

2. THE DISCOVERY OF FOLK MUSIC

In the aftermath of the Napoleonic wars, bulwarks of nationalism were ignited in a Europe ravaged by conflict, and in the fervent struggle for redress incited by military defeat and humiliation, energy was drawn from the wellspring of national history. And as ancient remains and mediaeval documents were pored over with a hitherto unknown zeal as testimonies to a noble past, archaeology became all the rage – a trend manifested in the Nordic countries with intensified interest in the Eddas and Icelandic sagas, barrows, ship burials and runic inscriptions.

The study of ancient relics and writings brought with it the discovery of “folk culture”. Buried in the myths, songs and stories of country folk – it was argued – were traces of times long past. Here could be found living sources of the history so keenly sought. It is significant for this entire view that no distinct boundaries were drawn between “folk life” and archaeology, and so it was on the ancientness of peasant life that the spotlight was trained, for here was the field of strength on which could be erected a new nationalist spirit.

This “discovery of the people” (Burke 1978, p. 3 f.), having become one of the foundation stones of 19th century national romanticism, had a profound impact on culture and politics. The origins of this veritable folk cult can most readily be sought in an intricate web of 18th century ideas. Already by the mid-century, Charles de Secondat de Montesquieu’s climate theory was calling to attention the unique and distinctive character of the various folk groups, which, he posited, was wholly shaped by extrinsic conditions, such as climate and geography.

In opposition to the reason-worshipping of Enlightenment philosophy, Jean Jacques Rousseau asserted the naturalness of “simple” folk as the ideal. Mankind is by nature good and free – but science and culture have corrupted and imprisoned the human spirit, which, he maintains, is guided not by reason but by emotion and natural instinct. These theses are also a fierce reaction to the aristocratic salon culture and the French Classical stylistic ideal. Rousseau’s fundamental adherence to the natural life also informs his – far from clear-cut – view of music, the principal purpose of which, he argues, is to interpret “nature”.

The budding passion for everything “folk” bloomed into rapture with the publication of James Macpherson’s *Poems of Ossian* (1760). In these bardic works, which he claimed had been collected in the Scottish highlands, could apparently be heard the voice of a Gaelic Homer. The evocative natural scenarios with their storm-whipped coastlines and wanderings over barren heaths replete with the moss-grown tumuli of ancient heroes and mist-shrouded mountains provided all the “sublimity” and “pathos” that the times demanded. Even if the authenticity of the Ossian poems was almost immediately challenged, they called attention to the still vibrant “folk poetry” and actuated feverish endeavours to collect similar material around the continent.

The academic and literary circles of German pre-romanticism provided fertile ground for this veneration of “folkishness”. The theses that Johann Gottfried Herder presented in “*Von deutscher Art und Kunst*” (1773) and in the editions of *Volkslieder* (1778 and 1779) – posthumously published under the titles *Stimmen der Völker in Liedern* (1807) – were extremely groundbreaking, formulating as they did the fundamental theories on the creative folk soul and coining the term “*Volkslied*”, which Herder initially imbues with considerable breadth of interpretation. In his collection of *Volkslieder*, poetry by Shakespeare and Goethe are placed side by side with poems from the Edda and the anonymous folk tradition – the English, Scottish, German, Latvian, Greenlandic, Peruvian and Lappish, amongst many others. To Herder, Homer was the greatest of all bards. What was decisive for him was not the poems’ origins but their spirit, and even if he stressed time and again that this was a sung

tradition, his interest in the folk songs was essentially literary. It was the words – not the tunes – that were paramount. His collections of *Volkslieder* are thus purely written works without complementary melodies.

A fundamental dichotomy for Herder, as for Rousseau, was that between art and nature; the closer to nature a people are, the freer, livelier and more sensual their songs. Against the regulated academic view of literature, the “culture of the learned”, he pits the free, original “culture of the people”. Thus did Herder’s theses on folk poetry lead to a radical and deliberate break from the classical ideal. As many scholars have argued, this placed Herder at the heart of the 18th century’s “great aesthetic paradigm shift, its coming to terms with French Classicism” (Wretö 1984, p.85).

