

PORTRAYALS OF IDENTITY
IN THE *ROMANSEER* AND RECEPTION
OF TURE RANGSTRÖM

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ABSTRACT

This thesis offers the first in-depth study of the Swedish composer Ture Rangström (1884-1947) in English-language scholarship. Although Rangström is well known in Sweden, particularly for his sizable contribution to the art-song genre, his music is still unfamiliar on the international stage. This thesis considers the composer and his songs in their immediate context of early twentieth-century Stockholm, but also in relation to broader trends in pan-European musical developments, with a particular focus on issues of nationalism and modernism and the distinctive ways in which these were articulated in Swedish culture. In a series of case studies, songs drawn from across Rangström's career are examined as musical expressions of Sweden's literature, language, and landscape, and as a means of forming and conveying the composer's sense of self. This thesis also corrects misrepresentations that have dominated Rangström's reception and explores strategies for approaching the writings both by and about him that have been shaped by his habit of deliberate self-presentation.

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CONTENTS

List of figures and tables	xi
A note on translation and terminology	xii
<u>Introduction</u>	1
Three surveys of Nordic music	2
One biography of Ture Rangström	6
The main threads: Literature, Identity, Nationalism, Landscape	8
Sources and strategies	19
<u>Chapter One: Presenting a Swedish artist</u>	28
Johan Lindegren: the Oracle	29
Julius Hey: the Meistersinger	35
Hans Pfitzner: the Conservative	40
Ferruccio Busoni: the Visionary	42
August Strindberg: the Genius	49
Lisa Hollender: the Beloved	65
‘A manifold of reflexes...’	67
<u>Chapter Two: Expressing national identity</u>	74
Inward-looking and outward-looking nationalism	76
Inward-looking and outward-looking nationalism in ‘Pan’	82
Manifestations of speech-melody outwith Sweden	86
The reception of Rangström’s <i>romanser</i>	90
Manifestations of speech-melody within Rangström’s <i>romanser</i>	97
‘Pan’ – introducing Rangström’s speech-melody	98
‘Melodi’ – inner and outer rhythm	102
‘Den enda stunden’ – the psychological and timbral balance	105
‘En gammal dansrytm’ – rendering the poem’s meaning	108
Speech-melody and Swedishness	111
<u>Chapter Three: Singing a seascape</u>	117
At home in Stockholm; at home on Törnsholmen	119
Music and landscape in Rangström’s reception	123

The reception and context of <i>Sång under stjärnorna</i>	126
Landscape tropes in Rangström's <i>romanser</i>	131
The night songs	131
The sea songs	133
The pre-symphony star songs	139
The post-symphony star songs	145
Summary of the surveys	149
'Bön till natten' and the idea of <i>Adagio</i>	151
<u>Chapter Four: Facing the Inexorable</u>	163
Rangström's self-analysis: <i>Dömd</i>	165
Rangström's self-identification: the <i>Vaux-hall</i> suite and the role of Tristan	169
The half-truths of 'Tristans död'	172
Rangström's re-identification of Karin Boye in his setting of 'Sköldmön'	176
Rangström's <i>romanser</i> as re-expressed experience of the text	182
Facing the Inexorable	190
<u>Conclusion</u>	194
The last word	198
<u>Bibliography</u>	202
Articles written under pseudonyms or initials	211
Anonymous articles	212
<u>Appendices</u>	213
Appendix A: Catalogue of Rangström's <i>romanser</i>	214
Appendix B: Patterns and preferences in the composition of Rangström's <i>romanser</i>	215
Appendix C: Case study scores	222
Appendix D: Rangström's sea texts and their translations	247
Appendix E: Rangström's <i>Dömd</i> and its translation	254

FIGURES

Figure 1. Selected Swedish composers of the early twentieth century	26
Figure 2. Timeline of Rangström's most frequently-set poets	27
Figure 3. Study locations of Swedish composers in Rangström's lifetime	69
Figure 4. Carl Eldh's statue of Strindberg	70
Figure 5. Posts held by Rangström	71
Figure 6. 'The bloody music critics'	72
Figure 7. Rangström and his collar through the years	73
Figure 8. Programme for the Dortmund Festival of Swedish Music	113
Figure 9. Regional characteristics and composers	114
Figure 10. The song-speech spectrum	115
Figure 11. Annotated sketch of 'Pan'	116
Figure 12. Rangström in Stockholm and Östergötland	156
Figure 13. 30 Bastugatan in its landscape	157
Figure 14. Contemporary understandings of Rangström's music in relation to landscape	158
Figure 15. Rangström's night songs categorized by theme	159
Figure 16. The night songs excluding Rangström's texts	160
Figure 17. The compositional chronology of Rangström's sea songs	161
Figure 18. The compositional chronology of Rangström's star songs	162
Figure 19. The rededication of 'Tristans död'	192
Figure 20. Karin Boye's painting 'Valkyrian'	193
Figure 21. Programme for Rangström's memorial service	201

TABLES

Table 1. The climax of 'Pan'	100
Table 2. Structure and time-signatures in 'Melodi'	103
Table 3. Rhythmic variation in 'Melodi'	104
Table 4. Summary of Rangström's sea texts	137

A note on translation and terminology

In Swedish there are two common terms for song besides the generic word *sång*. Rangström's songs fall into the category of the *romans* (plural *romanser*), which essentially designates an art-song, the equivalent of the German Lied. In contrast, *visa* (plural *visor*) often refers to a folk-song or a children's song, and carries connotations of simplicity. Some of Rangström's pieces that have historical or folk themes thus include the word *visor* in their title, despite belonging to the *romans* genre. For the sake of clarity, I have retained the Swedish terms for *romanser* and *visor*, and have translated only *sång* as 'song'. A fourth term, *lyrik*, is more rarely used, and can refer either to lyric poetry or to a song setting of the same; I have used 'lyric poetry' and 'lyric song' respectively.

There are also three different terms used in Swedish for poet (besides the borrowed English word): *dikter*, *lyriker* and *skald*. The first I have simply translated as 'poet', the second as 'lyric poet', and the third I have retained due to the long history and distinctively Nordic nature of the skaldic tradition. The term is not used of twentieth-century poets in a technically accurate sense, but rather as a way of acknowledging their exceptional talent and connecting them to the country's Viking heritage; I did not want to lose this associated meaning by using the closest English equivalent, 'bard'.

I have translated Rangström's term *språkmelodi* (which he borrowed in turn from the German *Sprachmelodie*) as 'speech-melody', to avoid it being confused with the existing definition of *språkmelodi* as the spoken intonation of the Scandinavian languages. However, it is worth noting that although the English word 'speech' is a cognate of *språk*, it does not encompass the same meaning, for we also use the etymologically and semantically separate word 'language'. The Swedish word *språk* incorporates both concepts, giving them an inherent intimacy that is lacking in English.

In Swedish, the definite article (*en* or *et*) is placed at the end of the noun and so is often incorporated into the names of concert venues or newspapers e.g. *Stockholm Tidningen* (The Stockholm Times). Where such titles are mentioned in the text, there is therefore no definite article in English.

Many of the Swedish source materials for this thesis feature spellings that were outdated by the orthography reform of 1906 but continued to be used by Rangström and his generation. (For example, *hvarje*, *hafvet*, *af* and *godt* are now spelt *varje*, *havet*, *av* and *gott*.) I have retained the original spellings where the Swedish for translated quotes is given in footnotes, but have modernized them in poem texts or piece titles which occur within the main body of the text.

All translations from Swedish are my own and I have occasionally taken liberties with the original punctuation in order to clarify the meaning.

Musical pitch is indicated according to the Helmholtz system: C₁-B₁, C-B, c-b, c'-b', c''-b'' etc. where c' is middle C.

