

# **The Göteborg connection**

## **Lessons in the history and politics of popular music education and research**

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### **Background**

#### **Why this article?**

Both this journal (*Popular Music*) and the International Association for the Study of Popular Music (IASPM) have been in existence for almost a generation. Given the radical social and political changes affecting the general spheres of work, education and research since the establishment of those two institutions in 1981, it is perhaps time for popular music scholars to review their own historical position and to work out strategies for the brave new world of monetarism facing those who will hopefully survive another generation after we quinquagenarian baby boomers of the rock era have disappeared from the academic scene. Of course, such a process of intellectual and ideological stocktaking requires detailed discussion of a wide range of political, economic and social issues that can in no way be covered in a single article. I will therefore restrict the account that follows to a discussion of one particular set of historical strands affecting the development of popular music studies. This part of our history is virtually unknown in the anglophone quarters that have, for obvious reasons of language and music media hegemony, dominated the international field of popular music studies. It is, however, as I hope to show, a story of considerable relevance to more general problems of music education and research at the turn of the millennium. I shall return to these broader issues at the end of the article.

Before launching into the account proper, I should perhaps explain that I have called this missing link in popular music studies history 'the Göteborg connection' because it was in Göteborg,<sup>1</sup> from 1967 onwards, that a unique and extremely dynamic combination of practical and theoretical approaches to music was developed. Concrete symptoms of such dynamism were (i) the founding in 1968 of a new department of musicology with a clear sociological profile; (ii) the establishment in 1971 of a music teacher training programme, still in existence, which included various forms of popular music as an important part of the curriculum; (iii) the successful completion, between 1979 and 1989, of seventeen doctorates in musicology, twelve of which are chiefly devoted to the scholarly study of popular music;<sup>2</sup> (iv) support, between 1980 and 1985, for the establishment and initial development of IASPM. It is doubtful if any other single institution can boast such a record of theoretical and practical contributions to popular music studies, especially in view of the fact that these activities were carried out in the second city of a nation somewhere out in the Adornian as well as anglocentric periphery, a

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1. Göteborg (pronounced 'yer-ter-borry', population ca. 500,000) is the second largest city in Sweden. It is Scandinavia's largest port and Volvo's home town.

2. These twelve doctorates are Tagg 1979a, Thorsén 1980, Wallis & Malm 1982, Reimers 1983, Fornäs 1985, Bernskiöld 1986, Åhlén 1987, Björnberg 1987, Öhrström 1987, Stockfelt 1988, Karlsson 1988 and Lilliestam 1988 (see bibliography).

nation whose language is probably understood by less than twenty million people worldwide. Such an anomaly begs the question 'how come?'

### ***Methodological caveat***

Before attempting to answer that question, however, a short methodological caveat is necessary in that much of what follows is based on my own first-hand experience. I was, from July 1971 to March 1991, deeply involved in many of the activities of the various musical institutions connected to the University of Göteborg and would ask the reader to be as aware as I am of the methodological problems relating to such long-term and personal observer participation that relies on the author's own memory as primary source. Nevertheless, despite this problem and apart from the fact that information thus collected and ideas thus presented are clearly preferable to none at all, the account should provide accurate insights, not least because I have also been able to make extensive use of the following sources:

1. a three-hour interview with Jan Ling on 5 September 1994, (abbr. 'Ling 940905');
2. conversations with colleagues in Göteborg (1994-5);<sup>3</sup>
3. official documentation and other literature presented in the list of references following this article.

### ***Why Sweden?***

#### ***Historical ballast***

The socio-economic and political climate of postwar Sweden, especially in the sixties, provides some interesting answers to the question 'why Sweden?', one obvious contributing factor being Sweden's lack of high-cultural historical ballast in relation to other nations. To put it simply, Swedes did not have to contend with the legacy of the likes of Bach, Bacon, Beethoven, Descartes, Debussy, Dante, Da Vinci, Gallilei, Goethe, Haydn, Hegel, Mozart, Pascal, Purcell, Sartre, Schiller or Shakespeare: they just had Strindberg, so to speak, and recent experience as one of Europe's poorest rural nations. This means that there were no really big historical names of high culture on which to focus bourgeois national identity and that the institutionalisation of high culture was therefore less substantial and less powerful than elsewhere.

Similarly, Sweden's history of class conflict also differs radically from that of the UK or Central Europe and the nation experienced a much later and faster process of industrialisation. All these factors and others, far too numerous and complex to describe here, contributed to the establishment of a political climate in which the official public debate of popular music and the subsequent institutionalisation of musical and musicological studies in that field was able to materialise and flourish earlier than in most other European nations.

Another set of factors contributing to greater openness in Sweden than elsewhere contemporarily in Europe towards popular music as an area of practical and theoretical importance consisted of the nation's recent political past, its generational demography and its high standard of living. Although its wartime government was morally compromised, Sweden as a national

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3. Chiefly Alf Björnberg, Bengt Olsson and Ola Stockfelt

economy emerged virtually unscathed from World War II, and was by the sixties enjoying considerable economic prosperity. The nation's baby boomers were approaching university age and the Social Democrats, who had been in power more or less uninterruptedly since 1933, needed to formulate and implement policies in the areas of culture and education that would gain the support of many first-time voters. Olof Palme, student leader of the previous decade and later prime minister, was Minister of Education during most of the sixties. Towards the end of that decade he marched with Le Duc To in a rally against US aggression in Vietnam. It was the age of student radicalism and, later, the 'New Left'.

### ***Nylöf and the national curriculum***

It was in this political and cultural climate (1964) that sociologist Göran Nylöf was commissioned by the newly established Swedish Concert Agency Commission (*Konsertbyråutredningen*) to investigate the musical habits of the country's population. This investigation resulted in a detailed empirical report entitled 'Musical Habits in Sweden' being published by the National Arts Council (*Statens kulturråd*) (Nylöf 1967). The report included among its findings the fact that old-time dance music (*gammaldans*) was the most popular style in the country, followed by pop music of the day. These musics were in their turn unsurprisingly found to be tens of times more popular with Swedes than was European classical music and thousands of times more popular than contemporary avant-garde art music. These findings were then used for variety of purposes.<sup>4</sup>

The initial purpose of Nylöf's survey was to help establish the policy of the new National Concert Agency (*Rikskonserter*) as regards types of music offered on the national and regional circuits and in relation to the production of phonograms. A foregone conclusion of this state commissioned empirical research was that 'better' music of the European classical type needed to be brought to the Swedish populace.<sup>5</sup> However, Nylöf's research had other far more important consequences: it directly influenced radical changes in national policy on music education. These unpredicted and unintended uses of Nylöf's work can only be understood in the historical and political context of Sweden in the 1960s (see p. 2). Jan Ling, whose central role in the Göteborg connection is described later, explains part of the matter as follows.

