

Music Documentation in Libraries, Scholarship, and Practice



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The Swedish Working Group of RISM in Relation to National and Regional Projects of Archival Research and Music Bibliography: Where to Go from Here?

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I. Introduction

The Swedish working group of RISM was founded in 1953 and has ever since been based at what is presently the Music and Theatre Library of Sweden in Stockholm (formerly the Library of the Swedish Royal Academy of Music). A number of its early principles and strategic decisions have had considerable consequences for all later RISM work and for archival scholarship and historical musicology in Sweden as a whole. One of these was, for example, the decision not to include manuscripts of Lutheran chorales (“koralhandskrifter”) and similar liturgical sources in the A/II cataloguing process, another the use of the Numericode system for a large corpus of music catalogued in the sixties. The chorale manuscript material excluded was subsequently thoroughly examined and collated within another project, *Svensk koralregistrant* at the University of Lund (1974–), providing an index with comparative apparatus for Swedish liturgical sources containing chorale melodies. A number of other projects which in different ways complement or overlap the ongoing RISM work have later been initiated, for example *Music in Tablature: A Thematic Index with Source Descriptions of Music in Tablature Notation in* (–1981), the *Düben Collection Database Catalogue* at the University of Uppsala (1991–) and the *Swedish Musical Heritage* project at the Royal Academy of Music (2011–).¹ How could the different principles and methodologies of all these ongoing projects be brought into mutual interplay for the benefit of current research and librarianship? This paper will address some fundamental problems and suggest solutions and strategies for the future.

¹ One may also mention the project MPO (*Medeltida pergamentsomslag*: ‘Mediaeval parchment wrappers’) at the Swedish National Archives, where a large number of liturgical and musical sources reused as wrappers (mostly for civic administration in the sixteenth century) have been removed, opened and systematically catalogued. Since this material falls outside the main scope of RISM’s coverage it will not be addressed in this paper.

II. Swedish RISM work (1953–)

The Swedish working group of RISM has since its inception been based at the Library of the Royal Academy of Music, which since the 1990s is separated organizationally from the Academy, directly under the Department of Culture. It is presently known as the Music and Theatre Library of Sweden (but remains known, of course, to all musicologists and librarians, by its RISM siglum S-Skma).

RISM work in Sweden can be divided into three rather distinct chronological phases of activity: (i) a consolidation and planning phase, with cataloguing by the two main Academy librarians Cari Johansson and Gösta Morin before 1961;² (ii) a concentrated cataloguing phase 1961–77 (with funding from the Knut and Alice Wallenberg foundation 1961–67, involving a large number of external musicologists and librarians,³ and (iii) a long period most aptly described as *Verwaltung*, since 1977. One of the main reasons for the diminished intensity in later years is the fact that the generous funding of the second phase was provided with the aim of comprehensive completion of the entire project, which makes it very hard to secure further funding after the initial process. The Swedish working group thus has a strength in organizational continuity, but a weakness in present financial resources. This invites comparison to some of the more dynamic working groups, such as e.g. Tirol-Südtirol or Switzerland (started in 1956 and run privately since 1996), which have more recently had the resources to employ a number of people to perform RISM work, but with periods of insecurity concerning long-term future funding. Sweden has enjoyed continuity by virtue of the fact that a small part of the job description of the Head of Rare Collections librarians has always been specifically allocated to RISM work (1953–1977: Cari Johansson; 1977–2006: Anna Lena Holm; 2006–2009: the present author; 2009–2011: Kia Hedell; 2011–: Marina Demina). Continuity thus comes at the price that the head of rare collections usually may reserve less than 10% of all work to RISM. This barely covers maintaining and meeting with a Swedish RISM committee (consisting of musicologists and librarians on a voluntary basis without funding),⁴ updating RISM entries, and upholding some sort of contact with the Zentralredaktion in Frankfurt and the other 34 regional working groups.

