STM 1992:1

The place and value of Middle Music

By Olle Edström

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Introduction – local preconditions

In this article, I will particularly focus attention on a type of music, middle music, which I look upon as a cement between different social strata during the interwar period in Sweden. An important objective has been to try to describe how this initially bourgeois music became the music of the many in a society characterized by great changes, not least in terms of its mass media.

Seen in a historical perspective, the 1920s are not far off, but the socio-economic and cultural preconditions of that decade were essentially different from those prevailing today. For this reason, I will sketch a picture of Gothenburg at the beginning of the period examined, with the aid of statistics.

In 1919 approximately 200,000 people lived in Gothenburg. Of these, 43% worked in industry, 34% in commerce/communications, 14% in domestic work/sundry work and 7% in public service (from Statistical data for Gothenburg, 1930).

The average length of life for men was just under 50 years, while women lived a little longer. The birth-rate fluctuated around 2.2% during the decade, while the death-rate for the city's population as a whole stood at a level of about 1.3%. Thus, the population was on the increase in the 1920s. In addition, a moderate number of people moved into the city. This population growth was checked in the 1930s, mainly due to the small difference between the birth and death-rates. In 1935, for example, these rates stood at 1.3% and 1%, respectively. More than half of the people living in Gothenburg were born in the city, which means that Gothenburg was and has been a centre to which people have migrated. In 1939, 275,000 people lived within the confines of the city.

While the city centre to 99% consisted of stone houses, certain areas of the town, such as Landala and Masthugget, had a large number of wooden houses and a special type of house where the ground floor was made of stone and the first and second floors of wood ("landshövdingehus"). For example, in Masthuggsbergen the percentage of stone houses amounted to 9%, the combined stone and wood houses to 56% and wooden houses to 32%. A more 'normal' figure for combined stone and wood houses was around 35%. This is an important explanation for the severely overcrowded conditions prevailing at this time; half of all flats contained one room and a kitchen and 80% were

small flats of two rooms and a kitchen at the most. In 1939, the percentage of people living in overcrowded conditions was still 42%, even though “the number in relative terms had been drastically reduced” (Attman 1963:202 – overcrowding is by Attman defined as more than two persons living in one room)

The differences in people’s social conditions can also be seen from the figures on income and private property. For example in 1930, the average income within the parish of Masthugget was 1,970 Swedish Crowns and the average savings 1,600, which compares with the parish of Vasa in central Gothenburg where the corresponding figures were 4,493 and 69,000, respectively.

Hence, the people of Gothenburg were born into completely different worlds; there was a narrow stratum of society with an extremely good standard of living, who lived in the central areas of the city (city centre, Vasa, Johanneberg and Örgryte), a broad intermediate stratum primarily living in Annedal and Majorna, and the largest stratum, frequently living in one room and a kitchen in Annedal, Landala, Masthugget, Olskroken or on Hising island.

The great socio-economic differences between various groups in the city had, of course, immediate effects on its musical culture, both in terms of people’s habits and their need for and use of music (see further below). Therefore, social affiliation and the tradition within the individual family meant that the starting-points were very different. To take a concrete example, many factors had to coincide before the purchase of a piano could be contemplated; you not only had to have the money to buy the piano and somewhere to put it but also money for lessons and sheet music. Also with the piano, this middle class instrument and piece of furniture above all others, it was a question of taking an ideological stand (cf Ehrlich 1976, Ballstaedt & Widmaier 1989:190pp). The piano was probably the most important and expensive symbol of a middle class home. It was a visible proof of both education and prosperity. It is to be hoped that a forthcoming study of estate inventory deeds will show what percentage of Gothenburg’s population had a piano during this period. However, from public statistics it is possible to draw data on the number of imported grand pianos and their value year by year. For example, in 1927, 288 grand pianos were imported from Germany to the value of 1,823,477 and 2,092 pianos to a total value of 574,000 Swedish Crowns. This can be compared with the figures for 1934, i.e. 82 grand pianos worth 144,790 Swedish Crowns. The market had recovered in 1939, when 285 German grand pianos were purchased representing a total value of 494,791 and 347 pianos to a value of 276,777 Swedish Crowns. Germany dominated the import market to 95%. At the same time, a large number of pianos and grand pianos were manufactured in Sweden. The importation of piano mechanics increased at the end of the 1930s, amounting to 44,000 mechanics in 1939. Thus, a grand piano was a very expensive investment, roughly corresponding to one year’s wages for a blue-collar worker. The price of a piano was approxi- mately half as much. In all probability, the conditions prevailing in Gothenburg during the

period studied were therefore not much different from those in Germany a decade earlier:

> Im Durchsnitt musste man im Kaiserreich für eine neues Pianino rund 550:- Mark [bezahlen]... Wenn wir einen kurzen Blick zurück auf die Einkommensverhältnisse um 1900 werfen, wird die Exklusivität dieses Statussymboles deutlich: rund zwei Drittel der deutschen Bevölkerung verdienten in einen Jahr gerade soviel, wie ein nagelneues Klavier kostete (Ballstaedt & Widmaier 1989:191).

If pianos were expensive, there were several types of instruments that were cheap: mouth-organs, simple accordions (slightly more than one day's wage) and also violins which could be bought for around 10 Swedish Crowns. Whereas violins were to be found in all social strata, accordions were chiefly to be found among workers and in the farming community. Also gramophones were in the 1920s comparatively expensive; at the end of the decade a portable gramophone could be bought for about 110 Swedish Crowns, which was more or less half of an industrial worker's monthly pay packet. However, wireless sets were more moderate in price.

In other words, there is reason to assume that the musical culture in terms of the incidence of musical instruments differed significantly between the various social groups in the city. A natural consequence of this would be that different forms of music occurred in the different social strata. However, this conclusion is – as far as can be judged – wrong, which will be discussed below.

Middle Music – Music for All

As I have discussed earlier (Edström 1990), the music that people encountered outside their own homes was a comparatively uniform type of music, which I have called middle music after Dahlhaus (1988). This kind of music was predominant in most contexts where music served as accompaniment and entertainment. In the term middle music I include overtures, parlour music, solo pieces, fantasies, medleys, character pieces, waltzes, marches, etc. It is not possible to define the characteristics of middle music with scientific exactitude. There is, moreover, a musical no-man's land at the extremes of the concept, whose location shifts over time and which is dependent on who is listening and where, and on the purpose of the music. Perhaps I should emphasize that my point of departure regarding the concept of middle music is structural, not functional. This does not mean, however, that there is no connection between the structural and functional properties of music (cf Edström 1990); it only means that I consider it to be better and safer to discuss middle music on the basis of a concrete structure. Thus, I prefer an empirical-structural point of departure to a theoretical-functional one. The following 'definition' or delineation of the concept should

never- theless be understood as loose and broad.[1]

What is stylistically common to middle music is its origin and closeness to the classicalromantic art music tradition. The fundamental elements of the music consist of melodiousrhythmical flows of sequences of events divided into clear passages (themes, phrases, periods, simple forms). Similarly, the music's overall form is well-arranged and clear. The melodics is often in a tone-painting manner, either following an imagined story or 'depicting' a landscape, a girl, a ramble in the Alps, a gipsy camp, etc., or it is based on a text, e.g. a solo song, an aria/song in an operetta/opera, or the origin and nature of the music are characterized by a dancing style. The harmonics is adapted to the melodics, is 'functional' and can rarely be interpreted in different ways. The chords are as a rule triads and seventh chords (four-note cord), with augmented chords as a special means of expression. The movement structure is easy to comprehend; middle parts accompany and support the latter rather than being independent (seldom polyphony). Development sections and rich textures, as in a classical period string quartet or romantic symphony, seldom if ever occur. The music's technical degree of difficulty can vary from full-scale virtuosity through music sounding virtuosic, to a very low degree of difficulty. The quality of the music is dependent on these structural conditions, and it is therefore possible to judge whether a certain piece can have functioned as middle music. As there is no absolute criterion for quality, it is a matter of taste.[2]

In other words, the music is characterized by singable melodies, wide variety and short forms. However, what in 1910 could be regarded as middle music is not entirely the same as in 1940; as new generations grew up and new types of music emerged, some of this music was transformed into middle music. In principle, middle music was a notated form of music in the interwar years.

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1 Alf Björnberg's (1991) lucid and valuable overview of the methods and theories used in research on popular music includes a comparatively long section (pp 3–12) on different definitions or delimitations of popular music. The term 'middle music' was never used in the interwar period. The terms commonly used during these years that are closest in meaning to what I mean by middle music are entertainment music and popular music. All music termed entertainment music or popular music in the period is here regarded as middle music. It is not possible for me here to go into similarities and differences between my use of the concept of middle music and the various approaches to and definitions of popular music treated in Björnberg's discussion. However, one essential difference needs to be stressed; Björnberg's definition of popular music is based on today's situation, i.e., it is "koncipieret og skabt til distribution via massmedia" (p 11), which middle music clearly was not, being spread both through live music (notated) and new mass media, such as the gramophone and the radio (see further below)

2 Martin Tegen (1982) makes a division, which in some respects is very similar, when he talks about music in the 1850's, referring to "popular and serious elements to varying degrees". The characteristics of the term "popular" include "symmetrical structure, simple harmony, clear and singable melody, agreeable sound, dance rhythms...", while "serious elements" are defined as "complex form, contrapunctal treatment, refined orchestral technique, broad spectrums of dynamic shadings and so on" (1982:341).

Thus, middle music was played in various public contexts, e.g. by a symphony orchestra during popular concerts, by military bands in Trädgårdsföreningen (a public garden in the city centre), by restaurant orchestras and silent film orchestras (and later often as background music to sound films), but it also made up the major part of the music heard at the main theatre in Gothenburg, Stora Teatern. Further, it was played by amateur orchestras (both string and brass-bands) and sung by choirs and male quartets. Moreover, this type of music was common in homes where music was played and it was often performed on the piano; a great part of the middle music had been arranged for the piano or included original pieces. Middle music could also be performed by singing accompanied by the piano or another instrument. With the advent of the gramophone, and in the late 1920s when wireless sets were beginning to find their way into an increasing number of homes, it became possible to listen to and enjoy this music during the 'gramophone hour' on the radio as well as during the programmes featuring entertainment music.

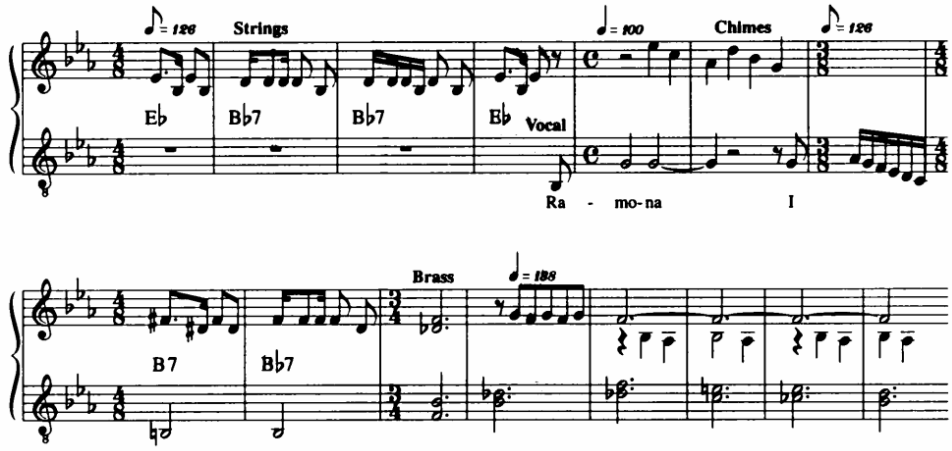
From the above can be seen that middle music in these years encompassed a wide range of music played and heard in both everyday and more festive contexts in homes and public settings. I have not, however, included on the one hand "folksy music", old and modern dance music and folk music, or, on the other, "bourgeois music", such as symphonies, chamber music, church music (oratorios, cantatas, solo pieces for the organ, etc) and certain operas that have traditionally been regarded as the core of Western World art music. Music belonging to these categories can, however, be regarded as middle music provided that the music has or is given certain structural attributes. As a genre, hit songs are a problem; whereas simple waltzes such as Swedish waltzes, "bonnfox" (farmer foxtrot), one- step and American foxtrot can be considered to be outside the grey area bordering on traditional 'folksy' music, other types of hit music, such as Viennese waltz, Boston waltz, German foxtrot, etc., are, because of their structural similarity with the romantic tradition, clearly within the grey area, or should perhaps be regarded as middle music. Consideration must also be given to how a hit song was performed; i.e. hit songs were perceived as middle music if backed up by accompaniment and if the instrumentation exhibited most of the colours and patterns of middle music.

From a structural point of view, it is therefore quite conceivable that a medley of Fred Winter hit songs, an arrangement of a Mozart symphony or a fantasy by Goudnod can be defined as middle music. In the first two cases, a form of structural repackaging takes place which transforms the music into middle music. At the time of writing (April 1991) I happened to hear, to my great surprise, a very advanced popular musical arrangement of 'White Christmas' (music In Berlin) for a large symphony orchestra with the legendary Jasha Heifetz as soloist! In the interwar period, there were on the whole many great dance and entertainment orchestras playing both the jazz of that time and middle music including the arrangement of classical favourite pieces. In order to highlight such

an example I have transcribed some passages from the extremely popular song waltz Ramona with Paul Whiteman's big band. The arrangement is characterized by variation and has several surprising ingredients. The overall form is:

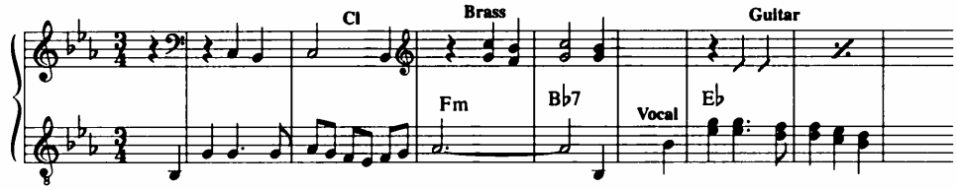
Introd. /15 bars/ –
Refr. /32b/ – Verse /16b/ –
Refr. /30b/ – Intermezzo /8b/ – Verse /16b/ –
Refr. /28b/ – Coda /4 bars/–

The first surprise comes already in the introduction. The piece does not begin with triple time but with a section similar to 'la Paloma' in quadruple time. After this, the male soloist sings "Ramona..." accompanied by a phrase played on the chimes, and then the triple time and the singing continue, but only for one bar, as the tango rhythm is resumed, followed by an instrumental bridge passage of 6 bars in triple time:



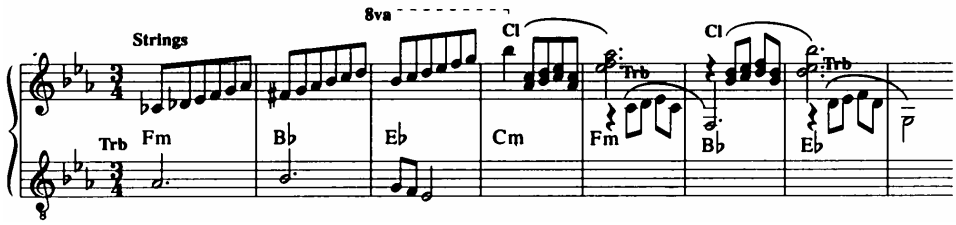
Example 1

Then the refrain immediately starts with the soloist singing accompanied by unobtrusive afterbeats by the guitar and the bass but with alternating contrary parts on the clarinet (duple time) and muted trumpets (duple time), respectively. In the B-part a singing voice is added. The melody is sung in parallel thirds in a high tenor pitch, which gives it a Latin American flavour.