Nylöf ... was just an empirical sociologist, but his research put the cat amongst the pigeons on the educational front because of growing support for the notion that processes of learning, especially in the cultural field, are far better motivated — and therefore more efficient — if they take as their starting point the actual experiences of pupils and students. This would obviously mean including popular music in state education. (Ling 940905)

Another far-reaching consequence of the cultural climate of Sweden in the sixties and of how empirical research was used in that context was the Ministry of Education's 1969 National Curriculum for Music in Secondary Education (*Läroplan för grundskolan — Musiksupplement, a.k.a. Lgr69*). That

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4. Nylöf's survey covered a sample of 2800 persons selected from the whole country 1964-65. The survey was in other words carried out when The Beatles and Motown™ artists were at the height of their popularity both in Sweden and internationally. Ten years later, Nylöf showed in a new survey that Anglo-American rock-based music had definitely overtaken *gammaldans* as the most popular set of genres in Sweden. See also Karlsson 1982.
  5. Thanks to Jan Ling for clarifying these points in a conversation on 5 September 1994 (Ling 940905). See also Karlsson 1980, 1982.

document includes numerous sociologically based observations about music, for example:

'Young people's music readily becomes an integral part of their existence, an expression of their attitude to life' ... 'In this decade there is the case of pop music which must be considered as part of a larger pop culture in which young people are deeply involved' ... 'Many pupils who start an instrument in their teens soon reach good results, which must be ascribed to the high degree of motivation they feel for making this type of music. Spontaneously created ensembles in the current teenage music style can often reach a considerable degree of personal style and skill'. (*Lgr69*:19).

Switching from observation to recommendation, the 1969 National Curriculum for Music goes on to state:

... 'Different types of music in the charts should be listened to and discussed. The personal style of popular artists should be studied' ... 'It can also be worthwhile studying how musical popularity relates to social environment both in our own country and abroad' ... 'Here, the connection between musical life and the general social and cultural development in different nations is of particular interest'. (*Lgr69*: 19, 22).<sup>6</sup>

It is important to bear in mind that this national curriculum was not penned by radical socialists but by middle-of-the-road Social Democrats, i.e. by individuals like Ingemar Gabrielsson and Bengt Olof Engström, both of whom came from the grass roots of practical music education at the municipal or regional levels.<sup>7</sup> It is clear that this Swedish school curriculum was popularly informed by both a critical-theoretical and an empirical sociology of music and there is no doubt that the Nylöf survey provided essential fuel for arguments influencing the direction of this new educational policy for music. Such policy also had repercussions in tertiary education, more specifically on the vocational training of music teachers to implement the new curriculum for Swedish state secondary schools.

### **Why Göteborg?**

The climate of cultural policy described above illustrates important differences between Sweden and other European nations in the mid sixties. However, the description offered so far does not explain why Göteborg, rather than, say, Stockholm or Uppsala as other important seats of learning in Sweden, became the site of the musical and musicological dynamism mentioned at the start of this article.

Göteborg is Sweden's largest industrial city, Scandinavia's busiest port and

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6. The radicalism of these recommendations is in fact far wider than the quotation suggests. Studying the effects of colonisation on African musics and Africa's contribution to the development of music in our part of the world is also included, as well as appreciation of the 'rhythmic vitality, intensity and varied timbric qualities' of the 'means of musical expression that usually capture the imagination of young people'.

7. This observation was confirmed by Bengt Olsson (Göteborg) over the phone (29 January 1994). Olsson's doctoral work analyses the background, development and effects of music teacher training programmes set up to implement the intentions of the 1969 national curriculum in Sweden (Olsson 1993). It should also be noted that one of the curriculum's authors, Ingemar Gabrielsson, was at the time head of the Stockholm College of Music and that he, in 1971, appointed teachers (including music theorist P-G Alldahl and jazz musician Carl-Axel Dominique) to construct courses in jazz at the college. One of the other authors, Bengt-Olof Engström, edited a highly popular songbook (*Vi gör musik*) for use in schools. The book contained everything from Schubert to folk songs, tunes from musicals and *Yesterday* (Engström & Cederlöf 1970).

the home of Volvo. Although the city's technological university may have been quite well known at the time, neither its humanities faculty nor its college of music had the high culture prestige of comparable institutions in Uppsala, Lund or Stockholm. Göteborg was in other words the largest working class city in a nation which in its turn carried very little by way of historical high art ballast compared to nations less marginal in anglocentric or germanocentric views of the world. The position of Göteborg within Sweden is in other words similar to that of Liverpool (with its university's Institute of Popular Music) compared to Oxford and Cambridge (with little or no popular music at their universities), or of East Berlin (with its *Forschungszentrum populäre Musik*) in relation to high-culture Heidelberg.

### **Personal histories**

The main driving force behind the development of music studies in Göteborg during the period under discussion was Jan Ling. His background and that of his professor, Ernst Emsheimer, are of considerable historical relevance to the main point of this article: what we can learn from Göteborg connection in terms of current developments in popular music studies.

### **Jan Ling**

After training as a classical pianist with at the Stockholm conservatory, Ling (born 1934) transferred to Uppsala, where he studied historical musicology. Ling's piano teacher, Greta Eriksson, had studied at the Paris conservatory in the thirties and his first mentor in musicology, Carl-Allan Moberg, had studied counterpoint in Vienna with Alban Berg during the twenties before launching into historical musicology under Peter Wagner.<sup>8</sup> With such studies behind him, it is safe to say that Ling received a solid grounding in the practical and theoretical rules of Central European art music. Therefore, with his father employed as church organist in a large rural parish in Uppland, Ling could be expected to have embraced the complete art music canon without question. Indeed, as Ling himself recalls:

‘Sometimes I used to run choir practice in Dad's church while I was studying piano at the Stockholm Conservatory. I remember thinking that the locals in the choir were hopelessly unmusical: their intonation and tone production were awful, I thought.’ (Ling 940905)

Ling's first paid job was to catalogue all sorts of music for both national radio (*Sveriges radio*) and for the National Song Archive (*Svenskt visarkiv*)<sup>9</sup> in Stockholm. During this period (1962-7), Ling became aware of the wealth of skill and artistry behind the production of popular music in Sweden, thanks not least to contacts with co-worker and popular composer Ulf-Peter Olrog (1919-1972). Simultaneously, while employed at the Song Archive, Ling was also working both with and for Ernst Emsheimer (see below) whose political and intellectual influences were decisive upon his development. During that time, Ling produced a book on Swedish folk music (1964) and a doctoral thesis (supervised by Emsheimer) on the keyed fiddle (1967). It was during this period that Ling began to jettison high-art evaluations of music. Referring to the same choristers mentioned in the previous quote, Ling continues:

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8. P Wagner (1865-1931): palaeographer, expert on Gregorian plainchant and medieval church music in Europe, professor of musicology at the University of Fribourg (Switzerland).

9. *Svenskt visarkiv* merged subsequently with the National Music Museum (*Musikmuséet*).

Not until I got properly into ethnomusicological work with Ernst' [Emsheimer], 'in fact not until I did my work on the keyed fiddle did I start to understand how truly musical those same locals actually were and how much that musicality was related to music having real functions in the day-to-day lives of real people, something that was clearly absent in the way my piano studies were conducted'. (Ling 940905)

This may explain some reasons behind Ling's questioning of the European high art canon of music in the mid sixties, while other aspects can be attributed to the general cultural and political climate mentioned earlier. However, all of this can only partly explain the activist focus of Ling's work as an academic. Therefore, before continuing with our account of work at the University of Göteborg's Musicology Department, it is necessary to trace the historical background of the most influential figure in Ling's own development: Ernst Emsheimer.