INTRODUCTION

Ture Rangström was not really a musician. Not, at least, according to the composer Wilhelm Stenhammar, writing in the autumn of 1917. Carl Nielsen had written to Stenhammar asking for suggestions of Swedish music to include in a Copenhagen Music Society concert programme, and in his reply Stenhammar discussed three names in particular. Rangström was one of these three, but Stenhammar had a caveat: none of them was really a professional musician.

As I understand it, there are only three who could come into question: Atterberg, Rangström and Natanael Berg...

Of the three, Rangström is definitely the one who interests me most. Certainly the most originally gifted. But perhaps, also, the most unbelievable dilettante. Many of his songs with piano are real pearls and full of great poetry. He is a poet. Unfortunately he is not a musician. He has not got control over the larger forms. I am convinced of this by [his] sheer ignorance of the elementary grammar, of movement construction, of instrumental knowledge, of everything. It is just ill-luck with all these three gentlemen, that they are not *musicians*. Neither practical nor theoretical. They are not even musicians by profession. Atterberg is an engineer, Berg is a veterinary doctor, Rangström is a singing teacher and music critic.¹

Stenhammar's letter is interesting not only for its frank assessment of his contemporaries and for what it reveals about the limitations of Sweden's musical life at the time, but also for the conclusions about Ture Rangström which can be drawn from it. Firstly, it places Rangström squarely among the best Swedish composers of his day. Despite his reservations, Stenhammar clearly considered Rangström's music worthy of consideration, promotion and performance. Secondly, Rangström's songs are emphasized as particularly valuable and Stenhammar's description of him as 'a poet' indicates the centrality of text in his work. Lastly, Stenhammar qualifies his commendation of Rangström by designating him an amateur who excels only as a miniaturist. Of these three points, the first provides substantial justification for this thesis, the second defines the scope of the investigation, and the question implied by the third – what was Rangström's identity as a composer? – informs much of the content.

Ture Rangström was born in Stockholm in 1884, the eldest of three children born to John Rangström, who worked in the leather trade, and his wife Charlotta. He chose music as his career

¹ Bo Wallner, *Stenhammar och hans tid* (Stockholm: Norstedts Förlag, 1991), vol. 3, 488-489. 'Så vitt jag förstår, är det endast tre som kunna komma ifråga: Atterberg, Rangström och Natanael Berg... Rangström är den av de tre, som avgjort intresserar mig mest. Säkerligen den originellaste begåvningen. Men kanske också, den mest otroligt dilettantiska. Många av hans sånger vid piano äro riktiga pärlor och fulla av stor poesi. Han är poet. Tyvärr är han inte musiker. De större formerna rår han inte på. Som jag är övertygad, av pur okunnighet i den elementära grammatiken, i satsbyggnad, i instrumentkänedom, i allting. Det är ju olyckan med alla dessa tre herrar, att de icke äro *musiker*. Varken praktisk eller teoretiskt. De äro ju inte ens musiker till yrket. Atterberg är ingenjör, Berg är veterinär läkare, Rangström sånglärare och musikrecensent.' (Letter from Wilhelm Stenhammar to Carl Nielsen, 16 September 1917.)

despite parental misgivings, and he lived and worked in Stockholm throughout most of the first half of the twentieth century: he took up his first post as music critic at *Svenska Dagbladet* in 1907, and when he died of cancer in 1947 he left his third opera unfinished. Little evidence remains of his work as a singing teacher, but as a composer he produced, in addition to the operas, four symphonies, several sets of incidental music, and almost 250 songs. During most of his career he compiled a vast collection of newspaper clippings, mostly by or about himself, which is now held in the Rangström Collection at *Musik- och Teaterbiblioteket* (The Music and Theatre Library) in Stockholm. Within his lifetime Rangström became known as one of his country's foremost composers, but he never made a breakthrough to the international music scene.

This thesis will challenge the perception of Rangström as an amateur and miniaturist by placing his music in the broad context of the Swedish culture of the day and the reception history of Nordic music, and will reveal a complex musical identity that is bound up with literary interests and a life-long habit of self-presentation. It will also engage with two issues that are rarely raised in the field of song studies due to the dominance of nineteenth-century *Lieder*: issues of modernity and nationality. In Rangström's reception, his *romanser* have often been portrayed as both modern and Swedish, but seldom with much justification. This thesis will go beyond Rangström's contemporary reception by not only asking how modern and Swedish his *romanser* are, but *how* they are modern and Swedish.

This introduction falls into three sections: firstly, a review of the available literature on Swedish music in general and on Rangström in particular; secondly, a discussion of the most substantial strands in the thesis (literature, identity, nationalism, and landscape); and thirdly, a summary of my sources and strategies, concluding with a brief overview of each chapter.

Three Surveys of Nordic Music

Although Sweden has produced many composers, it does not boast a single, towering giant – no Grieg, Sibelius, or Nielsen – and much of the country's musical activity in the first half of the twentieth century was therefore carried out, from a continental viewpoint, beyond the horizon. Despite being geographically central among the Nordic countries, on a musical map of Europe Sweden would be on the very edge. One symptom of this peripheralism is a certain degree of reciprocal disinterest: the archives of the *Svensk tidskrift för musikforskning* (Swedish Journal of Musicology) show that articles on specifically Swedish and Nordic subjects have, until the present

decade, easily outnumbered those on continental composers.² Another symptom, more problematic for the non-Swedish researcher, is the almost total lack of English-language studies of Swedish music: there are not even enough monographs of Swedish composers available in English to be charitably called a handful.³ Three broader studies of Nordic music, which have appeared at more or less twenty-year intervals, all struggle, to varying degrees, to give much more than basic information on the plethora of composers.

The most recent, Frederick Key Smith's ambitiously subtitled *Nordic Art Music: from the Middle Ages to the Third Millennium*, begins by arguing that it is only in the last two centuries that Nordic music has developed its own voice, before which the Nordic countries were dominated by imported talent.⁴ He suggests that this two-hundred-year development 'parallels, though in a compressed period, the musical developments that have taken place over the last millennium in continental Europe'.⁵ However, rather than going on to unpack and explain this claim, much of the book descends into encyclopaedic lists of little-known composers. After the turn of the twentieth century, few earn more attention than a paragraph or two, and the information is frequently unreferenced. Smith's decision to deal with all the Nordic composers since the late nineteenth century in chronological order of their birth means that the reader must constantly leap from country to country, and so has little chance to build up a coherent picture of the musical development in any one of the five nations that Smith considers.⁶ Although the book's aim is to cover Nordic music in general, it seems odd to blur the national boundaries during an historical period in which many of the composers involved were keen to keep them distinctly drawn. The structure is further complicated in the chapter on contemporary music, where the composers are listed chronologically within various genres but it is up to the reader to notice, by the sudden jump backwards in time, where the genre boundary has been crossed. The chapter divisions also feel somewhat arbitrary: the Swedish composers Wilhelm Peterson-Berger (1867-1942), Wilhelm Stenhammar (1871-1927) and Hugo Alfvén (1872-1960) are included among 'the last of the Scandinavian Romantics', while Rangström (1884-1947), born half a generation later, appears in the following chapter. While such disjunctures may never be entirely avoidable, they are particularly

² Svensk tidskrift för musikkforskning <<http://musikforskning.se/stm/index.php?menu=2>> (accessed 1 July 2016).

³ Robert Layton's biography of Franz Berwald (London: Anthony Blond Ltd., 1959) is one example. More than half a century later, there is still nothing else more substantial than Armen Shaomian's short print-on-demand work, *Swedish National Romantic Music: The Influence of Composers Wilhelm Peterson-Berger and Wilhelm Stenhammar* (Saarbrücken: VDM Verlag, 2009), published without editorial process or peer review.

⁴ Frederick Key Smith, *Nordic Art Music: from the Middle Ages to the Third Millennium* (Westport: Praeger, 2002), xiv.