Between 1805 and 1808 and in emulation of Herder, the young Heidelberg-romanticists Achim von Arnim and Clemens Brentano published their collection *Des Knaben Wunderhorn: Alte deutsche Lieder* (The Boy’s Magic Horn: Old German Songs, vol. 1-3), an inexhaustible inspiration for literary and musical composition in the following century. This was also a purely textual work without notation; but unlike Herder’s collections, it concentrates on German songs. The openness to a diversity of peoples and cultures that characterises the work of the great internationalist Herder becomes increasingly retrogressive until it applies exclusively to particular nations; it is folk culture penned in by nationalism.

A seminal contribution to the continued trend was the publication of Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm’s *Kinder- und Hausmärchen* (“Children’s and Household Tales”, 1812-22), in which they developed Herder’s theories of folk poetry as anonymously and collectively sprung from the creative folk soul – “*das Volk dichtet*”.

When gathering these national treasures, it was not the townsfolk one turned to but those who were closest to nature – the peasants. It was fancied that here could be heard echoes from the mists of history, here could be found “the living relics of the folk”. Henceforth, the word “folk” would thus long remain synonymous with the rustic culture of peasant life.

All this meant that peasant culture was given, for the first time, a positively charged intrinsic value in the eyes of academics, authors and other extra-rural commentators. For the first time, its distinctive characteristics were studied and its aesthetic qualities valued; still, however, it was kept at a distance through the inverted spyglass of the antiquarian view. Thus did folk culture become shrouded in the mists of ancient time.

The Geatish Society

In Sweden, the folk culture theses of German romanticism were combined with the Geatish abstract reality of the Swedish Empire. Here, as on the continent, it was chiefly in academic and literary circles that the infatuation with everything folk took root. Through the ideas of philosophy professor Benjamin Höijer – who had spent part of the “iron years” of Gustav IV Adolf’s rule (when publishing was subject to strict state control and censorship) in Germany and France – the young Uppsala romantics received first-hand information about the teachings of Kant, Herder, Schelling and Hegel. There were also significant influences from Denmark, where Rasmus Nyerup had published his two-volume collection *Levninger af Middel-Alderens Digtekunst* (two volumes) back in 1780-84. And even more relevant to Erik Gustaf Geijer and his like was *Udvalgte danske viser fra Middelalderen*, published in 1812 by Nyerup and Knud Lyne Rahbek.

In the 1700s, researchers following Linnaeus’s lead had made an inventory of Swedish nature for the benefit of science, commerce and material prosperity. The archaeologists of the 1800s roamed the countryside searching for the cultural heritage of the Swedish folk, their goal, as it was for the antiquarians of the 1600s, being to spotlight the magnificent past of the Swedish people – then in order to create a history worthy of imperial Sweden, now to seek

moral revenge for the traumatic loss of Finland. “The Fatherland had recently stood on the brink of ruin, and at that moment became more precious to its sons” (Geijer 1845, p. 17 f.).

Such ideas were primarily promulgated by members of the Geatish Society, originally a circle of young academics and public officials. With time their meetings degenerated into high-spirited bacchanalia in which the members adopted the names of Norse heroes and “where the mead was drained from our horns in the way of our ancestors” (Geijer 1845, p. 15). On the initiative of assistant clerk Jakob Alderbeth, the society was orientated towards more serious matters in an attempt to relive “the spirit of freedom, manly courage and moral fibre of the ancient Geats”. The society’s charter was formally approved on 16 February 1811 and bound every brother to “research the tales and customs of the ancient Geats” (Hjärne 1878, p. 15). Amongst its members we also find many of the 19th century’s archaeology pioneers and folklore compilers: besides Geijer, court chaplains Arvid August Afzelius and Johan Dillner, swordmaster Pehr Henrik Ling and secondary school teacher Johan Wallman.

There was also the trailblazer in the realm of folksong: “Ydredrotten” (King of Ydre) Leonard Fredrik Rääf, who after his studies in Uppsala served for a time at the Swedish National Archives in Stockholm – giving him an outstanding scientific schooling ahead of his long life as an archaeologist. After his parents’ death in 1810, he took over the running of his ancestral estate in Ydre, where for decades he worked as a farmer, a collector of folklore and archaeologist – an ultra-conservative, learned patriarch. Even before the Geatish Society entered the scene, he had embarked on his groundbreaking collection of ballads and other songs from the tradition he knew so well since his childhood. Lacking any kind of musical schooling himself, he only recorded the words; but he had first-rate assistants at hand. His friend Erik Drake – an estate owner like Rääf but also a highly trained musician and later professor of music theory – helped him down the years with notations and arrangements. Drake’s teacher, Joachim Nikolas Eggert, visited Ydre on several occasions, becoming deeply engaged in the collection activities, mainly perhaps as a musical adviser and reviewer. Together they set down an impressive collection of folk songs and ballads with accompanying melodies. A source of inspiration and gauntlet to their Geatish brothers it no doubt was, but it would be decades before it came out in print.

