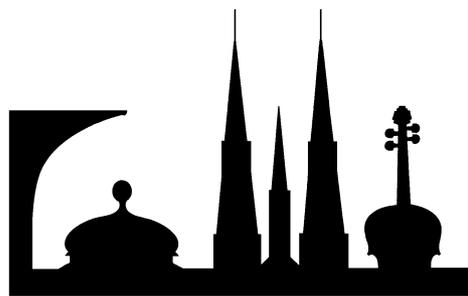


# **‘Cum organum dicitur’**

The transmission of vocal polyphony  
in pre-Reformation Sweden and bordering areas

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## Abstract

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The polyphonic sources of medieval Sweden are very few, although well-documented in musicological research. However, while most of the earlier research has tended to focus on interpreting the sources themselves rather than to examine the cultural and historical context in which they were written, the present dissertation aims at providing a broader narrative of the transmission and practice of polyphony. By examining the cultural context of the sources and putting them in relation to each other, a bigger picture is painted, where also Danish and Norwegian sources are included.

Based on the discussion and analyses of the sources, a general historical outline is suggested. The practice of *organum* in the late 13<sup>th</sup> century in Uppsala was probably a result from Swedes studying in Paris and via oral transmission brought the practice back home. This 'Parisian path' was accompanied by an 'English-Scandinavian' path, where mostly Denmark and Norway either influenced or were influenced by English polyphonic practice. During the 14<sup>th</sup> century, polyphony seems to have been rather established in Sweden, although prohibitions against it were made by the Order of the Bridgettines. These prohibitions were probably linked to a general anti-polyphonic attitude in Europe, beginning with the papal bull of John XII in 1324. The sources of the 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> centuries are very different from each other, and perhaps suggest that polyphony of older styles were sung in monasteries and certain churches while more modern *discant* were sung at the royal courts and at larger religious feasts such as the translation of Catherine of Vadstena.

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## Introduction

On the 12<sup>th</sup> of May, 1298, the archbishop of Uppsala, Nils Alleson, was occupied with writing. We know this because the document he wrote was kept intact and later copied, and eventually became part of a collection in the Swedish national archive. This document – the choir regulations of Uppsala cathedral – deals mostly with the duties of the canons and priests: what is expected from them under certain circumstances, punishments for absence from duty, rules on how to apply for leave, etc. But these regulations are also of particular musicological interest: in the section about distribution of the offerings, the singing of *organum* is mentioned almost in passing. What Nils Alleson wrote that day, then, might in his eyes not have been anything out of the ordinary – but for us, his handwritten document constitutes the earliest extant source mentioning a polyphonic practice in Sweden.

This document of course gives rise to several questions, such as: what did Alleson mean by the term *organum*, for how long had it been in use, were these regulations one of a kind in Sweden at this time, etc. While we will have reason to return to these questions at a later stage in this dissertation, I would like to point out that the regulations of 1298 are not only the earliest, but also one of a very limited number of Swedish medieval sources that talk about polyphony at all. How come there are so few sources of polyphony, while for example sources of plainsong exist in abundance?

As I see it, this question has three possible answers. The first answer may be that most sources indicating a polyphonic practice disappeared or were destroyed during the reformation of the church in the 16<sup>th</sup> century. We know that monastery and convent libraries were destroyed, and their collections were either shattered or destroyed with them. But that would not really explain why we have so many more sources of plainchant. If there in fact was a polyphonic practice in medieval Sweden, surely the monophonic sources would have disappeared in the same proportion as the polyphonic ones? Or – and this is the second possible answer – it might be that polyphonic singing simply was not practiced a lot at this time in Sweden or the Nordic countries. This is not something entirely unthinkable, considering the scarcity of sources and that some of them was not even written or used in Sweden, but came here with travellers. However, we cannot escape the fact that although the sources are few, they do exist. Furthermore, some of them speak of polyphony as if it was something natural, something that everybody would know of. For example, archbishop Alleson does not bother himself with explaining what organum is; he simply assumes that everyone reading the document will understand what he means. I therefore want to investigate if a third answer might solve the puzzle: what if organum and later polyphony in Sweden was orally transmitted, and learned by heart? We know this was probably the case even in Notre-Dame de Paris, the ‘birthplace’ of organum as we know it. Craig Wright has pointed out that there aren’t any polyphonic sources mentioned in any of the inventory lists of the church

until the late 16<sup>th</sup> century,<sup>1</sup> and Anna Maria Busse Berger has shown that the structure of Notre Dame Polyphony and later medieval polyphony makes them easy to memorize according to the mnemonic techniques used in most academic disciplines at the time.<sup>2</sup>

While there has been some research on Swedish medieval polyphony, there has been no study dealing in detail with the historical-cultural contexts of the sources, or taking into account the recent research in the medieval art of memory or orally transmitted music. To quote Busse Berger: ‘scholarship has tended to focus on the musical texts and their interrelationships, rather than on the cultural practices that produced the sources in which these texts are preserved.’<sup>3</sup> This is true for the research on Swedish medieval music as well. Most research in this category has focused on the existing sources, which means that we know much about the monophonic chants, but hardly anything about polyphonic singing. The information we get from looking at extant sources, however, only contributes to part of the picture. I believe that in order to get to know the whole picture, one has to look at the ‘non-existent’ sources as well. What can we deduce from what we know of the cultural practices of the time? What are the sources suggesting?

## Purpose and scope

This thesis will thus examine the cultural and historical context of Swedish medieval polyphonic sources, or sources that mention a polyphonic practice, aiming to provide a broader narrative of the transmission and practice of polyphony in Sweden at this time. The purpose is therefore not primarily to interpret the sources themselves, but rather to understand why and how they have come into existence.

In order to paint this broader picture, the following research questions were posed as the point of departure:

- What kind of polyphony was practiced in the European cities where Swedes travelled to study, and to what extent was it likely to have been orally transmitted?
- What terminology was there for polyphonic music in Sweden, and is it comparable to that of the rest of Europe?

Because of the limited scope of this dissertation, I have chosen not to discuss sources of instrumental polyphony, or sources indicating an exclusive instrumental polyphonic practice. Therefore, I will mainly look at the practice of vocal polyphony. However, I will also examine the sources which do not specify the medium of execution. In this way, important sources concerning the general transmission of polyphony in Sweden, such as treatises of mensural music, will not be overlooked only because they are not specifically ‘vocal’.

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<sup>1</sup> Craig Wright, *Music and Ceremony at Notre Dame of Paris, 500-1550*, Cambridge Studies in Music (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 334.

<sup>2</sup> Anna Maria Busse Berger, *Medieval Music and the Art of Memory* (Berkeley, CA, USA: University of California Press, 2005), <http://site.ebrary.com/lib/alltitles/docDetail.action?docID=10091263>.

<sup>3</sup> Busse Berger, *Medieval Music and the Art of Memory*, 1.

Neither is it possible within the scope of this study to examine every source in detail. I want to stress early on that each and every one of the sources could easily become the object of a study of its own. The present dissertation is merely an attempt to gather all the relevant sources in one place and to paint the larger picture. By doing this, I also hope to facilitate future, more detailed examinations of particular sources.

What is to be understood by the terms ‘Medieval’ and ‘Middle Ages’ in this dissertation? The National Encyclopaedia of Sweden (*Nationalencyklopedin*) suggests that the starting point of the Middle Ages in Sweden could be set to around the year 1000, based on both political and religious events.<sup>4</sup> The Christian mission in Sweden had started already in the 9<sup>th</sup> century, but it was not until the 11<sup>th</sup> century that an ecclesiastical organization started to consolidate.<sup>5</sup> The 11<sup>th</sup> century also seems like a relevant starting point of the time frame of the present study, since the polyphony described here originated within the Christian church.

It is generally suggested that the Middle Ages in Sweden ended with the reformation of the Swedish church in the 16<sup>th</sup> century, or with the coronation of Gustaf I (Vasa) in 1523.<sup>6</sup> Although the Reformation in Sweden was introduced in the 1520s, it is considered to have been a lengthy cultural and religious process, not fully completed until the end of the 16<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>7</sup> However, since the Reformation in Sweden is tightly connected to the politics of Gustaf I, I consider the year of his coronation a reasonable end point of the time frame of the present dissertation.

The geographical size of Sweden varied considerably during the middle ages. In the 12<sup>th</sup> century, the kingdom of Sweden was formed mainly in what now constitutes the southern parts of Sweden. Large portions of Finland were colonized in the 13<sup>th</sup> century, which means that the Finnish sources mentioned in this dissertation will be treated as medieval Swedish sources. The southern and western regions of Skåne, Halland, and Bohuslän were mainly a part of Denmark and/or Norway for the most part of the middle ages. That means that Lund, a historically important archbishopric and today a part of Sweden, was most of the time in the Middle Ages a Danish town. Furthermore, Sweden was a part of the so-called Kalmar Union – a union between Denmark, Norway, and Sweden – starting in 1397 and ending with the coronation of Gustav I (Vasa) in 1523.<sup>8</sup> This makes it difficult to decide ‘which’ Sweden to look at in this dissertation. However, since the Nordic countries all share a common cultural heritage, I would like to be as inclusive as possible. I will therefore mainly look at sources that were written or being used within the borders of modern Sweden, but also take into consideration sources written or used

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<sup>4</sup> Nationalencyklopedin, medeltiden. <http://www.ne.se/uppslagsverk/encyklopedi/lång/medeltiden> (accessed 2016-04-04)

<sup>5</sup> Nationalencyklopedin, Sverige. <http://www.ne.se/uppslagsverk/encyklopedi/lång/sverige> (accessed 2016-04-04)

<sup>6</sup> ‘Medeltiden - Uppslagsverk - NE’, accessed 4 April 2016, <http://www.ne.se.ezproxy.its.uu.se/uppslagsverk/encyklopedi/lång/medeltiden#litteraturanvisning>.

<sup>7</sup> ‘Reformationen - Uppslagsverk - NE’, accessed 31 May 2016, <http://www.ne.se.ezproxy.its.uu.se/uppslagsverk/encyklopedi/lång/reformationen>.

<sup>8</sup> Nationalencyklopedin, Kalmarunionen. <http://www.ne.se/uppslagsverk/encyklopedi/lång/kalmarunionen> (accessed 2016-04-05)

within the borders of modern Denmark, Norway, and Finland. It is important not to consider the medieval Sweden as an independent and isolated nation; what was the musical practice in Norway or Denmark was surely very similar to the practice in Sweden.

## Material, methodology, and terminology

As a study on medieval polyphony in Sweden, this dissertation has to address the primary sources. I have sorted this material into three categories: polyphonic music, treatises on mensural music, and texts describing or indicating a polyphonic practice. These sources are well-documented in musicological research, and they are the only reason we know anything at all about polyphony in medieval Sweden. In the sources mentioning a polyphonic practice, I will interpret the texts by asking what they are suggesting, rather than merely what is explicitly written. Why do the authors express themselves the way they do? What is their experience with the kind of polyphony they are describing? By asking these questions I hope to be able to create a historical backdrop, in front of which the sources in question are easier to understand.

There are four sources of polyphonic music with Swedish provenance. Two of them, Riksarkivet Fr 535 and Fr 813, were discovered in 1996, and dates from about 1300.<sup>9</sup> They contain organum and motets in three parts. Due to the uncertainty of their origin and provenance, and that they are soon to be discussed in a forthcoming paper by other authors, I have decided not to deal with them extensively. The two remaining sources are UUB C 23 (Rhymed office of Vadstena, around 1400), and the Rhymed Office of S.t Eskil (ca 1400), in which there is a parallel organum in one of the responsories. All of these contain chants with short passages of two-voice organum. To some extent, I will also deal with the known polyphonic sources of the Nordic countries bordering Sweden: UUB C 233 (The 'Orkney' manuscript, 13<sup>th</sup> century); The Danish Knut Lavard Office (late 13<sup>th</sup> century), which contains the hymn *Gaudet mater ecclesia*, supposedly to be sung in two parts; and the six two-part spiritual songs in the Ms. Am 76, 8<sup>o</sup>, written in a Danish monastery in the 1470s.

There are two sources of treatises on mensural music, both located in the library of Uppsala University. UUB C 55 contains two transcripts of mensural treatises, dating to the late 14<sup>th</sup> century, while the somewhat older transcript in UUB C 453 can be traced to the 1330s.

Although the time frame of this dissertation only stretches to 1523, I will also discuss some two-part songs of the *Piae Cantiones* of 1582. Some of the songs in this collection have archaic features, and it has therefore been suggested that they might have been in use for a long time before being printed.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> Gunilla Björkvall, Jan Brunius, and Anna Wolodarski, 'Flerstämmig Musik Från Medeltiden : Två Nya Fragmentfynd I Riksarkivet', in *Nordisk Tidskrift För Bok- Och Biblioteksväsen*, vol. 1996 (83), s. [129]-155 (Nordisk tidskrift för bok- och biblioteksväsen Stockholm : Scandinavian University Press, 1914-, 1997).

<sup>10</sup> Carl-Allan Moberg, *Om flerstämmig musik i Sverige under medeltiden* (Uppsala: Lundequistska bokh, 1928), 17.