⁵ *ibid.*

⁶ The book is concerned with the three Scandinavian countries, Denmark, Norway, and Sweden, together with the other Nordic countries, Finland and Iceland. A handful of twentieth-century Faroese composers are also mentioned.

misrepresentative here, given that each composer is described more or less in isolation from his environment. Peterson-Berger and Stenhammar were in fact both key figures in Rangström's career, as arch-rival and mentor, respectively, while Alfvén actually survived Rangström by more than a decade.

Smith's book is perhaps not at its best when read cover to cover. The latter chapters, in particular, lend themselves instead to use as a reference book. They are inclusive and thorough, containing basic biographical details and a summary of the work of any Nordic composer one is likely to come across. However, there is little attempt to demonstrate or describe the musical trends within the twentieth century. As Smith observes, 'history has not yet had an adequate opportunity to deem where many of these composers fit in Northern Europe's Modern art-music pantheon',⁷ and his solution seems to have been to take as broad an approach as possible. While Smith has certainly succeeded in meeting his declared goal, 'to make the history of this Northern European musical development accessible for any interested reader',⁸ his work is most useful as a starting point for further investigation.

Antony Hodgson's *Scandinavian Music: Finland and Sweden* takes a different approach, with over a third of the book comprising an extensive discography.⁹ The countries are dealt with separately, although the introduction considers the connections, parallels, and differences between the two. Two timelines show the lifespans of fifteen key composers from each country, giving the reader an immediate overview and putting the most important figures in clear chronological relation to each other.¹⁰ The text itself is much more of a narrative than Smith's, with a greater sense of context, although there are still places where it summarizes the work of several composers per page. Like most of those writing about Scandinavian music, Hodgson notes the lack of an internationally renowned master in Sweden, but he does so with a particularly striking metaphor:

... alone of the Scandinavian countries Sweden boasts no national composer of such a stature as to spring immediately to the lips of musical foreigners. Sweden is surely the obverse of the Eastern Scandinavian coin, a nationalistic design, worked with craftsmanship and taste: a musical democracy rather than a kingdom. On the other

⁷ *ibid.*, 87.

⁸ *ibid.*, xvii.

⁹ Antony Hodgson, *Scandinavian Music: Finland and Sweden* (London: Associated University Presses, 1984). Note that Hodgson takes the term 'Scandinavia' to include Finland. A planned second volume, dealing with Norway and Denmark, never materialized.

¹⁰ *ibid.*, 138-139. Following Hodgson's example, Figure 1 (p. 26) shows the lifespans of several composers in early twentieth-century Sweden. Though it makes no claims to comprehensiveness, it includes most of the best known composers, as well as some lesser known musicians who have particular relevance to Rangström, either personally or through their work as music critics, and whose names will therefore crop up throughout this thesis.

side of the same coin in [sic] Finland: no need to suggest whose head is metaphorically represented there...¹¹

This portrayal of Sweden's musical culture as a democracy is helpful: instead of a single spokesman for the country's music, there was a clamour of voices that competed or collaborated with each other according to their conservative or progressive inclinations. Many musicians, including Rangström, took on multiple roles – as composers, critics, and conductors – in which they had the opportunity to promote the music and interests of their allies, and to challenge and call to account their opponents. Sweden's musical life was therefore one of self-observation and self-regulation. In fact, *Föreningen svenska tonsättare* (The Society of Swedish Composers) was formed in 1918 to represent the rights of working composers; Stenhammar was one of the founders, along with the trio of composers he had mentioned in his letter to Nielsen the previous year.

In John Horton's overview of Scandinavian music, which is honestly subtitled 'A Short History',¹² the impact of the Nordic triumvirate – and the lack of a matching Swede – is reinforced even by the chapter titles. 'Norwegian Music after Grieg', 'Danish Music after Carl Nielsen' and 'Finnish Music after Sibelius' are followed by the rather less starkly worded 'Wilhelm Stenhammar and Modern Swedish Music'. Horton gives only a brief justification for his choice of Stenhammar as the leader of modernism in Sweden music, citing Stenhammar's use of modern poetry and his desire 'to bring Swedish music into the more powerful currents of contemporary European thought' rather than to invoke a folk culture idealized by an urban one.¹³ Though Horton aligns Stenhammar with modernism rather than (as Smith does) with late Romanticism, he does not make much more of it than to introduce some of the subsequent composers in relation to Stenhammar, and he acknowledges that 'the spirit of national romanticism remained very much alive both in his generation and ... during the one that followed'.¹⁴ His statement is a healthy reminder that much Swedish music from the early twentieth century resists straightforward categorization, and the difference between Horton's and Smith's views of Stenhammar indicates the difficulty – even the inadvisability – of separating the Romantic from the Modern in Swedish music. Horton's book exemplifies the approaches of its time: a contemporary review commends his 'meticulous documentation' and 'appropriate and unprejudiced comments' about early twentieth-century composers,¹⁵ but for today's scholar the work lacks some critical weight. For example, the gross

¹¹ *ibid.*, 22. Hodgson's sparse bibliography is in keeping with his observation: of the ten sources cited, five are concerned with Sibelius.

¹² John Horton, *Scandinavian Music: A Short History* (London: Faber and Faber, 1963).

¹³ *ibid.*, 155.

¹⁴ *ibid.*

¹⁵ Howard Hanson, 'Reviewed Work: *Scandinavian Music: A Short History* by John Horton', *The Musical Quarterly* 50/4 (October 1964), 535-537.

exaggeration that promotes Rangström to ‘a close friend of Strindberg and Bo Bergman’¹⁶ undermines any serious faith in similarly unreferenced statements.

These three books – Horton, Hodgson and Smith – all aim to give an accessible overview of Scandinavian music; each draws on those that came before, and the absence of a leading Swedish musical figure provokes comments from all three authors. Hodgson’s work is arguably the most successful, but the lack of accurate referencing across all three is unhelpful: it is difficult to know how much material has been borrowed and repeated without fresh examination. For example, Hodgson and Smith both describe Rangström as influenced by German music, yet from neither is it possible to trace a source for this rather contentious statement, which will be dealt with more fully in Chapters One and Two.¹⁷ A few individual Nordic composers have received more detailed attention than is provided by these three overviews: there is a plethora of monographs on Sibelius and Grieg, and increasing scholarly interest in Nielsen.¹⁸ However, here, again, the triumvirate almost entirely dominate the field, and English-language research is only now turning to Sweden.¹⁹

One biography of Ture Rangström

The sole biography of Rangström was written by Axel Helmer (1925-2001), a Swedish musicologist whose thesis focused on Swedish song,²⁰ whose interest in Rangström spanned his career, and who worked as the director of the *Svenskt Musikhistorisk Arkiv* (Swedish Music History Archive) in Stockholm.²¹ Helmer’s subtitle, ‘Life and work in interaction’, establishes his intention to examine Rangström’s life and music in connection with each other, an aim which is largely met.²² The book is

¹⁶ Horton, *Scandinavian Music*, 156. As a young man, Rangström met Strindberg no more than a handful of times; despite formal correspondence over many years, he never met Bergman in person.

¹⁷ ‘Ture Rangström ... represents the German element of Swedish composition in the first half of the twentieth century’ (Hodgson, *Scandinavian Music*, 108); ‘[His] compositional output ... reflects the stylistic influence of contemporary Germanic composers’ (Smith, *Nordic Art Music*, 88).

¹⁸ The most recent contributions include: Daniel Grimley, *Grieg: Music, Landscape and Norwegian Identity* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2006); Lionel Carley, *Edvard Grieg in England* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2006); Glenda Dawn Goss, *Sibelius: A Composer’s Life and the Awakening of Finland* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009); Tomi Mäkelä, *Jean Sibelius* (Woodbridge, Boydell Press, 2011); Anne-Marie Reynolds, *Carl Nielsen’s Voice: His Songs in Context* (Copenhagen: Museum Tusculum Press, 2010); Daniel Grimley, *Carl Nielsen and the Idea of Modernism* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2010); and the periodical *Carl Nielsen Studies*, 5 vols. (Copenhagen: The Royal Library, 2003-2012).