The activities of the society were highly diverse, although initially it focused primarily on the study of Norse mythology and its own literary writings. The contributions were published in its journal *Iduna*, the first volumes of which (1811 and 1812) were authored by Geijer, the society’s most astute intellect and leading ideologue. Already in the first issue, he staked out its future course with the poems *Manhem*, *Vikingen* and *Odalbonden*, which he also set to music. In his memoirs in *Iduna* (1845) Geijer writes:

“How many of the Geatish Songs that were released to the public were not first summoned in these happy circles of friends. Amongst us we had good singers; in particular a splendid voice, interpreter of an equally splendid heart. The way I heard brother Johannes Dillner sing *Iduna*’s first songs I shall never hear them sung again.” (Geijer 1845, p. 15 f.)

In *Iduna*’s third volume (1812), A.A. Afzelius made his first appearance as a contributor with “the song *Necken*, written to the delightful folk tune *Neckens polska*, which was published as a musical supplement to this volume” (Geijer 1845, p. 21 f.). Thus was the folk song also given space in the Geats’ writings. Ahead of publication, there was a discussion on an important matter of principle concerning the appropriateness of also publishing the tune in *Iduna*. The dispute was settled by Alderbeth, who made the point that “music, just like every other expression of the emotions, could indicate *Geatish vigour*”, to which “many brothers audibly concurred” (Hjärne 1878, p. 39).

The pioneers of Swedish folk music collectors – Rääf, Afzelius and Geijer – thus regarded the melodies as intrinsic to the whole. Even though the Geats’ interest lay mainly in the

words, many of the songs in their collections are notated. From the start, this set the Swedish publications apart from their continental forerunners.

The first folk music publications

The Geatish Society was also where the collaboration began between Geijer and Afzelius that would ultimately lead to *Svenska folk-visor från forntiden* (vol. 1-3, with music supplements, 1814-18). The driving force behind this first publication of folk music in Sweden was Afzelius. Geijer remained dubious about the plans – or rather about Afzelius’s capacity as a music recorder and publisher. But, as Geijer later writes: “I was drawn by the delightful old melodies, of which he had gathered a great many, and thus took up with the subject.” (Geijer 1845, p. 22). Geijer’s most important contribution, apart from some notated songs from Värmland, a lengthy Introduction, and an essay on “Om qvädets i de gamla Skandinaviska Visorna” (The Refrain in the old Scandinavian Songs). Both these texts provide an ideological grounding for the future collection of folk music in Sweden.

Even the title to “this first attempt to publish Swedish folk poems” can be seen as a manifesto of sorts. The connection to Herder is obvious. His “*Volkslied*” were presented here in their Swedish form as “folk songs” (*folkvisa* – the term appears in Swedish translation for the first time in 1804 in Wikforss’ German-Swedish dictionary), although the selection is confined to his own native tradition. The intention was to flaunt a “national trove” of “Swedish songs from pre-history”. The three-volumes therefore contain largely ballads, the oldest of the Nordic song genres. Nothing at all is written about those who sang the songs – they are just as anonymous as the theses on the poetic folk soul prescribe. They are “natural poetry” from times when “a whole people sang as one man” (Geijer 1814, p. 10).

All in all, the publication comprises 160 song lyrics and over 90 melodies, most of them from Afzelius’s home tracts in Västergötland as well as from Uppland and Östergötland. According to Geijer, the objective was “to present, as far as possible, each song with its melody”. They therefore rejected poems from older collections to focus solely on recorded material from “the oral folk tradition, which is, in any case, the most abundant and most dignified source” (Geijer 1814, p. 61).

Afzelius tried to secure the cooperation of Rääf but the two were far too scholarly remote from each other for his efforts to bear any fruit. Afzelius writes:

“[Rääf] has collected with critical earnest and made successful endeavours to serve our song book, while I have merely collected what I have felt to be bright and in which I have discerned some manifestation of the Folk heart, to which I belong and which I love.” (Afzelius 1848, p. 63 f.)