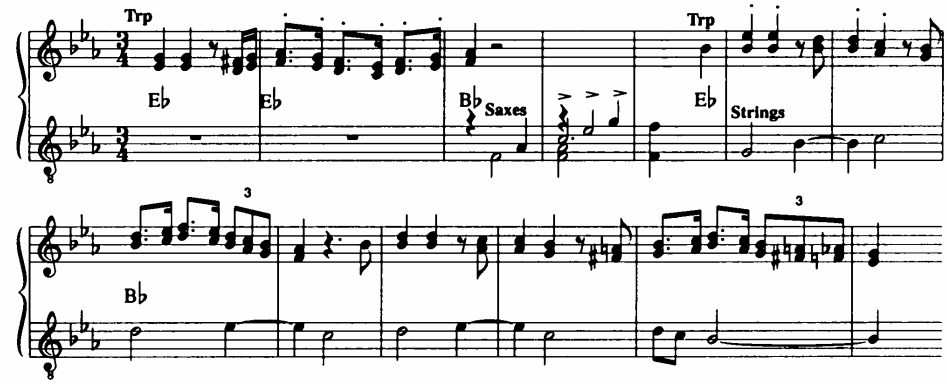
Example 2

When the verse begins, the melody is taken up on the trombones accompanied by an ascending and complementary phrase played on the violins. Then the melody is continued on the clarinets and trombones in a manner reminiscent of ”call & response”:



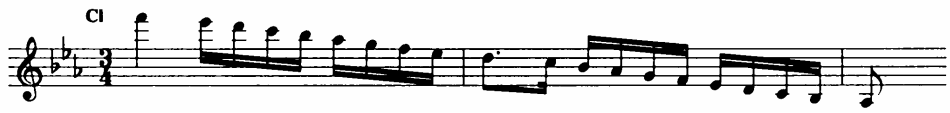
Example 3

Now the refrain recurs, this time played in a spasmodic style by the trumpets, interrupted by a marked rise in thirds on the saxophones. As if this idea was not enough, the violins play a second melody that almost eclipses the soloist role of the trumpets. The violins suddenly play a quotation from Waldteufel’s waltz ‘Espana’.



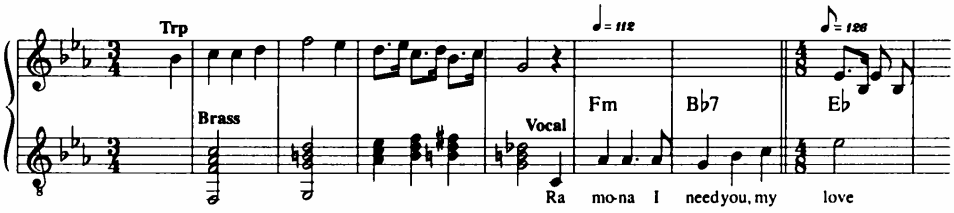
Example 4

The next surprise occurs at the end of the C-part which is cut short by two bars, i.e. on “the first” in the seventh bar a powerful interlude follows, spanning eight bars, for the whole brass-section. This is transposed into the verse which is now scored for the full orchestra in a dialogue-like section between different groups of instruments. The refrain now recurs for the third time in a spasmodic style, this time on the part of the saxophones. As a counterbalance, a descending figure on the violins is this time used twice in the respective A- part:



Example 5

The B and C parts are characterized by parallel chords played on the saxophones and trombones, while the trumpets play the melody. This was undoubtedly perceived as a very daring example of melodic and harmonic texture within the popular music of the 1920s and 1930s. Instead of the chords Ab, Ab minor, Eb and C7, the chords F minor, G major, Ab, Bb, B and G5, respectively, were used in the beginning of the C part! The listeners of that time probably experienced a breathtaking ‘atonal’ sensation on this occasion. Then the vocal soloist returns with “Ramona I need you, my love” in a slower tempo followed by four bars of tango in tempo I, after which the whole piece ends with a soft beat on a large gong:



Example 6

In this case, the hit song could clearly be placed within the realm of middle music. As for the other case when art music, e.g. a Mozart symphony, is transformed into middle music, many arrangers and orchestras in the 1920s and 1930s were well-known for this. In some cases, one and the same orchestra, e.g. Jack Hylton, was well-known for playing both hit music/jazz and middle music (cf Edström 1989:204). Others, like André Kostelanetz, chose to specialize in transforming well-known classical-romantic art music into middle music. In the dictionary "Musikens värld" (Eng. the World of Music) (1970), Kostelanetz talks about his "average music":

> I think it should be permitted to shorten the great musical pieces so that they only include purely melodious passages. The development towards lengthy pieces is for the benefit of musicians and only confuses other people".

Kostelanetz succeeded in reducing Tjakovskij's 'Romeo and Juliet' from the normal 16 minute performance to less than five minutes (1970:1191).

In consequence, the structural boundaries of middle music are flexible in both directions, and they have a natural tendency to change over time. As I have discussed in an earlier article (1990), one should not only concentrate on the structure of the music as such, as one has to allow for its reception, which should be seen as a function of three key factors: a) who is listening (the individual), b) the setting in which listening takes place (the situation), and c) what is being listened to (the product) (see further Edström 1990). Thus, there is no limit to how middle music could have been listened to.

The point I want to make concerns the stylistic properties, function and importance of middle music. Middle music was the dominating form for musical expression, which stylistically has many features in common with both the 'popular' and 'middle class' music during this period. My hypothesis is that middle music functioned as a musical and social cement between the different social strata, or expressed in dualistic terms, between the wealthy and the poor, i.e. between those who lived in Vasastaden and those who lived in Masthugget, etc. It was possible to listen to middle music from different points of departure in terms of reception, which, of course, did not mean that it was understood or listened to in a similar or the same fashion. I view middle music as a uniting social force in a period when women obtained the same legal status as men, when the trade union movement regained their strength (as a result of the "year of the big strikes" in 1906), and when the social democratic party came into power, first during short periods in the 1920s, and later, on a 'more permanent' basis in the 1930s.

After this, a reverse development took place, i.e. from the 1930s onwards middle music was subject to an inexorable change, leading to its eventual loss of power as a unifying force. These thoughts can be expressed in paradoxical form thus: it appears that, up to the time when the idea of

the Welfare State was formulated, middle music functioned as a unifying force and continued to do so for some time but began to lose ground when the Welfare State became a reality in the 1950s and 1960s. After this time, middle music was hardly heard any more. Instead it became natural to listen to music which was conducive to separate group listening and which stylistically had little in common.

This hypothesis is thus in line with what Martin Tegen (1986) has to say on the subject of 19th century popular music, i.e. that this bourgeois music was music for all. Dave Russel (1987) arrived at a similar conclusion in his work on brass bands and the choirs in England and their repertoires. I have earlier (1990) rejected the idea that this could have been the case in Sweden in the 19th century. On the other hand, the development of Swedish society in the 1920s and 1930s pointed towards middle music becoming a uniting force, which will be shown below.

In view of the sweeping brushwork used in the introductory background description, which intentionally made terms such as folk music, art music, etc, appear weak in outline, it is necessary to discuss how thinking associated with music was formed in the first place. I will mainly deal with different aspects of the fact that music was often thought of in terms of a dichotomy, i.e. 'higher' and 'lower' music. The term middle music, on the other hand, did not exist. Thus it is important to consider how different types of music were attributed different values.

The values of different concepts

It seems to me logical to assume that human thinking, knowledge and values are developed in the course of a person's life in relation to the surrounding social reality. A result of this process, and of the dissimilar socio-economic-cultural conditions in which people grew up, was that their linguistic usage, knowledge, attitudes, etc. reflected the differentiation prevailing in interwar society. This should naturally also be seen as a consequence of our historical heritage, that each human being on birth enters into a preformed society.

In a sociological context, this view would probably be described as an approach closely related to Karl Mannheim's so-called knowledge-sociological approach.[3] A fundamental ingredient in his system of thought is that it incorporates the relativising of the culture, economics, politics, etc., which he observed in Europe in the interwar years. He also discusses, among other things, how different concepts are relativised depending on who uses them, in what context and how they change in sociological terms:

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3 Karl Mannheim's knowledge-sociological hypotheses have recently been incorporated into Margareta Lindholm's thesis, Talet om det kvinnliga – Studier i feministiskt tänkande i Sverige under 1930-talet, Göteborg, 1991.

> Each idea acquires a new meaning when it is applied to a new life situation. When new strata take over systems of ideas from other strata, it can always be shown that the same words mean something different to the new sponsors, because these latter think in terms of different aspirations and existential configurations. This social change of function, then, is ...also a change of meaning. ...
>
> Different social strata then do not 'produce systems of ideas' in a crude, materialistic sense – they 'produce' them, rather, in the sense that social groups emerging within the social process are always in position to project new directions of that 'intentionality', that vital tension, which accompanies life (1968:188).

The values of different kinds of music are reflected in the linguistic usage to be found in the interwar period; there was, for instance, talk about high-brow and low-brow music (Edström 1989, 1990). This mode of thinking principally originated in continental cultural mores and cultural thinking. There was a certain amount of pressure to legitimate these stances and make them universal: the mode of listening, the mode of using the music, the need for music, etc. The need to control and separate music led to thoughts about qualitative dividing lines between different types of music. Put simply, the higher music ranked higher on an evaluation scale than the lower; on the one hand, there were the great masters like Mozart, Beethoven and Brahms, and on the other, hit songs and other 'farmer tunes'. That some music ranked higher meant that it was better and more valuable when it comes to both listening and playing.

In an earlier article (1990), I also tried to demonstrate that a listening-aesthetical ideal and manner of listening connected to this evaluation scale was regarded as the normal and most widely spread listening mode within the bourgeois culture but that this had never been the case even within this cultural stratum. A similar difficulty is then to know how deeply rooted a linguistic usage/way of thinking like higher/lower was in the culture. This approach found its expression in written form in a fairly similar manner in reviews, short stories and novels. In Waldemar Hammenhög's partly autobiographical novel "Det var en gång en musiker" (Eng. There once was a musician"), it is for example stated about the operations of the Swedish Broadcasting Corporation:

> The way the Broadcasting Corporation handles their music broadcasts, the symphony orchestras and all other higher forms of music must necessarily seem like veritable solemnities of gloom to this generation. (1942:364)

Another example is found in Erik Asklund's Stockholm novel about the jazz career of five youths as dance-musicians, when Berra, before a difficult performance, says a silent prayer to his two gods Mozart and Chopin (1934/86:114). A third variant of this evaluation is found in the fact that it was only socially acceptable for persons within the higher echelons of the middle-class to occupy

themselves with hit music as a hobby (below amateur status). To become a professional within this genre was thus out of the question. An educated person could not make a living from a musical style that had a low social status, and in fashionable society the only musical profession possible was that of the successful composer or soloist (cf Haslum 1989:9, Edström 1982:15f).

It seems, then, fairly evident that the conceptual pair higher/lower music mirrored the public opinion within the middle class. Mannheim points out that, at each point in time, there is a social stratum "which is interested in maintaining the existing economic and social system and therefore clings to the corresponding style of thought" (1968:185). However, then the question presents itself to what extent this type of evaluation (higher-lower) prevailed within the working class in Gothenburg. If we use Mannheim's views as a starting point, it follows from the quotation given earlier that there are always other social strata that do not have the same conception of the world as the dominating stratum has, i.e. there is a type of value conflict:

> Since the different strata are 'interested in' and 'committed' to different world orders and world postulates, some of which are things past while others are just emerging, it is obvious that value conflicts permeate each stage of historical evolution (1968:185).

Is it then possible to answer the question from a broad working class perspective in order to find out what the differences were? To be able to answer this question it is necessary to have access to source material in the form of diaries, interviews and other sources, i.e. a broad material covering data about people born in the 1910s or earlier. If we had access to such material, it might still be criticized on the grounds of having been 'distorted' in various ways, by the subsequent social development and the way in which culture has changed, a risk which can be considered to be considerable. The ethnologists Frykman & Löfgren point to a similar complexity of problems in connection with their review of the cultural changes taking place in the interwar period:

> Retrospectively reconstructing working class life in the interwar years as reported in the media is not an easy task. The very fact that culture is built from a disadvantaged position means that much of our knowledge thereof is filtered through the mesh of the dominating culture. The alternative culture is defined and interpreted through middleclass words and trains of thought as presented in the bourgeois media, from newspaper debates to Government reports. (1985:106)

As, sadly, such material is on the whole unobtainable (sparse data can be found in Nordiska Museet's Arbetarbiografier and in Bohman 1981), I shall have to answer the question in a different way, through depicting the views expressed by persons belonging to the working class and their actions. A discussion of this kind can, among other things, be found in Stefan Bohman's thesis

”Working class culture and cultivated workers” (1985), which treats the type of music, its importance and the forms in which it has been performed within the workingclass movement in Sweden. Bohman’s presentation demonstrates how early working-class leaders like Branting and Palmstierna, as well as Sandler and Engberg in our time, actively campaigned for the adoption of higher cultural values by the working-class population, such as they had understood and experienced these cultural values themselves through their upbringing and studies.