### **Ernst Emsheimer**

Emsheimer (1904-1989), born at virtually the same time and place as Adorno,<sup>10</sup> was probably even more of an exception in his time than Ling in his. Emsheimer had studied musicology in Vienna under Guido Adler in the twenties and had written his doctorate about Steigleider, a seventeenth-century German organist.<sup>11</sup> However, Emsheimer and his wife Mia were both politically active on the left, this commitment coming to expression in articles like 'The social meaning of music in the working day of the proletariat' and 'Mechanical work — work songs — leisure time', both published in the pre-fascist Berlin-based journal *Musik und Gesellschaft* (Emsheimer 1930a, b). In these articles, anthropological method is combined with important psychological and sociological observations about the use of background music in factory work, as well as about contemporary uses of music on gramophone and over the radio. These articles constitute, as far as I am aware, the first serious attempts at understanding how music functions in the commonest of everyday situations for the vast majority of humans living in the age of the mass media.

This early work of Emsheimer is also characterised by a clear understanding that the traditional hierarchical aesthetics of music (the *Wertästhetik* according to which he, Adorno, Ling, myself and most other musicologists were all taught) is totally counterproductive to the understanding of the real musical practices of most people in most situations in modern society. Commenting on the cultural shock many academics seemed to suffer from when facing the real musical practices of everyday life in the mechanical, mass-media age of inter-war, pre-fascist Germany, Emsheimer (1930a: 47) wrote:

'Their despondency can be attributed to ... a tendency to relapse into ... notions of a music culture that must as usual be interpreted as far too bourgeois and individualistic ... The postwar individual, caught in the hectic and tensely paced commotion of today's working life and forced to put social necessity before personal needs, can no longer be objectively understood or categorised according to a preordained, self-contained order of global values'.

Ling explains this phase of Emsheimer's activity as follows:

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10. Both men were born into Jewish families in Frankfurt, Adorno on 11 September 1903, Emsheimer on 15 January 1904.

11. Steigleider (1593-1635) was J J Froberger's teacher. Emsheimer's doctoral studies were carried out under Bessler and Gurlitt in Freiburg i. Br.

'Ernst never lived in Berlin, so I see what he wrote for *Musik und Gesellschaft*, though hardly related to his musicological expertise of the time, as an attempt to combine his thoroughness in understanding music with the clear political commitment he kept throughout the rest of his life.' (Ling 940905)

This thoroughness, this clear political commitment, this obvious concern with the real musical practices in the everyday life of the popular majority and this clear critique of elitist and eurocentric values about music all stand out in stark contrast, as we shall see, to the words and actions of Emsheimer's famous contemporary, Adorno. Apart from being left-wingers, Ernst and Mia Emsheimer were also, *like* Adorno, Jewish. *Unlike* Adorno, however, the Emsheimers were under no illusion as to what would happen to them when the fascists took over in their native Germany. Therefore, in 1932, several months before the Nazi *Machtübernahme* (1933), they fled Germany and emigrated east to the Soviet Union, not west to the United States as Adorno, Horkheimer and company were to do several years later.<sup>12</sup> This difference in refugee routes has also influenced the course of popular music studies, Adorno's influence extending directly and indirectly (e.g. through Marcuse at Brandeis to the early editors of *Rolling Stone*<sup>13</sup>) to the global Anglo-Saxon 'market' of ideas, Emsheimer's sphere of influence being mainly indirect and restricted to his ideas occasionally surfacing in the work of a few important figures in the anthropology or sociology of music, for example John Blacking, Bruno Nettl and Jan Ling.<sup>14</sup>

From 1932 until 1937 the Emsheimers were based in Leningrad where Ernst worked on the music collection at the Hermitage. Emsheimer's main interests were, however, ethnomusicological and for a couple of years he led the Russian Academy of Science's recorded documentation of Ossetian and Georgian music (e.g. Emsheimer 1979). During his stay in the Soviet Union, Emsheimer was of course exposed to a range of ideas about music. The explicit interrelation of music and society was part and parcel of Soviet politics and society at that time: serious policy-making (good or bad) could not take place in the sphere of music if all of its aspects, from its compositional materials via psychology and sociology to its political economy, were not discussed in some detail. Whether the methods used, conclusions drawn or measures taken in those prewar Stalinist days were right or wrong is not the issue here. It is, on the other hand, clear that Emsheimer was exposed to such discussion that was explicitly relatable, either positively or negatively, to his own holistic view of music. It is certain that such a view was useful to Ling who, in his turn and in the historical context of Sweden in 1967, initiated studies in the sociology of music at the University of Göteborg.<sup>15</sup>

Ling (1985a:6) explains part of that Soviet connection in the following

12. For critical discussion of Adorno's relationship to the Nazi regime, see Harker 1995: 10 ff.. Adorno moved to a post in Oxford in 1934 and joined Horkheimer's institute in New York in 1938, whence he proceeded to well paid jobs at Princeton, Los Angeles and, after the war, Frankfurt.

13. See Michelsen 1993.

14. Blacking, Nettl and Ling all appear in the *Tabula amicorum* of the collection of writings published in memoriam Ernst Emsheimer (1991). Other well-known scholars featured in the same list of friends are Mantle Hood, Krister Malm, Mark Slobin, Doris and Erich Stockmann, Trần Quang Hai and Walter Wiora.

15. I met Ling in 1968 and worked with him off and on until 1991. I met Emsheimer twice in the mid-seventies. Most of my information about Ling comes from working together with him for more than twenty years, a few facts from Karlsson (1977). My information about Emsheimer comes via conversations with Ling or from Ling (1975b) or Kolland (1978).

terms:

'Although the sociology of music was formulated in Central Europe (see, for example Boettiger 1931) we must not forget that general theories of music and society were developing simultaneously in the Soviet Union. Boris Asaf'yev's *Musikal'naya forma kak protsess* ['Musical Form as Process' (1930-1947)] is one of the results which, at last, has reached researchers in the Western world. In the Soviet Union' [there was] ... 'a processual amalgamation of historical materialism as a scientific method, sociology as a scientific field and education in humanistic thinking. Asaf'yev's turgid and rather heavy theory was undoubtedly an effort to create a paradigm of music sociology'.<sup>16</sup>

In 1936 the Emsheimers were summoned to the Third Reich consulate in Leningrad. A German official opened a file and placed it demonstratively on the desk in front of them, apologising that he would have to leave the room for a short while. It was not difficult to deduce from the top sheet of paper the fate awaiting them: as Jews and left-wing intellectuals, the Emsheimers had lost their German nationality and were on a list for some kind of transportation as soon as the Reich extended to wherever they happened to be. Mia and Ernst had to quickly decide whether they would become Soviet nationals or flee to a third country. They opted for the latter, partly because they were fed up with having to leave their flat, where someone clearly overheard their conversations, every time they needed to discuss anything vaguely political. (Ling 940905)

In 1937 the Emsheimers arrived in a disturbingly germanophile Stockholm. Ernst worked for twelve years as an underpaid archival galley slave at the National Ethnographic Museum before the 'new' official Sweden and its Social Democrat government re-orientated the nation's postwar sympathies in an Anglo-Saxon direction. In 1949, with the intervention of recently inaugurated (Social Democrat) professor of musicology at Uppsala, C-A Moberg (see above), Emsheimer was appointed head of the national Museum of Music History in Stockholm. It was in this position in the early sixties that Emsheimer took on Jan Ling as collaborator and doctoral student.