Amongst his closest circle of friends, however, were others willing to assist Afzelius in his recording endeavours: Johan Dillner supplied contributions from Norrland, the bard Frans Michael Franzén recorded material in his newly possessed parish in Närke, brothers Daniel and Johan Wallman aided both Rääf and Afzelius with material from Östergötland, to name but a few. During his summer visits to his native Värmland, Geijer also collected, as we have mentioned, songs for their joint publication:

“I send you here 4 copies of songs that I have recently been so fortunate to record as sung by an old maid in her 80th year who is paying a visit here. – I do not think you have heard them before. They appear to me to be authentic, old and to contain music of some value. I am particularly curious to see how Hæffner sets the melody to *Stolts Margareta*, for which I cannot offer to pick out some kind of bass that is tolerable to my ears. – They are all followed by their melodies notated as accurately as I was able... Through my old maid, I am also in possession of a couple of humorous ditties with their melodies according to genuine folk taste.” (Letter from Geijer to Afzelius dated 14/7 1814, Ransäter; after B.R. Jonsson 1967, p. 419)

In this community of recorders, Geijer was without a doubt the most musically competent. Afzelius loved to sing the songs he had heard and to pick out the melodies on his piccolo, but he was never a passionate recorder of tunes. The picture he gave of his collection journeys has the same patina as contemporary oil paintings of peasant interiors.

“While I wandered the forests and mountain paths of Västergötland and Bohuslän in my student years, I not only increased my vocabulary of flora but also, when I took lodgings in a crofters cottage or farmer’s house of an evening and there sang one or two old chivalric songs to the household’s children, the servants would become more confidential and my gain would always be some new song, sung by the daughters of the house, which I would immediately write down; and with the aid of a little piccolo notate their melodies. Thus did my collection of songs and ancient legends expand.” (Afzelius 1901, p. 81 f.)

On the firm recommendation of Geijer, and against the wished of Afzelius, the then *director musices* in Uppsala, Johann Christian Friedrich Häffner, was chosen as a musical colleague tasked with touching up the notations and making the melodies salon-ready. In his own harmonisations, the folk songs were transformed into Swedish *lieder* for voice and piano, well-attuned to the tastes of the intended consumers – a wealthy, culture-hungry middle class.

For the German-born organist and former chief conductor of the Royal Court Orchestra Häffner, folk music was far from terra incognita. He writes himself that in his childhood he would often seek out the charcoal burners in the forests of Thüringen to hear their tales and “numerous so-called *Snapperlieder* – as folk songs were known in my home tracts” (Häffner 1818, p. 85). In the 1780s he made the acquaintance of some Sami people, who were visiting Stockholm at the time. He was enraptured by their music and attempted to note down some of their chants, or *yoiks*. In his just cited essay “Anmärkningar öfver den gamla Nordiska sången” (Notes on the Old Nordic Song) he gives an astute description of how they were performed. There is much to suggest that Häffner also contributed his own notations to Afzelius’s publication. Geijer writes:

“Herein I send yet another tune from Häffner, which is exquisite. He goes to considerable pains to seek out all students, crones and maidservants in Uppsala city that could sing songs in order that he may have more traditions to compare: – for he believes some of those you submitted to be fake.” (Letter from Geijer to Afzelius dated 19/4 1814; after B.R. Jonsson 1967, p. 425 f.)

As a driven music theorist, Häffner was cut out for his task. But the difficulties were many and the collaboration fraught. The discussions concerned Häffner’s harmonisations in general – which Afzelius considered “too Scientific” – and his treatment of refrains in particular. Under the influence of the Denmark-residing amateur musician Peter Grønland (who published his own compositions of Afzelius’s notations in 1818), Afzelius detected in the balladic refrain traces of the dramatic chorus of antiquity, and recommended a multi-part setting. Häffner, for his part, stubbornly asserted that the songs were always monophonic. “It could therefore not occur to me to render them or some part of them for multiple parts, such as the so-called *omqvädet* (refrain), as a multi-voice chorus, to which it was never intended” (Häffner 1818, p. 81 f.; this did not, however, prevent him from subsequently arranging a number of folk songs for men’s quartet).