Bohman answers the question of how a new social class finds new forms of cultural expression by stating that ”it takes place in the interaction with other classes and cultures” (1985:193). This quotation is i.a. based on an important thought, which I will return to later, namely that this interaction must have meant that, from the perspective of perception, the culture adopted was not the same to working-class people as to the people within the middle and upper classes; what at times seemed like an adoption of ‘higher’ cultural values and mores signified, at least partly, something else.

However, the fact remains that there was a wish within the influential circles of the working-class movement to guide their electorate towards the highest form of art music. Hence, it is difficult not to see that the working-class regarded a type of music, which was not familiar to them, i.e. the art music heritage of the Western World, as higher relative to their own musical culture. This inference is therefore not easily reconciled with the thought that music is classless, i.e. that the middle-class music at the same time was a working-class type of music.

Bohman also examines the different ways of reviewing concerts in working-class newspapers, arguing that special attention was focused on the reactions of the audience, the emotions aroused by the music as well as appraisals of the artists’ technical ability. The skill of the virtuosos was emphasized, thereby implicitly supporting a middle-class view on human beings, based on the individual. Nevertheless, Bohman writes:

> – the music articles were hardly instrumental in creating the educational level in workers that e.g. Branting sought to achieve. After all, the readers could be assumed to have understood very little of the reviews...But knowledge of the symbolic value of classical music makes it possible to interpret the use of this ideal as a proclamation to the surrounding world that the working-class movement is capable of being in power. (1985:55)

Bohmans’ work also shows that the music played and sung within ABF (The Workers’ Educational Association) and by independent choirs of workers, and the repertoire that superseded many traditional battle songs in the working-class movement’s song books, as a rule were neither ‘higher’ nor ‘lower’ but middle music. Furthermore, this kind of music was, when performed in a concert

setting, called popular, park or folk concerts. These additional connotations conveyed generally positive associations, in contrast to the hierarchical and class-related associations conveyed by the conceptual pair high/low. However, this is not entirely true of the term folk concert. As we shall soon see, these concerts were aimed at the "Workers' Institute's audience", which is not least apparent from the low price of admission. Consequently, "folk" in this context should not be taken to include the upper social stratum, but all others.

The endeavours within the working-class movement to make it possible for people to attend such concerts were supported also by liberal forces working to raise the standard of education.

The folk concerts of the Workers' Institute

Like Tegen before him, Bohman shows that there was a wish within the educated middleclass to disseminate their musical culture to the working-class. In Gothenburg, this manifested itself most clearly in the establishment of the Folk concerts, under the aegis of the Workers' Institute, started in the winter of 1895.

Martin Tegen points out in his thesis on the musical life in Stockholm during the period 1890-1910 (1955) that those who wanted to expand art music for the benefit of the workers thought that it sufficed to listen:

> But, in principle, they were of the opinion that music rests firmly on emotions and imagination ... The listeners did not need to know anything about the technical complexities. All they had to do was to immerse themselves in the tones. Thus, music could reach everyone and the serious propagation of music should not be regarded as the concern of a few people only ... Out of this reasoning grew the idea of popularization. (1953:30)

This can be understood as meaning that there was a wish within the middle-class to view their musical culture as *the* musical culture, which also other members of society should have the opportunity to enjoy. For example, the Worker Institute's annual report 1894/95 states that "friends of workers and music lovers in Gothenburg" have contributed money in order to "satisfy the need for aesthetic enjoyment among the Institute's audience" (op. cit. Berman 1983:71). The fact that this was regarded as possible at all was partly because this music was viewed as independent of class and culture and could therefore be enjoyed by everyone (Bohman 1985:51). Strictly objectively, this is of course not true; the wish as such to disseminate one's own culture reveals that the values of one's own culture were considered to rank higher.

Therefore, when this process started at the end of the 19th century, the working-class movement's view on culture and the culture-propagating approach of the bourgeoisie could be united in their

efforts to enable the working and rural population to come into contact with a higher musical culture. There are no statistics available on the content of the folk concerts but undoubtedly, the music could most often be said to range under the heading of middle music. However, during certain periods in Gothenburg at least, a deliberate improvement of the content of the folk concerts was noticeable. While in the first few years of this century the repertoire consisted of "uncomplicated music in the form of short, instrumental pieces and well-known vocal poems, romances, etc." (Berrman 1983:86), longer and 'higher' pieces gradually came to be performed. Gösta Berrman stresses that this could be explained by "increased subsidies", but there was surely an ulterior, higher motive behind the choice made by Elfrida Andrée and the other members of the programme committee, i.e. that

> – it would be possible to take on greater tasks, such as Händel's Messiah...organ compositions by Bach, Händel, among others, operas like Mozart's The Magic Flute, Weber's Friskytten...(1983:86p).

Against a background of the efforts by these different movements to change the musical habits of the working-class, it is difficult not to draw any other conclusion but that the mode of thinking of this period (higher/lower) also prevailed within the working-class. In all probability, the conceptual pair appeared in linguistic usage when the interest in music and culture on the whole assumed greater importance, and the pair was by degrees turned into an almost objective designation. However, because of the nature of the source material, it is not possible to express an opinion about which music was regarded as higher than any other within the large middle-music repertoire. Clear examples can probably only be given by way of the extremes of the conceptual pair: a Beethoven symphony was higher music, a "farmer jazz" tune like Johan på Snippen belonged to the lower music. The further away from the end-points we get, the more difficult it will probably be to do any consistent ranking. We find a similar principle of division in Alf Arvidsson's valuable work (1991) on the change in the musical culture of Holmsund, a community in the county of Norrland, dominated by its sawmill. When Sture Sandberg, a dock worker, and his sister played at union meetings in the 1930s, they saw their repertoire as consisting of two parts. Arvidsson discusses their views in a chapter of his book entitled "Education and pleasure: conquering the music of the concert hall". The music, which in this context is defined as 'higher' was, however, very seldom heard in Holmsund. To all intents and purposes therefore, the music that Sandberg designates as 'finer'

> – art music pieces and stylistically similar 'light' music, corresponds to middle music. His sister mentions, e.g., Czardasfurstinnan, Liebestraum, Humoresque by Dvorak, while hit songs, dance music and airs belonged to another category (1991:76).

Views and attitudes are entrenched structures, deeply internalized in the culture. Further light is shed on this argumentation through considering the cardinal thoughts expressed by a sociologist by the name of Bourdieu (1984) that the cultural differences, the distinctions between diverse groups, are learnt through general socialization and are perceived as different natural inclinations. His empirical data is drawn from France in the 1960s, a class society much like the Swedish one in the 1920s and 1930s.

In the book's perhaps most important and shortest sentence, Bourdieu writes that "Taste classifies and it classifies the classifier" (1984:6). Taste is one of the many social habits and values that are sustained through a self-imposed process, i.e. that the internalization at the same time is a legitimization of the prevailing view. Bourdieu frequently returns to the "circular nature" of internalization:

> One of the most important effects of the correspondence between real divisions and practical principles of decision, between social structures and mental structures, is undoubtedly the fact that primary experience of the social world is of doxa, an adherence to relations of order which, because they structure inseparably both the real world and the thought world, are accepted as self-evident. (1984:471)

However, Bourdieu is unable to provide a satisfactory answer as to how deeply values, like higher-lower are internalized in working-class man.

Reverting to my basic hypothesis about the unifying function of middle music, the changes within the musical culture eventually led to middle music being the most common music in society.[4] This takes place at the same time as efforts are made both within the working-class movement and the middle class to teach working-class people to listen to the 'highest' form of music. These people encountered music at popular concerts, park concerts, folk concerts but also in restaurants, cafés, cinemas, etc. Karl Mannheim has highlighted the fact that each new idea acquires a new meaning in a new context. As people's knowledge is moulded by the conditions under which they live, the opportunities open to working-class people were different from those of the middle and upper classes. However, as we have seen, Pierre Bourdieu put greater emphasis on the internalization of cultural values within the working-class, values which thus became their own. The difference in approach between these positions therefore seems to be concerned with how deeply the middle-class manner of regarding and experiencing music had been internalized by working-class people. The source material did not provide sufficient information to be able to answer this question fully. If, in

4 This process has been described in detail by Martin Tegen (1955) from the perspective of Stockholm and summarized by the words democratization – popularization – commercialization.

reality, middle music was a unifying force, this necessarily implies that the hierarchical thinking, in this case focused on the concept of higher-lower, had been moderated considerably. Otherwise we are left with the paradox of how music, which could not have been perceived as classless, could still have a unifying function between the classes. What is missing in the equation? Before we take a closer look at these unknown factors, I think it essential first to establish, by way of a short parenthesis, the merits of relativism.

Relativism viewed objectively

As a musicologist, I find it tempting to think that the task of literary scholars is easier; the spoken/written language is understood by everyone in our culture. Without going into the whys and wherefores, most people would probably agree that it is much easier to say what a word or sentence means than to agree on what a musical theme or phrase means. From this, a musicologist may draw the conclusion that it ought to be easier to decipher how the value of a text (narrative, short story, novel, etc.) relates to the values of society than in the case of music. The nature of a text is more concrete.

It is unlikely that a literary scholar like Barbara Hernnstein Smith would agree with me. Nevertheless, in a pioneering work (1988), which deserves great attention, she has indicated an unbeaten track between those who claim that there are absolute values ('the absolutists') and those who argue that, all things considered, everything is equally good ('the relativists'). Her discussions, which are based on Shakespeare's sonnets – in about the same way as a musicologist would have used Beethoven's symphonies as a basis – deal with how all value judgements, all statements are dependent on an intricate interplay between the relations in a social system (p 42–53):

> And each of the evaluative acts mentioned, like those of the author and the individual reader, represents a set of individual economic decisions, an adjudication among competing claims for limited resources of time, space, energy, attention – or, of course, money – also, insofar as the evaluation is a socially responsive act or part of a social transaction, a set of surmise, assumptions, or predictions regarding the personal economies of other people (1988:46).

Moreover, she manages to pierce various traditional explanatory patterns – the idea that changes in taste can be regarded as improvements (The Development Fallacy p. 79f), the concepts of truth-value (p. 85f), the possibility of distinguishing between objective and subjective evaluations (p. 90f), etc. – to the extent that the air is completely expelled from these balloons. The path she advocates in order to overcome the dilemmas she portrays consists of an attempt to objectify the relativist technique. It is then important to start from:

> a) a conceptualization of the world as continuously changing, irreducibly various, and multiply configurable, b) a corresponding tendency to find cognitively distasteful, unsatisfying, or counterintuitive any conception of the world as fixed and integral and/or having objectively determinate properties, and c) a corresponding inclination or inability to use terms such as "reality", "truth", "meaning", "reason", or "value" as glossed by the latter objectivist conceptions. (1988:151)

Consequently, value has to be determined on the basis of the interacting factors existing within a system/group, in such a way that it can be seen why certain things/thoughts/values have been given a certain value within the system/group during a certain time/period. This does not mean that it is possible to arrive at a value which represents the truth. An evaluation can never have a truth-value in the usual sense. An important reason for this is that, no matter what efforts are made, all relevant factors will still not have been considered:

> While "the best" the active relativist could do can never be better than the-best-all-things-considered, all things can never, in fact, be considered... In her inability to conceive of an objective basis for determining or choosing even which things to consider, however, the relativist acknowledges and takes responsibility for the fact that, for better or worse, it's a judgement call all the way down. (1988:164)

Barbara Hernnstein Smith's claim, that the value of texts should be judged as an economic value, as a complex interplay of factors within a system, is a useful contribution to a critical scientific approach, with no other claim than to deconstruct the structure of eternal truths built on traditions. The usefulness of her proposed method of working has probably not yet been tested in practice. It contains many thoughts and ideas that are tempting to test also to a musicologist.[5] As I have argued earlier (Edström 1990), there can, however, be no doubt that certain evaluations of different levels of quality in music as well as conceptions about the modes of listening to music are still

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5 Of course, there is reason to warn against throwing the baby out with the bath water, i.e. that the opposite of the absolute evaluation which Smith criticizes is replaced by a total value nihilism. However, the risk of this happening is small, as any evaluation includes an element of power, hidden or not. In his excellent review of music aesthetics, Sten Dahlstedt (1990) discus- ses the consequences of the French deconstructionist theories, as well as the general implications of the standpoints of contemporary philosophy with respect to communication and the relationship between knowledge and language. Thus, also Dahlstedt warns that a non-constructive relativism that may even be based on individual terms of references, may be the result: "The very existence of different possibilities of taking up a definite position on this kind of problems is one of the factors which has exerted the strongest influence in the direction seen in the last few decades of judging scientific theories as a more or less individual linguistic exercise with its own philosophical preconditions, and of attempting to understand, in a similar way, works of art based on their unique preconditions in terms of thinking and emotions. The positive aspect of this is equality, versatility and a boundless wealth of variety in thinking and aesthetical expression. The negative aspect is that the phenomenon of meaning is subjectified, which in the long term perspective could eventually lead to total solipsism" (1990:17).

characterized by what Smith would term the idealistic wishful thinking of absolutists.

Regrettably, Smith refrains from making an attempt, based on one or two different texts, to build the network of interdependent factors that together form the values of which the people in a social system are the carriers. This is regrettable, as it would have been easier to start the project by studying linguistic texts rather than semantically more 'woolly' musical texts. Now we can only intersperse Smith's conclusions and views in the earlier discussion. After this, I will revert to the unknown factors before 1910, as promised earlier.

New media – new mores – new outlooks – new ...

In the beginning of this century, the number of Swedish people who had been to the cinema and listened to the accompanying music was easily counted. In 1929, however, more than 2 million people (in Gothenburg) saw a silent film, in other words, a colossal development. During the same period, the number of concert and theatre-goers was fairly constant from year to year, at a level of approximately 60,000 per year.

It can be interesting to get an idea of how long, on average, a person listened to silent cinema music. To be able to do this, we must examine what kind of audiences frequented the pictures and how often. If we divide the number of cinema goers by the number of people living in Gothenburg at that time, and then multiply this figure by the respective length of each film show, we arrive at a figure of 12, i.e. each person listened on average to cinema music during approximately twelve hours per year. Assuming, for very good reasons, that by far the greatest number of film goers were between the ages of 10 and 50 years, this means that the number of hours that these people listened to cinema music is doubled, or rather, multiplied. Ten years later, the number of cinema goers stood at 4 million, while 90,000 concert-goers were recorded.