¹⁹ Annika Lindskog is one scholar leading the way, through her interdisciplinary work on the interaction of society and cultural expressions.

²⁰ Axel Helmer, *Svensk solosång 1850–1890* (Uppsala: Almqvist & Wiksell, 1972).

²¹ Sven H. Hansell, ‘Reviewed Work: Svenskt Musikhistoriskt Arkiv Bulletin’, *Notes* 29/4 (June 1973), 733-735.

²² Axel Helmer, *Ture Rangström: Liv och verk i samspel* (Stockholm: Carlsson Bokförlag & Kungl. Musikaliska Akademien, 1999). The subtitle does not have a clear parallel in English and ‘i samspel’ has been variously translated as ‘in interplay’, ‘in harmony’, and even ‘as one’. The last two options lack the connotation of dialogue afforded by the first, which is more literal but less colloquial than the translation I have chosen: ‘Life and work in interaction.’

thorough and informative, with extensive and extremely useful appendices, and it successfully communicates the overall narrative of Rangström's life and work while also exploring in detail many specific pieces and their significance within his output. Rangström's professional life and relationships are given much more attention than his rather turbulent private life, which may be partly due to Helmer's personal and temporal proximity to his subject: as a young man he twice met Rangström himself, and he had direct contact with Rangström's relatives in the course of his research. While his sensitivity is therefore understandable, it does render his portrait of Rangström incomplete, or at least tactfully blurry in certain places. It is thus not from Rangström's biographer, but his grandson (who bears the same name), that we learn that in Rangström's life 'there were more women than my grandmother Lisa – and more than relatives knew about'.²³ It seems unlikely that the women referred to are simply Rangström's second wife, Omon Håkanson, and Elsa Nodermann, his partner in later life, even though his relationship with the latter was so discreet as to be kept from his wider family. The younger Ture Rangström, a scriptwriter who since 2003 has been Artistic Director of Strindberg's *Intima Teater* in Stockholm, remembers little of his grandfather, but wryly observes that:

As some lexicographer managed to put it: Rangström is known for his many romances. The ambiguous wording was possibly more justified than contemporaries suspected.²⁴

The impression – and it does remain only an impression – is that extra-marital relationships were not uncommon in Rangström's life, but this is a matter on which Helmer is silent. We shall see in Chapters Three and Four that Rangström's personal relationships sometimes had a dramatic effect on the nature and quantity of his output, and so in any examination of the interaction between his life and work, they require more than a passing (or, indeed, a tactfully averted) glance.

Helmer's citation habits can sometimes be unhelpful. While his use of endnotes rather than footnotes makes for fluent reading, he rarely quotes extended passages but prefers to pick and choose a few phrases. In doing so, he tends to blur the distinction between direct quotation and paraphrase, and often changes the form of words in a quotation without indicating that he has done so.²⁵ A great deal of his information is drawn from personal letters, which are unfortunately held in different locations (some public, some private) depending on the recipient. Given Helmer's

²³ Elisabeth Sörenson, 'Ture Rangström spanar efter farfar', *Svenska Dagbladet*, 19 October 1990. 'Där finns fler kvinnor än farmor Lisa – och fler än släkten kände till.'

²⁴ *ibid.* 'Som någon lexicograf lyckades få till det: Rangström är känd för sina många romanser. Den tvetydiga formuleringen var möjligen mer befogad än samtiden anade.' The double meaning of 'romanser' as 'art-songs' and 'romances' is obviously clearer in Swedish.

²⁵ Helmer's treatment of Stenhammar's letter to Nielsen, with which I opened this chapter, serves as an example, with its mixture of reordered snippets and unacknowledged paraphrasing (Helmer, 185). Less typical, but more unfortunate, is Helmer's error in referencing this quote: he cites both the wrong volume and the wrong page number from Bo Wallner's book.

occasional slips in referencing more readily available sources, it is with some reservation that I have, where necessary, taken his references at face-value.²⁶ Despite these caveats, Helmer's work deserves recognition as informative, comprehensive, and readable. Rich in photographs and musical excerpts, it is invaluable as a first port of call for anyone interested in Rangström – provided, of course, that they understand Swedish.

Currently, then, English-language scholarship on Swedish composers is largely limited to broad surveys in books that deal with Nordic music as a whole. Ture Rangström in particular has been covered only in Swedish, by Helmer's thorough but primarily descriptive biography. This thesis thus brings Rangström and his *romanser* to light in English for the first time, placing him, and the distinctive musical culture of early twentieth-century Sweden, in relation to the wider context of Nordic and European trends.

The main threads: Literature, Identity, Nationalism, Landscape

The Stenhammar quote at the start of this chapter raises two of the central themes of this thesis (literature and identity) in as many sentences: 'He is a poet. Unfortunately he is not a musician.' Two other themes (nationalism and landscape) are inescapable strands in Rangström's reception history. These four themes do not correspond completely and exclusively to the four chapters of the thesis; rather, like individual threads in a tapestry, each can be traced through the weave of Rangström's song composition, but should also be considered with reference to the others. Indeed, it is precisely where the threads cross that points of interest occur and that the overall picture of Rangström's musical career is formed.

It was Swedish literature, and Swedish poetry in particular, that, by Rangström's own account, triggered his compositional process. In what is probably his most frequently cited statement, he portrays it as essential: 'Perhaps even my interest in music was born of poetry, for it was precisely the word, the burning word, that sparked my relentless desire to compose.'²⁷ Alrik Gustafson's lengthy and detailed survey of Swedish literature, though it is now rather dated, has not, at least in English-language publications, been bettered, and it offers an insight into the literary and intellectual movements that marked the culture in which Rangström lived and worked.²⁸ Swedish

²⁶ Where the original material is unavailable, I have always acknowledged Helmer as the source of the reference.

²⁷ Ture Rangström, 'Mitt första möte med musiken', *Nya Dagligt Allehanda*, 14 November 1940. 'Kanske rent av mitt intresse för musiken föddes av dikten, ty det var just ordet, det brinnande ordet, som satte i gång min obevekliga åtra att komponera.'

²⁸ Alrik Gustafson, *A History of Swedish Literature* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1961). A more recent contender for the status of standard text, the 1996 publication which bears the same title and is edited by Lars G Warne (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press), is marked by the pros and cons of multi-author work.

literature is evidently a living tradition for the author, 'something *more* than merely an object of study',²⁹ and while his tendency to personify and poeticize it makes for an engaging narrative, it sometimes leads to a lack of critical distance. He imbues his subject with agency from the very first page, where he tells us that 'the chief glory of Swedish literature is its lyric poetry (the genre which most stubbornly yields its secrets to the labors of translator or interpreter)'.³⁰ Swedish literature thus becomes the eponymous hero of the book, greater than any individual author, always more or less true to itself, never abandoning its heritage but always adapting to survive. In each of the last five chapters, Gustafson is at pains to explain that the commonly used period labels, particularly those based on particular decades (*åttiotalet*, *40-talister* etc.), are unhelpful in that they imply lines of demarcation and breaks with tradition where in fact there was a good deal of continuity. This warning echoes Horton's caveat regarding the Romantic and the Modern in Swedish music: both writers stress the overlapping nature of periods. Gustafson's definition of literary modernism never fully surfaces from a sea of turbulent description, and nor does he define the Swedishness that he holds up as an ideal:

Swedish literature becomes again in the 1890's [sic] a *Swedish* literature, after a period in which it had rather too slavishly followed foreign prophets and had sworn allegiance to foreign gods. No period in Swedish literary history is so essentially Swedish in its orientation as is the 1890's [sic].³¹

Gustafson seems content to let the literature speak for itself, as though the surest way to understand the Swedish identity is simply to read all that was written in the 1890s (the decade, notably, in which Rangström grew up). It is important to realize, before approaching Rangström's *romanser* with questions about modernity and Swedishness, that these terms have gone largely undefined even in the better-known territory of the literature that he set. What is clear from Figure 2 (p. 27) is that Rangström habitually set contemporary and recent texts, which, according to Horton's criteria, places him alongside Stenhammar as a modernist composer. It also distinguishes him from the 'basic regressive tendency' that Jane K. Brown has observed in the Lieder tradition: that even composers who lived into the twentieth century 'looked overwhelmingly to the period 1770-1870 for their texts'.³² So although the *romans* can be considered a parallel genre to the Lied, it quickly becomes apparent that fresh questions come into play as we move north across the Baltic from Germany and shift forward in time, deeper into the twentieth century. The issues of national identity and modernism are rarely the focus of Lieder scholarship, bound as the genre is to the

²⁹ *ibid.*, xi.