The editors had, as a matter of principle, decided to present a melody for each song, but no more than one – the ideal version, in itself embodying all: “While it is thus a sheer impossibility to present all the variations of a folk song, which are infinite, knowledge of a number of such is required in order to show the song in its best light.” (Geijer 1814, p. 63.) Amongst all the variants that were sent to Häffner, he preferred those “that deviated from our normal keys” and that thus “manifested originality of character” (Häffner 1818, p. 79).

In the above-mentioned essay on the “old Nordic song”, he described his observations of performance, tonal compass and melodic structure – the first music-analytical study of

Swedish folk music. Some of the theses he presents there have gained support in later research. For example, he thought himself able to discern a Nordic scale: D E F G A B|C D in both ascending and descending pitches with a floating interval between the sixth and seventh; “How the other tones float I can not yet say with certainty” (Häffner 1818, p. 78).

As something of a by-product to the edition of Swedish folk songs was a collection of instrumental dance tunes, *Traditioner af Svenska Folk-Dansar* (volumes 1-4, 1814-15), it too compiled by Afzelius. This time, his co-editor was music publisher and composer Olof Åhlström. It is not clear how the music was recorded but it is likely that the two of them were responsible for most of it. It is also likely that the colleagues who supplied Afzelius with songs also contributed instrumental tunes. Here too the melodies were harmonised, in this case by Åhlström.

Both these works constitute a pioneering endeavour by Afzelius and his assistants. To be sure, there is much to object to in the heavy-handed retouching of both music and lyrics, but the melodies are there for most of the songs. Also included are the folk musicians’ polskas, a repertoire that was largely overlooked at this time. And all this was gathered from the contemporary, living tradition. In this sense, these works differ markedly from earlier northern European folk song publications.

Inventorying the national cultural archive was, as stated above, very much an international phenomenon, Sweden’s Nordic neighbours having taken precocious initiatives in this regard. German currents of ideas quickly reached Denmark, where the first collection of folk songs was published back in the 1780s. In the middle of the 1800s, Svend Grundtvig and colleagues began their edition of the monumental anthology *Danmarks gamle Folkeviser* (which would take a century to complete). Much native and international attention was also garnered by Elias Lönnroth’s compilation and publication of the Finnish national epic *Kalevala* (1835). The fifty *runot* songs became a unifying force in the Finnish struggle for independence and a rich source of inspiration for composers, authors and painters. In Norway, folk music collecting was slow to start. The first work – saga recorder Jørgen Moe’s *Samling af sange, folkeviser og stev i norske almuedialekter* – was published in 1840, followed in 1853 by organist and composer Ludvig Mathias Lundeman’s *Ældre og nyere Norske Fjeldmelodier*. In Norway, folk culture acquired a particular value during the prolonged union crisis as a symbol of the nation in the struggle for political liberation and cultural identity.

“To rescue some valuable relics of ancient music”

Owing to the diligence of the folk music collectors, all the more of the music that had previously only been stored in the memory and passed down in melodic guise was now recorded on paper using the classical music notation system. In the process, it passed through several filters – recorder selection, notational convention, editor arrangement and so forth. There is a peculiar contradiction in this endeavour to “rescue” a culture by tearing it from its original context or, in other words, seeking to “preserve” it by fundamentally changing it; yet, as we have seen, the first recorders were well aware of the effect such interference had. Geijer even writes that it “pains his heart” to see the songs in print:

“Their element is not paper but the open air, the forests and the Nordic countryside. For centuries they have lived solely in the melodic undulations of Song: family upon family have found in their simple tones an expression of their sentiments; and their public performance in front of the noses of art experts is but a stranding on dry ground. However, rather than that they should fall into an oblivion that nowadays might otherwise not be far away.” (Geijer 1814, p. 68)

This stocktaking of folk culture would remain an academic – and therefore naturally male – concern. This said, the tradition-bearers, the custodians of the rich folk song heritage, were

Kommenterad [N1]: Bb?