A similar line of reasoning can be pursued regarding the total time the concert audience listened to live music. In contrast to silent films, it can be assumed that the section of the population that went to concerts was considerably smaller. Perhaps some guidance can be obtained from the statistics prepared by the so-called Konsertbyråutredningen (SOU 1967:9) in the 1960s, which shows that 82% of those who only had elementary school education never went to a classical music concert (Table 5.42), and that 65% of the population in towns larger than 100,000 inhabitants had never been to a classical concert (it is also stated that 15.9% went "less than once a year", which seems to be the same as nil/cf Table 5:51).

Naturally, it is impossible to determine how valid these data from the 1960s are for e.g. the 1920s, and how different factors like school education and interests correlate with each other. However, assuming that in 1929 10% of the population, i.e. 25,000 persons, went to a concert at

least once a year, we arrive at a figure of a little more than 3 hours (60,000 visits divided by 25,000, times 1 hour/the average length of a concert).

A development, which cannot be seen from the statistics, is that folk concert audiences were decreasing sharply in the 1920s. While in the early 1920s the average number of concert-goers was approximately 600, this figure was reduced to 300 at the end of the decade, where with some fluctuations it more or less remained. From this follows that the percentage of theatre-goers can be assumed to have increased, as the figure for the total number of theatre or concert goers varied somewhat from year to year (see above).

The point I want to make is clear: from the turn of the century onwards, the inhabitants of Gothenburg encountered a completely new musical world, the world of film music. The dim interior of cinemas was perhaps the most important institution for musical socialization (sic).

The middle music used in a silent film context was frequently composed for the purpose of serving as background music, and the music industry expanded quickly in the USA, England, France and Germany. Claudia Gorbman's study "Unheard Melodies" (1987) summarizes some of the most common arguments for silent film music, i.a. that the music provided an emotional basis, interpreted moods and the actors' emotions, conveyed information and filled up longueurs in a more neutral way, so that the music created a sense of togetherness and security, which united the audience in an almost magical way. In addition, film music had:

> – important semiotic functions in the narrative: encoded according to late nineteenthcentury conventions, it provided historical, geographical, and atmospheric setting, it helped depict and identify characters and qualify actions. Along with undertitles, its semiotic functions compensated for the characters 'lack of speech'. (1987:53)

The music retained its hold over the audience also with the advent of sound films. Now the music is intermingled with real sounds and the actors' voices, but at the same time music is used that in some way plays its own part in the plot ('diagetic'), and as background music (for a review of how background music was composed in the 1930s, see Gorbman, pp. 7098).

The audience listened to film music in a setting they had chosen and paid for themselves, i.e. they had a positive attitude to the whole situation, both to the film and the music. The cinema was a world removed from everyday drudgery, a world associated with excitement, entertainment and adventure.

The music was an essential part of the film experience, to the audience as well as to the film producers and cinema owners. The value of offering excellent music is evident in different ways. At times, advertisements appeared in the Gothenburg press announcing the name of the leader of the

orchestra, e.g. the well-known leader of the Philharmonic Society, Francesco Asti. The fact that on one occasion he did not show up at the Palladium during the musical prelude resulted in a letter to the editor of the paper Vidi. Asti's name and that of the conductor at the Victoria cinema, Jacob Velt, were practically always mentioned in the interviews I have conducted with senior Gothenburg citizens. It was precisely these cinemas, Victoria, Cosmorama and Palladium, that had major orchestras, whereas other cinemas were content with having just one pianist. To give another example, when the cinema Metropol had been newly renovated, it was pointed out that they had a new orchestra, the balalaika band named "Russj". When a reviewer expressed his opinion that their musical accompaniment to an Indian film story was good, selected extracts thereof were printed and included in the advertisement for the film (GHT 260215). However, it is more likely that they played middle music rather than Indian music.

Even if many reviewers and many people in the audience initially expressed their dissatisfaction with the quality of the sound and the music in sound films, fascination with the spoken word and with the background sounds being real was sufficiently great. Of course, the difference between the sound reproduction in the sound films and the live sound from a major silent film orchestra was considerable. As we have seen, however, this did not affect the crowd of people queuing up at the box-office. In the 1930s, the quality of the sound reproduction was gradually improved.

Sound films quickly became the object of a great deal of attention, as they exerted a strong attraction. American so-called revue films attracted the greatest attention, then German comic-opera films, and then music and dance films with Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers. It is difficult to make any clear distinction between the music often introduced in these films and middle music. While the music in the German-speaking films predominantly consisted of middle music, there was a more obvious emphasis on popular songs in the American films at this time. In his encyclopedic work "American Popular Music and its Business", Sanjek (1988) shows in detail, firstly, the astronomical sums spent by film companies on obtaining the right music, secondly, the enormous value of the songs in marketing the films (one oracle proclaimed: "If the song isn't there, the picture can't help it" p.106), thirdly, how an escalating overabundance of musicians and orchestras suddenly became apparent (p. 153), and fourthly, how composers of considerable standing like Erich

Korngold, Max Steiner and Alfred Newman were employed by the film companies. The music that was not already middle music was 'refined' and made into middle music thro- ugh an ingenious arrangement. Further, the film audience could, so to speak, see that what they heard was at least middle music, thanks to the conduct and well-cut tail-coats of the musicians as well as the elegant

setting in which the music was performed.[6]

In Sweden there were composers, such as Jules Sylvain, Erik Baumann, Eric Bengtsson, Olof Thiel and Fred Winter, who all contributed hit songs and sometimes more typical background music to popular Swedish films. As a rule, the music was performed in elaborate arrangement. Hence, the conclusion with regard to sound films is the same as for silent films; film music continued to be among the most important encounters with music. Going to the pictures was a pastime often indulged in, which has often been described as the main principal enjoyment of the middle and working-classes.

Everybody can play the gramophone

All the enjoyment experienced when listening to a film melody could be experienced over again in one's own home through playing the melody on the gramophone, another new medium which changed the views on and evaluations of music.

The most egalitarian 'musical instrument' of that time was the gramophone, a sound tool everybody could play. In the 1910s gramophones were, however, fairly expensive to buy, the cost of the cheapest ones amounting to around 30 swedish crowns, and as a consequence, it was mainly people with a fairly good income who could invest in a gramophone. Those who had earlier bought the precursor of the gramophone, the graphophone, or an expensive self-playing piano were, of course, still fewer. As mentioned earlier, a portable gramophone was quite expensive in the 1920s, the equivalent of a fortnight's wages for an industrial worker. An uncomplicated 'home-gramophone' still cost around 30 swedish crowns. But this did not mean that there was a gramophone in every home. As one of my interviewees pointed out, the gramophone was still so unusual in the 1920s, that when he was invited to someone's home, he was asked to bring his portable gramophone and records. There is no data on how many gramophones there were in Sweden at this time, but the situation was probably very different from that in America; in 1926 there was, Sanjek writes, one gramophone in almost every other American home (p. 69). Records cost around 3 swedish crowns during this time, which can be compared with the hourly wages of approximately 1 swedish crown for most male workers and craftsmen. In other words, records were about three times as expensive as they are today.

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6 Note that many dance and jazz musicians in the 1920s and far into the 1930s were dressed in tails when performing. It would be interesting to study, in more detail, the choice of dress and the Swedish audience's perception of jazz, i.e. did jazz, in the modern sense of the word as music exclusively for listening, emerge during the same time period as when evening dress was doffed?

In his presentation of the development of the gramophone industry, Haas (1957) reports that in the early 1910s, almost twice as many records of art music (Ernste Musik) as popular music (Unterhaltungsmusik) were produced, but that this was soon changed so that in the late 1920s, popular music accounted for 75% of the record production. We do not, however, know how he defines E and U-music, respectively, and we may wonder how he classified the records recorded by the tenore robust Caruso. Both in the 1910s and 1920s, his records sold extremely well. For example, the sale of his records earned him more than 2 million dollars in 1921. When it comes to hit songs, Sanjek mentions circulation figures of between 2,000 and 3,000 for a relatively successful hit song on the American market, but also that there were examples of records in the 1920s, whose sales ran into millions, e.g. The Japanese Sandman with Paul Whiteman‘s orchestra (see Sanjek p. 117f, Hamm 1979:336f). Assuming that production corresponded to consumption, the music dominating record sales was thus to a very large extent popular music, dance music and hit songs (concepts which may overlap).[7]

The 1930s saw a sharp drop in the sale of records and sheet music. Sohlman's dictionary (1979) provides the information that the importation of records to Sweden was still high in 1929, a total of 3 million records, but there are no figures for the years around 1932 when the importation was low. However, German figures may serve as a guide: in 1929, 30 million records were sold, in 1930 20 million, after which the figures gradually decrease to 5 million in 1935 (Mezger 1975:127). There was a similar situation in the USA and England (Sanjek p. 117–118), and thus there are very good reasons for making the assumption that the situation was similar in Sweden, despite the fact that the first Swedish gramophone company, Sonora, started their operations in the midst of the depression, in 1932. Efforts were even made to keep sales up through sale from kiosks and through cheap records, e.g. the DURIUM record for 1.25 swedish crowns, whose repertoire in this time of depression probably reflects the assortment of middle music and dance music that still sold, e.g.:

No. 28 Morgonblätter, J Strauss' famous waltz Gräshoppornas dans, Bucalossi's masterpiece – the

7 It is precarious to judge whether this distribution and the shift in production between E and U- music can be said to have a similar distribution in sales in the 1920s. There is no available data on this. The sales figures for a record reveal nothing about how often it has been played. But even if we assume that the record companies made money on their record sale only, this assumption is complicated by the fact that it may perhaps have been cheaper to record art music (song and piano) than popular music. The costs of producing a popular hit song were low also for a large edition, yielding high profits. This meant that the companies could afford to produce many recordings of different hit songs, knowing that the success of only one of them would carry the costs of all the others. On the other hand, also Caruso's recordings sold in large editions. To summarize, all these different viewpoints considered, and against a background of the epithet of "the roaring twenties", and how widespread public dancing became, there is no reasonable cause for doubting that also the record sale consisted of 75% popular music (Unterhaltungsmusik) and 25% art musik (Ernste Musik).

> record for all musical connoisseurs
>
> No. 29 Between the devil... Happy–Go-lucky-you... two foxtrots, in a fantastic recording and sung by Kirbery.
>
> No. 30 Every day's a lucky day, quickstep, Five minutes to twelve, the waltz of the century – England's currently most popular dance melody.
>
> No. 31 Det var en gång en vals – Det finns ju ännu små äventyr, both from "Kärlek i valstakt" – the season's greatest hit melodies, N.D.A. writes (Charme 1932:No.21)

Likewise, the sale of gramophones shows a similar pattern. From the Swedish public statistics can be seen that the value of imported gramophones from Germany in 1924 amounted to approximately 400,000 swedish crowns, in 1927 to 1.3 million and in 1929 to 4.5 million, but that the figure dropped to slightly more than 600,000 swedish crowns in 1932. The fact is that the sales figures during the remaining years of the 1930s only showed a very slow improvement. As we shall soon see, a competitor to the gramophone appeared on the scene.

When middle music was played in cafés, restaurants, cinemas, open-air theatres, etc., other activities were always taking place concurrently: people were having coffee, eating food, concentrating on the story of a film, walking around, etc. As for gramophone music played in the home, two extremes are conceivable: that the music was surrounded by other social activities in the same or adjoining room, or that it was possible to listen to the flow of sounds fairly undisturbed, like in a concert hall. The more crowded the family and the less sound-proof the flat, the greater the number of possible disturbances.

The economic historian Cyril Ehrlich, author of works also within musicology (1985, 1989), has therefore claimed that there is correlation between the repertoire and the listeners' perception, and we may add, also between their reception and family/living situation:

> Meanwhile playing-time restrictions influenced repertory; the three minute jazz or dance number; the four minute popular classic, ... The manner of hearing was concentrated, far more commonly, perhaps than any time before, and certainly since; both because the brief duration of each side discouraged daydreaming or alternative pursuits, and because the high cost of discs encouraged intensive use of a small collection. During the 1930s and '40s record owner of every taste... knew their chosen music with a thoroughness previously only achieved by trained musicians... (Ehrlich 1991)

The 'consumer mentality', which is so widespread today, was unheard of in the interwar period. People took great care of their records, not least because they as a rule only had a small number.

From this we can draw the conclusion that the gramophone music in one's possession had a very high, personal value. The actual listening could also have a personal value in that it was something one could do oneself. Earlier it had not been possible to listen to music within one's own four walls which was intended to be performed in a public setting. It now became possible for a single individual to listen to a symphony performed by a large symphony orchestra, i.e. the listening became or could become an individual act, if the living conditions were not too crowded.

On the other hand, the high value placed on the gramophone records and the music as such can also be understood in the light of the gradually spreading social habit in the 1930s of listening to one's favourite records together with one's peers, probably started by secondary grammar school boys. In homes where music was a rarity, in spite of a certain amount of interest, the gramophone meant a great change. However, in homes where one listened to music every day, the gramophone did not cause any great upheaval but could act as a spur to increased music-playing, or alternatively, the music-making of the less advanced children at family gatherings, etc., could be replaced by the latest gramophone record.

Thus, Ehrlich's hypothesis indicates that, in the decades between the 1920s and the 1950s, there may have existed several listening modes in the home when the gramophone was played. On the one hand, there was concentrated listening to the few records one owned, to pieces that seldom lasted for more than three minutes, which undoubtedly meant that every little nick on the record was familiar. The best precondition for this kind of listening was a quiet home setting. On the other hand, there was the kind of listening, where the music was used to provide a backdrop to social home activities in a small flat. As the differences in the use of gramophones were substantial between individuals and between different families, we are here dealing with a spectrum of different listening modes. Irrespective of one's mode of listening, social and music background, everyone who had access to a gramophone could make music. So far, the gramophone was a truly egalitarian sound tool, from which very familiar music usually flowed and on which one therefore placed a very high value.

The civil engineer Eliasson's laboratory – the importance of the radio

Naturally, the possibilities of listening to radio music in the home were not fundamentally different from what was said above about the modes of listening to gramophone music. There is only one, quite essential, difference concerning choice. When playing a gramo- phone record, the choice of music is your own, whereas when the radio is turned on it is not. It was of course possible to try to tune in to some other music or to turn the radio off. Other individuals in the same room, who did not have a say in the choice of music, were in

both cases from this point of view passive recipients. Also in the case of the radio, the listeners could either listen to the music as background music or as at a concert. The communication with the gramophone as well as the radio was always one-way; it was possible to play the record repeatedly and the sound level could be varied, but two-way or direct communication as with a musician or band was not possible.