According to Ling, the Emsheimers' political commitment was quiet but unswerving: without Mia's activism in the Vietnam solidarity movement and Ernst's patiently Marxist argumentation, it is doubtful whether Ling would have acted as he did in terms of politics, music policies and educational strategy. Similarly, Ling goes to some lengths to underline the meticulous attention that Emsheimer paid to (musical) structural, source critical and anthropological detail in his research.<sup>17</sup> These two aspects of Emsheimer's activities — his political commitment and his professional thoroughness, both empirical and theoretical, — were undoubtedly inherited and adapted by Ling in his work at Göteborg between 1967 and 1991.

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16. Ling (940914) does not know if Emsheimer met Asaf'yev.

17. I base this part of the account on my conversation with Jan Ling (940905) and on Ling's article about Emsheimer in *Sohlmans Musiklexikon* (Ling 1975b). The following evaluation of Emsheimer's research, recorded by Gunner Larsson, Krister Malm and Hans Åstrand in the foreword to a posthumous edition of Emsheimer's writings (Emsheimer 1991:7), is also worth noting: 'His work is distinguished by meticulous source criticism and the carefully phrased but wide-ranging perspectives that open up and bear witness to his incredibly wide reading' (Moberg 1964). The same foreword also records Bruno Nettl's qualification of Emsheimer's research publications as 'models of scholarship'

## Göteborg from 1967

In the same year as Nylöf's report on Swedish people's musical habits was published (1967, see p. 3, ff.), Jan Ling, then a music history lecturer at the college of music in Göteborg, set up a new department of musicology. Its profile was centred around the empirical sociology of music and a number of pioneering studies of musical habits in two middle-sized towns were produced (Ling & Erdmann 1970, Erdmann 1971, Frostensson *et al.* 1972).

In 1969 the new national curriculum appeared. It contained passages such as:

'Music teaching must ... take into consideration the specific characteristics of young people's music and use these as a starting point' ... (*Lgr69*: 19)

and

'the connection between musical life and the general social and cultural development' ... 'is of particular interest'. (*Lgr69*: 22)

### Sämus

If these intentions were to be implemented, national music teacher training would need a radical overhaul. Skills in and knowledge about popular music would have to be studied, as would basic theory and method in the sociology and anthropology of music. It was with such ends in mind that a new music teacher training programme — *Sämus*<sup>18</sup> — was set up in Göteborg under the leadership of the only Swedish music academic with any real experience or knowledge of any music, or approach to music, outside those related to traditional studies of the European classical canon. That person was Jan Ling.

Although Ling had extensive knowledge of many popular music traditions from rural cultures, he never feigned expertise in such intrinsically urban musics as jazz, rock and pop and their related sub-genres. This meant he had to take considerable risks when hiring personnel to teach in these essential areas that had previously been debarred from institutions of higher education.<sup>19</sup> For example, I was contracted on the dubious merits of being the only person he could find in Sweden at the time (1971) who had (i) a music degree and (ii) some experience of writing songs and playing pop music. Other colleagues were employed on comparable premises and we all worked hard, both students and teachers, to make a success of the new college according to the main directives of the (then) new national curriculum.

We soon came into direct conflict with the government authority that channelled funds to *Sämus*,<sup>20</sup> the fiercest point of contention being the grading of marks (Tagg 1982: 235-6). There was a clear contradiction in our minds

18. *Sämus* = *Särskild Ämnesutbildning i Musik* = (lit.) 'Special Subject Training in Music'. The pilot scheme lasted for four years (1971-75), after which the experimental forms were 'made permanent' (*permanentades*) and incorporated under the Göteborg College of Music's administrative aegis. *Sämus* ceased to exist.

19. It was also around this time (1971) that the Berklee School of Music (Boston) and the Institut für Jazzforschung (Graz) were founded. It was also around this time that jazz was introduced into the Stockholm conservatory. Whether or not the sort of jazz entering the academy in 1971 was really qualifiable as 'popular music' is of course a highly complex matter that cannot be discussed here.

20. The government authority was OMUS (*Organisationskommittén för högre musikutbildning i Sverige* = the organising committee for higher music education in Sweden), appointed directly under the Swedish Department of Education (*Utbildningsdepartementet*). See *Musiken, människan, samhället* (1976).

between one government directive stating that collective musicianship and cooperative skills should be encouraged and another stating that each student should be given graded marks according to his or her individual ability and achievement. Since there was a clear risk that opting for the latter was more likely to damage the former than vice versa, we opted for awarding passes *or* fails rather than distinctions *or* passes *or* fails. By supporting both staff and students and by actively campaigning for simple pass or fail marks, Ling was forced to resign, as indeed was his successor, Lennart Spångberg. Ling led us through two harrowing experiences as committees were sent down from Stockholm to assess whether we were right or wrong. One of these committees set up a veritable inquisition, calling in a random sample of students and every single teacher, each individually, to be grilled by a team of experts apparently set on finding cracks in our argumentation and solidarity. Since the matter had been discussed thoroughly at the college's General Meetings and since majority decisions from General Meetings had real executive value within the college, all students and teachers abided democratically by the collective majority decision.<sup>21</sup>

Just as two successive heads of the college had come out in favour of a majority decision to prioritise the cooperative rather than individualistic side of government policy, two successive independent state appointed committees found our arguments to be valid according to the terms of our brief. Then, apparently frustrated by two committees reporting that  $2+2=4$ , the government body in charge of Sämus appointed a 'loyal' puppet as head and a 'loyal' committee to tell us  $2+2\neq 4$ . Needless to say, the committee in question never visited our college and the 'loyal' new head stated that his job was not to have an opinion on the issue of graded pass marks but to 'follow orders'.<sup>22</sup> There was clearly no longer any room for development: it was time to bury musical, intellectual and educational heads in the sand and to pretend that history had stopped. We were in effect ordered to:

- prioritise individual achievement to the detriment of collective creativity in popular music, a form of communication upon whose *collective* qualities the well-being of the entire music industry ultimately depends;
- make permanent institutional structures out of a form of communication (popular music) as changeable and dynamic as the society in which it exists.

It may still only have been the mid seventies but sloppy thinking, reaction-

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21. In this context it is interesting to note that the only members of staff with any reservations at all about the common policy of ungraded marks at Sämus were teachers of classical singing and of art music composition, i.e. areas of training in which the bourgeois notion of the individual plays a far more important role than in, say, rock and pop ensemble playing or songwriting. This topic warrants at least one doctoral dissertation!