In order to contextualize all of these sources, I will rely on previous musicological and historical research. Of particular importance in this respect is Anna Maria Busse Berger's groundbreaking study of how the *ars memorativa* was used in the transmission, performance, and composition of medieval polyphony and counterpoint. I will look into certain aspects of this and put them in relation to Swedish conditions and to the aforementioned sources. In connection with this, I will partly discuss oral transmission. For that, the definition of oral transmission needs to be clarified. I will use Anna Maria Busse Bergers two-fold definition. She states that oral transmission could mean either of these two things:

1. Singers reproducing from memory what they heard other singers perform, what they learned from a cantor, or what they learned from a written score. In other words, orality does not exclude writing; a singer might have first memorized the piece from a manuscript and then reproduced it, either tone for tone or altered.
2. Scribes reproducing from memory what they heard singers perform. Again orality does not exclude writing, but may imply that a scribe did not necessarily copy from another manuscript but tried to remember or reconstruct a performance. He might have also combined copying from a manuscript with his memory of a performance or his ideas as to how he could improve the piece.<sup>11</sup>

For this dissertation, I have chosen to use a chronological outline. The sources are grouped into the 13<sup>th</sup>, 14<sup>th</sup>, and 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> centuries, respectively. Of course, the different centuries are not to be viewed as separate, isolated time units, although this kind of chronological grouping might suggest just that. In a historiographical context, the fictional borders of a century are for most of the time in the way, clouding connections and relations between objects on either side of the turn of the century. This, I think, is the case of the sources of the 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> century, which is why they share the same heading. In this case, splitting the sources between 1499 and 1500 would be unnecessary and anachronistic. That said, grouping sources together according to centuries could be helpful if they help to highlight actual differences or developments.

## Previous research

The first and (to my knowledge) only work focusing exclusively on medieval polyphony in Sweden is musicologist Carl Allan Moberg's *Om flerstämmig musik i Sverige under medeltiden* (Uppsala, 1928). Moberg concerns himself mostly (but not only) with the mention of organum in the 1298 choir regulations of Uppsala, and with the narration of the translation of Catherine of Sweden 1489. He interprets the meaning of the words organum and discantus in each source, and investigates the whereabouts of Swedish students abroad. Moberg also includes an analysis of the three treatises on mensural music in the library of Uppsala university, and reprints them in the book. *Om flerstämmig musik...* is to this date the most exhaustive study concerning medieval polyphony in Sweden, and as such indispensable – in spite of its age.

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<sup>11</sup> Anna Maria Busse Berger, 'Mnemonics and Notre Dame Polyphony', *The Journal of Musicology* 14, no. 3 (1 July 1996): 264.

Other contributions to the topic were made by Tobias Norlind (*Latinska skolsånger i Sverige och Finland*, Lund 1909; *Svensk Musikhistoria*, Stockholm 1918), and Ingmar Milveden, who wrote the entries on mensural music and organum in *Kulturbistoriskt lexikon för nordisk medeltid* (Lund 1966 and 1967, respectively). The newly discovered fragments of polyphony in Riksarkivet are described by Gunilla Björkvall, Jan Brunius, and Anna Wolodarski in 'Flerstämmig Musik Från Medeltiden: Två Nya Fragmentfynd I Riksarkivet' (*Nordisk Tidskrift för Bok- och Biblioteksväsen*, vol. 1996 (83)). Danish sources has been explored by among others Nils Schiørring ('Flerstemmighed i dansk middelalder' in *Festskrift Jens Peter Larsen*, Copenhagen 1972) and Jacques Handschin ('Das älteste Dokument für die Pflege der Mehrstimmigkeit in Dänemark' in *Acta Musicologica* VII, 1935).

As previously stated, a major contribution to the way we understand the medieval *ars memorativa* and its connections with music was made by Anna Maria Busse Berger in *Medieval Music and the Art of Memory* (Berkeley 2005). Busse Berger, in turn, based her study on Mary Carruthers' *The book of memory* (Cambridge 1990, 2008), which deals with the art of memory in the educational system of the middle ages. Craig Wright has written of music in French churches, most notably *Music and Ceremony at Notre Dame of Paris, 500-1550* (Cambridge 1989).

## Disposition

As previously stated, this dissertation divides the sources into three sections: sources of the 13<sup>th</sup> century, 14<sup>th</sup> century, and the 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> centuries. Within each of these sections, the sources will be presented, analyzed and discussed. The final part of the dissertation consists of a conclusion, in which I discuss the earlier sections and make a general historical outline.

## Sources and context

In this section, the sources will be chronologically presented and discussed. Each century will have an introduction, which gives a brief survey of the sources, and a final discussion, which compares the sources and summarizes what have been said.

### The 13<sup>th</sup> century

The only Swedish source of the 13<sup>th</sup> century mentioning polyphony is the aforementioned choir regulations of Uppsala cathedral in 1298. This part of the dissertation will take that source as its point of departure, and explore ways of how the practice of organal liturgical singing might have been brought to Uppsala. I will then examine the Danish source (the Knud Lavard Office) and those of Norway (the *Ordo Nidrosiense* and the Orkney-related hymn *Nobilis humilis*).

The term ‘organum’ is problematic. According to the theorist Johannes de Garlandia (active ca 1270-1320), it was considered both a *genus* and a *species*.<sup>12</sup> That is, both a term for polyphony in general, and a style within that polyphony. In this dissertation, I will use the words ‘organum’ and ‘polyphony’ interchangeably, and ‘organum purum’ to describe the specific polyphonic style.

#### *The choir regulations of Uppsala cathedral, 1298*

In the beginning of the 13th century, the first cathedral of Uppsala was destroyed in a big fire.<sup>13</sup> It was partly rebuilt during the following decades, but because of the fire and the fact that the town had in recent years become quite depopulated, it was eventually decided to move the archbishop’s see to the bigger town of Östra Aros, located approximately five kilometres south. In a letter, the pope made it clear that the see would keep its name of Uppsala.<sup>14</sup> The see finally moved in 1273, but the construction of the new cathedral in Östra Aros may have started as early as two years prior to that.<sup>15</sup>

In 1298, then, the construction had been going on for almost thirty years. When we think of that archbishop Nils Alleson at this time wrote the regulations of the choir, we should also be aware of that only half the choir was actually finished. It has been suggested by other scholars that Alleson’s regulations indicated that the whole choir was finished, but later archaeological

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<sup>12</sup> Edward H. Roesner, ed., *Ars Antiqua: Organum, Conductus, Motet*, Music in Medieval Europe (Farnham: Ashgate, 2009), 134.

<sup>13</sup> Ronnie Carlsson, *Uppsala domkyrka. 2, Domkyrkan i Gamla Uppsala, nuvarande domkyrkans omgivningar*, Sveriges kyrkor 228 (Uppsala: Upplandsmuseet, 2010), 23.

<sup>14</sup> Christian Lovén, Herman Bengtsson, and Markus Dahlberg, *Uppsala domkyrka. 3, Byggnadsbeskrivning, byggnadshistoria, domkyrkans konsthistoriska ställning*, Sveriges kyrkor 229 (Uppsala: Upplandsmuseet, 2010), 271.

<sup>15</sup> Lovén, Bengtsson, and Dahlberg, *Uppsala domkyrka. 3.*, 300.

research has proven this wrong.<sup>16</sup> Construction of the cathedral started with a chapter house on the northern side of the choir. The choir with its surrounding chapels was then built from north to south. Thus, the cathedral was at the time of 1298 still a building site rather than a place of worship, although it seems that the chapels surrounding the choir started to function as such as soon as they were finished. The whole choir with the high altar was not useable until about 1314-1318.<sup>17</sup> Mass was until then (and for some time afterwards as well) celebrated in the temporary *ecclesia lignea* – wooden church – built in 1290, and located west of what later became the transept of the cathedral. What prompted Alleson to write the regulations when he did might instead have been that the easternmost Lady Chapel was erected the same year, 1298. There are also indications of masses being celebrated in this chapel from the start.<sup>18</sup>

In 1298, Alleson had not been an archbishop for long. As a dean, he had accompanied archbishop Johannes on a journey to Rome 1291; their mission had been to make the Pope revoke the suspension of the Uppsala chapter, ordered by the superior archbishop of Lund. Johannes, however, had died on the way. Alleson was then elected new archbishop of Uppsala, but could not be consecrated as such until 1295, when the Pope finally made the revocation. Alleson returned to Uppsala with a number of privileges, which in many ways strengthened his position. He soon started to organize his diocese with rules and regulations. He wrote the regulations of the diocese in 1297, and, as we know, the regulations of the choir in 1298.

What, then, were the contents of these regulations? Most of the text concerns administrative matters. The paragraph mentioning organum is no exception to this. It simply states that singers of organum will be paid extra:

Cum organum dicitur Cantores illius vnam oram leuent de oblacione, dummodo tantum fuerit, si minus ora venerit et illud recipiant, quid autem maius ora venerit sit communitatis canonicorum.

Carl-Allan Moberg has provided a detailed translation of this passage to Swedish. Moberg suggests that ‘cum organum dicitur’ translates to roughly ‘when organum is sung’, and that the whole sentence can be read thus:

When organum is sung, its singers together will get one *öre* out of the offerings, if they [the offerings] amount to that much. If they amount to less than one *öre*, the singers will have to make do with what there is, and if the offerings amount to more than one *öre*, the surplus will go to the common fund of the canons.<sup>19</sup>

Though it is not much, we can deduce a number of facts from this text alone. First, Alleson clearly knew about organum. The text does not explain the meaning of the term, but that does

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<sup>16</sup> Sven-Erik Pernler, ‘Nicolaus Allonis’, *Svenskt Biografiskt Lexikon*, accessed 4 April 2016, <http://sok.riksarkivet.se/sbl/artikel/8875>.

<sup>17</sup> Lovén, Bengtsson, and Dahlberg, *Uppsala domkyrka*. 3., 305.

<sup>18</sup> Lovén, Bengtsson, and Dahlberg, *Uppsala domkyrka*. 3., 254.

<sup>19</sup> ‘Då det utföres sådan flerstämmig sång, som kallas organum, så få de sångare, som utföra denna ett öre av de influtna medlen tillsammans, ifall dessa uppgå till så mycket; om det blir mindre än ett öre, så få de hålla till godo, med vad som finns; blir “kollekten” däremot mer än ett öre, skall överskottet gå till kanonikernas gemensamma kassa.’ (Moberg, *Om flerstämmig musik*, 14.) My English translation.

not change that there apparently was some kind of organum practiced in Uppsala at this time. What Moberg does not concern himself with, but what I would like to emphasize, is the way organum is mentioned. The purpose of the regulations of 1298 was simply to be a reference document clarifying tasks, salaries, and punishments. It was not its purpose to define the meaning of the word organum. However, the fact that Alleson could use the word without explaining it suggests that it was by then an established term. Alleson knew that anyone supposed to read the document would understand what he meant. What this means to us, then, is that there most probably was a polyphonic practice in Uppsala at least some years prior to 1298. Thus, what we want to know is this: what kind of organum was sung, when did this practice start, and how did it get to Uppsala?

Second, the singing of organum was valued as something positive. This is apparent from the fact that the singers were paid extra – ‘unam oram’, according to the regulations. For comparison, the crime of killing a neighbour’s cat (which protected the house from rats), was at this time punishable by a fine of exactly the same amount – not a negligible sum, then, it seems.<sup>20</sup> According to Moberg, the extra payment suggests that the singers of organum must have had special skills, not easily acquired by just anyone, and that this most likely rules out the ‘easier’ kind of organum, such as parallel organum and the like.<sup>21</sup> Thus, states Moberg, the extra payment only makes sense if the organum was more advanced – i.e. in line with the Notre Dame polyphony of the time.<sup>22</sup> Furthermore, for singers of organa to be paid extra was not something unique for Uppsala. For instance, we know that the singers of Notre Dame in Paris also got paid extra, according to the *Cartulaire* of Notre Dame with the last entry in 1271.<sup>23</sup> This shows that whatever organa practiced in Uppsala, it was regarded as something valuable which enriched the celebration of the mass, in the same way as it did in Paris.

Nils Alleson had actually previously lived in Paris. In a letter by the dean Björn of Uppsala, dated to 1278, Alleson is reported being a student in the French capital together with three other men from Uppsala.<sup>24</sup> Paris was at this time the capital of the learned world; an international educational centre with famous teachers attracting students from all over Western Europe. Swedes were no exception. We know that the dioceses of Uppsala, Linköping, and Skara all bought houses in Paris to accommodate their students, and that in 1329, there were more than 30 Swedish students living there.<sup>25</sup> *Collegium Upsalense* was the oldest of the Swedish colleges,

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<sup>20</sup> Ingmar Milveden, ‘Tradition Och Förnyelse I Uppsalastiftets Musikliv’, in *Uppsala ärkestift I Ord Och Bild*, ed. Per Axel Björkman, Öyvind Sjöholm, and Olof Herrlin, Sveriges stift i ord och bild (Stockholm: Idun, 1954), 445–72.

<sup>21</sup> Moberg, *Om flerstämmig musik i Sverige under medeltiden*, 13.

<sup>22</sup> Moberg, *Om flerstämmig musik i Sverige under medeltiden*, 15.

<sup>23</sup> Wright, *Music and Ceremony*, 339. See also Ingmar Milveden, ‘Organum’, *Kulturbistoriskt Lexikon För Nordisk Medeltid* (Malmö: Allhem, 1967), 687.