A number of persons of the so-called Frankfurter School warned against this aspect and other negative consequences, which they considered to be associated with the new medium. In his detailed review of the Frankfurter school, Martin Jay (1973) raises the subject of how Adorno was influenced by his friend Ernst Krênek's thoughts about the negative role of the radio. Krênek claimed, among other things, that the music played on the radio was characterized by a levelling out and that the music was reduced to merely becoming an everyday accessory. Jay also includes a third theorist, Benjamin, in this circle, and he summarizes:

> – radio brought about a crucial change in the aesthetic experience of the listener... Instead of experiencing the music with its 'auratic' qualities intact, the radio listener heard it in a depersonalized, collective, objectivized form, which robbed it of its negative function.
>
> – Adorno's own study of radio music agreed with Krênek's conclusions. (1973:191)

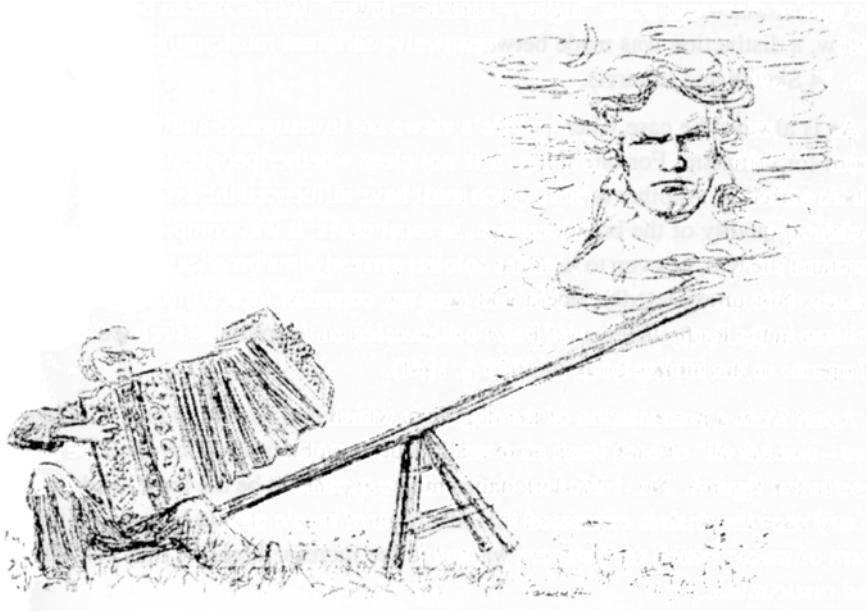
That ordinary radio listeners already at an early stage had thoughts about the implications of the radio is evident from several of the personal statements in The Broadcasting Corporations's tenth year-book in 1934. This is what Sven-Olof Molin, elementary school teacher, had to say:

> It has become quite common to listen to e.g. a Beethoven symphony to the additional accompaniment of loud discussions or even of the splashing from the wash-basin or the clatter in the washing-up bowl! In my opinion, such listeners use the radio in a negative manner, as a person's senses and concentration will be dulled. On the other hand, I have on many occasions experienced, yes innumerable are the times when in our house... there has been a whole circle of people, enjoying Haydn or Beethoven.. in complete silence, with the light switched off or with only the faint light from the tuning dial. We have then not only been present in the Concert Hall... but have been far

> away. Away from the present – from the dining-table and the washing-up bowl. (Röster om Radio 1934:243)

In Gothenburg, the programmes were in the beginning broadcast from the laboratory of an engineer by the name of Eliasson (wavelength 460 m), but were soon taken over by the Broadcasting Corporation, which officially started its regular activities on the 1st of January, 1925. The increase in the number of radio listeners had a similar staggering development as for the silent film audiences; in the beginning of 1925, the number of licence- holders was 40,000, in 1930 450,000 and in 1934 750,000. In 1929 it was estimated that 1.25 million people could listen regularly to the radio and that 45% of the broadcasting time was allocated to music. The spread of radio can also be measured in figures; while in 1927, 'special electrotechnical sets', as the term used by statisticians goes, were sold to the amount of 4.8 million swedish crowns, the corresponding figures for 1932 and 1937 were 12.6 and 24.7 million swedish crowns, respectively.

In the above-mentioned jubilee publication from 1934, we can find several pieces of evidence of the impact and importance of radio music, even if it is impossible to know how representative the various personal statements were for the population as a whole. Like many other musicians during this period, Gösta Nystroem, the composer, warned that mechanical music would have an excessively dampening effect on live music (pp. 100, 79). However, his was mainly a city perspective; the rural population in general had limited access to live music of the kind Nystroem was concerned with. For this population, the radio meant instead that the cultural isolation perceived by many was very much reduced, not that they stopped going to something which did not exist. Alf Henriksson, editor with a passion for adult education, considers that both Beethoven and Jularbo should have a place in it, but he warns against "thoughtless listening", as, he writes, "to have one's brain deafened by frolicsome noise is not one of the human rights" (1934:238). It is probably the editor of the book who has illustrated Henriksson's contribution by an apt drawing which clearly shows the complex nature of the two concepts of higher-lower, and also turns the knowledge about the law of gravity upside down:



The higher and the lower music
or
The heavier and the lighter

(Lagerstedt.)

Beethoven is also mentioned in other listener contributions. One listener, who had been brought up on Ahnfeldt's and Sankey's songs, confessed to having problems with understanding Beethoven, while another listener wrote that although he only managed to listen attentively for a few minutes the first time he listened to the 7th symphony, he "went into raptures" the third time and has never since missed an opportunity to listen to Beethoven (1934:249).

Five contributions deal with the great importance of entertainment music and of the socalled gramophone hour. One man had talked to many people who earlier had only listened to old-time dance music but who now gradually had gone over to "entertainment music and military music". There is even mention of the fact that the loudspeaker is on when listening to symphony concerts (1934:139).

The contributions to this publication bear witness to the popularity of middle music, but we do not know how representative they were. An attempt to statistically determine the views and preferences of the Swedish listeners was made by the Broadcasting Corporation in the summer of 1928, when questionnaires were distributed to licence-holders. The response rate was 42.6%, i.e. 154 943 responses were received. Out of these, every tenth response was apparently selected for processing (The Broadcasting Corporation 1929, cf Radiolyssnaren 1928:27).

It is actually possible to make a rough division of the various items of a programme into the earlier discussed scale "higher – middle – lower" music. As can be seen from the table below, a distinction was made between twelve different music programmes (not counting No. 14 Sketch and cabaret).

As is always the case when people's views are investigated and labelled, there is much room for criticism. For one thing, it is not clear whether people understood the different labels correctly. Another factor, which must have influenced the assessment, concerned the technical quality of the broadcastings. In most cases, it was completely impossible to understand the text, or even to hear the soloists properly in a broadcasting of an opera performance. Not unexpectedly, opera and jazz are common topics in the letters-to-the-editor column in the Radio listener (cf Rabe's discussion on the problems related to broadcastings of operas in the jubilee book of 1929 p. 194f).

Apart from a presentation of the degree to which one wished to have "more – the same less – none at all" of each item, an overall value was obtained which could be instantly read (see Index figure). No. 1 Modern dance music appears to be the least liked form of music, in any case the wish is expressed that this form of music should be reduced the most. The form of music which the listeners wanted to see increased most is thus No. 20 Folk-songs and rustic music.

If we include No. 4 Operettas, No. 8 Entertainment music and No. 15 Military music in middle music, we can see that the three forms are spread far apart. The form of music where one wanted to see the greatest increase was military music. It is open to speculation how much this increase was due to the popularity of the military bands as such and how much was due to the middle music they played. The problems of the labelling used in the questionnaire are evident here, as there is a very small difference between the music played by the military bands and entertainment music (No. 8). If No. 10 Choir song is counted as middle music, the positive picture is strengthened.

The table also shows that Operettas and Entertainment music were more appreciated in the cities than in rural areas (cf Index figures). 'Higher' music can be taken to include No. 2 Operas, No. 3 Symphony concerts and No. 7 Solemn orchestral music. While the two former types of music thus have a more or less negative profile, solemn orchestral music was regarded much more favourably. The wish to be able to listen to operas and symphony music was considerably lower in rural areas than in the cities. If we include No. 5 Solo singing in this division, the negative trend is reinforced.

There is a unanimous wish to have more of No. 17 Music on the accordion, No. 19 Old dance music and No. 20 Folk-songs and rustic music, i.e. the 'lower' type of music.

	Items of programme	The whole country				
		°/∞				Index °/∞
		+	+ –	–	0	
		1	2	3	4	5
1	Modern dancemusic	38	246	330	386	468
2	Opera	44	256	429	271	536
3	Symphony concert	62	383	392	163	672
4	Operetta	97	382	342	179	699
5	Solo singing	75	451	383	91	756
6	Pedagogical courses	50	540	302	108	766
7	Solemn orchestral music	157	502	288	53	882
8	Entertainment music	203	498	254	45	930
9	Reading of poetry and short stories	206	551	210	33	965
10	Choir song	221	552	175	52	971
11	Radio theatre	303	447	189	61	996
12	Children's programme	81	861	54	4	1010
13	Divine service	172	759	57	12	1045
14	Sketch and cabaret	473	333	118	76	1102
15	Military music	415	493	78	14	1155
16	News	376	612	11	1	1181
17	Accordion music	542	329	97	32	1191
18	Lectures	463	471	62	4	1197
19	Old dance music	563	342	71	24	1223
20	Folk-songs and rustic music	567	353	70	10	1239

Big cities					The countryside (and small cities)					Index of the-cities in °/oo of the country side	Col.6 in % of col.11	
°/oo				Index °/oo	°/oo				Index °/oo			
+	+ –	–	0		+	+ –	–	0				
6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	
42	260	347	351	496	35	237	318	410	449	110	120	1
75	308	394	223	618	23	219	454	304	480	129	326	2
85	418	368	129	730	46	359	408	187	632	116	185	3
157	431	274	138	803	55	347	389	209	625	128	285	4
90	464	360	86	779	65	442	398	95	739	105	138	5
61	586	253	100	806	42	508	336	114	739	109	145	6
153	469	317	61	858	160	525	268	47	899	95	96	7
261	506	205	28	1000	162	492	290	56	880	114	1618	8
238	535	194	33	989	184	562	221	33	948	104	129	9
209	538	187	66	946	230	561	166	43	989	96	91	10
371	446	142	41	1074	255	448	223	74	943	114	145	11
63	866	66	5	993	94	857	45	4	1020	97	67	12
108	789	84	19	993	217	738	38	7	1083	92	50	13
514	322	103	61	1144	445	340	128	87	1072	107	116	14
413	488	83	16	1149	417	497	73	13	1160	99	99	15
323	658	17	2	1152	413	580	6	1	1203	96	78	16
464	366	123	47	1123	596	304	78	22	1237	91	78	17
488	445	63	4	1208	446	489	61	4	1188	102	109	18
494	398	86	22	1182	611	303	61	25	1259	94	81	19
455	424	105	16	1158	646	303	46	6	1294	89	70	20

I do not intend to dwell on the low figures of modern dance music, merely to say that this form of music had a small group of listeners, dominated by young people, few of whom owned wireless sets (cf Edström 1989:205).8

Another table demonstrates the differences in views between working-class, middle– class and upper–class males, as well as between males and females, according to a division into cities, towns and rural areas. In the case of middle music, the figures show no significant differences between men of different classes in the cities in terms of entertainment music and military music. On the other hand, the wish among men to listen to operettas is higher the higher the social group (the index figures are 735, 810 and 914, respectively). The greatest differences emerge with regard to opera, where the index figures are 488 (working class), 603 (middle class) and 814 (upper class), and in the opposite, negative direction for music on the accordion (1305, 1130 and 865). In addition, the table shows that the women in the study in general wanted to hear more of the 'higher' forms of music than the men did, while the situation was reversed for the 'lower' kind of music. However, an internal report by Karl Arvid Edin, statistician to the Telegraph service, reveals that "women .. chiefly belong to a population group, whose social standard is somewhere between the middle and upper class" (Edin, no date). On the other hand, the views on middle music, like No. 8 Entertainment music and No. 15 Military music, are fairly similar between the sexes.

Obviously, the main problem with an investigation like this is that "more, the same, or less" has to be considered as "more" in relation to the actual programs offered, divided in the same way. However, the Broadcasting Corporation provides no data of this kind and those that do exist have been compiled after the survey was carried out. The jubilee publication of 1929 supplies the information that in "one winter month of 1929", 35% of the broadcasting time consisted of music. On top of this, 10% was gramophone music. It is furthermore stated that the percentage of music is higher for most foreign radio companies. Nevertheless, it was reported that 17% of the peak broadcasting time, between 19.15h and 21.15h, featured entertainment music, military music and choir song, while symphony concerts, orchestral music, solo singing, chamber music and operas amounted to 33% (1828:76f). But also the value of a figure like this is limited, as the time 19.15–21.15 gives a false picture of the programme content, which was confirmed by a single swoop into the programme schedules. On Wednesday the 11th of May, 1927, for example, modern dance music

8 Of the questionnaire material still extant in the central archives of the Telecommunications Administration (Series H VII:9), an internal compilation by Karl Arvid Edin is worth noting. Edin writes, i.a., that the form was sometimes filled in after consultation with "whole groups of people interested in the radio, who did not hold a licence themselves". Moreover, in his opinion, families who owned wireless sets had more than the average number of family members, why "the number of persons represented in the programme questionnaire far exceeded half the number of those eligible to answer the questionnaire". Unfortunately, the article provides no answer to the question of the age of the radio licence-holders.

was broadcast between 22.15h and 23.15h. The day after that, a programme with Ture Rangström's songs ("Solo song") was transmitted between 18.50h and 19.15h, and on the Friday, a quarter of an hour's chamber music was missed (the broadcast started at 19.00h) as well as the whole broadcast from Rolf's revue after 21.15h. In other words, nearly every day there is music which is outside the measuring points of the Broadcasting Corporation.

As a larger study of the Broadcasting Corporation's "real" programme content in relation to the number of listeners is lacking, it is wise to interpret the findings of the survey with caution. Although the survey was based on statistical data, the licence holders of 1929 were not representative of Sweden's population as a whole. Further, the distribution of the ownership of wireless sets between different population strata was uneven, and the radio network had not been fully developed. This imbalance is most clearly revealed in the figures for modern dance music. The results are a strong indication that there was a wish to listen to much more old and contemporary folk music (Nos. 17, 19 and 20) and considerably less of opera and symphony concerts, while middle music ended up in between these positions. It is to be noted that, according to the periodical the Radio Listener, Julius Rabe who was in charge of the Corporation's music section, is reported to have said of modern dance music that if the listeners wanted to have old-time dance music rather than jazz (=modern dance music), "they should be spared the jazz" (1927:No. 27).