Due to a number of factors, Swedish RISM coverage is without doubt very good. 29,348 entries in RISM A/II make up ca. 4.1 % of the total of the approximately 700,000 entries in this system, which is an overrepresentation considering the size and population of the country and the estimated number sources extant in the world (we know that there are many large collections on the European continent and elsewhere which have yet to be catalogued for RISM). Most of the Swedish entries date from the early cataloguing phase mentioned above, and have been transferred from cards at the Zentralredaktion (through the use of the PIKaDo software). There is an urgent need for a considerable amount of emendations and rectifications in light of recent musicological research. This will have to be done in Kallisto or a similar system as soon as possible.

One of the factors concerning the early exceptional coverage of Swedish sources in RISM is that information for the B/I volume was taken *in extenso* from the then recently printed catalogues by Åke Davidsson and Rafael Mitjana.⁵ Another was the insistence of Prof. Ingmar Bengtsson of Uppsala University that the notation coding system Numericode should be used to index

² This included correspondence with all major public collections, archives and libraries throughout the country, most of which reported back with preliminary inventories or approximations of volumes of manuscripts and prints.

³ Most of the institutions in fact moved their collections to the Academy library for cataloguing during these years, two of the considerable exceptions being the Skara diocese library (S-SK) and the Uppsala university library (S-Uu), which were both catalogued by Jan Olof Rudén on location.

⁴ The committee presently consists of Lars Berglund, Department of Musicology, University of Uppsala; Kia Hedell, Uppsala University Library, Anders Edling, Uppsala University Library (retired) and the present author.

⁵ Davidsson and Mitjana, 1911 and 1951, and Davidsson 1952.

insecurely attributed, unattributed and anonymous works.⁶ Cari Johansson developed a simplified model (discounting note values) which enabled a much faster and exact treatment of the many problematic attributions of French and Italian music in Sweden than would otherwise have been possible (although it must be stressed that many misattributions remain, especially as regards eighteenth-century Italian music). Johansson also saw to it that all available thematic indexes from old publishing catalogues (Cari Johansson herself a specialist in matters concerning Hummel prints), incipits from all available *Denkmäler* editions, the Chrysander Händel edition, and a number of other items authoritatively attributed elsewhere, which were often found (or were anticipated to be found) unattributed or misattributed in Swedish collections. Quite apart from the RISM catalogue entries, this resulted in a master Numericode index, a resource that is still used by the staff at the Music and Theatre Library of Sweden and by visiting scholars in Stockholm. The study of watermarks was not consistently applied, since it was regarded as slowing down the process, at the risk of facing financial problems further on. The study of copyist hands was, however, carried out to a great extent, especially in relation to the eighteenth-century music in the Academy Library collections (with its 11,996 entries in A/II, this institution holds more than a third of the manuscripts entered for Sweden). This has led to many secure datings and provenance details on the RISM entries under S-Skma. Copyist hands that have not been securely linked to a specific individual are numbered, passing on valuable information of provenance, and of different layers of the Academy collections.

III. Swedish index of Lutheran chorale manuscripts (*Svensk koralregistrant*, 1983–)

This project was instigated by the University of Lund as a collaboration between the department of musicology (Folke Bohlin) and the department of theology (Lars Eckerdal).⁷ It was instigated by virtue of the fact that the Swedish RISM working group had decided to exclude chorale manuscripts (mainly in the form of *Choralbücher*, often in some way indirectly related or complementary to the official Swedish hymnals, notably that of 1697). Even if this decision was rooted in agreements taken centrally at the early RISM meetings, it was interpreted in Sweden in an especially narrow and exclusive manner, which in effect left out some types of sources that in other regions were incorporated into A/II. Originally *Svensk koralregistrant* was planned as a collaborative project of the Nordic countries (Finland, Sweden, Norway, Denmark and Iceland) but it was only realized in final form in Sweden and Denmark.⁸