<sup>24</sup> *Svenskt diplomatarium*, SDHK-nr: 1038

<sup>25</sup> Moberg, *Om flerstämmig musik i Sverige under medeltiden*, 23–24.

founded in 1291,<sup>26</sup> while *Collegium Lincopense* and *Collegium Scarense* followed in the beginning of the 14<sup>th</sup> century. Not only Swedes, but also Danes and Norwegians studied in Paris. What experiences, then, did the Swedish students make? What did they learn about polyphony? Is it possible that some of the Swedish students learned to sing organum, or did they perhaps bring skilled singers back to Sweden with them? And what kind of organum was practiced in Paris at that time?

We might need to first ask ourselves if the Swedish students actually would have heard organum at all. There were more than two hundred churches in Paris at the time.<sup>27</sup> Did they all have organal practices? While there probably were certain differences in polyphonic liturgy between these churches, it is evident that polyphony in Paris had a long tradition even before Léonin and the *Magnus liber organum*. The organum of Notre Dame was sung not only in the cathedral. Craig Wright points out that the singers and clergy of Notre Dame on several occasions went in procession through the town, visiting churches and institutions, celebrating mass and singing organum.<sup>28</sup> Furthermore, the style of Notre Dame polyphony began to spread, not only within Paris or France, but throughout the whole catholic church.<sup>29</sup> The polyphonic practice could therefore at the end of the 13<sup>th</sup> century be heard virtually in every corner of Western Europe. It thus seems very likely that any student at the University of Paris at that time – including Nils Alleson and other Swedes – could hardly have been able to avoid coming across Notre Dame organa.

In order to know more about the polyphony which the Swedish students might have encountered and possibly learnt, I will now turn to describing Notre Dame polyphony, and what we know of its transmission.

### *The transmission of Notre Dame polyphony*

What we know of the early days of Notre Dame polyphony is largely thanks to the English author known as Anonymous IV, who, in the end of the 13<sup>th</sup> century, wrote a treatise on music. In this treatise he tells us of Magister Leoninus, who put together the ‘great book of organum’, the *Magnus liber organi*, and of Magister Perotinus, who ‘produced a redaction of it’.<sup>30</sup> As we shall see, though, Leoninus and Perotinus were not ‘composers’ in the modern sense of the word. As Craig Wright writes, ‘polyphony in this era most often came into being during the celebration of the liturgy, as a spontaneous creation fashioned by clerics singing within the parameters of the accepted rules of music theory, and not as a fully prescriptive artifact conceived outside of and,

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<sup>26</sup> Westman K. B., ‘Andreas Andræ And’, *Svenskt Biografiskt Lexikon*, accessed 4 April 2016, <http://sok.riksarkivet.se/sbl/artikel/5770>.

<sup>27</sup> Wright, *Music and Ceremony*, 236.

<sup>28</sup> Wright, *Music and Ceremony*, 339–340.

<sup>29</sup> Wright, *Music and Ceremony*, 235.

<sup>30</sup> Edward H. Roesner, ‘Who “Made” the “Magnus Liber”?’’, *Early Music History* 20 (2001): 227.

indeed, well before the moment of execution'.<sup>31</sup> Before we consider how this was actually done, let us take a brief look at the basic features of the music in question.

According to the theorist Johannes de Garlandia, organum (i.e. polyphony in general) in the 13<sup>th</sup> century can be divided into three different styles. First, there is organum purum, which consists of melismatic lines, in measured or unmeasured rhythm, added above the cantus firmus. Second, there is discant, which moves in modal rhythm together with the cantus firmus. Third, there is copula, which is something in between the two other styles, with the upper part moving in modal rhythm while the cantus firmus has sustained notes.<sup>32</sup>

The singing of organum was, according to Craig Wright, 'exclusively a soloist's art'.<sup>33</sup> There are several sources describing organum being performed by two to six persons. Wright argues that the upper voices (the organal parts) were most probably sung by individual singers, since the lines themselves would have been too complicated for two or more singers to sing together. The remaining singers would then have been singing the tenor part. This, argues Wright, makes sense since the tenor lines were very long; the more singers performing it, the more they could take turns breathing and help each other 'maintain the musical and spiritual identity of the plainsong'.<sup>34</sup>

The research by Anna Maria Busse Berger also shows that it was highly likely that *duplum* and any other upper parts were sung by individual soloists. Notre Dame polyphony was, according to Busse Berger, 'composed in a culture that was to a considerable extent still oral', in which 'every composer/performer/scribe made his own redaction of the piece'.<sup>35</sup> This means, for example, that a singer of organum purum had memorized many different melodic formulas, *colores*, that could be used in a performance. The organal part, then, was not something carved in stone. Rather, it was a highly flexible melodic line that could be performed differently from time to time. Thus, putting the *colores* together would easiest have been done by one individual, one soloist.<sup>36</sup>

But what about the written polyphonic sources? What about the *Magnus liber organum*? Why write something down if you would not use it? What we have to remember is that the idea of a piece of music as a 'work of art' is a fairly modern concept. Busse Berger exemplifies this by showing that Friedrich Ludwig, the scholar who researched the Notre Dame organa in the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, was living and working in a musical and scientific culture presupposing such works of art. In his research, he wanted to find 'the true and original version

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<sup>31</sup> Craig Wright, 'Leoninus, Poet and Musician', *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 39, no. 1 (1986): 1–35, doi:10.2307/831693.

<sup>32</sup> Busse Berger, *Medieval Music and the Art of Memory*, 164; Edward H. Roesner, 'Johannes de Garlandia on Organum in Speciali', in *Ars Antiqua: Organum, Conductus, Motet* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2009), 81–112.

<sup>33</sup> Wright, *Music and Ceremony*, 342.

<sup>34</sup> Wright, *Music and Ceremony*, 343.

<sup>35</sup> Busse Berger, *Medieval Music and the Art of Memory*, 197.

<sup>36</sup> Busse Berger, *Medieval Music and the Art of Memory*, 174.

of a piece'.<sup>37</sup> The different sources could be researched with philological methods for this purpose. What Ludwig did not think of was the possibility that the music in question might not have a 'true and original version'. If the music was created in an oral environment, it would rather have been created in new versions all the time, and the written-down composition would have been only one of several versions.

As described by among others Carruthers and Busse Berger, orality does not exclude writing. The situation is rather the opposite – writing helped to memorize even more: 'the ability to write something down, to visualize it, allowed for exact memorization and opened up new ways of committing material to memory', as Busse Berger puts it.<sup>38</sup> Busse Berger has also shown that the text known as the Vatican organum treatise, a document earlier thought of being a handbook of how to 'compose' organum (that is, in writing), was more likely to have been memorized. The Vatican organum treatise was put together in the early 13<sup>th</sup> century, and contains a large number of melodic formulas, or *colores*, mostly in organum purum. These are first set to different cantus firmus progressions, then written as stand-alone melismas, and lastly used in several complete organa. These organa corresponds very well to those in the *Magnus liber organum*. As Busse Berger argues, the formulas could have originated from the *Magnus liber*, but 'the only reason to copy them would have been first to classify them and then systematically to memorize them'.<sup>39</sup>

Thus, the written-down organa would mainly have served the purpose of being memorized. Busse Berger notes that 'the earliest Notre Dame manuscripts date from the 1230s at the earliest, more likely 1240s or 1250s', and that the tradition of oral transmission of organa within the cathedral would have continued 'even after the pieces were written down elsewhere'.<sup>40</sup> We know that memorization of at least the psalter and antiphoner was considered essential, since this was clearly noted in one of the *cartularies* of Notre Dame in 1313: 'no persons are to receive payment for Matins unless they have demonstrated to us that they know by heart the antiphoner and the psalter which have been customarily sung by memory in the church of Paris'.<sup>41</sup> There are also later documents of the church showing this favorable attitude towards memorization.

But there were other reasons for writing down organum as well. One reason could have been just to preserve the repertory: 'preserving the music would be important to a collector [...] But preservation would have also been important for a compiler or a composer who would want to keep his particular version of a piece'.<sup>42</sup> We know that one version of the *Magnus liber* was copied for use in St. Andrews in Scotland, which indicates that another reason for writing down the organa was to introduce the repertory to singers in other regions.

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<sup>37</sup> Busse Berger, *Medieval Music and the Art of Memory*, 26.

<sup>38</sup> Busse Berger, *Medieval Music and the Art of Memory*, 45.

<sup>39</sup> Busse Berger, *Medieval Music and the Art of Memory*, 127.

<sup>40</sup> Busse Berger, 'Mnemotechnics and Notre Dame Polyphony', 266–267.

<sup>41</sup> Quoted from Wright, *Music and Ceremony*, 326.

<sup>42</sup> Busse Berger, 'Mnemotechnics and Notre Dame Polyphony', 297.

I have mentioned earlier that Notre Dame organa were spread throughout the entire catholic church. But where exactly do we find traces of the *Magnus liber* and similar sources? First, it should be stated that the ‘original’ version of the *Magnus liber*, which was first compiled around 1170, has been lost. We only know of three more or less complete manuscripts that exists today, all of which dates to the middle or second half of the 13<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>43</sup> We know also of some seventeen lost manuscripts containing Notre Dame polyphony because they are mentioned in inventories and other texts.<sup>44</sup> Several of these were owned by Englishmen and donated to St. Paul’s Cathedral in London. Other notable owners were King Edward I of England, Pope Boniface VII, and King Charles V of France. All of the seventeen sources dates back to both the 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>45</sup> At least in the case of the donations to St. Paul’s, this shows that there were in fact many who brought the polyphony of Notre Dame back to their home country.

In Sweden, we have yet to come across sources like this. However, if Swedish students learned to sing organum in Paris, it is not unlikely that they would have copied the music in the same way as the Englishmen in order to introduce it to other singers back home, or to memorize melodic formulas or interval progressions. Since we know that some kind of organum was sung in the cathedral of Uppsala in 1298, what is described above might serve as a hypothesis as to where this practice originated and how it was brought to Uppsala.

#### *The Knud Lavard Office, late 13<sup>th</sup> century*

The oldest example of polyphony in Denmark is the hymn *Gaudet mater ecclesia*, which is a part of the Office dedicated to St. Knud Lavard of Denmark (1096-1131). According to Jacques Handschin, the only extant source (Kiel S.H. 8.A.8<sup>o</sup>) was copied at the end of the 13<sup>th</sup> century in either Ringsted or Roskilde.<sup>46</sup> However, John Bergsagel has pointed out that the dating is uncertain, and that it could have been copied virtually anytime within the 13<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>47</sup> Regardless of when the copy was made, the translation feast for Knud Lavard took place on June 25<sup>th</sup> 1170, and it is believed that the original Office was created for that occasion.<sup>48</sup> In that case, the hymn is the earliest example of polyphony in the Nordic countries that we know of.

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<sup>43</sup> Wright, *Music and Ceremony*, 244.

<sup>44</sup> Rebecca A. Baltzer, ‘Notre Dame Manuscripts and Their Owners: Lost and Found’, *The Journal of Musicology* 5, no. 3 (1987): 380–99.

<sup>45</sup> Baltzer, ‘Notre Dame Manuscripts and Their Owners’.

<sup>46</sup> Jacques Handschin, ‘Das Älteste Dokument Für Die Pflege Der Mehrstimmigkeit in Dänemark’, *Acta Musicologica* 7, no. 2 (1935): 67–69.

<sup>47</sup> John Bergsagel and International Musicological Society, eds., *The Offices and Masses of St. Knud Lavard († 1131): Kiel, Univ. Lib. MS S.H. 8 A.8<sup>o</sup>*, *Wissenschaftliche Abhandlungen ; Musicological Studies, II* (Copenhagen : Ottawa: Published by The Royal Library ; In collaboration with The Institute of Mediaeval Music, 2010), xxxii.

<sup>48</sup> Handschin, ‘Das Älteste Dokument’.

Handschin has described this hymn as a so-called ‘voice-exchange’ hymn. There are six verses. The melody of the first verse consists of two phrases which can be sung at the same time, creating a two-part *rondellus* (the two phrases are here labelled A and B):<sup>49</sup>

The image shows a musical staff with a treble clef and a common time signature (C). The melody is divided into two phrases, A and B, which are written on a single staff. The text below the staff is: Gau-det ma - ter\_ ec - cle - si - a, Que pri- dem\_ pro- lis\_\_ nes - ci - ta,.

Below this, there is a separate musical staff showing the two phrases, A and B, written on two staves. This illustrates the two-part *rondellus* structure where the two phrases can be sung simultaneously.

The same melody has been found in several other sources, three of which use the text *Nunc sancte nobis* and come from the northern English towns of York and Durham.<sup>50</sup> In these English sources, however, the two phrases are written in score, whereas in the *Gaudet mater* they are written continuously on a single staff.<sup>51</sup> In one of these English sources – Cambridge, St. Johns College 102 (York) – there are also specific instructions for singing the hymn as a *rondellus* (although other words were used).<sup>52</sup> The earliest source of the melody is, although not in its *rondellus* form, in a St. Martial manuscript dated to the first half of the 12<sup>th</sup> century. It can also be traced to places other than England or Denmark in the following centuries, such as Prague and Salzburg.<sup>53</sup>

The words of the second verse are fit to another melody. The only occurrence of this elsewhere is in the Worcester Antiphoner, dated to the 1230s. The melody is not written in *rondellus* form in either source, but could be sung as such, in the same way as the melody to the first verse. Whether this was intended or not, we do not know. However, Bergsagel has suggested that if the *Gaudet mater* was to be sung as a *rondellus*, the two melodies would have been ‘alternating every second verse, in a manner which would have been appropriate to a particularly festive occasion’.<sup>54</sup>

<sup>49</sup> This rendering of the hymn is based on Bergsagel’s interpretation (Bergsagel and International Musicological Society, *The Offices and Masses of St. Knud Lavard*, 52.)