It is therefore possible that the compilation of programmes which was presented in the jubilee publication of 1934 is a more true reflection of people's wishes, even if the Broadcasting Corporation naturally also continued to keep the banner of adult education flying. It can be seen from the compilation that higher or "art" music accounted for 12% and entertainment music for twice that figure. To this can be added "Cabaret and dance music" with a total of 11%.

In order to obtain a better knowledge of the programme content offered, I have studied the period of January 28th through March 3rd, 1934, concentrating on the content in relation to my earlier definition of the concepts of higher, middle and lower music, respectively. There is not much variation in the content during the five weeks studied. Every day features some form of symphony concert, chamber music or song recital as well as a gramophone hour, totally dominated by middle music, and, in addition, some form of entertainment music, performed by a military band or small entertainment orchestra. The lower type of music occurs more infrequently; a short programme once a week with Swedish folk- songs or other folk music, but as a rule there was both old and modern dance music on Saturdays. It is therefore hardly possible to give an example of an average day.

For the period studied as a whole, the higher form of music accounted for 31% of all broadcasting time, middle music for 51% and lower music for 19%. It is difficult to compare these figures with those of the Broadcasting Corporation, given above, as we do not know how they defined the music

under the three headings, but it seems as if my calculations with respect to middle music are too low rather than too high. In any case, the middle music made up at least half the time of 'musical' broadcasting.

Of course, the importance of The Broadcasting Corporation as a uniting factor in terms of music is not limited to Gothenburg but is valid for the whole of Sweden and for all Swedish-speaking persons who could receive the broadcasts. In the middle of the 1930s, it was estimated that more than one third of Sweden's population could be reached. However, the expansion continued unabated; five years later, the number of licence-holders had doubled, amounting to 1.5 million licences. On average, this meant that almost every fourth person had a radio licence, that almost all Swedes could listen to the same music at the same time, that a comprehensive musical socialization was taking place in various social groups and homes, and that music gradually became an everyday occurrence. Music could hereby function as a uniting link between people from different walks of life, in that it became a common topic of conversation. A foreman by the name of Axel Edén has described part of this change.

> The contribution of the radio towards popularizing music is perhaps most evident when the opportunity presents itself to exchange thoughts with like-minded people. I am a member of a male choir, whose members are mainly workers, low-ranking officials, shop assistants, etc., most of whom are keen radio listeners. At almost every rehearsal, there is "radio chat" during the breaks, and the current program items are discussed and criticized... (Röster om Radio 1934:138).

On the radio, middle music clearly dominated, which hereby became an integral part of everyday life, i.e. music was now once and for all firmly established in the home, besides all the other situations in which this kind of music was heard; the use of and need for middle music thus formed the basis of the personal value attached to this music. Even if each individual is unique in this situation, no doubt the patterns showed less variation between people of the same sex and social group than between different sexes and social groups. As we have seen from the findings of the survey, women generally wanted to have more of the 'higher' music on the radio.

At the same time as the middle music on the radio strengthened its role as a musical vernacular for the population as a whole, we can, however, also see that there was an inherent possibility in the new media, i.e. the radio as well as the gramophone and to a lesser extent the sound film had an inherent possibility of division according to the earlier discussed division of musical culture. Different groups and age groups gradually acquired both the time and money necessary to seek out group-specific repertoires. In Sweden, the earliest sign of this change was noticeable in the purchasing habits among secondary grammar school boys

in the 1930s. These boys liked to buy American dance music full of go, which they listened to in private or in the company of their peers, which in turn gave rise to specialised periodicals, such as Orkester Journalen and Estrad, to sound films such as Swing it Magistern, etc. If we take a huge step forward into the 1980s, it is easy to see that the Broadcasting Corporation tried to satisfy different tastes and age groups by playing barock, Hawaiian and jazz music as well as Lars Frisk's hit songs and other "music hours".

Consequently, this development shows that the apprehension expressed by Krênek and Adorno in the late 1930s, that the radio would have a levelling-out effect as an impersonal and collective music medium, has by no means come true. However, it is indisputable that music through loudspeakers may have a neutralizing effect or violate the performance of music and the intended situation the music was aimed at. When Helmut Rösing (1985) discusses, for example, the current situation, he therefore writes about what he calls today's "Übertragungsmusik":

> Sie wird beliebig austauchbar (Krenek 1938: Autonomieverlust von Musik im Radio) und verliert den Character des Besonderen, Einmaligen, Situationsbezogenen. Mit anderen Worten: Sie wird zur Alltagserscheinung, so wie es nahezu alles genuin für die Wiedergabe durch die Massenmedien produzierte Unterhaltungsmusik bzw. Leichte Musik von vornherein ist. (1985:296).

However, there is an important difference between today's situation as described by Rösing, and the situation I have outlined for the interwar years. At that time, music through loudspeakers was still a new phenomenon and music was relatively rare, which favoured the role and function of middle music. In all probability, listening to loudspeaker music leads to two diverging development trends: a) one consisting of increasingly differentiated types of music with its own broadcasting time, aimed at a particular group of avid listeners, while b) the other trend points towards a large national group of listeners, inattentively listening to a mix of undistinguished, inoffensive music.

In the above, I have touched on the importance of new factors for music socialization, such as the silent and sound films, the gramophone and the radio. During a comparatively short time, the expansion of these three media was enormous and their impact was far more far-reaching than that of any earlier medium. People, young and old, could, for a relatively modest sum, listen to music through loudspeakers, irrespective of sex and class. While middle music had completely dominated the silent film cinemas, it still in the 1930s made up the majority of the music played on the radio, whereas the gramophone music in the home apparently was more and more dominated by a narrow range of middle music, hit songs and other popular music, which gradually merged into the 'lower' musical world. Just as everyone who had a minimum of musical education could remember the leading melodies (phrases/catches) in the middle music they had heard, everyone who had a gram-

ophone or radio could, with still less effort (on their part) make the gramophones play music. Even if upper-class people were the first to afford the expensive gramophones, the prices fell so rapidly that they became affordable for most people. Unlike earlier music media, musical mediation and music settings, i.e. certain instruments, orchestras, sheet music, the concert form, concert halls, etc., the new media were not perceived to be associated with a particular social stratum. Everyone could go to the cinema or listen to music from a loudspeaker. In addition, it was possible to become familiar with the music, as the gramophone records could be played over and over again, something which had earlier only been possible for those who were themselves active performers.

I will now proceed to discuss how different social strata found both different and similar values in middle music and how this unifying type of music was used and listened to.

Middle music as a cement

In his topical and valuable review of English-speaking research within the area of popular music, Richard Middleton (1990) challenges most things: traditional musicology, the Frankfurter school, popular musicologists, etc. At the beginning of the book, he presents a theory which he considers to be the most promising and which he calls “a theory of articulation”:

> It preserves a relative autonomy for cultural and ideological elements (musical structures and song lyrics, for example) but also insists that those combinatory patterns that are actually constructed to mediate deep, objective patterns in the socio-economic formation, and that the mediation takes place in struggle: the classes fight to articulate together constituents of the cultural repertoire in particular ways so that they are organized in terms of principles or sets of values determined by the position and interests of the class in the prevailing mode of production. (1990:9)

My understanding of Middleton’s theory (and language) is that he presupposes that there is no straightforward congruence between “class” and “the sign community”. He bases his theory on a number of researchers inspired by marxism. His train of thought indirectly supports my theory about the possible unifying function of middle music. On the other hand, Middleton also seems to think that this takes place in a tug-of-war-like process, where the deep, objective patterns are determined by the position and values of the class. This thought supports a point I raised earlier; that middle music was after all not classless.

If we place this theory in the context of Gothenburg in the interwar years, we find, in conformity with the statistical data reported above, that the period was characterized by great differences and

tensions between different social strata. Frykman & Löfgren tell us that, within the growing layer of salaried employees and shop assistants and within the middle classes generally, or social group two as they are currently called in Swedish statistics, there was a feeling of "climbing" (1985:98). However, the picture of the social and cultural conditions of the middle classes is blurred. Within these classes, there existed certain consciously selected priorities, which at least gave an impression of respectability: housing, clothes and that children should be protected from the realities of working life: "When middle class children were put to work, it was not a question of economic but moral necessity" (p. 112). That the children should be taught to play an instrument was also part of their moral upbringing. It is quite clear, from the advertisements for piano-lessons in Gothenburg newspapers, that the number of advertisements is many times greater in bourgeois papers, such as Göteborgs Morgonpost and Göteborgs Handels- & Sjöfartstidning, than in Göteborgs-Posten and Göteborgstidningen. But it should also be pointed out that many groups within the middle classes lacked the financial means to realize the bourgeois ideals (see further Löfgren & Frykman p. 99).

From a working-class perspective, it was therefore evident that a peaceful class struggle was going on, which for the individual involved all the circumstances of life: school, housing, work, culture, leisure time, etc. As we have seen earlier, determined efforts were made within the leading stratum of the working-class movement for all working-class members to partake of the bourgeois cultural heritage. It is important to remember that the political perspective was changed when the social democratic party came into office in the 1920s and then 'for good' after the 1932 election, when social democracy began its long reign. Now, the cultural ambitions could, so to speak, emanate from a governmental level, and it is also at this level that the work to fulfill the expectations of a richer life for the workingclasses in general could start.

An attempt to analyse this process has been made by Bernt Gustavsson in his thesis on different educational ideals within social democracy. He identifies four main causes of the changed view on education in the 1930s: a) the changed methods of production, i.e. the industrial revolution had had its full impact, b) institutional changes, i.e. that parliamentary democracy had been implemented, c) that the first generation of social democrats had gradually made room for a new generation, and d) that the German influence was increasingly replaced by Anglo-Saxon and American influences (1991:224ff).

Also Löfgren & Frykman treat this gradual and inconspicuous change of perspectives, stressing the fact that the changes were so slow as to conceal what was happening. This process was initiated already in the 19th century, but then, the authors write, the building of culture within the working classes was primarily a question of survival:

> The situation was different in the interwar years. ... Now it was possible to start negotiations with

> those in power and even to force them to retreat in certain situations. However, in pace with the gradual undermining of the political and economic hegemony, new forms of cultural dominance were, paradoxically enough, created. With the integration of the new class into society, the working classes became more exposed to the missionary activities of the bourgeois culture, through all public institutions and the communication channels of the budding consumer society. This new form of superior power was often more difficult to recognize and hence more difficult to guard against. (1985:103)

For this reason, we should not expect any particular guiding principles for a social democratic music culture. It was not until many years after the Second World War that the social democratic party had a cultural programme worthy of the name. (Cf Edström 1982:250f).

Understanding this process of change during the interwar period from the standpoint of the individual was not any easier. For the individual, it was a matter of lived experiences which are not easily reconstructed. However, different sources from the interwar period have accounts of everyday situations that give evidence of the divide between the classes of that period. Löfgren & Frykman give several examples, one of which shows the feeling of insecurity in a teenager when approaching the city's most fashionable music café (p. 118). A similar thought-provoking episode is described in the Gothenburg paper Vidi, a conservative so-called boulevard paper. The person who observed the following was probably Barthold Lundén, the son of Rev. Lundén in Mölndal. Lundén, a staunch Conservative, was a chemist educated at Chalmers university of Technology, but had been an alto violinist with the Gothenburg Philharmonic Society since 1908. Nevertheless, he reported the following:

> **The emergence of class-hatred**
>
> Last week three well-dressed workers stepped into the city's railway station. They bought second-class tickets on the north-bound line and then went into the restaurant and ordered a lager each.
>
> – Only holders of first-class tickets are served, was the pert answer.
>
> The three workers pointed out that a notice at the entrance of the restaurant said both first and second-class holders.
>
> – It makes no difference – was the answer – we will not serve you.
>
> I had the opportunity to observe the incident. The three men were, as mentioned, welldressed and completely sober. I cannot understand why they should be harassed and insulted in this way. It is tactless behaviour like this which gives rise to class-hatred and keeps it smouldering. (190806)

What is lacking in both Löfgren & Frykman's as well as Lundén's accounts is whether there were bands playing in the restaurants, and if so, what music they played. Well, the workers might have gone to a beerhouse where they were served lager; the same kind of beer but in a different setting. Perhaps, the café also had a small band or an accordionist. If this was the case, the music would probably have consisted of a blend of fairly similar middle music; the same type of music but in a different setting. The question to be asked is thus: are all cultural habits and objects of equal value when it comes to their subjective content or is there, so to speak, a fundamental difference between lager and music. My line of argument is that there is such a difference, which is related to the abstract and polysemic nature of music, i.e. that, to some extent and independent of a person's background, there is a possibility of listening to and understanding middle music in a similar way.

My concluding discussion will be based on three different cases: a) I – upper class, a merchant family in Vasastaden in Gothenburg, b) II – middle class, a salaried employee and his family in Haga, and c) III – working class, a working-class family in Masthugget, and I will mainly deal with similarities and differences in terms of music. There is much detailed information in the investigation of life in Gothenburg in the period 1922–1923, clearly indicating real differences in incomes and expenditures. For example, among the workingclass families examined, 19 Swedish Crowns was expended on "recreation and pastimes", i.e. 4.50 per family member, whereas in a higher income group, probably corresponding to upper middle class, the figure was 25 Swedish Crowns.

In the early 1920s, the possibilities of playing music in the home were, on the whole, very dissimilar. Overcrowding and a poor financial position restricted the music-making in group II and especially group III homes. This can also be assumed to be valid for the possibility of playing the gramophone. In general, music was therefore more rarely played in the homes within groups II and III. On the other hand, singing was a possibility, usually airs, hit songs and hymns. Singing in unison also occurred at the meetings of trade-unions and temperance societies, and of course during the divine services of the national church and the free churches. It was not uncommon for an adult, in most cases a man, to take part in a choir, where the members belonged to the same social stratum.

In group I homes, on the other hand, pianos were common. Moreover, it was common for the children to learn to play the piano and also that middle music was played on the gramophone. In Gothenburg, many families belonging to group I played e.g. chamber music in their own homes. The support for Stora Teatern (the Opera) and the Philharmonic Society as well as the Chamber Music Society formed a part of this interest, which was fostered on social and musical grounds.