22. I was staff representative of the college at that time and the 'loyal' committee never contacted me in that or any other capacity for any consultations. No other colleagues or (ex-)students I have spoken to since recall being contacted by that committee either. It was in a similar context of authoritarian ignorance, more precisely at a Board of Studies meeting (in 1976, I think), that I asked the 'loyal' head which of the two conflicting government directives he personally thought was better. His reply (that his job was not to prioritise or interpret directives but to follow orders) prompted me to retort with some irritation 'you're suffering from some bloody Eichmann syndrome', or words to that effect, whereupon I was, not surprisingly, asked to leave the meeting, which I did. I also left my activities at the college at the first subsequent opportunity (1977) and never returned to them on a full-time basis.

ary ideology and perverted notions of individualism already seem to have been official policy, overriding musical, social and economic common sense in a way that became increasingly obsessive during the 1980s.<sup>23</sup>

### ***Back to the musicological drawing board***

After two years as head of Sämus (1971-73), Ling moved full-time back to the Department of Musicology in Göteborg, establishing a postgraduate programme in 1975 and securing a professorship in 1976. There was, as can be gathered from the bibliography, a shift of emphasis away from empirical sociology and anthropology on their own (e.g. Ling 1970; Erdman & Ling 1970, 1972; Frostensson et al. 1972; Bergentz & Widmark 1973; Larsson & Rid-darstolpe 1975) to matters more theoretical, historical and (musical) structural.

Research interest in the latter areas sprang from the practical need to answer questions for ourselves and for our students. We knew most of the important data about musical tastes and habits, we also knew the usual music industry sales figures, but we were at a loss when trying to explain the 'hows' and 'whys' behind all those empirical observations. Those of us who came from music education were also keenly aware of major lacunae in the teaching of popular music (see Tagg 1982a). The work was conducted in three main new areas: (i) music analysis (e.g. Tagg 1979, 1987, 1989; Björnberg 1984, 1987), (ii) philosophy and critical theory of music (e.g. Fornäs 1980, 1990; Ling 1975b, 1976, 1979b, 1981a; Tagg 1981) and (iii) the re-evaluation of European music history (e.g. Ling 1974, 1983, 1986a, 1989a; Stockfelt 1988, Klingfors 1991).

### ***Adorno***

One account that certainly needed squaring by all of us was Adorno. We spent all the 1977 autumn semester postgraduate seminars discussing his *Introduction to the Sociology of Music* (1976). Many of us were relieved to discover that we needed no longer to worry about this bitter man and his haut-bourgeois norms of aesthetic reference that seemed so irrelevant and uninformed in the context of popular music as we knew it.<sup>24</sup> It seemed quite

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23. As a consequence of such false reasoning, the Göteborg music teacher training programme's development seems to have been seriously stunted. For example, while visiting old friends in Göteborg in 1995, I found that the *temporary* pop keyboard accompaniment compendium I had been successively adding to between 1972 and 1977 was (i) *still in use* and (ii) without additions since I relinquished full-time activity at the college in 1977.

24. It should be remembered that *Über den Fetischcharakter in der Musik und die Regression des Hörens* (Adorno 1938) first appeared *after* Ellington had recorded *Creole Love Call* (1928), *Mood Indigo* (1931), *Solitude* (1934), *Sophisticated Lady* (1935) and *Caravan* (1937). Similarly, in 1941, when Adorno's *On Popular Music* first appeared, Count Basie had been in circulation for some time and Ellington had managed to score several new big band arrangements. When Adorno published his *Einleitung in der Musiksoziologie* in 1962, Miles Davis's *Kind of Blue* had been out for three years, Charlie Parker was already dead and recordings of the Dizzy Gillespie Big Band had circulated extensively in both Europe and the USA for well over a decade. In short, although Adorno, given his background, could hardly be expected to appreciate any innovative trends in pop and rock music that may have developed in the late fifties and early sixties, it is both surprising and disturbing that he seems to have been completely out of touch with the contemporary jazz canon embraced by many younger colleagues at that time: Charlie Parker was revered and Miles Davis's *Kind of Blue* owned by many intellectuals of the Kerouac generation. Louis Malle had also commissioned Davis to write the score for *Ascenseur a l'Échaffaud* (1957). How did Adorno manage to miss all this?

reasonable then (1977) to question the dialectical quality, positive or negative, of texts in which the presence of concepts like *Reiz* (stimulation), [*Wirklichkeits-]Flucht* (escape [from reality]), *Ablenkung* (distraction) and *Nivellierung* (standardisation / homogenisation) outweighs the presence of terms like 'enjoyment', 'alternative', 'democratisation' or 'empowerment' — all just as applicable to popular music as Adorno's solely negative epithets — by a factor of infinity percent.

Another lesson learnt from those 1977 seminars was that a hierarchy of listening types, like Adorno's, which apparently disqualifies the vast majority of musical situations experienced by the vast majority of people as intrinsically substandard is itself intellectually substandard.<sup>25</sup> Opposition to such exclusivity was strong and provided one colleague with one of the factors prompting him to produce a viable and non-elitist categorisation of listening modes according to which each different mode is linked to its appropriate set of musical functions (Stockfelt 1988). This systematisation reveals how real listening ability lies in the extent to which and the skill with which individuals can draw on any listening mode and use it in the relevant listening situation. To simplify Stockfelt's main point, 'unlistening' to music (i.e. using it solely as sonic background masking unwanted noise) or getting up to dance to something that makes you want to move your feet are just as valid skills as being able to follow, fully concentrated and engrossed, the course of a Bach fugue in sound and notation.<sup>26</sup>

In the light of Emsheimer's work from pre-fascist Germany (1930a, b), not to mention those who have criticised Adorno's view of popular music since (e.g. Middleton 1990:57, ff;), it is astounding that some scholars still see fit to make today's students plough through pages of text by a man who seems to have no regard for the social, economic or cultural situation of the popular majority. Add to these problems Adorno's notions of 'authenticity' and their application to the aesthetics of rock — a subject tackled in some depth by Michelsen (1993) — and it seems more than reasonable to question the use of Adorno to popular music studies, except as intellectual inoculation against elitism. Indeed, the most dynamic aspect of the Göteborg connection — its openness and breadth of interest — always rhymed badly with Adorno's prescriptive norms of global aesthetic values.

### **Openness**

It should be clear from the bibliography, that activities at the Göteborg Department of Musicology under Jan Ling were wide ranging. Such breadth of interest expressed itself in the sort of ways listed below.

1. *A wide range of musical genres was studied.* Classical music, folk music,

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25. Paul Beaud explains Adorno's blind spot (or deaf ear) towards popular music and 'jazz' as follows. 'His texts' ... [on popular music] ... 'date from his American period when he was on the lookout for fascism everywhere. Anything resembling rhythm he equated with military music. This was the visceral reaction of the exiled, aristocratic Jew during the Hitler period. The only time Adorno introduces elements of crude supermarket psychology is when he deals with light music and jazz... Worst of all' ... [are] ... 'his listening categories which are complete junk' (interviewed by Tagg 1980:80). Here Beaud is referring here to Adorno's listening types (Adorno 1976:1-20,29,41; 1941:32-48; 1978: 288). For an less polemic and more detailed critique of Adorno's listener typology in the context of popular music studies, see Middleton, 1990:57, ff.