<sup>50</sup> Bergsagel and International Musicological Society, *The Offices and Masses of St. Knud Lavard*, 60.

<sup>51</sup> Bergsagel and International Musicological Society, *The Offices and Masses of St. Knud Lavard*, 59–60.

<sup>52</sup> Handschin, ‘Das Älteste Dokument’, 68.

<sup>53</sup> Frank Ll. Harrison, ‘Rota and Rondellus in English Medieval Music’, *Proceedings of the Royal Musical Association* 86 (1959): 99.

<sup>54</sup> Bergsagel and International Musicological Society, *The Offices and Masses of St. Knud Lavard*, 60.

It is evident from the hymn's English occurrences that there would have been a strong connection between Denmark and England at this time, inherited probably from the time of the Danelaw. It is not clear, though, if the melodies came from England to Denmark, or if it was the other way around. Handschin suggests the first alternative, but H.V. Hughes, the scholar who first compared the Danish hymn to its English versions, notes that all of the English sources are of a later date than the *Gaudet mater* (presuming it was included in the Knud Lavard Office original of 1170), which makes the second alternative seem credible as well.<sup>55</sup> Bergsagel, discussing these facts, also mentions the chronicler and archdeacon Gerald of Wales (ca 1146-1223), who in the north parts of England had encountered 'an unusual manner of singing in two parts, which he considered peculiar to the local Scandinavians'.<sup>56</sup> Since this might be an important bit of contemporary information, let us take a look at Gerald's words directly. Here is the text, taken from his *Descriptio Cambriae* ('Description of Wales') of 1194:

Also in the northern parts of Britain, that is, beyond the Humber and round about York, the people who inhabit those parts use a similar sort of harmony in their singing [to the Welsh], but in only two different parts, one murmuring below, the other soothing and charming the ear above. In the case of each nation this facility has been acquired not by skill but by long-established custom, so that habit has now become second nature. And this has become so strong in either case, and has struck its roots so deep, that one never hears singing in unison, but either in several parts, as in Wales, or at least in two, as in the north. And what is still more marvellous, children too, and even infants, when first they turn from tears to song, follow the same manner of singing. But the English as a whole do not use this manner of singing, only the northerners, so that I believe it was from the Danes and Norwegians, who very often used to occupy those parts of the island and hold them for long spaces of time, that the inhabitants derive their peculiar manner of singing, just as they have affinities in their speech.<sup>57</sup>

Gerald of Wales speaks here of some kind of orally transmitted polyphony. This singing was obviously not something situated exclusively to the realm of liturgical song. Instead, it was a widely dispersed popular practice. But regardless of whether Gerald's description goes for either secular or sacred polyphony, or both, it is a clear testimony of that polyphony in the former Danish and Norwegian parts of England was a widely dispersed, orally transmitted practice. Was it a heritage exclusively from the Danelaw period, as Gerald guesses?

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<sup>55</sup> H. V. Hughes, *Latin Hymnody: An Inquiry into the Underlying Principles of the Hymnarium* (London: Faith Press, 1922), 36, <http://archive.org/details/latinhymnody00hughuoft>.

<sup>56</sup> Bergsagel and International Musicological Society, *The Offices and Masses of St. Knud Lavard*, 60.

<sup>57</sup> 'In borealibus quoque majoris Britanniae partibus, trans Humbriam scilicet Eboracique finibus, Anglorum populi qui partes illas inhabitant simili canendo symphonica utuntur harmonia: binis tamen solummodo tonorum differentiis et vocum modulando varietatibus, una inferius submurmurante, altera vero superne demulcente pariter et delectante. Ne carte tamen sed usu longaevo et quasi in naturam mora diutina jam converso, haec vel illa sibi gens hanc specialitatem comparavit. Qui adeo apud utramque invaluit et altas jam radices posuit, ut nihil hic simpliciter, nihil nisi multipliciter ut apud priores, vel saltem dupliciter ut apud sequentes melice proferri consueverit; pueri etiam, quod magis admirandum, et fere infantibus, cum primum a fletibus in cantus erumpunt, eandem modulationem observantibus. Angli vero, quoniam non generaliter omnes sed boreales solum hujusmodi vocum utuntur modulationibus, credo quod a Dacis et Norwagiensibus qui partes illas insulae frequentius occupare ac diutius obtinere solebant, sicut loquendi affinitatem, sic et canendi proprietatem contraxerunt.' Translation and quote from Ingrid De Geer, *Earl, Saint, Bishop, Skald - and Music: The Orkney Earldom of the Twelfth Century: A Musicological Study* (Uppsala, 1985), 157-58.

In her dissertation on the Orkney Earldom of the 12<sup>th</sup> century, Ingrid de Geer suggests that *Gaudet mater* 'is more likely of English provenance'.<sup>58</sup> She argues that the use of *rondellus* as such is 'especially characteristic of English music throughout the Middle Ages'<sup>59</sup>, and that Gerald's descriptions of how the two different parts were sung are not clear enough.<sup>60</sup> Thus, we cannot know for certain if the singing Gerald spoke of had anything to do with the singing of *rondelli*, or if it was connected to a Scandinavian practice. Gerald of Wales has indeed been questioned as a credible musical witness, but it seems as the problems in understanding him lies in his lack of appropriate musical-theoretical terminology rather than in an inadequate description.<sup>61</sup>

In short, even though *Gaudet mater* supposedly was written down before its English counterparts, the fact that *rondellus* is a typical English polyphonic form makes it unlikely that the melody was brought from Denmark to England and not vice versa. Furthermore, although Gerald of Wales describes a popular polyphonic singing, the description is not clear enough to let us know exactly how this was done. What we do know, though, is that there undoubtedly was a strong connection between Denmark and England in the Middle Ages, and that this connection might have facilitated the transmission of polyphony between the two countries in either direction.

#### *Ordo Nidrosiensis Ecclesie ca 1250*

The Norwegian town of Trondheim, or Nidaros, as it was called during the middle ages, was founded in 997 and became an archbishopric in the 1150s.<sup>62</sup> In the first half of the 13th century, a document codifying regulations of the liturgy was written. This document, called *Ordo Nidrosiensis Ecclesie*, contains some paragraphs which have been interpreted as indications of a polyphonic practice. However, this interpretation is far from certain and could be questioned. The document starts off with listing a number of the greatest feast days, such as Christmas, Epiphany, Easter, and All Saint's Day, in which

quator cantores cappis induiti cum coloribus tenent chorum.<sup>63</sup>

Olof Kolsrud has provided a translation to Norwegian of the *Ordo Nidrosiensis* in its entirety, in which this passage reads 'the choir is lead by four cantors clothed in copes with colours'.<sup>64</sup> Ingmar Milveden suggests, on the other hand, that 'cum coloribus' should belong to 'tenent

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<sup>58</sup> De Geer, *Earl, Saint, Bishop, Skald - and Music*, 190.

<sup>59</sup> De Geer, *Earl, Saint, Bishop, Skald - and Music*, 179.

<sup>60</sup> De Geer, *Earl, Saint, Bishop, Skald - and Music*, 159.

<sup>61</sup> Shai Burstyn, 'Is Gerald of Wales a Credible Musical Witness?', *The Musical Quarterly* 72, no. 2 (1986): 162.

<sup>62</sup> *Nationalencyklopedin*, Trondheim. <http://www.ne.se/uppslagsverk/encyklopedi/lång/trondheim> (accessed 2016-04-25)

<sup>63</sup> O. Kolsrud, 'Korsongen I Nidarosdomen', in *Festskrift Til O.M. Sandvik, 70-årsdagen 1875-9.mai-1945*, ed. Ole Mørk Sandvik (Oslo: Aschehoug, 1945), 90.

<sup>64</sup> 'vert koren leida av fire kantorar, iført kâpor med fargar.' Kolsrud, 'Korsongen I Nidarosdomen', 93.

chorum' rather than to the copes.<sup>65</sup> As shown in the previous chapter, melismas in the Notre Dame polyphony are called *colores*. Thus, Milveden argues that the quoted paragraph of the *Ordo Nidrosiensis* refers to polyphonic singing in organum purum style. Since Milveden's suggestion is accepted as a true fact in at least one book discussing early polyphony in the Nordic countries, there is reason to examine his arguments.<sup>66</sup> How probable is it that organum was a part of the liturgy in this Norwegian town this early, decades before any mention in other Nordic sources?

If we look at the rest of the regulations, copes are mentioned four more times. Not in any of these, however, is *color* mentioned in any way. It makes sense, though, that the coloured copes were reserved only for the most important feasts, specified in the beginning of the text. However, the same could be said about polyphony. If organum was practiced, it would surely have been during these feast days.

The key term here is obviously *color*. What is the usage of this term in the rest of Europe in the 13<sup>th</sup> century? Where and when did it originate? In fact, the earliest text mentioning *colores* is *De mensurabili musica*, the mid-13<sup>th</sup> century anonymous treatise which in a later version towards the end of the same century was attributed to Johannes de Garlandia.<sup>67</sup> This text divides *color* into three subcategories. What they all have in common is repetition. That is, *color* refers to embellishments made up of elements of repetition. Later on, in the 14<sup>th</sup> century, *color* became the term for the repeated melody in the isorhythmic motets, its theoretical counterpart being the repeated rhythmical series *talea*. In the 13<sup>th</sup> century, however, *color* seem to have a vaguer meaning. Before it was designated a musical connotation, *color* could mean 'rhetorical embellishment'.<sup>68</sup> This was probably the origin to the musical connotation as well. In his edition of the anonymous treatise *De Musica Mensurata* from 1279, Jeremy Yudkin translates *color* to 'rhetorical device' or 'rhetorical color'. For instance, the sentence 'Aut propter colorem musicae purpurandae vel variandae sic' is translated 'And on account of a rhetorical device to embellish or vary the music is shown here'.<sup>69</sup> Anonymous IV is another 13<sup>th</sup>-century source speaking of *color*, but in his text the element of repetition is not that clear. He refers to Perotinus' organa being made up of 'an abundance of musical colores'.<sup>70</sup> In the entry of *color* in *Grove Music Online*, it is noted that although Anonymous IV doesn't speak explicitly of repetition, 'the Perotinian examples he referred to often contain passages embellished by various types of repetition, which was bound to play a prominent ornamental role in the melodically restricted polyphony of the time'.<sup>71</sup>

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<sup>65</sup> Milveden, 'Organum', 687.

<sup>66</sup> Nils Schiørring, *Musikkens historie i Danmark. Bd 1, Fra oldtiden til 1750*, ed. Ole Kongsted and Poul Henning Traustedt (København: Politikens forl, 1977), 61.

<sup>67</sup> Ernest H. Sanders and Mark Lindley, 'Color', *Grove Music Online* (Oxford University Press), accessed 7 May 2016, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/40034>.

<sup>68</sup> Sanders and Lindley, 'Color'.

<sup>69</sup> Anonymus Sti Emmerami, *De Musica Mensurata*, ed. Jeremy Yudkin, *Music: Scholarship and Performance* (Bloomington: Indiana Univ. Press, 1990).

<sup>70</sup> Translation by Busse Berger, *Medieval Music and the Art of Memory*, 173.

<sup>71</sup> Sanders and Lindley, 'Color'.

In his 1967 article on organum, Ingmar Milveden speculates in the true meaning of *colores* when referring to Anonymous IV. Milveden wonders if *colores* are so typical within the style that they actually could refer to organum itself.<sup>72</sup> It seems it is on this assumption that Milveden is able to make the connection to the *Ordo Nidrosiensis*. However, as shown above, *colores* was only used to refer to the embellishments or the melismas of organum, not to organum itself. Moreover, it is unlikely that the use of *color* in the sense of organal melismas or repetitional embellishments would have reached Nidaros already in the first half of the 13<sup>th</sup> century. If that was the case, then the Norwegian town would be one of the first places where that meaning of the word was ever used. Considering the geographical distance between Paris and Nidaros, and the fact that there are no other instances of *color* being used in that sense in the Northern countries at the time, that is not plausible. Instead, what polyphonic practice that might have existed in Norway at this time should rather be connected to England, or the British Isles in general, than to the French practice of organum. This is apparent in the hymn *Nobilis humilis*, described below.