Kommenterad [NV2]: yes. but in the next part of the sentence it seems that it sometimes is B and sometimes B-flat. Let's just leave it as B for now and I'll discuss with Erik W. p. 61-62 in the original.

largely women. In the source material are scantily worded notes on the singers, information that while never making it into print give fascinating glimpses of a female culture that transcends social divisions and binds generations. From Rääf's notes we read that he and his colleagues recorded songs from Anna the maid from Ydre, Kerstin from Enerby poor-house, and soldier's wife Greta Naterberg, the ballad-singer par excellence. But there were also songs from Mrs Major Westerling, Miss Loenbom and baroness Schmitterlöf. Rääf was also able to draw from the plethora of songs sung from within the walls of his childhood home – ballads, jocular songs and singing games, all sung by the family's servants and his younger sister Magdalena Rääf. Geijer did not need to go further than to his own fiancée Anna Lisa Lilljebjörn to obtain some valuable contributions to the collection. Afzelius states that he noted down songs from "old peasant women" and "old deans' wives", but he also sourced lyrics and melodies from his sister Anna Charlotta and cousin Anna Sofia Afzelius. The "folk songs" clearly spanned across all boundaries between "common folk" and "fine folk". In kitchens and chambers, deans' wives crossed paths with maids, Mrs Majors with servants. And the children got to hear sagas and ghost stories, singing games and nursery rhymes from their nursemaids, mothers and grandmothers. While the social barriers were high, the home was still the women's common world.

The vast majority of 19th century folklore collectors were raised in the countryside and the distance from the academic Parnassus to the farmhouses was often illusory. It goes without saying that they prided themselves on claiming a right of inheritance to their ancient unwritten culture. To understand and reproduce the folk songs, writes Afzelius, one needed to

"have been raised in the folk life and been a member of the barn dancing and winter evening storytelling clubs. Thus had Geijer, Ling and Tegnér begun their literary journey. Thus did I spend my childhood in the remote countryside in the house of a wise and honourable man, where I spent unforgettable winter evenings sitting at the old sage's knee by the hearth, listening to legends and folklore. By then my mind was already a storehouse of folk songs." (Afzelius 1848, p. 63.)

The collection work expands

The folklore collectors of the early 19th century were interested in folk culture in all its manifestations, the spiritual as much as the material. As dilettantes – in both senses of the word – they threw themselves valiantly into the different fields of ethnology and archaeology. Amongst other things, this meant that the recorded repertoire gradually expanded to cover genres of song other than the ballad. In Fenno-Swede Adolf Iwar Arwidsson's *Svenska fornsånger* (3 vols., 1834-42) – the first major collection after Afzelius's two publications – contains in addition to "hero ballads" and "folk songs", games, dances, children's songs and a few *wallqväden* (herders' songs). The collection is heavily based on Rääf's material, which here at last appears in print. There are also contributions from the Wallman brothers, Afzelius and Arwidsson himself, and texts from some older song books. The music is, as custom demanded, arranged for voice and piano by Rääf's old friend Erik Drake. However, both editors agreed that games, lullabies and herders' songs were not suited to harmonisation, so in these cases only the melody line is presented.

A remarkably open mind to folk culture also characterises the work of Levin Christina Wiede. Already as a young student (1818-20) he was recording song lyrics and melodies during the Christmas and summer celebrations in his native Småland. However, he completed his most extensive collection in the 1840s as a vicar on the Östergötland peninsula of Vikbolandet. His material includes orally transmitted folk songs of an older nature (ballads, jocular songs and lullabies) and newer songs from the broadside repertoire – in total some 400 songs and a small number of instrumental tunes. He also appealed to friends and colleagues in his quest for material:

“If you therefore, while in merry company, at a dance or during a journey, or in the forest, or from the farmer’s barn, or from the cradle, hear a song, a singing game, a ballad or whatsoever catchy tune it may be, I beg you condescend to learn what it is.... Even happier would I be if the organist would undertake to assist by editing the melodies.” (Wiede, letter fragment; after Ling 1965, p. 14).

Wiede subsequently dropped his request for only “the most venerable and authentic” of peasant songs. But his tolerance was not boundless, and he expressly warned against the “baseness and drivel spread by the Dalecarlian girls”. One of the songs was furnished with a comment that: “[m]ore verses follow but could not be recorded since they contain nothing but vulgarities and the like. It is reproduced here most particularly for the sake of the melody.” (After Ling 1965, p. 109.)

Like Rääf, Wiede had acquired respectable antiquarian and philological learning. In the field of music he was an amateur, but one with a thorough schooling, “a sure hand and a sure ear”. He had learnt to play the violin early on in his life, which he used when putting songs to paper. His notations are of a high standard even if he often despaired over his ability to reproduce the tunes correctly. Unfortunately, Wiede never had the chance to publish his own collections himself, and it would take another century for them to become the object of scholarly revision and publication.