The Swedish index of Lutheran chorale manuscripts takes the numbering of the 1697 hymnal and allocates those numbers to each separate chorale occurrence in manuscripts found within the present borders of Sweden (those chorales which are not represented in the hymnal are treated separately). This enables large-scale comparison of the sources involved, and contextual or regional development lines in melody, harmonic practice, meter, etc. The index has been crucial to much work in ethnomusicology (the study of chorale melodies in folk versions and deviances), as well as for national and international hymnological scholarship, but also for more practical purposes, such as the inventorial and editing process leading to the Swedish hymnal of 1986 (inaugurated in 1969). The fact that the index was never intended as an index of printed volumes, unlike RISM B/VIII: *Das deutsche Kirchenlied* (which was in its earliest conception interrupted, albeit later completed), has given it from the start the beneficial properties of a proto-database, where new and cumulative cross-indexing, revisions and emendations have been

⁶ Bengtsson, 1967 and Johansson. 1975. See also Kjellberg, 1968. Bengtsson's system differs on a number of significant points from the *Plaine and Easie Code System* presented by Brook and Gould and presently used by many RISM working groups. (1964: Bengtsson has also commented on the *Plaine and Easie* system, alongside a number of other scholars, in *Fontes artis musicae* IX/3 (1964). Numericode was specifically adapted to possibilities of what was then referred to as "AD", automatic data processing. The RISM entries were not subject to such operations at that early stage, but Numericode greatly facilitated manual comparative work.

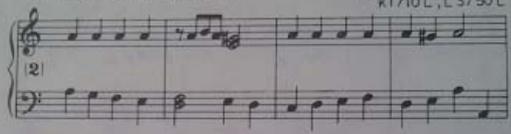
⁷ For observations concerning its historical background see Wentz-Janacek 2006 and Bohlin 2012.

⁸ See Bohlin 2012.

Group 1:	Duple meter	major	first note repetition
Group 2:	Duple meter	major	first interval ascending
Group 3:	Duple meter	major	first interval descending
(Group 4):	Duple meter	major	first interval unknown
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Group 5:	Duple meter	minor	first note repetition
Group 6:	Duple meter	minor	first interval ascending
Group 7:	Duple meter	minor	first interval descending
(Group 8):	Duple meter	minor	first interval unknown
<hr/>			
Group 9:	Triple meter	major	first note repetition
Group 10:	Triple meter	major	first interval ascending
Group 11:	Triple meter	major	first interval descending
(Group 12):	Triple meter	major	first interval unknown
<hr/>			
Group 13:	Triple meter	minor	first note repetition
Group 14:	Triple meter	minor	first interval ascending
Group 15:	Triple meter	minor	first interval descending
(Group 16):	Triple meter	minor	first interval unknown
<hr/>			
Group 17:	Meter indefinite	major	[all melodic openings]
Group 18:	Meter indefinite	minor	[all melodic openings]

Group 5: Duple meter
Minor mode
First interval tone repetition

3305. Gavotte / Air. Camille Lagie Ka1/54VK, Ka 3/6VK
K1/10L, L 3/50L



3306. V. Vierdanck, Toccata i. toni (incomplete) U 15K



3307. Den lustelyken May M 2/52VK

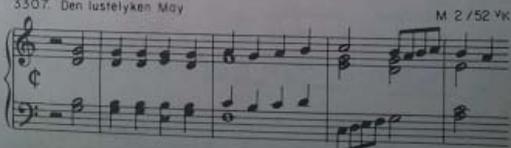


Fig. 2. Example entry from *Music in Tablature* (Jan Olof Rudén, 1980).

The same categories are applied first to tablatures for plucked instruments, later to tablatures for keyboard instruments (in the latter category one finds also a lot of vocal music preserved in tablature form).

In Rudén's work, as in the use of Numericode for RISM entries, we can observe a tendency which appears peculiar to Swedish music bibliography: that is the stress on structural metadata categories. Such metadata can be very valuable in research pertaining to large bodies of repertoire.