³⁰ *ibid.*, vii.

³¹ *ibid.*, 293.

³² Jane K. Brown, 'In the beginning was poetry' in *The Cambridge Companion to the Lied*, ed. James Parsons (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 13.

German language and, by and large, to the nineteenth century; in the study of Rangström's *romanser*, they become not only relevant, but crucial.

The single most influential literary figure in Rangström's early life was August Strindberg (1849-1912), 'the mad inventor of modern drama' and 'a walking scandal'.³³ He was a tremendously significant figure in *fin-de-siècle* Sweden, where his realist and naturalist plays gave impetus to the Modern Breakthrough, an anti-Romantic movement that had begun in Denmark under the leadership of Georg Brandes (1842-1927). However, as Birgitta Steene has observed, Strindberg 'is perhaps too restless, self-centered, and idiosyncratic a mind to personify the period. He is part of it, but again and again, he also transcends it.'³⁴ Strindberg is precisely the kind of dominant personality that Swedish music lacks, and it was to him that Rangström dedicated his first symphony. Although Strindberg's tempestuous life and ground-breaking oeuvre are unparalleled, there are sufficient correspondences between his interests and Rangström's to raise the possibility that Rangström saw him as a model of Swedish genius and therefore worthy of emulating. The most problematic similarity, from the researcher's point of view, is that both men were in the habit of poeticising their experiences and were deeply concerned with self-representation. Most biographers of Strindberg acknowledge the difficulty of separating fact from fiction, and the border between the two remains somewhat blurred, as different authors have drawn the line in different places. For example, Sue Prideaux explains that the books which Strindberg himself identified as autobiographical 'are a complex mix of sticking closely to the action of his life and veering into the wildest imagined scenarios',³⁵ and yet, for the early years of Strindberg's life, she relies heavily and unquestioningly on accounts from the four-volume novel *Tjänstekvinnans son* (*The Serving Maid's Son*, 1886), which Strindberg wrote long after the fact. Michael Meyer, as a renowned translator of Strindberg (for which he became the first Englishman to be awarded the Gold Medal of the Swedish Academy), had an intimate knowledge of the purportedly autobiographical novels, but argued that, rather than these, 'the principal source for any life of Strindberg must, or should, be the monumental edition of his letters edited by the late Torsten Eklund'.³⁶ Olof Lagercrantz takes an even more sceptical stance, observing that even the letters are 'literary exercises, much given to hyperbole, whose recipient becomes an experimental audience'.³⁷ Lagercrantz developed several strategies for guarding against his subject's 'extraordinary talent for making us believe what he wants us to believe',³⁸ and, given that a large proportion of the available material regarding Rangström was collected and preserved

³³ Arthur Miller, 'The Mad Inventor of Modern Drama', *New York Times*, 6 Jan 1985.

³⁴ Birgitta Steene, 'Liberalism, Realism, and the Modern Breakthrough: 1830-1890' in *A History of Swedish Literature*, ed. Lars G. Warne (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1996), 237.

³⁵ Sue Prideaux, *Strindberg: A Life* (London: Yale University Press, 2012), 40.

³⁶ Michael Meyer, *Strindberg* (London: Secker and Warburg, 1985), xii.

³⁷ Olof Lagercrantz, *August Strindberg*, trans. Anselm Hollo (London: Faber and Faber, 1984), 31.

³⁸ *ibid.*, 20.

by the composer himself, these strategies have been adopted, though to a somewhat lesser extent, for this thesis.

Firstly, and most simply, the researcher must examine contexts with common sense. Lagercrantz teaches this not overtly but by example, through his interpretation of Strindberg's suicide threats, which 'occur in material written in a consistently beautiful and calm hand and expressed in clear and always controlled language'.³⁹ The understanding of what is written thus becomes contingent on how, why, when, and to whom it was written, and Rangström's statements must undergo a similar interrogation. Secondly, Lagercrantz suggests that 'the serious scholar needs to compile and constantly refer to his own "dictionary" of Strindberg vocabulary and terminology, which will enable him to get at their true meaning',⁴⁰ an approach that he considers to be sadly lacking in Strindberg research. For example, Lagercrantz interprets Strindberg's discussion of contemplating suicide as an expression of deep distress, but as a symbol rather than a fact. (This strategy of building up an interpretation of a recurring word or theme will be applied in Chapter One to Rangström's personal writings, and in Chapter Three to his use of common Romantic tropes in his songs.) Thirdly, Lagercrantz insists that the nature and content of Strindberg's work can and should be used to illuminate his complex and conflicted character: 'Ultimately his poetic *oeuvre* was the bill of health that released him from every straitjacket which his wives or others would recommend'.⁴¹ That is to say, whatever disturbed or unbalanced self-portraits Strindberg draws for the reader, he is also the author 'who guides his pen with such a firm hand'.⁴² However, Lagercrantz also repeatedly acknowledges that Strindberg's characters are reflections – sometimes partial, sometimes magnified, sometimes distorted – of their author. Strindberg's work highlights the issue of presented identity: 'for every phase of his life, [he] decided how he wanted to be understood and deliberately created a persona for himself'.⁴³ Chapter One will consider Rangström's life as a series of similarly presented identities and Chapter Four will examine the partial projections of his identity in specific compositions.

The discussion of Rangström's sense of self is problematized by the significant development in conceptions of identity during and since his lifetime. The sociologist Stuart Hall provides one way of negotiating these changes by distinguishing between three understandings of identity: the

³⁹ *ibid.*, 32.

⁴⁰ *ibid.*

⁴¹ *ibid.*, 210.

⁴² *ibid.* Lagercrantz argues his case through the poem 'Somnambulist', in which Strindberg chillingly describes a madman who is deluded into thinking he is writing. The deranged writer is a self-portrait, but then so is the 'self' observing the madman within the poem, and Lagercrantz argues that both are crafted with a skill that belies insanity.

⁴³ *ibid.*, 20.

Enlightenment subject, the sociological subject, and the post-modern subject.⁴⁴ In the Enlightenment subject, an identity is assumed to be the core or centre of each individual, which remains 'essentially the same' throughout life. The sociological subject, while retaining some sense of this core, depends rather more on the interaction between the self and society:

The notion of the sociological subject reflected the growing complexity of the modern world and the awareness that this inner core of the subject was not autonomous and self-sufficient, but was formed in relation to 'significant others,' who mediated to the subject the values, meanings, and symbols – the culture – of the worlds he/she inhabited... The subject still has an inner core or essence that is 'the real me', but this is formed and modified in a continuous dialogue with the cultural worlds 'outside' and the identities which they offer.⁴⁵

The conception of the post-modern subject, on the other hand, does away altogether with the idea of an essential core, dismissing it as a fantasy constructed to give a comforting impression of continuity. Identities are seen as multiple, moveable, and even contradictory. Hall admits that his summaries are simplifications, but that does not answer the question left at the heart of this last conception: who constructs the imagined sense of self if not some deeper, more essential self?