The importance of education for the musical socialization process has to be regarded as fairly similar and limited for the children in groups II and III. School songs and hymns were sung, i.e. melodies whose melodic and harmonic structure closely resembled that of middle music, which

thereby served to prepare the ground for this music. In general, it was not until secondary grammar school that the boys in group I encountered a form of education which also included instrumental music and choir-singing. Church-goers of all social categories also encountered the music played during the services. In addition, a few times every year, the largest state-owned church buildings were opened up for concert-type musical performances.

Within groups II and III, the profession of musician was probably viewed with a certain degree of scepticism; the musician's work as such was abstract and complex and required great talent. Arvidsson bases similar conclusions on the general opinion prevailing in the sawmill society of Norrland: the role of the professional musician "as an antifigure – work during evenings and weekends, the question of whether on the whole it was a real job for a man to sing or play music", and flying in the face of the typical Swedish characteristic of self-denial, are all mentioned as important reasons why musicians were frequently regarded with scepticism. Arvidsson summarizes:

> Establishing oneself as a professional musician also meant breaking away from the collective and to shatter the inseparable unity between the individual and the collective, on which working-class conceptions of social honour are built. (1991:143)

Thus, the professional musician did not in reality belong to the working-class collective; he was an individual within a generally bourgeois sphere, where the ultimate aim was to serve the highest gods: Mozart, Beethoven, Brahms, etc. Their music was very seldom encountered within groups II and III, but more often in group I, as these composers dominated the repertoires of chamber and symphony orchestras (also on the radio). The expectation was therefore that group I would be clearly over-represented at symphony concerts, subscription concerts, chamber music concerts and Stora Teatern's opera performances in particular.

The musician was also viewed sceptically by group I, as it was a career with severely restricted means and uncertain prospects, which one did not want one's son or daughter to embark upon. The highest reputation was enjoyed by respected composers, conductors and soloists. Among the musicians in Gothenburg, the leaders of the Philharmonic Society enjoyed the highest status.

As we have seen earlier, groups II and III encountered middle music in their spare time. There was, during the whole period, a need and demand for more and more music, both 'live' and so-called mechanical music. As a result of improved standards of living, changed leisure habits in combination with the musical potential of the new mass media, the demand for music was progressively increasing. As music was in short supply, it was highly valued; people often frequented special cinemas and cafés for the very reason that the music in these places was considered to be good. Artists with a special power of attraction drew a packed house. It occurred time and time again that vocal and instrumental soloists came to Gothenburg apparently to hold one

concert, but that a second concert was quickly arranged and sometimes even a fifth!

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From a polar perspective, the structure of middle music, performed by one or several musicians, was more complex – although not perceived to be too complex – than the music encountered by groups II and III in everyday situations. The music was played in settings encountered in one's leisure time, which were associated with positive values, and which were usually separate from dwellings and places of work.

On the other hand, the people in group I approached middle music from the opposite direction; music was more of an everyday experience, a valued part of one's life. Outside one's home, one listened to middle music, besides the places enumerated above, at Stora Teatern and at popular concerts performed by the symphony orchestras, venues which were at a walking distance from one's home. These people had learnt that it was expected of them to be quiet and to listen in a concentrated manner in these contexts, especially when the highest form of music was played. It can be assumed that this comportment and connected attitudes were not internalized as a matter of course for the people in groups II and III. In accordance with the ideals characteristic of the bourgeois cultural outlook, the peo- ple within group I therefore approached middle-music from above, but they did not find it too uncomplicated or uninteresting. However, sometimes attempts were made to raise it to the level of the highest form of art music, to which the German expression "gehobene Unterhaltungsmusik" bears witness. Thus, for all groups, middle music was regarded as valuable; from the standpoint of group I, to a somewhat lesser extent, from that of group III, considerably more.

In the course of the 1920s, an increasing number of people, within the different social strata in a city like Gothenburg, more and more often encountered the same kind of middle music in the cinemas. As time went on, also the radio and to a lesser extent the gramophone contributed to the consolidation of this development. Not least the radio, because of its large-scale concurrent penetration in Sweden, developed into a unifying medium, where middle music reaped great successes.

The statistics point in the same direction; while the differences in expenditure on children's education are still extremely large between the low and high income brackets in 1923, as well as between the middle class and working class in the investigation of 1933, there has been a marked levelling out of the item "Pastimes" (thus assuming that the designation "Recreation and pastimes" used in 1923 corresponds to "Pastimes" in 1933). In the latter year, an average of 21 Swedish Crowns was reported for the middle class and 15.50 for the working-class. The corresponding

figures for “Books” were 20 and 4.50, respectively, i.e. here the differences in values and financial possibilities are obvious.

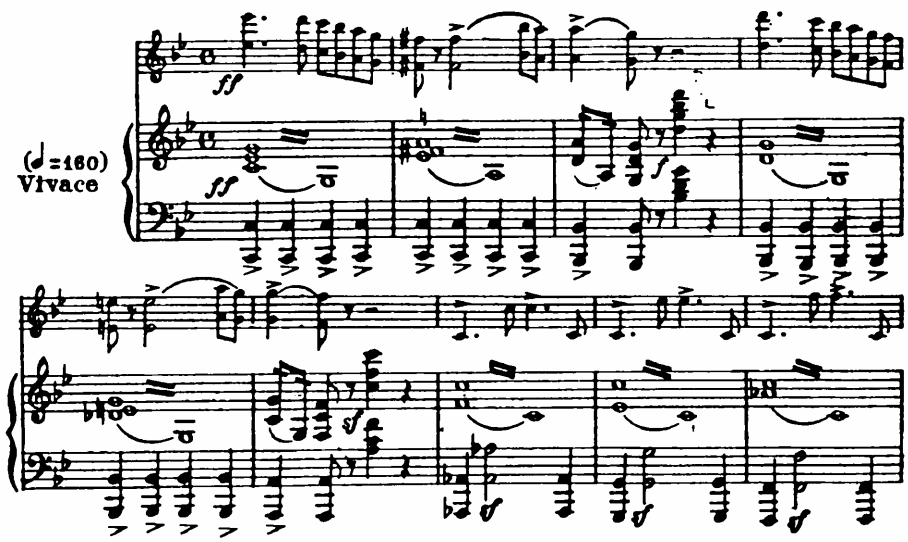
In the 1920s, there is no doubt whatsoever that there were major class differences (also) in terms of musical socialization. Within the lower social strata, people listened to middle music from their own standpoints, and to go back to Karl Mannheim (“social change of function.. is .. also a change of meaning”), the attitudes to this music were formed and the music was embraced on the basis of other preconditions than those prevailing for the people within the higher social strata, which meant that the music could not possibly have the same meaning or be said to be classless. At the same time, the lower social strata were constantly exposed to middle-class opinions and values, which were difficult to ignore and which were internalized as their own.

My interpretation of this continued development and of the reported figures for the 1930s is that middle music increasingly functioned as a unifying social cement between different social groups, despite, or thanks to, the fact that middle music can have both disparate and similar functions for people from different backgrounds. Another important aspect conducive to middle music being for a long time perceived as part of one’s own music was the political change process initiated in the 1920s – new thoughts and mores, the new media and the rapid development of these. This music was no longer thought of as ‘higher’ or ‘lower’, nor as ‘theirs’, but rather as ‘mine’ (cf Edström 1990:109f). To conclude, I will therefore discuss how middle music could be a unifying force without having been understood and received in the same way.

The functions and value of middle music

In an earlier article (1990) on i.a. the reception of middle music, I used an explanation model after Peter Ross (1983). I pointed out that the situations/settings seldom made it possible to apply a purely structural mode of reception and that an associative/emotional listening mode was more common. However, the possibilities of the latter mode of listening as well as of other and varied listening modes were considerable (see further the graphs, ibid p. 160f). It is not possible to establish, in any detail, the reception mode of a particular listener during the performance of a certain piece of music at a certain place, etc. This can only be established in extreme cases.

If, during a dramatic sequence of a silent movie film, the following agitated music by the French composer Gabriel-Marie (in Collection “Drama”, ed. Ricordi) was played, it is difficult to imagine that a structural mode of listening was at all possible (cf Edström 1986:23–26):



The situation is the same with respect to the functions of music; what functions a certain piece of middle music has for an individual at a certain point in time cannot be determined other than in a general sense. Further, it is impossible to define the weight of each function. The similar lines of argument and the almost identical models for the concepts of reception and function are an indication of an implicit relationship of some sort. It is difficult to imagine that music can have some kind of function if it has not first been received. Rösing (1984) advocates, for example, a division, based on the present musical world, into a conscious and an unconscious level of listening:

> – if music is to exercise any functions in the social/communicational and individual/psychological spheres at all, functions which transcend that of a mere background sound, it must affect the receiver, and must leave behind effects within him. (1984:128)

However, Rösing does not discuss in any detail the relationship between reception and function; it appears that no such in-depth discussion on this intricate interaction exists at all. True, that these problems are touched upon from different angles in some of the research carried out on reception and in different attempts to model so-called listener typologies, but as a rule these are too speculative or not supported by empirical material. As Helga de la Motte writes, there is today a feeling that "Die meisten Hörertypologien sind recht naiv konzipiert" (1985:300).[9] In consequence,

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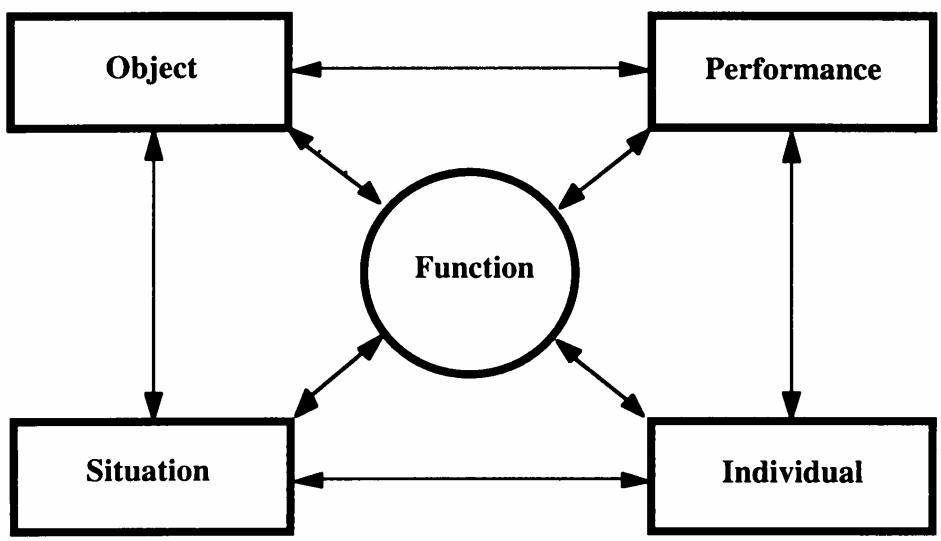
9 Overviews of reception research are found in Rösing (1984), partly in his own introduction, partly in Ross' article and partly in Sofia Lissa's study, where she also tries to integrate the two aspects of history of music and sociology. See also several articles in Musikpsychologie – Ein Handbuch in Schlüsselbegriffen, Hrsg Bruhn & Oertner & Rösing (1985).

a multitude of unanswered questions and problems remains to be researched and it is not my ambition to deal with them in this article. However, it is apparent that there are clear parallels in certain cases, for example that a motoric/reflexive listening mode (this reception term and the following are after Rösing) is a prerequisite for the ability of music to have or function as a physical response, or that an associative as well as an emotional mode of listening facilitates its function of symbolic representation (both these functions are drawn from Merriam's classic division, 1964).

In other cases, the relationships are problematic, and I can here only raise a few questions: Does, for example, a musical function presuppose a structural mode of reception? How did the private circumstances surrounding gramophone and radio listening influence a structural mode of reception? Did the listening become more individual-oriented?

Enumerations of the possible functions of music are certainly not lacking. As I have mentioned above, the most often cited compilation is found in Merriam (1964:219f). I have recently discussed the functions of the hit song in Swedish society during the period 1910– 40 (see Edström 1989:306–38 and 1986) and will therefore not repeat this discussion here. Instead, the function of music should here be seen as depending on four interacting factors based on the model below. I have added one variable to Ross' model, the performance, in order to emphasize that the object sounds in different ways. This may seem to be a matter of course, but I have found it essential to stress that middle music is not to be regarded as a piece of music in a German idealistic sense (cf Dahlhaus 1983:6f). Thus, four factors are included: a) the object = the structure of the music – please note that middle music was often performed in different arrangements and could be played by different kinds of ensembles, b) the performance = the music played by different ensembles (or individual musician), c) the situation = the place and time, in which the music was performed, and d) the individual = a person's background, personal disposition and preconditions:

Listener typologies are treated in these two works and also in de la Motte's above-mentioned handbook (1985). Theodor W Adorno's often cited discussion on different types of listeners can be read in Swedish in his Musiksociologi – 12 teoretiska föreläsningar, Kristianstad, 1976. See further e.g. Ross' article in Rösing (1984) for a review of these.

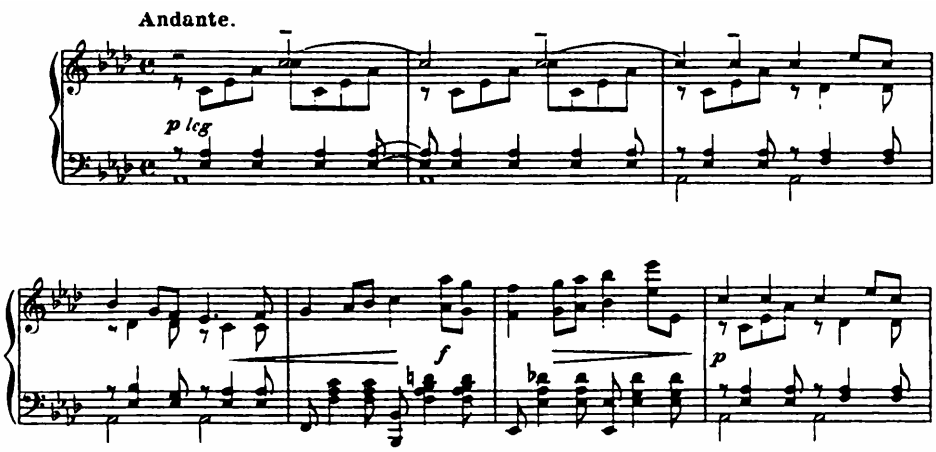


It can be seen from the model that the function of music should always be seen as an interaction between a) the structure of the object, i.e. b) the music performed by the musician/ orchestra, c) in relation to the situation in which the music is performed, and d) in relation to the cultural background and disposition of the individual.