The second generation of folk music collectors also included Richard Dybeck, who, during his years in Uppsala, had attended Geijer’s lectures with eager fascination and seized wholeheartedly upon his views of history and culture. Dybeck had an excellent singing voice and as a student sung in Hæffner’s choirs and took part in the city’s salon scene, which by that time was in full bloom. He also played violin, flute and guitar – a solid grounding for his coming recording endeavours. After taking his law degree, Dybeck served for a time as a notary and pro tem mayor, but was unhappy in public office and tendered his resignation so could dedicate his time to archaeology – without employment or permanent income.

Dybeck is unanimously described, and with some justice, as the great visionary and enthusiast, more a poet than a scientist. But this portrait easily conceals Dybeck the untiring man of action and cultural worker. Researchers of more recent times have mainly been interested in the extensive material that he collected and recorded, but in his own days other sides of his work drew greater attention. Amongst his culturally interested peers he was primarily known as the editor of the antiquarian magazine *Runa* (published sporadically between 1842 and 1876) and of several folk music collections. As a concert arranger, he was feted and respected but also spiritedly debated in the capital’s press. To the wider public, his name was associated with *Sången till Norden* (“Du gamla, du friska”, which would eventually, after a little tweaking, become the Swedish national anthem).

In his field work and source hunting, Dybeck the amateur seems a remarkably “modern” ethnomusicologist. While earlier recorders had chiefly drawn their material from their immediate surroundings and from collaborators in other regions, Dybeck would take wide-ranging annual excursions to several provinces of southern and central Sweden. His source material includes notes on the extrinsic conditions of music, on function, instruments and performance, on legends, riddles, dialectal expressions and magical customs as well as an extensive collection of excerpts from older writings. He was also in keen collaboration with a large number of colleagues dispersed over the length and breadth of the country.

Possessed of this broad folkloric base, Dybeck was able to present folk music as part of a larger cultural context. In his *Svenska visor* (1847-48), *Svenska gånglåtar* [1849] and *Svenska folkmelodier* (1853-56), Dybeck follows the pattern set by Geijer & Afzelius and Arwidsson: anonymous melodies harmonised for three or four-part piano and solo voice. However, with *Svenska vallvisor och hornlåtar* (1846) he had entered uncharted territory, exploring the distinctive, inaccessible music of the remote hill farms where no previous recorder had trod before. In the summers of 1843 and 1844, Dybeck visited for the first time some such

pastures and was astounded by the music he heard there. At the same time he agonised over the difficulties of notating their horn tunes and herding songs, which he presents in unharmonised form with only the naked melody line but also with detailed background commentaries.

It is symptomatic that pastoral culture captivated Dybeck so much. It was here that he thought he could find echoes of a “pre-historic folk”, perhaps even “the very foundation of everything that Swedish folk music is”. This, if anything, was the sublime music of nature that romantics had been seeking ever since the time of Herder. “The pastoral song is *the song of the forest*...it is *the forest in the song*” (Dybeck 1846, p. VIII).

Dybeck combined a reverence for the cultural heritage of the fatherland with an ever more astringent rejection of the imported Biedermeier culture that reigned supreme in the salons of the time, and would viciously spew bile over contemporary art music, which he believed posed a mortal threat to the native tradition:

“The end times of folk music are nigh. The languorous airs are no longer confined to their homeland, the Cities, but are spreading across the country like malodorous infections... In the Nordic forests, a poetry fatally succumbs – a music that asserts its freshness in its very melancholy.” (Dybeck, *Runa* 1842, p. 36.)

Folk music on the concert and theatre stages

By the mid-1800s, the passion for archaeology and ethnology found new modes of expression in music, drama and art. In music, the first recorders’ dogged diligence bore rich fruits and the tunes they collected spread from the printed page to the concert and theatre stage.

In 1830s Uppsala, the students were already performing folk songs in Hæffner’s four-part arrangements; in the 1840s, carnival processions and tableaux were arranged in provincial style, the different student “nations” competing for the best reproduction of peasant life. The students of the Västmanland-Dala nation requisitioned dancing masters and an entire set of traditional costumes from various Dala parishes, the Värmlanders danced “Jössehärad” polskas and the Gothenburgers dressed up as sailors. Some of the students had to put up with wearing women’s garments to partner their menfolk in the country dances. At the May festivities of 1847, the students of Småland’s nation won the prize for their “Värend” wedding, featuring a medical student dressed in a traditional bridal gown complete with girdle and golden crown, a mounted groom and a procession of bridesmaids, Småland grenadiers and gentry in stately equipage (see Grandien 1987, p. 70 f.).