V. *The Düben database catalogue project (1991–)*

This project aims at a complete multiple-level catalogue and full text facsimile of the Düben collection in the University Library of Uppsala, donated to the university in 1732 or 1733 by the Düben family, who had then for generations been Kapellmeister, organists or officials at the Swedish court. These sources were catalogued by RISM before 1977, but the present database offers far more detailed information deduced both from the sources (watermarks, copyist hands, etc.) and from scholarly literature after 1977. It is organized as a relational database, with the main categories of "Work" (with subrelation to the main category "Text"), "Composer", "Volume", "Part", "Source" and "Watermark". "Source" is a superlevel to the categories "Volume" and "Part" (material descriptions, providing also the level which links to the scanned images).¹¹ "Work" and "Source" both have a relation to the metadata category of "Attribution".

Since the Düben database catalogue offers much richer and better metadata than do the corresponding RISM entries, it would be highly desirable to link the relevant RISM entries directly to the Düben database.

VI. *Swedish musical heritage project (Levande musikarv, 2011–)*

The *Swedish musical heritage* project is based on the Swedish Royal Academy of Music and funded by a number of public and private bodies. This project was preceded by two inventory projects, the first of which concerns anonymous and unattributed polyphonic pieces in Swedish sources before ca. 1650 (with the consequence that many RISM entries will have to be emended, and a number of items not previously in RISM will have to be entered).¹²

The Swedish musical heritage project resembles the similar projects underway in Denmark and Norway, with the main difference that its base is the Academy, not a publicly funded research library, as is the case in Oslo (the National Library) and Copenhagen (the Royal Library).¹³ It will lead to a database of more than 500 Swedish composers whose works are no longer under copyright (the project thus extends into the early twentieth century), complete lists of their works, editions of selected works, as well as performances and recordings.

VII. *Where to go from here?*

When it comes to the matter of the *Svensk koralregistrant*, the scholars behind the project opted for a central card index, which has been cumulatively updated. RISM B/VIII: *Das deutsche Kirchenlied* was published as printed volumes (I. *Verzeichnis der Drucke*: 1975; II. *Register*: 1980). Had the situation been reversed, there would have been possibilities to integrate the Swedish information in the RISM material. The situation is similar with tablatures, but there both the *Thematic Index with Source Descriptions of Music in Tablature Notation in Sweden* and RISM B are 'locked up' in the static form of print (one must add however, that these volumes, through their great availability in research reference libraries worldwide, have possibly had a greater impact on research than 'proto-databases' like *Svensk koralregistrant*).

¹¹ A full description and visual outline of the database structure is given by Bergsten, 2010.

¹² There was also an inventory of the works of a number of nineteenth-century Swedish composers, which falls outside the original limits of RISM, but which may be incorporated in the future.

¹³ A large number of staff members are presently entering information in the composer-work database.

Once the Achilles' heel of *RISM A/II*, the source-level description can now be integrated by linking separate item entries through a specific Kallisto category – this means that it is easier to get an overview of the relation of items than before. This could be one way of improving the RISM OPAC with the metadata from the Düben database. Another perhaps more feasible option is to link each RISM OPAC item directly to the category “Work” or “Source” as applicable in each situation. Linking can also be done to the abovementioned forthcoming database covering anonymous and unattributed polyphony in Swedish sources before ca.1650, which will also be linked to scanned images from part books, which in some instances are scattered all over the region of the Baltic sea.

It becomes clear, when surveying the amount of data collected in Swedish music bibliography, that certain principles have changed in relation to scholarly ‘turns’ and ‘trends’, often to do with outlooks for future technology. It appears as if the best way forward in our time is not to try to hone all information to fit into one system, but rather to attempt to connect different layers of information concerning musical sources in a way that protects the original idiosyncrasies of each project, but still enables exchange, overview and cumulative knowledge production in relation to our collections.

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