The art-song genre is an extraordinarily fertile field for discussions of identity. James Parsons has suggested that it was precisely 'because the genre aided in the formation of individual identity' that it survived the transition into the twentieth century.⁴⁶ In the composition of a sung text (and even more so in the performance) there are multiple personas – actual and imagined, living and dead – interacting with each other to different extents and with varying degrees of awareness. Asking a recital audience to whom they are listening can therefore result in a vast array of answers, which would in all likelihood differ from hearer to hearer, song to song, day to day, and performer to performer. Edward T. Cone's seminal work *The Composer's Voice* has dealt with this question in detail, and the identity-focused case studies in Chapter Four are based on the assumption that, as Cone puts it, 'the singer is the actual, living embodiment of the vocal protagonist'.⁴⁷

In this thesis, discussions of identity will accept the post-modern belief in a multiplicity of identities while retaining the sociological conception's assumption of a fundamental self that is shaped by interactions with the outside world. This provides some common ground with the views of identity held in Rangström's own time and place, allowing us to understand the *fin-de-siècle* quest

⁴⁴ Stuart Hall, 'The Question of Cultural Identity' in *Modernity: an Introduction to Modern Societies*, ed. Hall et al. (Oxford: Blackwell, 1996), 597.

⁴⁵ *ibid.*

⁴⁶ James Parsons, 'The Lied in the modern age: to mid century' in *The Cambridge Companion to the Lied*, ed. James Parsons (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 275.

⁴⁷ Edward T. Cone, *The Composer's Voice* (London: University of California Press, 1974), 23.

for the self as a valid pursuit,⁴⁸ but also leaving scope for the great contradictions in Rangström's life and songs to be explored without demanding that their tensions be resolved.

One of the most potent ingredients of identity formation in the early twentieth century was that of national identity, and Chapter Two examines Rangström's music as a means of expressing and propagating his sense of Swedishness. Although nationalism in twentieth-century Europe has been thoroughly scrutinized, Sweden is rarely the country in focus, as though political neutrality and nationalism are assumed to be mutually exclusive. In fact, Sweden's connections to Germany (historically, linguistically, and economically) render reactions to the latter's belligerent role in both world wars particularly complex and contentious. Like many of his compatriots, Rangström was pro-German by default. Helmer is quick to assure his readers that any Blood and Soil rhetoric in Rangström's writing 'in the context of its time, mostly appears to be typical and relatively naïve ... nothing suggests that future racial teaching and the ideas of the emerging German National Socialism took hold of him'.⁴⁹ Indeed, Rangström seems to have insulated himself from the politics and conflicts of the early twentieth century. For example, only a handful of the thousands of articles collected by Rangström contain any news of either World War. On the odd occasion where the bold, black headlines do appear, they seem to be there by chance, included simply because some smaller article on the same page mentions Rangström or his work. In line with this puzzling silence, Helmer does no more than touch on the World Wars in his biography, mentioning little more than 'the isolation during the First World War's troubled years'⁵⁰ and the economic difficulties that followed. He assures us that, as the Second World War loomed:

One need not doubt Rangström's worry over the critical and threatening events of the time. As composer, however, he remained aesthetically distanced, sometimes neutral, and did not want to jumble up art and politics. He chose the artistic-idealistic way to answer the time's cause for concern in musical form.⁵¹

As an example of this 'aesthetic distance', Helmer refers to Rangström's disapproval of a proposal that the Society of Swedish Composers should express itself politically, but he cites no expression of the supposedly self-evident worry. Rangström's lack of overt political engagement is problematic for any discussion of nationalism in his music – a nationalism which could easily be assumed to lie at the

⁴⁸ Pål Bjørby, 'Eros and Subjectivity: Knut Hamsun's *Pan* and Ragnhild Jølsen's *Rikka Gan*' in *Fin(s) de Siècle in Scandinavian Perspective: Studies in Honor of Harald Naess*, ed. Faith Ingwersen and Mary Kay Norseng (Columbia: Camden House, 1993), 125.

⁴⁹ Helmer, *Ture Rangström*, 302. '... i sitt tidssammanhang mest framstår som typisk och relativt aningslös ... ingenting talar för att tidens rasläror och den framväxande tyska nationalsocialismens idéer vann fotfäste hos honom.' The German ideology of Blood and Soil (*Blut und Boden*) promoted nationhood based on descent and territory; it predated but was popularized by National Socialism in the 1930s.

⁵⁰ *ibid.*, 198. 'isoleringen under första världskrigets oroliga år.'

⁵¹ *ibid.*, 369. 'Rangströms oro över de kritiska och hotfulla tidshändelserna behöver man inte tveka om. Som tonsättare förhöll han sig dock estetiskt distanserad, ibland neutral, och ville inte blanda ihop konst och politik. Han valde den konstnärligt-idealiska vägen att svara på tidens orostecken i musikalisk form.'

heart of works like his Second Symphony, *Mitt land (My country)*, which was conceived during the last months of the First World War.

In readiness for Chapter Two, it is necessary to clarify some definitions: nationalism, national identity and patriotism. Most studies of nationalism present the concept as particularly difficult to define, with Elie Kedourie's blunt assertion that 'nationalism is a doctrine invented in Europe at the beginning of the nineteenth century'⁵² being an exception rather than the norm. Though overly categorical, Kedourie's definition provides a helpful starting point from which to summarize scholarly thought on the subject. Firstly, he describes nationalism as a doctrine. Authors may disagree over what exactly this doctrine contains, or name it ideology instead, but most definitions of nationalism assert that it involves a set of beliefs. Secondly, Kedourie's claim that nationalism was invented can be understood as a bald expression of the constructed nature of nationalism, something which tends to be acknowledged with differing levels of wariness. So, for example, while there are overtones of disapproval to Anthony D. Smith's description of nationalism as 'perhaps the most compelling identity myth in the modern world',⁵³ David Miller is at pains to argue that 'in making our nationality an essential part of our identity, we are not doing something that is rationally indefensible'.⁵⁴ Thirdly, Kedourie says that nationalism originated in Europe. There is something unavoidably circular about this statement: certainly, nationalism as he defines it originated in Europe, but he has formed his definition through examining nationalism in Europe. It is important, at this stage, to clarify that the nationalism under discussion in this thesis is the Western model of nationalism, and to emphasize that this model has no claim to exclusivity. The lines between 'Eastern' and 'Western' nationalism have sometimes been drawn in uncomfortable places, designating the former as essentially backward while the latter is liberal and rational.⁵⁵ An alternative generalization is Smith's distinction between the Eastern approach as ethnic-genealogical and the Western approach as civic-territorial.⁵⁶ That is to say, the Eastern emphasis is on a people bound by common descent and culture, while the Western model tends to place more importance on a people with common territory and laws, making it far more compatible with the existence of a liberal state than its Eastern counterpart tends to be. However, this binary understanding fails to account for the preoccupation with racial purity in early twentieth-century Germany and, as we shall

⁵² Elie Kedourie, *Nationalism*, 4th edition (Oxford: Blackwell, 2000), 1.

⁵³ Anthony D. Smith, *National Identity* (Reno: University of Nevada Press, 1991), viii.

⁵⁴ David Miller, *On Nationality* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995), 10. For much of his discussion, Miller adopts the term 'nationality' rather than the more problematic 'nationalism'.

⁵⁵ *ibid.*, 8. Miller cites two scholars whose distinctions are somewhat pejorative: Hans Kohn, 'Stirrings in the Old World' in *The Idea of Nationalism* (Toronto: Collier-Macmillan, 1969), 455-576; and John Plamenatz, 'Two Types of Nationalism' in *Nationalism: The nature and evolution of an idea*, ed. Eugene Kamenka (London: Edward Arnold, 1976), 22-36.