*A two-part hymn from the Orkney Islands (UUB C233), 13<sup>th</sup> century*

The Orkney Islands, in the archipelago of northern Scotland, were a Norse earldom from ca 900 to 1468.<sup>73</sup> From this earldom stems a manuscript written in the second half of the 13<sup>th</sup> century, containing a two-voiced hymn written largely in parallel thirds. This manuscript was acquired in Greifswald by a Swedish monk in ca 1470, and today it is located in the library of Uppsala University.<sup>74</sup>

The hymn in question, *Nobilis humilis* (NH), celebrates St. Magnus of Orkney (d. ca 1115), and is one of only two songs in the manuscript which otherwise contains religious texts in Latin. The hymn is written down by a later hand in an empty spot in the manuscript. As one of the earliest polyphonic pieces in Nordic source material, NH has been researched by many scholars since it was first discovered in the early 1900s. However, there has been a lot of uncertainty regarding the origin and dating of the hymn. In her dissertation on the Orkney Earldom, Ingrid de Geer has dealt in detail with these issues of the earlier research, and the short survey presented below is based on her conclusions.

NH was written in plainsong notation on two staves. Following is a transcription of the first phrase of the hymn into modern notation.<sup>75</sup>

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<sup>72</sup> Milveden, 'Organum', 686.

<sup>73</sup> 'Orkneyöarna', *Nationalencyklopedin*, accessed 30 May 2016, <http://www.ne.se/uppslagsverk/encyklopedi/lång/orkneyöarna>.

<sup>74</sup> De Geer, *Earl, Saint, Bishop, Skald - and Music*, 145.

<sup>75</sup> The transcription is based on that of De Geer, *Earl, Saint, Bishop, Skald - and Music*, 148.



One of the main characteristics of NH is the parallel thirds between the two voices. There has been some speculation among different scholars as to whether this kind of parallel writing originated within the Nordic countries or elsewhere.<sup>76</sup> This debate is to a certain extent connected to Gerald of Wales and the passage in *Descriptio Cambriae*, quoted above. However, de Geer shows that while Nordic source material do not contain any other polyphonic music written in thirds, there are many in English sources. And although Gerald of Wales speaks about a kind of two-part singing among Englishmen of Scandinavian origin, he does not mention thirds in any way. This makes de Geer conclude: ‘In the absence of any relevant, valid evidence or indication regarding the Norse area in this respect, it must be concluded that the two-part setting of *Nobilis humilis* belongs to the English influence sphere’.<sup>77</sup>

The dating of NH is also quite complicated, partly because it is not clear whether text, melody, and the two-part setting originated as one unit or had different origins.<sup>78</sup> De Geer concludes that the only safe dating is a rather wide time span of 150 years: NH was written down at least before ca 1300 due to the paleographic dating of the manuscript, and at least after the St. Magnus cult was established in the middle of the 12<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>79</sup>

#### *Discussion of the 13<sup>th</sup>-century sources*

It is apparent that the Danish and Norwegian polyphonic sources of this time is closely connected to the musical culture of the British Isles, while the only Swedish source seem to be connected to the continental practice of Notre Dame polyphony. While the sources of Denmark and Norway do not indicate the same continental influence, it would be wrong to assume that such an influence would not have existed. We know that Danish and Norwegian students went to Paris as well as the Swedes. If the orally transmitted polyphonic practice of Notre Dame had an impact on Swedish students, there is reason to believe that this practice might have been picked up by Danish and Norwegian students as well.

There are, however, no ‘hard’ evidence to support this. In the section discussing the *Ordo Nidrosiensis*, it was shown that Ingmar Milveden’s hypothesis of the practice of Notre Dame organum in the Nidaros cathedral is highly unlikely to be true. The only circumstantial evidence of Notre Dame polyphony being practiced remains the choir regulations of Uppsala cathedral

<sup>76</sup> De Geer, *Earl, Saint, Bishop, Skald - and Music*, 189–192.

<sup>77</sup> De Geer, *Earl, Saint, Bishop, Skald - and Music*, 192.

<sup>78</sup> De Geer, *Earl, Saint, Bishop, Skald - and Music*, 209.

<sup>79</sup> De Geer, *Earl, Saint, Bishop, Skald - and Music*, 210.

1298. It is important to stress, though, that the connection to Notre Dame in this case is only a hypothesis.

In short, based on the sources and hypotheses of this section, the transmission of polyphony in Sweden and bordering areas in the 13<sup>th</sup> century seem to have followed two main paths: a 'Parisian' path, in which the polyphonic practice travelled in only one direction (students from the Nordic countries heard or learned Notre Dame polyphony, and brought the practice with them), and an 'English-Scandinavian' path, in which the transmission of polyphony might have travelled in both ways.

## The 14<sup>th</sup> century

The sources of the 14<sup>th</sup> century reveal an increased polyphonic activity in Sweden and its neighboring areas. Treatises of mensural music were copied, polyphonic books were in circulation, and the first prohibitions (that we know of) against polyphonic performance were formulated. The term *discant* occurs in several of the sources. It is a word which encompasses several different meanings during the middle ages and the renaissance, and it is therefore important to clarify the usages of the word, and what kind of polyphony it could refer to.

As shown in the previous chapter, discant was one of the techniques of organum. In contrast to *organum purum*, the *duplum* of discant moved in modal rhythm together with the tenor. But discant could also be used as a word for polyphony in general, although this meaning apparently was the least used. At the end of the 14<sup>th</sup> century, discant had become a word for note against note-counterpoint – that is, what we today would call counterpoint of the first species.<sup>80</sup> This was certainly the case in the so-called 'English' discant (which, on the whole, did not differ from continental discant), which meant two voices note against note, preferably in contrary motion.<sup>81</sup> *Discantus* could also refer to the added voice itself.

### *The will of Mathias of Enköping, 1330*

The earliest use of the word *discantus* in Nordic source material we find in a will of Mathias, canon of Uppsala cathedral. In this will, he decides to bequeath his book of discant to the cathedral:

In primis do et lego Ecclesie vpsalensi in qua mei corporis eligo sepulturam librum meum,  
discantus et triginta marchas denariorum [...]<sup>82</sup>

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<sup>80</sup> Rudolf Flotzinger, Ernest H. Sanders, and Peter M. Lefferts, 'Discant', *Grove Music Online* (Oxford University Press), accessed 25 May 2016, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/07839>.

<sup>81</sup> Richard L. Crocker, 'Discant, Counterpoint, and Harmony', *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 15, no. 1 (1 April 1962): 1–21.

<sup>82</sup> Bror Emil Hildebrand, Kungl. Vitterhets historie och antikvitets akademien, and Riksarkivet, eds., *Svenskt diplomatarium. Bd 4, D. 1 /: Åren 1327-1340* (Stockholm: Utg, 1853), 148.

This would seem to indicate that polyphony was still practiced in Uppsala, thirty years after organum was mentioned in the choir regulations. However, Ingmar Milveden has questioned whether the book mentioned in the will contained polyphony at all. He proposes that ‘discantus’ could be an error in writing, and that the right word would be ‘ducentas’, since the comma is written before the word and not after.<sup>83</sup> This would mean that Mathias bequeathed a book with no further description, and a sum of not thirty, but two hundred and thirty marks of money. Tönnes Kleberg rules out this possibility, arguing that it is not likely for Mathias to have bequeathed that kind of money, and that ‘discantus’ in this case should be considered *lectio difficilior potior* – that is, the principle of textual criticism that says that the more unusual option is more likely the original.<sup>84</sup>

*The will of Bennike Henriksson, cantor of Lund, 1358*

Similar to the will of the aforementioned Mathias of Enköping, Bennike Henriksson also includes a book of polyphony in his will. This book was bequeathed to ‘the schools of Lund’, and seems to have been lavishly decorated, at least with golden initials:

Item ad scholas Lundenses librum cantus, continentem discantus et tripleta in bona litera cum literis capitalibus deauratis, ...<sup>85</sup>

The book contains ‘discantus et tripleta’, songs in two and three parts. What kind of music could this have been? At the time, *tripla* was the name used for three-part organum.<sup>86</sup> It seems, then, that the book of Bennike Henriksson might have contained Notre Dame polyphony or polyphony of a similar kind. According to Carl Allan Moberg, the university of Paris remained the most popular foreign university for Swedish students up until the middle of the 14<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>87</sup> Regardless whether the book of ‘discantus et tripleta’ was brought to Sweden by Bennike himself or by others, it is therefore likely (although not by any means certain) that it was of French provenance.

Björkvall et al. argues that while it is impossible to know whether the books of either Mathias of Enköping or Bennike Henriksson actually was used, it seems probable at least in Bennike’s case, since he was a cantor.<sup>88</sup>

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<sup>83</sup> Ingmar Milveden, ‘Mensuralmusik’, *Kulturbistoriskt Lexikon För Nordisk Medeltid* (Malmö: Allhem, 1966), 543.

<sup>84</sup> Tönnes Kleberg, *Medeltida Uppsalabibliotek. 2, Bidrag till Deras Historia Fram till år 1389 = Beiträge Zu Ihrer Geschichte Bis Zum Jahre 1389*, Skrifter Rörande Uppsala Universitet. C, Organisation Och Historia, 0502-7454 ; 25 (Uppsala, 1972), 55.

<sup>85</sup> Kristian Erslev, ed., *Testamenter fra Danmarks middelalder indtil 1450* (København: Gyldendal, 1901), 122.

<sup>86</sup> Flotzinger, Sanders, and Lefferts, ‘Discant’.

<sup>87</sup> Moberg, *Om flerstämmig musik i Sverige under medeltiden*, 24.

<sup>88</sup> Björkvall, Brunius, and Wolodarski, ‘Flerstämmig Musik Från Medeltiden’, 137.

The founder of the Bridgettine Order, St. Bridget of Sweden (1303-1373), actually never explicitly forbade the nuns of her Order to sing polyphony. However, in the statutes of the Order, she says their song should not be 'broken', but 'together'.<sup>89</sup> The Swedish word for 'broken' that St. Bridget uses is 'bruten', which, according to Moberg, points to the practice of *cantus fractus*.<sup>90</sup> In the 14<sup>th</sup> century, *cantus fractus* (literary meaning 'broken song') referred to the practice of breaking the plainchant into smaller note values, thus creating a measured, rhythmical song. Rob Wegman has pointed out that it was the rhythmical complexity of polyphony that had the most critics of polyphony worried, at least in the 14<sup>th</sup> and early 15<sup>th</sup> centuries.<sup>91</sup> The papal bull *Docta sanctorum partum*, issued by Pope John XII in 1324, shows this very clearly. In this decree, the Pope turns against music like the isorhythmical motets and other music which, in his eyes, has become too rhythmically complex. And even if the tenor sings the plainchant unmeasured, the other voices still obscure it with their rhythmical melodies:

But some disciples of a new school, occupying themselves with the measuring of time units, [now] signify with new notes, and prefer to make up their own rather than sing the old notes. The ecclesiastical [chants] are sung in semibreves and minims, and beaten with little notes.

[...]

For they cut the melodies with hockets, make them slippery with discants, and sometimes add vernacular *tripla* and *moteti*, to such a degree that at times they spurn or disregard the very foundations of the Antiphonal and Gradual on which they build, [that they] are unaware of these church modes, which they do not distinguish but rather confuse, because the modest ascents and measured descents of the plainchant, by which those modes are distinguished from one another, are obscured by the multitude of those notes.<sup>92</sup>

The practice of *cantus fractus* was thereby condemned by the highest authority. It seems that an opposition against polyphony in general, and *cantus fractus* in particular, was on the rise in the first half of the 14<sup>th</sup> century. Several monastic orders issued prohibitions in line with the papal bull, among them the Carthusians, which St. Bridget specifically refers to in the statutes of her own order:

They [the nuns of the Bridgettine Order] should also follow the song by those who are called Carthusians, whose psalms and songs have more of the sweetness, humbleness, and piety to

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<sup>89</sup> 'Systra sanger skal ey wara dwl, ällir doffuen, Ey brwten ... utan ... samdräktogher'. Tobias Norlind, 'Vadstena Klosters Veckoritual', in *Samlaren*, vol. 28 (1907), p. 1–31 (*Samlaren*, 1907), 15.

<sup>90</sup> Moberg, *Om flerstämmig musik i Sverige under medeltiden*, 36.

<sup>91</sup> Rob C. Wegman, *The Crisis of Music in Early Modern Europe, 1470-1530* (New York, NY: Routledge, 2005), 17.

<sup>92</sup> 'Sed nonnulli novella scholae discipuli, dum temporibus mensurandis invigilant, novis notis intendunt, fingere suas, quam antiquas cantare malunt, in semibreves et minimas ecclesiastica cantantur, notulis percutiuntur. [...] Nam melodias hoquetis intersecant, discantibus lubricant, triplis et motetis vulgaribus nonnumquam inculcant adeo, ut interedum antiphonarii et gradualis fundamenta despiciant, ignorant, super quo aedificant, tonos nesciant, quos non discernunt, immo confundunt, quum ex earum multitudine notarum adscensiones pudicae, descensionesque temperatae, plani cantus, quibus toni ipsi securuntur ad invicem, obfuscentur.' Translation quoted from Rob C. Wegman, 'What Is Counterpoint?', in *Improvising Early Music*, ed. Dirk Moelants, Collected Writings of the Orpheus Institute, 2015, 35.

the mind than any other splendour; for the sin will not leave the mind with nothing when the one who sings diverts himself in the notes rather than in what is sung; and everything is to God an abomination when the voice is raised for the sake of the listeners rather than that of God.<sup>93</sup>

The Prior of Alvastra monastery, Petrus Olavi (ca 1307-1390), made additional comments to the original statutes of the Bridgettine Order. Petrus, who was the confessor of St. Bridget herself, states in the so-called *Constitutiones* that the nuns should sing ‘not with a broken voice, not with discant’.<sup>94</sup> The difference to the text of St. Bridget is of course that Petrus also forbids ‘discant’. Is this to be understood as a different type of undesirable singing than *cantus fractus*, or does Petrus mean that ‘broken voice’ and ‘discant’ essentially mean the same thing? In order to interpret this more carefully, let us take a look at the whole paragraph:

The sisters should solemnly sing their times [the canonical hours] each day with steadiness and humbleness, not with a loud voice but let the song be moderately steady and onefold, not with a broken voice, not with discant but full of humility and piety.<sup>95</sup>

It is clear that Petrus connects ‘broken voice’ with ‘discant’ since they are written immediately after each other, but whether the two are meant to signify the same thing or not is difficult to say. A probable interpretation might be that Petrus intended to specify more clearly what ‘broken voice’ could be – namely discant. If this was the case, all discant would be prohibited, since all discant contained *cantus fractus*. But does this mean that no polyphony at all were to be sung at Vadstena?