26. Adorno's notions of authenticity are also problematic in connection with rock and pop music, as Michelsen 1993 has shown.

jazz and popular music (including non-European musics) were *all* obligatory ingredients on the undergraduate course. Substantial research was carried out by staff or postgraduates into classical music (e.g. Benvenga 1979, Ling 1983, Kjell 1987, Dahlqvist 1988, Klingfors 1991), folk music (Edström 1977, Ling et al. 1980), pop and rock music (Björnberg 1987, Lilliestam 1989), film and TV music (Tagg 1979, 1980a), background music (Thorsén 1988), nursery rhymes (Reimers 1983), tango (Åhlén 1987) etc.

2. *A large variety of topics was studied*, ranging from music education (e.g. Olsson 1993), to gender and music (Öhrström 1987, Brette 1991), to the soundscape (Tagg 1990), to the use of music in churches (Thorsén 1980, Bernskiöld 1986, Kjell 1987), to music at work (Thorén 1986, Thorsén 1988), to the international music business (Wallis & Malm 1982, 1990), to music in service centres (Barkefors 1985) or libraries (Barkefors & Ström 1985) etc.
3. *A wide range of approaches was explored and developed*. Some work was quite empirical and statistical (e.g. Erdman & Ling 1970, 1972; Frostensson et al. 1972), while other texts were decidedly theoretical (e.g. Rhedin 1969; Ling 1976, 1979b, 1989b; Fornäs 1980; Tagg 1981; Björnberg 1981; Dahlstedt 1986; Stockfelt 1988) or historical (Ling 1983, 1989a; Dahlqvist 1988, Klingfors 1991) or semiotic (Ling 1978a, 1978b, 1992; Ling & Ramsten 1985; Tagg 1979, 1987) or neurological (Wallin 1982) etc.
4. There was *extensive interdisciplinary cooperation* between the musicology department and neighbouring institutions of learning, especially the music college (including music education, see pp. 3-4, 9-11, Tagg 1982a, Henningson et al. 1988, Olsson 1993), as well as with the departments of Linguistics (Tagg 1982b, 1985, 1986) and Media Studies (e.g. Björnberg, Fornäs, Lilliestam and Tagg, all in Roe & Karlsson 1990).<sup>27</sup>
5. *Interprofessionalism was a common trait*. Most postgraduates and members of staff were musicians or music teachers or involved in music production or management of some kind (e.g. local clubs, bands, choirs, churches, political organisations).<sup>28</sup> Such activity also included recording, as well as productions, musical or verbal, for radio and TV (e.g. Ling 1970, 1972; Tagg 1975).
6. Activities at the department were initiated and continued on the basis of *cooperation with local and regional organisations* such as churches, local councils, schools, political parties (e.g. Andersson & Bergendahl 1982, Barkefors 1985, Barkefors & Ström 1985, Bergentz & Widmark 1973, Erdman (& Ling) 1980/1972, Fornäs 1985, Frostensson 1972, Jansson & Nowotny 1975, Larsson & Riddarstolpe 1975, Ling 1986b, Ling et al. 1983, Thorsén 1980, Samuelsson et al. 1982).
7. Although contacts with local and regional communities were maintained

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27. Keith Roe worked at the Mass Communication Research Unit of Göteborg University's Department of Political Science from about 1980 until 1991.

28. A few examples will illustrate the point. [1] Ling constantly kept up his skills as keyed fiddle player and pianist. [2] Björnberg, Lilliestam, Stockfelt and Tagg were all members of various types of band at one time or another (agitrock, Balkan music, Anglo-US-American covers, balalaika music, blues and soul, etc.). [3] Edström played competent jazz piano. [4] Stockfelt had considerable experience of running musical events in youth clubs and other venues and worked extensively as a music critic.

throughout the period, the department was also *active both nationally and internationally*. At the *national* level, it can be noted, for example, that: (i) starting in about 1987, the Swedish Journal of Musicology (*Svensk tidskrift för musikforskning*) was run from Göteborg; (ii) authoritative accounts of popular music history in Sweden were produced in Göteborg (e.g. Ling 1981b; Edström 1984, 1988). At the *international* level it can be noted that (i) IASPM was started and run from Göteborg until 1985; (ii) that the geographical range of research topics was successively broadened (e.g. Malm 1981, Wallis & Malm 1982b/1990, Åhlén 1987, Lee 1988, Rochon 1992, all in addition to such collections as Carlsson & Ling 1980 and Tagg & Horn 1982).

8. The department was *involved*, directly or indirectly, *in national policy making in the spheres of music, education and culture*. Apart from making extensive contributions to music education policy documents (e.g. *Musiken, människan, samhället* 1976), some colleagues co-wrote the music parts of cultural policy documents produced by political organisations on the left and which influenced state (Social Democrat) cultural policies.<sup>29</sup>
9. The insertion of any topic being studied into its *historical, social and ideological contexts* was strongly encouraged. It is after all on such levels of discourse that both musicologists and social theorists, both active musicians and anthropologists can meet.
10. Points 1-9 were all exemplified in practice by leadership. The range of musics, topics and approaches covered by Ling was very broad and his activities as educator, amateur, liaison officer, broadcaster, cultural politician and skilful administrator are all well documented.<sup>30</sup> Like Emsheimer, Ling was neither demagogue nor opportunist. He was, however, always clear about the ethical and political issues facing music education and research.<sup>31</sup>

Points 1-10 constitute what I regard as the best qualities of the Göteborg connection. Listed in this way, they paint an far from complete picture of what actually went on. However, the idea here is to use the Göteborg connection as a basis for discussing future development in popular music studies, not to write its definitive history.

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29. Some of these measures, implemented in the seventies in the realm of, for example, music provision in youth clubs, were directly beneficial to the development of the local music business. For example, It is unlikely that commercially successful Göteborg region bands like Ace of Bass would have been motivated to start playing if a circuit of publicly subsidised youth clubs (with musical activities) had not existed. For documentation of those activities, see Andersson & Bergendahl 1982. See also point 5, above.

30. Ling was subsequently Vice Chancellor of the University of Göteborg between 1993 and 1997.

31. To those of us who know him better, Ling's extracurricular involvement in the Vietnam solidarity movement and his politically 'uncool' activities as president of the Swedish - Soviet Friendship Association (*Vänskapsförbundet Sverige-Sovjet*) drove home the point that it was impossible to separate the politics and ethics of your own work as an artist or intellectual from that of politics and ethics on a much larger scale.