⁵⁶ Smith, *National Identity*, 8-13.

see, Sweden. Lastly, Kedourie dates nationalism from the beginning of the nineteenth century, more or less in line with the scholarly consensus that the French Revolution is the period which gave rise to the ideology. Western nationalism is therefore a relatively modern phenomenon, a characteristic that is at odds with its tendency to draw on historical or mythological pasts as an incentive for present unity. Eric Hobsbawm outlines this paradox at the heart of nationalism:

[...] modern nations and all their impedimenta generally claim to be the opposite of novel, namely rooted in the remotest antiquity, and the opposite of constructed, namely human communities so 'natural' as to require no definition other than self-assertion.⁵⁷

Before attempting to form a working definition of nationalism, there is a major caveat to be taken into consideration, as observed by Peter Alter:

The plethora of phenomena which may be subsumed under the term 'nationalism' suggests that it is one of the most ambiguous concepts in the present-day vocabulary of political and analytical thought... Only with reference to a concrete historical context can we say what the term actually does or should signify. An initial conclusion could run like this: *nationalism* does not exist as such, but a multitude of manifestations of nationalism do. In other words, it is more appropriate to speak of *nationalisms* in the plural than of *nationalism* in the singular.⁵⁸

It is possible to accept Alter's point without fully adopting this practice. (Indeed, he does not often adhere to it himself.) However, acknowledging the multiple manifestations of nationalism does not altogether remove the need for a definition, as there must still exist a core meaning to which these manifestations, in their various ways and to varying extents, pertain. Such a definition must necessarily be open-ended: a broad basis on which discrete forms of nationalism can be built. Henceforth, then, nationalism will be taken to mean the Western model of nationalism, which emerged in Europe around the time of the French Revolution, and which comprises a set of inter-related beliefs about an individual, their nation, and its politics.

National identity is a far more fluid and less exclusive concept than nationalism, and one which is not so weighed down by historical baggage. Where nationalism promotes an individual's relationship to the nation state (whether existing or aspirational) as of primary importance, national identity allows for multiple senses of identity and other levels of loyalty.⁵⁹ There are of course many overlapping areas: both concepts often involve an attachment to a particular territory, a sense of political community, a shared language and culture, or a common history. But where nationalism makes objective claims, national identity is essentially subjective. It is an individual's sense of

⁵⁷ Eric Hobsbawm, 'Introduction: Inventing Traditions' in *The Invention of Tradition*, ed. Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 14.

⁵⁸ Peter Alter, *Nationalism*, 2nd edition, trans. Edward Arnold (London: Arnold, 1994), 1-2.

⁵⁹ Stuart Woolf, ed., *Nationalism in Europe, 1815 to the Present: A Reader* (London: Routledge, 1996), 30.

belonging to a nation, formed by an array of experiences, given diverse expression, prone to fluctuation, and even capable of reorientation.

In discussions of nations and nationalism, surprisingly little is said about patriotism.⁶⁰ Indeed, the word itself has undergone a steady decline in general usage since the end of the First World War, when ‘nationalism’ became increasingly prevalent.⁶¹ The modern meaning of patriotism as ‘devotion to one’s country’ emerged in the sixteenth century, before which the word ‘patriot’, disseminated from Latin into the major European languages, simply denoted a fellow-countryman.⁶² The Latin was derived in turn from the Greek *πάτριος* (*patrios*), which was used of barbarians: those who could be identified *only* as part of a clan, as opposed to Greeks who belonged to a *πόλις* (*polis*: city, state).⁶³ In one way, then, the metamorphosis of the word, across languages and centuries, has come full circle. Patriotism is now commonly viewed as the non-political (or, at least, not necessarily political) alternative to nationalism. That is to say, it need not be tied to a nation-state, nor have a political agenda. It could form part, but not the entirety, of a person’s national identity. Thus, while nationalism, national identity and patriotism are related ideas, and in some particular times and places may be so closely related as to be almost inseparable, the concepts themselves remain distinct. Chapter Two will explore Rangström’s music and writing in order to draw out his notions of Sweden and Swedishness, and so to outline his sense of national identity and discuss its reception as an expression of nationalism.

While the idea of nationalism can be (and increasingly has been) distanced from a musical score, categorized as a matter of the composer’s intention and the audience’s interpretation, landscape can prove a more tangible influence, and Chapter Three will deal with Rangström’s deep connection to the archipelago landscape of Östergötland in this context. In Western nationalism, part of what defines a nation is its association with a certain territory, and it follows that there is a strong relationship between landscape and national identity. Indeed, Kenneth Olwig and Michael Jones suggest that the Blood and Soil rhetoric of German nationalism led, in the decades after the Second World War, to scholarly neglect of the interactions between society and nature.⁶⁴ However,

⁶⁰ David A. Bell’s *The Cult of the Nation in France: Inventing Nationalism, 1680-1800* (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 2001) is a recent exception.

⁶¹ Google’s Ngram Viewer shows that the frequency with which ‘patriotism’ has been used in written English was lower between 1980 and 2000 than at any other point since the late eighteenth century. Its decline began after the First World War and coincided with a dramatic rise in the use of ‘nationalism’.
<<https://books.google.com/ngrams>> (accessed 19 April 2016).

⁶² Oxford English Dictionary, <<http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/138899#eid31784971>> (accessed 26 June 2015).

⁶³ The Liddell-Scott-Jones Lexicon, <<http://stephanus.tlg.uci.edu/ljsj/#eid=82495&context=lsj&action=hw-list-click>> (accessed 26 June 2015).

⁶⁴ Kenneth R. Olwig and Michael Jones, ‘Introduction: Thinking Landscape and Regional Belonging on the Northern Edge of Europe’ in *Nordic Landscapes: Region and Belonging on the Northern Edge of Europe*, ed. Kenneth R. Olwig and Michael Jones (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2008), x.

critical interest in landscape has been growing quickly since the 1990s, perhaps not least because, as a site of intersection between history, geography, politics and culture, landscape lends itself to interdisciplinary research.⁶⁵ The twenty-two chapters of Olwig and Jones' *Nordic Landscapes* reflect this diversity, providing an overview of current scholarly thought on many aspects of landscape and identity, but also dealing specifically with the Nordic countries and their particular conceptions of landscape.

The observation that all 'mature nations' have national landscapes that are imbued with iconographic importance can be taken as evidence for the effectiveness of landscape as a nationalist tool.⁶⁶ One reason for this is, of course, that landscapes provide a tangible connection to the past, in that they are the actual or imagined sites of historical or mythological events. As we have seen, nationalist movements are modern phenomena and the formation of nations a relatively recent and rapid affair. But through landscapes that have been formed by geological processes on a timescale far longer than that of human experience, nationalist ideologies can claim to be grounded in the ancient past. Battlefields thus become hallowed places; mountains become depositories of memory.⁶⁷ A particular landscape is often promoted as the nation's heartland, with the cultural character of its community perceived to be purely or quintessentially national. Daniel Grimley discusses the Danish island of Funen, birthplace of Hans Christian Andersen and Carl Nielsen, in this context.⁶⁸ In Sweden, the favoured region is Dalarna, which Ulf Sparring describes as 'an ancient Swedish *landskap* with a legendary populace of independent, freedom-minded farmers that is widely seen to form the heartland of Sweden. In the hands of artists and poets, its physical landscape has become a symbol for Sweden as a whole.'⁶⁹

Perhaps it is an eagerness to maintain distance from such nationalist strategies that renders Olwig reluctant to give credence to the function of landscape features as natural borders, denouncing Sweden's southern coastline and mountainous border with Norway as follows:

⁶⁵ The interdisciplinary nature of landscape studies has been exemplified by the *Hearing Landscape Critically* network (2012-2016), led by Daniel Grimley and funded by the Leverhulme Trust.