Most likely, the polyphonic practice at Vadstena – if there ever was one – would have been very sparse. Obviously, St. Bridget was of the opinion that (liturgical) song only existed to glorify God, and that it was a sin to sing if the singing or the song itself was appreciated more than its purpose. Polyphony seems to have had that effect. However, as shown above, the main argument against polyphony at this time was the complex rhythms. Rob Wegman points out that most opponents of polyphony in the 14<sup>th</sup> century actually only opposes the rhythmically complex polyphony, and not polyphony per se.<sup>96</sup> He notes that the Carthusian brother Heinrich Eger of Kalkar in his treatise of plainchant 1380 discouraged everyone to study discant, but had no problems with the plainchant being accompanied with parallel fifths and octaves.<sup>97</sup> Even the pope John XII in his decree actually did not ban polyphony altogether – as long as the ‘integrity

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<sup>93</sup> ‘The skulu oc äptirfölgia thera sang, som kallas cartusienses, Hwilka psalma sangher meera haffwir af hugxsins sötma ödhmiuktinne, oc gudhelighetinne, än nakot högbälle, Thy at ey är hughin lotlös, aff syndinne, Nar then som siongher Lustas meera j nothomen än j the thing som siongx, Och alzstingis är gudhi styggelikit naar rösten wphögdh meera wardher, ffor thera skuld som a höra än för gudz skuld.’ Norlind, ‘Vadstena Klosters Veckoritual’, 15.

<sup>94</sup> ‘Ey mz bruthne röst, ey mz discant’. Norlind, ‘Vadstena Klosters Veckoritual’, 15.

<sup>95</sup> ‘Systrarna skola var dag sjunga högtidligt sina tider med stadighet och ödmjukhet, ej med ropfull röst, utan må sången vara måttligt stadig och enfaldig, ej med bruten röst, ej med diskant utan full med all ödmjukhet och gudelighet.’ Tobias Norlind, *Svensk musikhistoria*, 2., tillökade och ill. uppl (Stockholm: Wahlström & Widstrand, 1918), 36.

<sup>96</sup> Wegman, *The Crisis of Music in Early Modern Europe, 1470-1530*, 19.

<sup>97</sup> Wegman, *The Crisis of Music in Early Modern Europe, 1470-1530*, 19–20.

of the chant' remains 'unimpaired', and the contrapuntal voices only uses 'consonances that have the savor of melodious sound, such as octave, fifth, fourth, and others of this kind'.<sup>98</sup>

It is of course impossible to know for certain if polyphony of any kind was allowed and practiced at the Bridgettines of Vadstena. However, we cannot be sure of the opposite either. Petrus Olavi says that *discant* is not to be sung, but Heinrich Eger of Kalkar says the same thing at about the same time, and he still allows for a simple, parallel-organum style. Could it be that Petrus Olavi was of the same opinion? A later source, discussed under the headline 'The Rhymed Office of Vadstena', p. 32, seem to strengthen this hypothesis. What we do know for a fact is that it is the 'broken voice', *cantus fractus*, that is heavily criticized by both St. Bridget and Petrus Olavi, and that *discant* at this time and place is a term not easily defined.

The words of St. Bridget and Petrus Olavi are not easily interpreted, and there are still several questions to be asked. For instance, what does Petrus Olavi mean with the word 'onefold' (*enfaldig*)? It is not within the scope of this dissertation to examine these texts any further, but I hope that some of the implications and questions put forth in the discussion above may serve as fuel for a future, in-depth examination of these sources.

#### *Treatises on mensural music (UUB C55 and C453)*

During the 13<sup>th</sup> century, the rhythmical development in musical notation was described by a number of theorists, like Johannes de Garlandia and the Anonymous of St. Emmeram. However, the treatise by Franco of Cologne, *Ars cantus mensurabilis* (mid-13<sup>th</sup> century), is considered the 'main formulation' of this new way of notating rhythm.<sup>99</sup> One of the main features of this so-called Franconian notation is that the note shapes themselves indicate the relative rhythm between them, rather than the earlier system of showing the rhythmic mode via the combination of ligatures in the beginning of the piece.

The three treatises located in the library of Uppsala University are all based on the treatise by Franco or the theorists following him, although they differ in content, scope, and accuracy. Musicologist Carl Allan Moberg made a detailed survey of these sources in 1928, and later scholarly additions to his research has been made chiefly by Ingmar Milveden in 1966.<sup>100</sup>

The earliest of the three treatises is probably the one within the manuscript listed as C453. Moberg suggests that the treatise was copied in the 1330s by Sven, canon of the bishopric of Skara.<sup>101</sup> The manuscript consists mostly of theological texts, and the Franconian treatise is written on only three pages (fol. 172<sup>r</sup>-173<sup>v</sup>). It is not complete, and the copyist seems to have

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<sup>98</sup> Wegman, 'What Is Counterpoint?', 36.

<sup>99</sup> Ian D. Bent et al., 'Notation', *Grove Music Online* (Oxford University Press), accessed 29 May 2016, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/20114pg6>.

<sup>100</sup> Moberg, *Om flerstämmig musik i Sverige under medeltiden*; Milveden, 'Mensuralmusik'.

<sup>101</sup> Moberg, *Om flerstämmig musik i Sverige under medeltiden*, 21.

been interrupted in his work.<sup>102</sup> In 1407, the manuscript was bequeathed to the library of the monastery of Vadstena.<sup>103</sup>

The two treatises copied in the manuscript listed as C55 differ mostly in length and accuracy. The longer treatise has a lot of errors in writing. According to Moberg, the copyist does not seem to have understood the things he was writing.<sup>104</sup> The other, smaller treatise, is considered by Moberg to be the most correct one of both C55 and C453. According to Ingmar Milveden, the treatises date from the late 14<sup>th</sup> century, and the provenance is probably Prague.<sup>105</sup> As was the case of C453, C55 was later donated to the library of the monastery of Vadstena.

It is hard to say if any of the treatises described above had any sustainable impact on the performance of mensural polyphony in Sweden at this time. What they do tell us, though, is that some Swedes actually copied treatises of mensural music in their studies abroad or in Sweden, and that this might support the idea that there was a general knowledge about mensural theory among well-educated scholars of the time.

#### *Discussion of the 14<sup>th</sup>-century sources*

For European polyphony, the 14<sup>th</sup> century seem to have been a time of great disagreement, but also of great development. In the beginning of the century, the pope criticized the rhythmical development of the contemporary polyphony, advocating a humbler and more modest homophonic treatment of the music. While the pope's wish may have been followed and shared by some, it was ignored by others, and the European polyphony of *ars nova* continued to develop into different genres and forms, one example being the *Messe de Notre Dame* by Guillaume Machaut – the earliest four-part setting of the mass ordinary.

The Swedish sources presented above seem to reflect part of this picture. On the one hand, there are sources indicating a polyphonic practice, as in the cases of Mathias of Enköping and Bennike Henriksson, and the treatises on mensural music. On the other hand, there are sources prohibiting the use of such polyphony, as in the writings of St. Bridget and Petrus Olavi. Of course, there would have been no need for prohibitions if the polyphony was not practiced in the first place. Thus, there is a possibility that polyphony could have been sung in Vadstena prior to the writings of St. Bridget. As Ingmar Milveden writes, it is also important to note that the prohibition only goes for the Bridgettine sisters, while nothing is said about the brethren.

The 14<sup>th</sup> century, then, seems to have been a time when polyphony became somewhat established and practiced in Sweden, although we do not know to what extent. In contrast to the 13<sup>th</sup> century, there are almost no extant Danish or Norwegian sources – the exception being the will of Bennike Henriksson (as we remember, Lund belonged to Denmark in the 14<sup>th</sup> century).

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<sup>102</sup> Moberg, *Om flerstämmig musik i Sverige under medeltiden*, 56.

<sup>103</sup> Moberg, *Om flerstämmig musik i Sverige under medeltiden*, 22.

<sup>104</sup> Moberg, *Om flerstämmig musik i Sverige under medeltiden*, 58.

<sup>105</sup> Milveden, 'Mensuralmusik', 545.

## The 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> centuries

The source material in this section dates mainly from 1462 to 1520. Most of the polyphonic sources can be traced to monastic milieus, as is the case with the rhymed Office of Vadstena and the two-part songs from a Danish Dominican monastery. The sources which indicate a polyphonic practice, however, seem to have connections rather with the royal courts of both Sweden and Denmark. As will be shown, it is possible that different kinds of polyphony was practiced in different parts of society. In this section, I will also look at the songbook *Piae Cantiones* from 1582, even though it is outside the time frame of this dissertation. In this book, some of the songs have archaic features, and it has been suggested by other scholars (such as Moberg) that this reflects an older polyphonic practice.

### *The choir regulations of Lund, 1462*

Similar to the choir regulations of Uppsala cathedral 1298, the regulations of Lund also mention polyphony in passing. The Archbishop Tuve Nielsen lists all the things the singers in the choir must not do, for example

non confabulantes, non ridendo, non cachinnando, non currendo, non vagando, nec  
pauimento vel arantes sulcando, non per inpudivicos oculos circumgirando, non psalmodiam  
aut lectiones sincopando aut cursorie cantando, *non discantum ullulando*, [...] <sup>106</sup> [my italics]

Milveden writes that ‘non discantum ullulando’ has been interpreted by earlier scholars as a prohibition against the singing of discant altogether, but that this interpretation is incorrect. Instead, he argues that what the singers must not do is to sing discant in a bad way – the discant must not be ‘howled’ (‘ullulando’).<sup>107</sup> It seems that Milveden is correct in his interpretation, and the quoted paragraph may then be translated thus:

[they should] not speak, not laugh, not laugh in a loud or excessive manner, not run, not stroll about, not make furrows in the ground as if they were plowing, not go round about with immodest eyes, not be careless with the pronouciation of the readings or psalms or sing hastily, not howl when singing discant, [...] <sup>108</sup>

From the rather casual way discant is mentioned in this text, then, it seems that this practice was not something new. We can also assume that there would have been some occurrences when discant actually was ‘howled’, or else the rule not to do it never would have been written.

What kind of discant, then, would have been sung in the cathedral of Lund in 1462? The only source connected to a polyphonic practice in Lund prior to this year is Bennike Henriksson’s book of ‘discantus et tripleta’ 104 years earlier. Most likely, the discant mentioned by Tuve Nielsen was of a newer kind.

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<sup>106</sup> Lauritz Weibull, ed., *Diplomatarium diocesis Lundensis. Bd 4, [1461-1485]*, Monumenta Scaniae historica (Lund, 1909), 12.

<sup>107</sup> Milveden, ‘Mensuralmusik’, 544.

<sup>108</sup> My greatest thanks to Prof. Anders Piltz for his help with this translation.

### *Two-part songs in a Danish Dominican monastery, 1470s*

Somewhere in Denmark in the decade between 1470 and 1480, several spiritual songs were written down and put together in a book with other religious and liturgical texts of the time. Six of these songs were written in two parts. According to Nils Schiørring, these pieces ‘supplement the widely-spread and often poorly-preserved material which is available to elucidate the survival of the technique of organum right down to the time of the Lutheran Reformation’.<sup>109</sup> While mensural polyphony became the main branch of European polyphony during the 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> centuries, Schiørring argues that there also was a smaller tradition of improvised organum with archaic features living in the shadow of the greater polyphonic practice.<sup>110</sup> The six two-part songs in the manuscript of the Dominican monastery seem to strengthen this hypothesis.

Schiørring describes how although all the songs show archaic features, the polyphonic technique differs somewhat from song to song. While the hymn *Gaude mater letare* almost exclusively consists of parallel fifths and often uses voice crossing, there are more parallel octaves and thirds in the following *Maria candens lilium*, and the voices cross to a lesser extent. The third Maria song, *Laetificat laudacio*, is based on contrary motion, and voice crossing occurs in almost every phrase. There is only one song in the collection, *Jesus Christus nostra salus*, which is written with mensural notation. This song is also known from other places, but the Danish version seems to be the earliest source.<sup>111</sup>

If there indeed was a tradition of improvised organum in the Nordic countries still in the end of the 15<sup>th</sup> century, why were the songs written down? As shown in the chapter describing the transmission of Notre Dame polyphony, one of the reasons to write down music that was normally orally transmitted was to preserve the material. Schiørring argues that this was the case with these songs as well. The manuscript itself is quite small (ca 143x108 mm), and the different parts of the songs are sometimes written on different pages. This suggests that the manuscript probably was not intended to aid in a performance.<sup>112</sup> Instead, Schiørring suggests that the practice of singing this kind of polyphony was on the verge of extinction, and the songs were therefore written down in order to not be forgotten.