## **Lessons from Göteborg: end-of-millennium perspectives from the UK**

### **Disempowerment?**

Of course, the situation of popular music studies in end-of-the-millennium Britain differs radically from that of Sweden during the period just described. Whatever vestiges of public responsibility that may have existed in the seventies and early eighties have been replaced by market anarchy serving the interests of management rather than of students and staff. Institutions are expected to compete, not cooperate and to attract student clientele by pursuing the line of least resistance. It sometimes even feels as if we should treat ideas like trade secrets and keep them to ourselves. Such attitudes are not only counterproductive to the development of viable strategies for music studies in general: they are also based on the false assumption that teachers and students are totally disempowered, an assumption ignoring basic contradictions of the relationship between music and the mindless political economy under which we are expected to live.

### **Three contradictions**

Although disempowerment, epitomised by constant threat of unemployment and never-ending cutbacks in public spending, may be the overriding subjective factor in our professional life, there is at least one set of contradictions that put (popular) music studies into a position of some power. I am referring here to the following sorts of contradiction.

1. The music industry is still one of the most profitable areas of enterprise on a local, national and global scale, but music (especially popular music) is still treated as a low priority in most universities.
2. New social formations, new technologies and the proliferation of both terrestrial and satellite programming are constantly generating new areas and modes for musical production. However, these areas of activity have yet to be widely accepted as subjects for academic or practical study.
3. Music is one of the most popular areas of interest for young people entering the job market after school. However, most young people are unable to find employment and therefore obliged to join the reserve army of labour (and to postpone unemployment) by entering tertiary education.

Seen in this light, (popular) music studies are in a *more* powerful position than they were twenty years ago under the relative liberalism of Swedish state corporatist cultural policy. What, then, are the lessons to be learnt from the Göteborg connection? I will divide this final part of the article into two sections: (i) the relationship of practical and academic studies; (ii) general strategies.

### **Practical and academic studies**

#### **Three traps**

One lesson to be learnt from Göteborg is that popular music studies cannot develop healthily if there is no cooperation between practical and academic aspects of the subject. The drive and enthusiasm with which the music teacher training college was run (see pp. 9-11) could have been directed

much more efficiently if some of the theories and methods elaborated at a later stage (see pp. 11-15) had been available to us. Three other important lessons from the Sămus period (pp. 9-11, Tagg 1982a) are listed below.

1. Inherently collective musical skills, such as playing or singing in a band, will be penalised if too much assessment weighting is given to individual skills.
2. It is impossible to 'freeze' popular music skills into a set of repeatable study packages because changing social and musical practices require by definition changing criteria for how those practices can be assessed. Such changing criteria fly in the face of otherwise understandable demands from education authorities and student bodies that assessment criteria should be clear and consistent from one student to another and from one year to the next. Put in the form of simple rhetorical questions, how would you have assessed Bob Dylan's harmonica playing in 1963, Jimi Hendrix's guitar playing in 1966, or Johnny Rotten's singing in 1977? And if you gave them all high marks, how would you have motivated your decision to their fellow students or to the pop music education authorities of the day?
3. It is impossible, musically and intellectually as well as economically, for any institution with any limits on its funding to keep abreast of the stylistic and technological developments of the commercial music industry. For this reason, institutional acquisition of 'state-of-the-art' equipment leads to either (a) funds that might otherwise have been better spent on human resources being swallowed up by the ongoing purchase of updates and replacements, or (b) 'state-of-the-art' rapidly becoming out-of-date.

These three points demand that serious consideration be given to alternative forms of musician and music teacher training, i.e. to forms in which the worst dangers of institutional canons in popular music are avoided and in which purchasing policies favour cooperation rather than competition with other organisations (see also p.18).

### ***Vocational orientation***

Although Sămus was explicitly set up for music teacher training purposes, a large number of students enrolled because it was at the time the only institution of higher education in the country providing practical tuition in popular music styles. This meant that fewer graduates than projected actually went into teaching. The current situation in the UK is even more extreme because there is, vocationally speaking, an overproduction of qualified musicians in tertiary education, this suggesting that the academic side of popular music studies is underdeveloped by comparison. The observation is further substantiated by responses I have heard from music professionals (in education, media, the music business) to the simple question 'what should a music graduate know and be able to do in order to get along well in your job?' After 'a passion for music' and before 'the ability to make music in a range of different styles', the most common sort of answer was 'they should know as much as possible about as many kinds of music as possible, not just from the production side but from the point of view of listeners'.<sup>32</sup> Such vocational observations suggest that one priority would be to increase

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32. Other important qualities mentioned were the ability to write good English and talk convincingly about music, a good knowledge of music technology and the music business.

the quantity and quality of institutions offering academic studies in a wide range of musics.

### **General strategies**

#### **Dealing with adventurers**

One problem with working in an area of potential expansion is that it is attractive to adventurers of educational management who see students as a source of revenue rather than as a *resource* for a better future. Moreover, some tertiary education managers seem blissfully ignorant of any tradition of popular music studies and appoint staff according to even more dubious criteria than those in operation when Ling employed me in 1971 (see p. 9). The proverbial popular music studies wheel must have been reinvented by hundreds of institutions on as many occasions and very few people about to set up popular music programmes have actually consulted any of us in any of the institutions with any experience of the same subject to find out what they could learn from past successes and failures.

Several measures need to be taken in response to this ignorance and inefficiency.

1. We need to ensure that competent graduates leave our institutions to occupy the new posts in popular music studies that are likely to be set up in response to popular demand.
2. Reputable representatives for popular music studies should be appointed to oversee the validation of new programmes.
3. Popular music scholars and teachers should organise and publicise their activities more efficiently in order to secure a better chance of implementing points 1 and 2, above.

#### **Beating the canons**

I have already indicated the paradox of legislating for consistent norms in assessment of musical practices that are by definition subject to constant change. Embracing one conveniently global aesthetic or intellectual canon is certainly less effort than dealing with a multitude of fluctuating musical genres and their concomitant value systems. Indeed, it is sloth, more than anything else, that explains the tenacity of the *Wertästhetik* adopted by many music education institutions, not only those teaching the European 'classics' but also those dealing in jazz and folk music. After all, one set of clear values makes course administration so much easier and does not confuse the students, or does it? Needless to say, the same urge to canonise first and think later applies even to some institutions where rock and pop music are studied, the 'classical' or technically 'advanced' qualities of that music being prioritised to the detriment of other less easily quantifiable aspects. Obviously, students following higher education in popular music are not helped by the institutionalisation of any aesthetic canon of music for any purpose: as suggested earlier by our music professionals, 'they need to know as much as possible about as many kinds of music as possible from the listening side', not about as few as possible from the production side. However, even when, as with our the music teacher training college at Göteborg during the seventies, a multiplicity of genres was mandatory, canons are still constructed. In fact it seems as if young musicians thrown together in the same institution frequently end up by negotiating a special sort of musicians' shared repertoire through which they then try to stake out some kind of professional

identity in relation to their peers. This peer group repertoire, often called 'muso music' and held in high esteem by musicians but by few others, thrives at music colleges. Restricting this phenomenon to jazz, rock and music students in Göteborg during the early to mid seventies, canonic figures were Parker, Coltrane, Chick Corea and, possibly, Chicago, Stevie Wonder, Clapton or Blood Sweat and Tears. Very few of students seemed to want to sound like The Band, Lynyrd Skynyrd, James Brown or Keith Richards and no-one would have ever considered emulating Abba, Martha and the Vandellas, or Merle Haggard.