The comparatively broad structural definition of middle music formulated above means that middle music can be of different kinds: marches, Hungarian dances, certain types of hitsongs, overtures, character pieces, fantasies, operetta medleys, etc. In all probability, the composer has at least intended his composition, the object, to be used in (a) certain context(s), to which the structure of the music is adapted. But a characteristic of middle music is that this structural adaptation can be perceived as very broad and varying. Although middle music includes pieces whose function is (or can be) intended for a certain context, e.g. for marching, a prelude to a play, etc., the performance of the same marching melody, etc., may be very different; it may be the first item on the programme for the evening played by a restaurant trio or the last item of the gramophone hour on the radio played by the Royal Life Guards' band.

Hence, the structure of the music allowed the music to be played in different situations. This means that it was not necessary to march when a march was being played or even to feel that it was necessary to do so. Tapping one's fingers on the table could suffice. The same could be said of Viennese waltz; the structure permits different modes of listening and different functions.

This is true of the following piece; it could be played in all 'middle' contexts irrespective of whether it was originally intended for a certain purpose/a certain context:



The possibility within a culture to attribute different meanings and associations to music allows a piece of music to mean different things. Even if the structure of music is regarded as a constant factor, the end result is different as a consequence of the additional factors place, musicians (instruments), performance, individual. Of course, also piece upon piece, song upon song, etc. are added to larger units in each individual's conceptual world; for this reason we can talk about middle music as a concept.

If we use the piece of music above as a starting-point, we may assume that it was heard by different people in widely different contexts and thus with different results. While, e.g. a) a person born in the 1890s in a bourgeois home associated this song with his home, where his mother often amused herself and her friends by solo singing, b) another person born a few years later might have encountered this piece for the first time when it was performed by a duo, the piano and the violin, at his favourite restaurant, while c) a nine-year old girl, brought up in comparative poverty in Majorna, heard the piece for the first time in the cinema, played by Asti's band at the Palladium as background music to a very romantic sequence in a Swedish silent film. As can be seen, the piece was performed by different types of ensembles with different forms of arrangements in these three cases, i.e. the performances were different.

Examples of this kind can be multiplied endlessly but the point remains the same: the piece has no clear-cut semantic message, as the meaning/content of music can be influenced in many directions and have different charges and values, depending on the factors outlined above. This is a quality which has a decisive importance for the *utility value and functions* of music; middle music can be used in different situations, be played by different persons/orchestras, with different arrangements and be heard by different people. To mention some of the functions Merriam enumerates, it is thus clear, that the piece functions as a form of 'emotional expression' for the three

hypothetical persons but in different ways. The piece also reinforces "[the] conformity to social norms" but in completely different ways for the person brought up in a middle-class home (case a/ above) and for the girl who grew up in a working-class home in Majorna (case b). Similarly, it is possible to go through 'all' conceivable functions and to reflect on similarities and differences. However, what is most important is to realize that there is a very complex relationship between the different factors, a relationship which not only determines the function of the music but also its reception, meaning and value (see further below).

In fact, this very piece was extremely often played during the period studied and can therefore be assumed to have been a great popular favourite. This made the music 'my' music, irrespective of its original place and function, and as such it represents music-making in a Swedish national-romantic middle-class home. The piece is called "Jungfrun under lind", which was part of a collection of three songs, opus 10 composed by Wilhelm Peterson-Berger in 1895. It is far removed from today's middle music and is probably sinking into oblivion.

All middle music was therefore, to a great extent, exchangeable and could be performed in different ways and in different situations. Conversely, (although the principle of exchangeability is retained) Rösing (1984), in his discussion on today's contemporary music ("contemporary U-Musik"), points out that the nature of this music is such that the social functions of the music are exchangeable:

> [the music] is aimed primarily at the individual sphere, its goal the maximum satisfaction of the maximum number, based on a high level of prior knowledge and familiarity. Consequently, its social functions are always interchangeable. Advertising of products, motivation of work in factories, positive stimulation in shops or on car journeys, generation of community spirit at public events... all these and other purposes can be served by one and the same music". (1984:125).

The character of 'higher' music, on the other hand, was more stationary; a symphony was performed and should be performed by a symphony orchestra on premises intended for this very purpose.

In the same way, there were also underlying values, governing what orchestras/musicians could play what music, although this influence was very weak. The Gothenburg Philharmonic Society now and then played, for example, dance music during soirée evenings in the Concert Hall, which was appreciated by the senior middle-class members of the audience, though not always the by the younger ones, if we are to believe Barthold Lundéns report:

> The young people dancing at the Concert Hall ball... do not consider Mr. Stenhammar, the honorary doctor of music, to be a man of honour... spoils their pleasure. The dance, for example the one-

> step... sets the time, turns his back on the orchestra and plays at least three times too fast. Experts contend that the honorary doctor of music does not know how a one- step should be played. However that may be, it is unforgivable... (Vidi 190226)

In this case, the whole orchestra played the wrong tempo; otherwise there were no complaints. However, there was probably a 'lower' musical limit for a small circle of musicians who were regarded as the servants of the 'highest' form of music only, like certain composers and soloists, whose repertoires only featured classical or modern works, chamber music groups and string quartets. This group was no doubt very small. A simple explanation for this might be that many of these musicians/singers lacked talent outside their own specific area. As we have seen, musicians as well as small dance bands, old-time dance bands, and, at least in the beginning of the period, particularly 'hot'-playing jazz musicians were considered to be outside the domain of middle music. In the late 1930s, however, orchestras like Håkan von Eichwald's could play both middle music and jazz in the people's parks and, as pointed out in connection with the transcription of 'Ramona' earlier, this mixed repertoire was normal for large, world-famous orchestras like Paul Whiteman's, Jack Hylton's and Bert Ambrose' orchestras, among others.

Thus, in the interwar period, it was natural and accepted for a distinguished violinist like Carl Garaguly, leader of the Philharmonic Society, to double as a conductor in a cinema. It was a normal thing for musicians of the city's most distinguished orchestra, the Gothenburg Philharmonic Society, to move between different spheres as unifying agents, from the music temple to silent film cinemas and restaurants. However, this type of professional musician gradually disappeared. This was partly due to external conditions, such as the disappearance of silent film jobs around 1930, the extension of the orchestral musicians' contracts from seven to twelve months in 1937, which meant that many musicians no longer needed to work in restaurants during the summer months, and the gradual disappearance of the opportunities to work in restaurants from the 1940s onwards. An additional factor is the "separation of tastes" that we observed earlier, which entailed increased specialization within different niches: "classical" musicians, dance musicians, jazz musicians, etc.

Finally, if we consider the concept of value, it is obvious that this to a high degree correlates with the concept of function. For instance, the fact that a middle-class family regarded it as essential that their children should be taught to play an instrument reflects the important function and high value imputed to music. The music which was most highly valued was also the one with the richest content and it was therefore expected of the listeners to listen to it with the greatest attention.

As discussed above, this reasoning was conceived of as an "eternal" and bourgeois "truth", which was inherent in the culture, into which the 'rising' working classes were socialized. We can agree with Bourdieu when he describes the fundamental dispositions of humans as inert, slow-moving structures, and that the symbolic capital of these dispositions conferred on these people a high

standing within the dominating class, to a certain extent irrespective of their financial capital (see Broady 1990:212, 225, 234).

To return to Hernstein Smith's work and thesis on "the cultural-historical dynamics of endurance" (see p 47f) and my discussion on 'higher' music, it should here be further emphasized that, in the interwar years, this was a 'self-supporting' system of middle-class values, which with a circular-like logic sustained 'good taste'. This evaluation system was therefore the opposite of the relativistic value system advocated by Smith. According to this system, the following four factors can be seen as the sides of a quadrangle, whose surface and circumference are determined by these sides. In order to function as a rectangle, the sides must be closed and the values kept inside them. The order in which the sides are considered and also perceived in relation to each other is arbitrary. Thus, to say that a) the most valuable music had b) the richest content, which presupposes c) a structural listening mode, and entails d) an aesthetical-autonomous function, might as well be expressed in the following way: that d) an aesthetical-autonomous listening mode presupposes music with b) the richest content, why this a) valuable music must be listened to by way of c) a structural mode of listening.

If thus the fundamental value attributed to music during the period studied is dependent on the prevailing values in the 1910s and changes with society's general political, socioeconomic development, including the changed mores of the people concerned and the influence of new media, i.e. film, the gramophone and the radio, then there is also, by analogy with the concept of function, a personal value for each individual, depending on the individual's position.

The fundamental cultural value of middle music forms the basis for the subjective value of music. Middleton discusses a similar process in connection with the value and importance of present-day pop songs. He mostly talks about "positional values" for the individual, giving the example that "popular songs offer positions to subjects, who evaluate them in terms of their function as 'markers of social and individual difference'" (1990:252), but he also enumerates other values, which like the former lack "a fixed point of perspective from which they can be mapped and ranked... [i.e.]: Communicative values... Ritual values.. Technical values... Erotic values... Political values..." (p. 253). All these values are relevant also to middle music, but Middleton also puts the rhetorical question: " – by what criteria can any musical values be legitimated, other than in terms of the participation of those involved?" (ibid).

It is here only possible to establish, by way of a graphic illustration, how the sizes of the different rectangles in the figure below, taken together, yield different surfaces which can be understood as an individually perceived value for the respective rectangle. In the spirit of Barbara Hernstein Smith, it is however important not to view the total area of the rectangles as an objective quantitative/qualitative value, but to view the figures in a controlled, relativistic light.

If, therefore, we use the same persons in an arbitrary order, like above in the case of "Jungfrun under lind" – and regard the individual as a constant quantity (the size of the rectangle) – we may hypothesize that the value to the individual of one and the same piece of middle music varies with the different individuals. While a) individual No. 1 is relatively familiar with the structure of the piece (the object), enjoys it and is especially pleased with the orchestra's performance/arrangement but less pleased with the situation/setting in which she finds herself, b) individual No. 2 is not pleased with any of the three factors, and c) individual No. 3 primarily appreciates the music's structure and the situation/setting very highly. In any sense to exactly measure and compare these values, based on three different individual perspectives, is however an impossible task. When cultural sociologists attempt to measure and distinguish different socio-cultural habits and values, this is as a rule made on the basis of cold figures, portfolios à la Bourdieu, based on investigations of large groups. In this way, statistically reliable results are produced (to my knowledge, the latest survey of this kind was published in the autumn of 1990, carried out by SIFO on behalf of Kulturrådet, see Göteborgs-Posten 900826).

The concepts of reception, function, value and content are, in other words, interdependent. As the earlier figure on the function of music showed in principle, this interplay is very complex, relative and difficult to capture in a theory. An apparent way out of this dilemma is to emphasize that the cultural and ideological elements are relatively independent, as could be seen from the earlier quotation from Middleton (see again p. 42). However, at the same time Middleton also asserts that these elements (="combinatory patterns") convey "deep, objective patterns in the socio-economic formation" (1990:9). The contradiction between these two assertions is obvious and has still to be resolved. As Donald Broady (1990) states in his excellent exposition of Bourdieu's authorship and the historical epistemology, contemporary marxist discussion did not succeed in untying the knot; how culture can be both dependent on the economic level and independent of it is thus a classic and unresolved question (p. 287). Broady elucidates:

> The talk about relative autonomy hereby becomes [in the marxist explanations] only a way of putting a label on that which so to speak is left unexplained by the tools available (p. 290).

This is why I have tried to highlight the fact that if these elements convey anything, it is 'deep, subjective experiences from the standpoint of the culture and socio-economic position of the respective individual' and not deep, objective patterns in the socio-economic structure (cf above).[10]

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10 In an earlier draft of this article (May 1991), this section had the following concluding sentence: "On the other hand, Middleton is right in that they [the cultural processes] take place within "the prevailing mode of production". Today I find little justification for these words, or rather, I find them pointless, as there, in principle, is no difference in the mode of production between the western countries that Middleton's theses refer to, i.e. capitalist industrialized

Conclusion

I have in this article above all provided the reader with a presentation, and hopefully an understanding, of how the interacting events during the period 1919–1939 created the opportunities for middle music to become a unifying but nevertheless not classless music. The article is one of several in an effort to create an overall comprehension of and to find relevant methods for my research on the musical life in Gothenburg in the interwar years (pilot project supported by HSFR).

It is to be hoped that my presentation has shown that middle music became an important part of the working-class people's (group III) 'own' music. This was also the case for people within other social strata in Gothenburg. However, the experiences of and attitudes to this music were internalized from different class perspectives. Music became a common component of Swedish society, both in everyday life and on festive occasions and thus had a unifying function, not least during a period when the Swedish Welfare State started to be built.

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countries like England, France, Germany and Sweden. The explanatory value seems to vanish in the same haze as the thesis on the relative independence of art. Bourdieu's thinking espouses another approach. Broady writes: "For Bourdieu, the economy does not constitute a 'basis' in a classic marxist sense, and references to 'conclusion in the last resort'[a reference to Althusser] he views as a rhetorical device to avoid the empirical exertion of analyzing the nature of any controlling influence of the economy" (1990:287). On the other hand, there is a continual propagation of theories with marxist roots. In, for example, Thomas Docherty's interesting study (1990) of the possibilities of postmarxism, he takes a long-term view and he summarizes: "If I think only according to the ideology of a particular language-game, then, postmarxism asserts, I am not thinking at all... Similarly with the discourse of marxism: simply identify the mode of production relevant to a particular event, and the system of marxism itself will fill in all the blanks and produce an answer to our problem. This, clearly, is not thought at all ...postmarxism asserts that thought is only possible at the very interface between theoretical systems." (p. 218 [italics by me]). The differences between Middleton's, Bourdieu's and Docherty's knowledge- theoretical view are thus substantial. However, in my opinion the choice is a simple one, not because it is a matter of somebody being in the right or wrong but because it is better to say, like Bourdieu, that the available tools and methods have been unable to solve the problems or disagreements, than to settle for solutions that presuppose a belief in a relative autonomy or the conviction that one factor takes precedence over others. Hopefully, my discussion about the value of middle music has, if nothing else, clearly demonstrated the complexity of the problem.

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