### *The rhymed Office of St. Eskil, Åbo, late 15<sup>th</sup> century*

From the diocese of Åbo, Finland, stems a fragment from an antiphonary containing the rhymed Office of St. Eskil of Sörmland. Ingmar Milveden, who identified this fragment, has dated the

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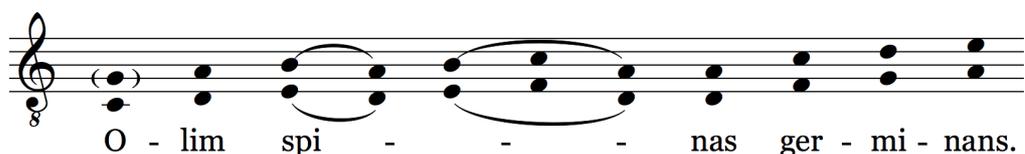
<sup>109</sup> Nils Schiørring, ‘Flerstemighed I Dansk Middelalder’, in *Festskrift Jens Peter Larsen*, ed. Nils Schiørring, Henrik Glahn, and Carsten E. Hatting (København: Wilhelm Hansen, 1972), 27.

<sup>110</sup> Schiørring, ‘Flerstemighed I Dansk Middelalder’, 13.

<sup>111</sup> Schiørring, ‘Flerstemighed I Dansk Middelalder’, 23.

<sup>112</sup> Schiørring, ‘Flerstemighed I Dansk Middelalder’, 26.

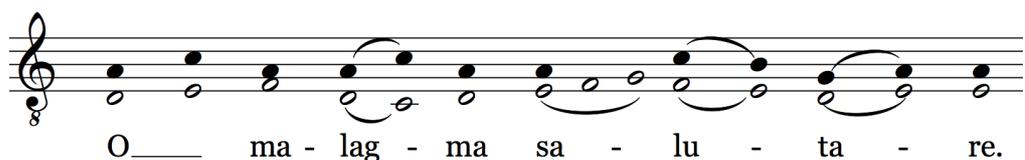
antiphony to the middle of the 15<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>113</sup> In the first responsory of matins, a later hand has added an organal, upper voice to the original chant. The added melody moves in parallel fifths with the chant:<sup>114</sup>



Like some of the songs from the aforementioned Danish monastery, this example shows highly archaic features, mostly because of its parallel fifths. After this first phrase, the responsory continues with just one voice. Milveden noted that there is no first note in the organal voice, which means that there would be an unusual skip of a major sixth from c to a.<sup>115</sup> However, the incipit of this piece in RISM puts a hypothetical note within parentheses.<sup>116</sup>

*Rhymed Office of Vadstena (UUB C23), late 15<sup>th</sup> century*

The Ms. C23 in the library of Uppsala University is a compilation of rhymed offices, antiphons, and other liturgical material, written in Vadstena or Linköping in the late 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> century. In the office of the Compassion of the Blessed Virgin Mary, an organal part in red ink is added to a short passage of an originally monophonic antiphon. As in the case of the aforementioned parallel organum of Åbo, the addition was made by a later hand. According to Ingmar Milveden, the added part is written by the monk and librarian Michael Nicolai, who was in Vadstena 1487-1516.<sup>117</sup> Milveden notes the unusual practice of adding the second part below the chant instead of above. What is apparent are also the highly archaic features, including parallel fourths and fifths. In the following example, the red notes are transcribed as white:



<sup>113</sup> Ingmar Milveden, 'Die Schriftliche Fixierung Eines Quintenorganum in Einem Antiphonar-Fragment Der Diözese Åbo', *Svensk Tidskrift För Musikforskning* 44, no. 1962 (n.d.): 64.

<sup>114</sup> The transcription is based on the incipit given in Gilbert Reaney, International Musicological Society, and International Association of Music Libraries, eds., *Répertoire international des sources musicales. B. 4. 2, Manuscripts of polyphonic music: (c. 1320-1400)* (Kassel: Bärenreiter, 1969), 1165.

<sup>115</sup> Milveden, 'Die Schriftliche Fixierung Eines Quintenorganum', 65.

<sup>116</sup> Reaney, International Musicological Society, and International Association of Music Libraries, *Répertoire international des sources musicales. B. 4. 2, Manuscripts of polyphonic music*, 1165.

<sup>117</sup> Milveden, 'Organum', 689.

The antiphon originally started earlier, higher up on the page, but Milveden points out that Michael Nicolai wrote instructions in the margin, telling the readers to skip the first bit and begin the antiphon at ‘O malagma’. After the two-part passage transcribed above, the antiphon continues with one voice only.

Scholars have pointed out the seemingly paradoxical fact that this two-part antiphonal passage was created in Vadstena, the very place where St. Bridget and Petrus Olavi had forbidden the practice of *cantus fractus* and discant. Milveden suggests that the two-part passage could have been sung only by the brethren of the monastery, since the prohibition of discant were addressed only to the sisters.<sup>118</sup> But, as shown earlier, there is a possibility that it was only the rhythmical complexity of discant that was forbidden. If so, adding a second part that more or less moves note against note with a chant would not have been seen as a violation of this prohibition.

Why, then, was the second voice written down? Was it an isolated phenomenon, or was the adding of a voice to a chant a recurring practice? We can only guess. It might seem somewhat strange to put the second voice on paper if adding a second voice was part of an oral tradition. However, as Anna Maria Busse Berger has shown, oral tradition does not exclude writing. This could have been an isolated phenomenon, but it could also have been done to introduce the practice to someone unfamiliar with it.

#### *The translation of Catherine of Vadstena, 1489*

Catherine of Vadstena, or *Katarina Ulfsdotter*, was the fourth child of St. Bridget. After her death in 1381, stories began to spread, telling of miracles performed by Catherine. She soon acquired a saint-like status, and during the 15<sup>th</sup> century, the monastery of Vadstena started to gather information about her supposed miracles in order to aid in a canonization process. In 1488, the process had led to Catherine’s beatification, and it was allowed to celebrate her feast day in all the Bridgettine monasteries.<sup>119</sup> The monastery of Vadstena was then granted to move her remains from the tomb. This procedure, known as the *translation* or *enshrinement*, was celebrated with a great feast lasting several days. A detailed account of the events of this feast was written down by the monk Nils Ragvaldsson. It is from this text we know that polyphony was sung several times during the festivities. What follows is a list of the instances where Ragvaldson accounts for the polyphonic singing (my italics).

On the friars’ high stone staircase, at the top, there were some chairs, and in front of them a fine tapestry, underneath which stood a select company of *discantores*. They were well versed in *nova mensura*, and none of them could be seen by anyone, neither by the common people nor the clerics.<sup>120</sup>

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<sup>118</sup> Milveden, ‘Organum’, 690.

<sup>119</sup> Anne Reese, *Under oändliga lovsånger sannerligen med rinnande tårar: Sångerna vid den heliga Katarina av Vadstenas translation*, 2006, 18, <http://uu.diva-portal.org/smash/record.jsf?pid=diva2%3A419695&dswid=-2801>.

<sup>120</sup> Birgitta Fritz, Lars Elfving, and Kungl. Samfundet för utgivande av handskrifter rörande Skandinaviens historia, eds., *Den stora kyrkofesten för Sankta Katarina i Vadstena år 1489: samtida texter med översättning och*

When the two responsories, of which had been spoken of, were finished, and while the relics still was handled by the bishops, the sisters started singing the sequence to St. Catherine Recensemus in hac die. And when they stopped singing the sequence, the *discantores* started to sing several *tenores in nova mensura* and the people rejoiced in each corner and in all places.<sup>121</sup>

And as said before, when Te Deum was finished, the friars started celebrating the Officium Magnum of St. Petro Apostolo, and the Archbishop made two prayers with common ending, both to St. Peter and St. Catherine. A large part of the mass was sung *in discantu in nova mensura* [...]<sup>122</sup>

After the Credo, which was sung *in discantu*, had ended, the venerable bishop Henrik took place in the pulpit [...] Then the Offertorium was sung *in discantu* [...]<sup>123</sup>

On the fourth day, when the sext of the sisters had been sung, the venerable bishop of Linköping, Herr Henrik, sang the Officium of St. Catherine at the altar, at the same place where her picture is. And that mass was sung mostly in *discant*, and at that time the *cantores* of herr Sten sang with the schoolboys.<sup>124</sup>

The singers performing this polyphony were called *discantores* by Ragvaldsson, and they were all experienced singers of ‘nova mensura’. What Ragvaldsson meant by this expression is not fully clear. Moberg suggests that ‘in nova mensura’ could be translated as ‘in a new contrapuntal technique’, i.e. that of *ars nova*, and that Ragvaldsson expresses himself in this way because he probably had not heard this kind of music before.<sup>125</sup> Milveden writes that although *mensura* refers to the rhythmical aspect of notation, most mensural music are polyphonic in nature.<sup>126</sup>

Ragvaldsson’s account also tells us that large parts of the masses celebrated during the festivities were sung *in discant*, and we find out specifically that both the Credo and Offertory were sung *in discant*. Moberg notes that this is a little bit strange, since Credo belongs to the mass ordinary, while the Offertory belongs to the proper. He concludes, however, that ‘during the translation feast there would have been performed a complete polyphonic mass’.<sup>127</sup>

Moberg also notes that the *discantores* belonged to the company of Sten Sture the Elder, regent of Sweden, and that this suggests that the monastery itself seemingly did not have any *discantores* of its own.<sup>128</sup> As have been showed earlier in this dissertation, St. Bridget and her confessor Petrus Olavi did not approve of *cantus fractus* or *discant*, but the two-voiced passage of the Rhymed Office of Vadstena discussed above suggests that there could have been some kind of simple polyphony practiced at Vadstena from time to time. Since Ragvaldsson speaks of ‘nova mensura’,

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*kommentar*, Handlingar / Kungl. Samfundet för utgivande av handskrifter rörande Skandinaviens historia 27 (Stockholm : Uppsala: Kungl. Samfundet för utgivande av handskrifter rörande Skandinaviens historia ; Swedish Science Press [distributör], 2004), 36–37.

<sup>121</sup> *Den stora kyrkofesten för Sankta Katarina i Vadstena år 1489*, 48–49.

<sup>122</sup> Fritz, Elfving, and Kungl. Samfundet för utgivande av handskrifter rörande Skandinaviens historia, *Den stora kyrkofesten för Sankta Katarina i Vadstena år 1489*, 50–51.

<sup>123</sup> Fritz, Elfving, and Kungl. Samfundet för utgivande av handskrifter rörande Skandinaviens historia, *Den stora kyrkofesten för Sankta Katarina i Vadstena år 1489*, 52–53.

<sup>124</sup> Fritz, Elfving, and Kungl. Samfundet för utgivande av handskrifter rörande Skandinaviens historia, *Den stora kyrkofesten för Sankta Katarina i Vadstena år 1489*, 54–55.

<sup>125</sup> Moberg, *Om flerstämmig musik i Sverige under medeltiden*, 39.

<sup>126</sup> Milveden, ‘Mensuralmusik’, 536.

<sup>127</sup> Moberg, *Om flerstämmig musik i Sverige under medeltiden*, 51.

<sup>128</sup> Moberg, *Om flerstämmig musik i Sverige under medeltiden*, 38–39.

the polyphony he was used to hear would probably have been similar to the aforementioned antiphon ‘O malagma’, which we know dates from about the same time as the translation. At least Michael Nicolai and Nils Ragvaldsson were at Vadstena at the same time. All of this seem to strengthen Moberg’s hypothesis that the *discantores* was not a part of the monastery.

Why contemporary mensural polyphony would have been used in a place like Vadstena, where St. Bridget and Petrus Olavi explicitly had forbidden rhythmically complex music, has confused several scholars. Carl Allan Moberg believed that the idea of having contemporary polyphony sung at the translation feast would have come from either the regent Sten Sture or the Archbishop of Uppsala, Jakob Ulfson.<sup>129</sup> Since Sweden had a stretched economy at the time, Moberg finds it more probable that it was the Archbishop who arranged and paid for the service of the *discantores*. In that case, the company of *discantores* would not have been a steady part of the court of Sten Sture, but only hired for this one time. Moberg also notes the fact that on the fourth day of festivities, the schoolboys joined forces with the *cantores*. This suggests, according to Moberg, that the schoolboys would have been rehearsing a polyphonic piece with the *discantores* during the three earlier days.<sup>130</sup>

Ingmar Milveden, however, opposes this view and suggests an alternate idea: that the *discantores* and the schoolboys actually were one and the same. This means that it was the *cantores* of Sten Sture who joined forces with the *discantores* (i.e. the schoolboys), and not the other way around. Milveden argues that the schoolboys would have been trained in mensural polyphony for festive occasions. Furthermore, the acoustic milieu of the church had been altered prior to the translation feast: the tapestry mentioned in Ragvaldsson’s account would have supported the clarity of a polyphonic performance, as would the tapestry in front of the altar, which Ragvaldsson speaks of in another part of his account. According to Milveden, these preparations were carefully executed in order to improve the acoustic conditions with polyphony in mind. Milveden argues that this suggests a general knowledge of a polyphonic practice at Vadstena, and that the *discantores* would have been practising inside the church before the festivities took place.<sup>131</sup>

It is not possible within the scope of this dissertation to examine whether Moberg or Milveden are correct in their hypotheses. Milveden’s arguments would explain why Ragvaldsson calls the the group belonging to Sten Sture for *cantores* and not *discantores*. However, this is in need of a further examination.