From the picturesque provincial tableaux of the salons and the student carnival processions, the step to the national, folk-themed dramas of the 1840s was not a big one. To be sure, such entertainments were popular back in the times of Gustav III, but this time the perspective had shifted, and the idealised monarch-subject relationship of the earlier era found itself ousted by an urban-bourgeois infatuation with everything rustic. Authors, composers and stage designers could now build upon all the ethnographical material published by recorders and collectors. There were the two comic operas *Ett nationaldivertissement* and *En majdag i Värend* (which were both staged by the Royal Opera in 1843) and, not least, the “tragicomic spoken, sung and danced” *Värmlänningarna* (1846) – a provincial Romeo and Juliet saga complete with family feuds, madness scenes, slapstick, folk songs, dancing and wedding celebrations.

It was under this *zeitgeist* that Richard Dybeck began arranging his purely folk-music concerts with the intention to prepare fertile soil for a healthy national musical culture: “to fashion a world of song for an entire people, to be freely embraced and loved.” The concerts also foment the growth of national music during the latter half of the 19th century. The first of his “Evening entertainments of Nordic folk music” was held on 18 November 1844 in the Kirstein House in Stockholm to a packed audience. Public enthusiasm was such that the programme could be repeated already in December that same year, this time in De la Croix’s

new salon at Stockholm's Brunkenberg Square. Dybeck, who had doubts about the arrangement, was able to gleefully affirm

“that the denizens of the capital also possess a fondness for these old tunes from our forests, mountains and valleys, tunes that nonetheless differ, ‘as far as Heaven is from Earth’, from today’s extolled art music.” (Dybeck, *Runa*, December 1844.)

Dybeck had conceived a programme design for the first concert to which he would stick faithfully for a series of similar concerts held over the coming two decades – most of which in Stockholm, two in Uppsala and one in Västerås. The last one was held in 1870.

The folk tunes were assembled into “numbers” of varying kinds: “ceremonial pieces”, instrumental dance rhapsodies, lyrical folk song passages, scenes from pastoral woodlands, etc. They were arranged for different settings: instrumental groups or orchestras, choirs and soloists. On the instrumental side, he was assisted by the Mindre Teater orchestra and conductors: Jacob Niclas Ahlström, Jacob Edvard Gille, August Söderman and Hermann Berens, who also helped with the arrangements. The choir comprised amateurs or students from the Royal Swedish Academy of Music, while some of the Royal Opera’s leading singers appeared as soloists. Ahlström continued on his own with his collection titled *Valda svenska folksånger, folkdansar och folklekar* (with P.C. Boman, 1845) and with his own Dybeck-like evening entertainments (e.g. in Gothenburg 19/8 1848).

The debate inspired by Dybeck’s concerts exposes some of the tensions underlying the contemporary music scene, such as the conflict between dilettantism and the rapidly expanding amateur musicianship on the one hand, and the rising demands for professional quality on the other. In its apparent simplicity, folk music presents the enthusiastic amateur with an effective ideal to hold up against the more demanding genre of art music. Inherent to this matrix of ideas is the dichotomy between melody and harmony, which we encounter so frequently in the musical debates of the 19th century and which contrasts the ideal of the simple, lyrical melody with the complex “harmonic edifices”. The melody is the inspiring, emotion-bearing element of music, harmony the learned and artificial. A difference of opinion that reflects this polarisation is also discernible in the reviews of Dybeck’s concerts: in one corner is allegiance to Dybeck’s “folkloric” demand for simple harmonisation in order to preserve as far as possible the distinctiveness of the folk music; in the other the demands of music professionals for richer arrangements that treat folk melodies more as a source of raw material.

Transferring folk music to the concert stage again raised the issue of how much influence its recorders had on its musical architecture. For Dybeck, folk music in its original form was superior to any arrangement, such arrangements being to him a constant source of irritation. The problem he had to contend with – to configure folk music in the style of classical music without altering its idiom – was fundamentally insoluble. Yet it would take half a century for the original form to be considered presentable so that folk musicians and folk singers themselves could be entrusted with the task of performing their music to Stockholm audiences, a privilege that was not granted until the 1890s, and then within the special milieu of the Skansen living folk museum.