In short, the problem is not that canons exist but how to tackle them in educational programmes allegedly preparing students for a reality where it is necessary to deal with a whole range of genres and canons, not with just one. One simple suggestion is to make them aware of their own canon (muso or otherwise) and to ensure that they are able to relativise its structural rules and social functions to those of other styles and genres.<sup>33</sup>

Returning to the academic side of studying popular music, aesthetic canons often present themselves in various statements of 'authenticity' and 'street credibility'. During the 1980s, the essentialisation of 'blackness' in US-American popular styles and the rockologist myth of subcultural oppositionality were two types of 'credibility canon' circulating in popular music studies circles, including Göteborg. Such historical falsification still occurs and needs public correction.<sup>34</sup>

Thankfully, however, methodological canonisation was less common at the Musicology Department in Göteborg. Although there was frequent discussion about method, diversity of approach was generally considered to be an asset and there was rarely any epistemological trench warfare between either critical theorists and empiricists or between musicologists and social scientists.

Summarising this section, several lessons can be learnt from the Göteborg connection. (1) Breadth of genre should be considered the norm and the institutionalised canonisation of one genre at the expense of any other should be prohibited. (2) Remembering the uses to which Nylöf's empirical research was put (p. 3-4, 9) and the need for serious theorising after the Sämus crisis (p. 9-11), it is counterproductive to set up antagonistic states of contradiction between empiricism and critical theory.

### ***Cooperation, not competition***

A more concrete expression of anti-elitism and openness in the Göteborg connection was the way in which the department carried out work (commissioned or not) for local and regional organisations, becoming involved in the

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33. Similar relativisation strategies can be used with the canonic security blankets carried around by 'non-musos'. I am currently unaware of any in-depth ethnomusicological study of 'muso music'. It would make an excellent subject for a doctoral dissertation and could provide valuable insights into patterns of musician socialisation.

34. Four examples: [1] The open letter I wrote to *Popular Music* 10 years ago (Tagg 1989) expresses my strong objections to the essentialisation of 'black' and 'white' music by colleagues in and outside Göteborg. [2] The debate article 'From refrain to rave' (Tagg 1994) expresses strong objections to the rockologist canon still upheld in the early 1990s by a few colleagues, both Swedish and of other nationalities. [3] Garry Tamlyn is currently completing doctoral work refuting received jazzologist and rockologist wisdom about the origins of postwar drumkit pattern (University of Liverpool), while [4] Morten Michelsen (Copenhagen) is working on an extensive account of Adorno's notions of authenticity and their use in rock aesthetics. See also Michelsen 1993.

everyday musical life of various communities. Our school of music and university department were both unable and unwilling to compete with local bodies in the private or public sector. For example, we never invested in a 'state-of-the-art' recording studio, not only for the financial reasons already mentioned (p. 16), but also because the city already had plenty of professional studios which could be rented at advantageous rates and because students wishing to pursue a career in the music business could, we argued, learn most of the necessary skills far more efficiently by direct apprenticeship than inside the 'studio bubble' of an academic institution. It was thanks to such vocationally reasoned and cooperative, not competitive, strategies that good relationships were maintained with both public and private sectors. These relationships were mutually beneficial, helping our work tremendously by keeping us constantly abreast of ideas and developments in the real world, and helping those outside by providing them with a little extra income and plenty of ideas to the extent that quite a few local professionals ended up by registering for our courses.

In short, although the temptation may be great to prioritise the obviously global aspects of popular music studies, anyone who underestimates, ignores or mismanages relations with the local community does so at their own intellectual and artistic as well as institutional peril.<sup>35</sup>

### ***Democracy and control***

If, as we have suggested, disempowerment is to some extent more a state of mind than of real affairs in the small realm of popular music studies, then it is perfectly reasonable to ask how such power as there may be can be acquired and used to the advantage of students and musicians.

The clearest lesson from Göteborg seems to be that some sort of democracy is essential in any process of change involving confrontation with conservative forces. Our general meetings, for all their faults (always sluggish and at worst occasionally veering towards an uninformed rule of the mob), at least provided both staff and students with a real opportunity of influencing their own immediate working environment. It was, for example, thanks to our General Meeting (students and teachers with one vote each) that we were able to challenge state policy in education virtually single-handed for over two years, causing the government considerable expense and embarrassment while, more importantly, raising the consciousness of many towards issues of individualism and collectivity already mentioned in this article (p. 9). Perhaps this is one of the most important lessons from Göteborg: that without organisation that includes students as well staff at the local, national and international levels, the main issues affecting the future of our subject will never actively involve those whose future it is. Without that involvement, there will never be a democratic mandate, let alone enough power, with which to confront, if necessary, any authority, private or public, seeking to preserve an undemocratic status quo in music studies.

At the same time, without the breadth of topics and approaches mentioned above, there will be very few ideas in popular music studies worth fighting

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35. This attitude towards local bodies, public and private, contrasts starkly with the competitive market strategies adopted by the management of LIPA (Liverpool Institute for the Performing Arts, partly financed by Paul McCartney) who, for example, after discussing cooperation with local recording and rehearsal studios then proceeded to build their own professional recording and rehearsal facilities.

for. Moreover, until we arrive at a greater understanding of music as socially meaningful *sound* in addition to its qualities as concomitant patterns of social behaviour, it is doubtful whether our field of studies will progress much further. These statements are of course typical for someone coming out of the Göteborg school during the Ling era. They are also statements that constantly question the received wisdoms of (popular) music studies. Hopefully, this constant questioning will help keep our subject alive. Perhaps this dogged music-based criticism, dating back via Ling to Emsheimer, is also the most important legacy of the Göteborg connection...

## Bibliography

### Format

This listing mainly consists of writings produced at the Musicology Department of the University of Göteborg between 1967 and 1991. Although all doctoral dissertations produced during the relevant period are included in this bibliography (flagged with a final \*), other writings listed here should be understood as no more than a representative selection.

Swedish and Danish titles are translated into English and placed in square brackets at the end of each reference.

In order to save space, no publishing place is given if the publishing place for the title in question is Göteborg. Similarly, if the body issuing the writing in question is either the Department of Musicology (*Musikvetenskaplig[a] institution[en]*) or the College of Music (*Musikhögskolan*) at Göteborg, no publisher's name is included in the bibliographical details. Copies of all such works are deposited in the *Library, Musikhögskolan, Box 5439, S-40010 Göteborg, Sweden*.

### Abbreviations

\* = doctoral dissertation;

PMR = *Popular Music Research*. See Roe & Karlsson, 1990

SfMV = *Skrifter från Musikvetenskapliga institutionen* (= writings from the Musicology Department), University of Göteborg.

SOU = *Statens Offentliga Utredningar* = (lit.) Public investigations by/of the state, i.e. Swedish government white papers.

SPGUMD = *Stencilled Papers from the Gothenburg University Musicology Department*.

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