#### *The accounts of the court of Queen Christina of Denmark, 1500 and 1520*

Christina of Saxony (1461-1521) became Queen consort when she married John of Denmark in 1478. There are records showing that school boys were payed to sing discant at certain events. In

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<sup>129</sup> Moberg, *Om flerstämmig musik i Sverige under medeltiden*, 39.

<sup>130</sup> Moberg, *Om flerstämmig musik i Sverige under medeltiden*, 52.

<sup>131</sup> Milveden, ‘Mensuralmusik’, 541–542.

1500, on St. Martin's day November 11, they sang at the castle.<sup>132</sup> Leaping forward in time two decades, the same kind of services were performed in 1520 and 1521, when the school boys sang discant on Christmas eve, New year's eve, and Epiphany.<sup>133</sup>

#### *The court singers of Christian II of Denmark, 1519*

Christian II of Denmark, who also was king of Sweden 1520-21, seems to have had some royal court singers trained in polyphonic singing. In a pay roll of 1519, there are listed two bass singers, three tenors, three altos and ten discantists. As some other scholars have noticed, such a specified list indeed indicates a polyphonic repertoire (it would be strange to specify the different voices unless they sang different parts).<sup>134</sup> Furthermore, a Royal Ordinance of Christian II from the beginning of the century also mentions that the mass should be sung in a new "Mensure".<sup>135</sup> This choice of words reminds us of Nils Ragvaldsson's account of the translation feast in Vadstena 1489, where the music was sung 'in nova mensura'. It seems, then, that music sung in 'nova/ny mensura' could have been somewhat of a standard expression the decades before and after 1500.

#### *Piae Cantiones 1582 – traces of older polyphony*

In the song collection *Piae Cantiones* (hereby also PC), published in Greifswald in 1582, there are some songs that are of particular interest to this dissertation, and which I hereby shall discuss briefly. Compiled by Jacobus Finno, headmaster of the cathedral school of Åbo, the collection consists of 74 songs allegedly constituting the main repertoire of school songs in use at the time of the publication.

Carl Allan Moberg notes that five two-part songs from this collection stylistically belong to rather the 13<sup>th</sup> century than the 16<sup>th</sup>, and that they indicate an older polyphonic practice:

Considering their antique style, that completely corresponds to the *ars antiqua* period, and with the lively connections between Sweden and France at the end of the 13<sup>th</sup> century in mind, there should be no doubt that these and similar songs were sung in our country already 300 years before the edition of *Piae Cantiones* of 1582.<sup>136</sup>

Moberg classifies the songs *Regimen scholarium* and *Paranymphus audiens* as based on the principle of contrary motion, while *Parce Christe* is written in parallel fifths. The remaining two songs, *Ad cantus laetitiae* and *Zachaeus arboris*, is written in *rondellus* form. Moberg relies in his classifications on

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<sup>132</sup> Kristina and William Christensen, *Dronning Christines Hofholdningsregnskaber* (København: Gyldendal, 1904), 22.

<sup>133</sup> Kristina and Christensen, *Dronning Christines Hofholdningsregnskaber*, 407–408.

<sup>134</sup> Kia Hedell, *Musiklivet vid de svenska Vasaboven: med fokus på Erik XIV:s hov (1560-68)*, *Studia musicologica Upsaliensia*, N.S., 20 (Uppsala: Acta Universitatis Upsaliensis : Univ.-bibl. [distributör], 2001), 25.

<sup>135</sup> Milveden, 'Mensuralmusik', 542.

<sup>136</sup> Moberg, *Om flerstämmig musik i Sverige under medeltiden*, 17. 'Med hänsyn till deras ålderdomliga stil, som helt och hållet passer in på *ars antiqua* och med de livliga förbindelserna mellan Sverige och Frankrike från 1200-talets slut för ögonen, torde man icke betvivla, att dessa och liknande sånger sjungits i vårt land redan 300 år före *Piae Cantiones*-upplagan av 1582.'

the work of Tobias Norlind, who was the first scholar to write a dissertation on the *Piae Cantiones*.<sup>137</sup> Maybe Moberg jumps into conclusions when he says that these songs were sung 300 years before 1582, as this would take us back to even before the year of the choir regulations of Uppsala cathedral. The styles and features of the songs specified above do indeed correspond to the *ars antiqua* period, but one should be careful when making assumptions of how and when the songs of PC actually were sung.

While the scope and time limitations of the present dissertation do not allow for a detailed historiographical and contextual examination of these songs, some things can be said about their general archaic features. The full title of the *Piae Cantiones* states that the songs were ‘used in the whole of Sweden’.<sup>138</sup> However, considering the older features like the cadence formulas, parallel movement, and the *rondellus* form, this might be an exaggeration. How probable is it that songs composed in parallel fifths were being sung on a regular basis by most school children of Sweden in the late 16<sup>th</sup> century? Could the ‘old’ songs of PC really have been sung at this time at all, or were they just included in the collection in order to infer the image of Sweden as a country with a rich musical history?

Rather than trying to answer these questions directly, it might be a good idea to revisit the songs of the Danish Dominican monastery described above. Although it is more than a century between PC and these songs, we know from this Danish source that songs with archaic features probably were sung rather late in the 15<sup>th</sup> century, although this practice might have been on the verge of extinction. Of course, school songs and liturgical hymns are not necessarily the same thing, and they are not always sung in the same milieu. But the songs of the Danish monastery might act as a reminder of that songs in older styles sometimes may have been sung at a later time than first would have been expected.

Maybe the aforementioned songs of *Piae cantiones* were sung in the 14<sup>th</sup>, or even the 13<sup>th</sup> century – to be somewhat certain of this, there has to be further examination of the sources. There is a possibility, though, that they might have been sung in the 15<sup>th</sup>, or even the 16<sup>th</sup> century – at least if we consider that there are other sources with similar archaic features written at that time.

#### *Discussion of the 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> century sources*

The polyphonic sources (the two-part songs of a Danish Dominican monastery, the rhymed Office of St. Eskil, and the rhymed Office of Vadstena) were not very modern pieces of the time; instead they show notable archaic features like parallel fifths or fourths. The sources which only

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<sup>137</sup> Tobias Norlind, *Latinska Skolsånger I Sverige Och Finland*, Lunds Universitets årsskrift. Första Avdelningen, Teologi, Juridik Och Humanistiska ämnen, 99-0507131-8 ; 5:2 (Lund, 1909).

<sup>138</sup> ‘PIÆ CANTIONES ECCLESIASTICÆ ET SCHOLASTICÆ VETERUM EPISCOPORUM, in Inclyto Regno Sueciæ passim usurpatæ [...] Theodoricus Petri Rutha and Jacobus Petri Finno, *Piae Cantiones Ecclesiasticae et Scholasticae Veterum Episcoporum* (Greifswald, 1582), <http://runeberg.org/piaecant/0001.html>.

indicates polyphonic practices (the choir regulations of Lund, the translation of Catherine of Vadstena, the accounts of the court of Christina of Denmark, and the court singers of Christian II), however, suggest that a more modern, mensural polyphony with maybe three or more voices was practiced at the court of both Christian II of Denmark and possibly Sten Sture the Elder of Sweden, and that some sort of discant was also used in churches. Based on these sources, one can perhaps guess that different kinds of polyphony might have been used by different parts of the society. Based on the extant sources, the monasteries seem to have made use of an older polyphonic style, where any upper or lower parts would not steal focus from the original chant, while the royal courts had at least some access to contemporary mensural polyphony. It is important to emphasize, however, that this is merely a hypothesis. In the case of *Piae Cantiones*, some of the songs in this collection show notable archaic features, and it could be questioned if these songs were actually sung at the time. However, instead of assuming that they would have been sung in the 14<sup>th</sup> or 13<sup>th</sup> centuries, one can note that there are other sources which show similar archaic features written in the 15<sup>th</sup> century. This fact might support the hypothesis of that the songs of *Piae Cantiones* could have been sung in the 15<sup>th</sup>, or even the 16<sup>th</sup> centuries.

## Conclusions

As stated in the beginning of this dissertation, its main purpose is to provide a broader narrative of the transmission and practice of polyphony in Sweden during the Middle Ages. In this last section I will ‘connect the dots’, that is, summarize what have been said in the previous sections, and highlight important tendencies and relationships between the sources.

One way of connecting the dots is geographically. During the 13<sup>th</sup> century, the transmission of polyphony seems to have followed two main paths: one ‘Parisian’ path and one ‘English-Scandinavian’ path. Paris (or France) and England can be viewed as international locations of central importance for the transmission of different polyphonic practices such as organum and discant. Apparent from the sources, there seem to be ‘domestic’ (that is, Sweden and bordering areas) places of importance as well, such as Uppsala, Lund/Copenhagen, and Vadstena.

Uppsala and Paris seem to have been connected in relation to the Notre Dame polyphony, although most likely only up to ca 1350, when the plague hit Paris and Swedes went to universities in German countries instead. After the discant book of Mathias 1330, we know of no more sources speaking of a polyphonic practice in Uppsala. Is it possible that the practice continued anyway? Although the organum sung in the cathedral of Uppsala probably was orally transmitted, it is a fact that there are no sources whatsoever to verify its existence in neither the second half of the 14<sup>th</sup> century or the 15<sup>th</sup> century. Most likely, the practice faded away at some point during that time.

The Archbishop’s see of Lund appears in the sources twice, both times in connection with discant. Bennike Henriksson’s book of ‘discantus et tripleta’ in 1358 suggests that there were at least some persons acquainted with the polyphonic practice at that time. In 1462, we have a more direct evidence of it being performed in the cathedral. Thus, discant might have been sung in Lund from the mid-1300s until the end of the 1400s. It might have been the same technique, but it is also possible that newer discant techniques were in use in the 15<sup>th</sup> century. This is most likely the case with the discant sung by schoolboys at the court of Queen Christina of Denmark and the court singers of King Christian II.

Vadstena is important in regard to the prohibitions of cantus fractus and discant, but also in regard to the two-part antiphon ‘O malagma’ and the translation feast of Catherine of Vadstena. The three treatises of mensural music were stored in the monastery library of Vadstena, although probably never used there.

A general historical outline of the transmission of polyphony in Sweden and bordering areas can be made thus: The first indications of a polyphonic practice in Sweden in the end of the 13<sup>th</sup> century can be traced to Paris and the so called Notre Dame polyphony. Norwegian and Danish polyphony of this time have English characteristics such as the *rondellus* form and parallel thirds. The Parisian style of polyphony seems to have been practiced in both Uppsala and Lund, at least in the beginning and middle of the 14<sup>th</sup> century respectively, but maybe well into the 15<sup>th</sup> century as well. Two books of discant alongside with three treatises of mensural music and a prohibition

against discant by the Order of the Bridgettines show that polyphony in general, and discant in particular, had become 'common' knowledge in the 14<sup>th</sup> century. In the time between 1460-1520, there seem to be a lot of different polyphonic practices. Songs in monasteries and churches in Denmark, Åbo, and Vadstena show features of an older polyphony, such as parallel fifths or fourths. At the same time, there was probably a more modern polyphony, with three or more parts, practiced at the royal courts and at larger religious feasts such as the translation of Catherine of Vadstena 1489.

The method of analysing the cultural and historical context of the sources has made it possible to understand why certain sources was written, and to re-examine conclusions made by other scholars. Among other things, I have shown how the students of Sweden, Denmark, and Norway would have come into contact with the polyphony of Notre Dame, and the conditions for how they would have brought it back home with them. I have also shown how the word 'coloribus' in the *Ordo Nidrosiensis Ecclesie* most likely did not have anything to do with the Parisian usage of the word *color*, musical embellishments.

Still, a lot of future research is needed to be able to know more about the polyphonic practices in Scandinavia during the Middle Ages. As previously stated, each and every one of the sources presented in this dissertation could itself easily be the object of a whole study. While I have been able to hint at some answers as to how the polyphony and its transmission went about, this examination has raised several new questions as well. These questions, posed directly or indirectly in the present dissertation, would be fruitful to examine in-depth in the future. For instance, it would be interesting to compare polyphonic practices in northern Germany and England with that of Sweden in the 14<sup>th</sup> century in order to find more similarities or differences. A more detailed examination of the prohibitions by St. Bridget and Petrus Olavi and a comparison to similar prohibitions in other countries would also be of great value. What did a prohibition like theirs actually mean at that time? Similarly, deeper contextual analyses of several sources such as the organa in 'O malagma' and the Office of St. Eskil, and the older songs of *Piae Cantiones* would contribute greatly to the knowledge of polyphonic practices in Sweden and its neighbouring countries during the medieval era.

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