⁶⁶ Donald W. Meinig, 'Symbolic Landscapes: Some Idealizations of American Communities' in *The Interpretation of Ordinary Landscapes*, ed. Donald W. Meinig (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1979), 164.

⁶⁷ Scholarly preoccupation with this process has emerged in response to Pierre Nora's *Les Lieux de memoire* (Paris: Gallimard, 1984-1992), 4 vols, which details sites (loosely defined) of French cultural memory.

⁶⁸ Daniel Grimley, *Carl Nielsen and the Idea of Modernism* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2010), xiv, and Chapter Five: 'Funen Dreams', 132-177.

⁶⁹ Olwig and Jones, 'Introduction', xix. Ulf Sparring's chapter, 'The Province of Dalecarlia (Dalarna): Heartland or Anomaly?' considers a wide range of reasons for Dalarna's status, and finds enough evidence for both viewpoints – and of connections between them – to conclude that Dalarna should probably be understood as both (p. 217).

Looking at the map, it is easy to forget that there is nothing natural about these borders and that they were brought about by force and only naturalized later according to governmental policy.⁷⁰

The false dichotomy Olwig creates here between the physical and the political landscapes sits awkwardly with the very origins of the Scandinavian term *landskap*, which historically meant a province, generally ‘culturally and geographically homogenous,’⁷¹ that adhered to a common law.⁷² Tomas Germundsson claims that these *landskap* ‘often have their roots in prehistoric times and thus predate the Nordic nations,’⁷³ while Gabriel Bladh more cautiously dates them from ‘at least the Middle Ages.’⁷⁴ Studying the present-day situation is as interesting as speculating about the past: Germundsson suggests that modern Swedes are more inclined to identify themselves with these ancient *landskap* than with the current administrative regions.⁷⁵ Although the idea of landscape as observed scenery arrived in Sweden with Romanticism, it did not supersede the older concept of a ‘lived territory’, which still forms part of the Nordic understanding of landscape, and, at least in rural Sweden, part of regional identity.⁷⁶

In the late nineteenth century, the cultural distinctions between Sweden’s varied *landskap* were promulgated through the arts. The scholar and folklorist Artur Hazelius’s vision of celebrating and preserving regional rural life was realized in the creation of Skansen, the world’s first outdoor museum, where agricultural buildings from across the country were reconstructed on Djurgården in Stockholm. Authors, artists and composers were similarly drawn to their landscapes. The work of Nobel Prize winner Selma Lagerlöf (1858-1940), for example, depicts Värmland as both a lived and a scenic landscape. The art historian Michelle Facos has asserted that the painter Anders Zorn (1860-1920) ‘clearly affirmed the “interanimation” of people and landscape’ through his depictions of female nudes in the Dalecarlian landscapes, often portrayed in the act of bathing.⁷⁷ Gustafson’s description of the poet Erik Axel Karlfeldt (1864-1931) provides a particularly striking example of landscape as a lived concept (as well as of the value that was placed on racial purity):

[He] was a true son of Dalarna ... of pure Dalarna stock... Indeed, Karlfeldt *is* Dalarna in as absolute a sense as it is possible for a poet to be the collective expression of a region’s folk and its way of life.⁷⁸

⁷⁰ Kenneth R. Olwig, ‘Danish Landscapes’ in *Nordic Landscapes*, 7.

⁷¹ Gabriel Bladh, ‘Selma Lagerlöf’s Värmland: A Swedish *Landskap* in Thought and Practice’ in *Nordic Landscapes*, 221.

⁷² Olwig and Jones, ‘Introduction’, xviii.

⁷³ Tomas Germundsson, ‘The South of the North: Images of an (Un)Swedish Landscape’ in *Nordic Landscapes*, 157.

⁷⁴ Bladh, ‘Selma Lagerlöf’s Värmland’, 221.

⁷⁵ Germundsson, ‘The South of the North’, 158.

⁷⁶ Bladh, ‘Selma Lagerlöf’s Värmland’, 221-223.

⁷⁷ Michelle Facos, *Nationalism and the Nordic Imagination: Swedish Art of the 1890s* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1988), 91.

⁷⁸ Gustafson, *A History of Swedish Literature*, 325.

Here, 'Dalarna' is clearly taken to mean not the physical landscape, but rather its people, and their way of living in it. This understanding of landscape, as an interaction of physical features and human activity, will be a vital interpretive tool when examining contemporary writings about music and landscape. Its implication is that when Rangström spent his summers composing in Östergötland, he was not just describing the landscape in his music, but also reshaping its meaning.

The musical connections to landscape are as strong as the literary ones but, though more recently established in scholarship. Daniel Grimley's work on Grieg and Nielsen has broken new critical ground, suggesting that the Norwegian landscape can be understood as a means of contextualising and resolving 'the tension in Grieg's work between competing musical discourses, the folklorist, the nationalist and the modernist'.⁷⁹ Landscape's multivalence is similarly crucial for understanding Rangström's music: Chapter Three will consider his vivid portrayals of regional landscapes as a deliberate statement of Swedish identity, but also as a way of locating his position relative to the modernist mainstream.

Sources and strategies

The Music and Theatre Library in Stockholm holds a sizable collection of material relating to Rangström. It consists primarily of twenty-six large volumes of newspaper clippings, most of which were collated by Rangström himself. However, his partner, Elsa Nodermann, under whose name some of the material is gathered, continued the practice for almost thirty years after Rangström's death, filling eight of the volumes herself. There are also several files of photographs, half a dozen volumes of musical sketches, and a hoard of private letters. A battered tin box holds some odds and ends of sentimental value: the cigar-shaped, wooden pen with which Rangström wrote his music; a handful of shells and bottle corks; the handkerchief that was used to wipe the dying composer's forehead.

The themes at the heart of this thesis are those that emerged from studying this material. The sheer time and effort involved in creating this self-selected record of his life is indicative of Rangström's concern with self-presentation and so reveals something not only of who he was, but also of how he wanted to be known. His association with archipelago landscapes is repeatedly emphasized in articles and photographs; his tendency to not only cause or contribute to conflicts but also to dwell on them is shown by his decision to preserve a particularly insulting telegram from Peterson-Berger and the correspondence (including draft letters) that led up to his resignation from the post of music critic for *Stockholms Dagblad* in 1914. The material also contributes to an

⁷⁹ Daniel Grimley, *Grieg: Music, Landscape and Norwegian Identity* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2006), ix.

understanding of the musical culture of Rangström's day, not least in the impression it gives of a musical circle so small and interconnected as to be claustrophobic. The same names appear over and over again as critics, composers, conductors and even performers: it was not uncommon for a composer to review a concert which included his own work, or for Rangström's compositions to appear side by side on a programme with those of his adversary, Peterson-Berger. Insofar as identities are formed and re-formed through interaction with multiple others, these reviews help us to build up a picture of Rangström in relation to the other musicians around him.

My case studies have been selected from Rangström's song output to exemplify and explore the key themes that emerged from the archival research. However, their double function is to serve as an introduction to Rangström's unfamiliar oeuvre. Dating from 1915 to 1941, they cover the majority of his working life and appear more or less in chronological order, thus providing an overview of Rangström's compositional development and his shifting interests. They are also among the most frequently performed of Rangström's songs; this has ensured both a reception history for the researcher and access to recordings for the reader.

I have taken a performative approach to the case studies, by which I mean that in many cases my analysis is a formalization of an accompanist's thought process when confronting the score at the piano. It is worth noting that the sight-reading accompanist rarely has the luxury of pre-considering any text beyond the title, and so this first encounter with the piece is essentially a performed analysis, guided primarily by the musical material, but also the composer's instructions and the singer's interpretation. In that sense, it is the opposite of what Kofi Agawu describes as 'the credo that informs many song analyses', that is, a methodology which assumes that the composer began with the text, and therefore does so too.⁸⁰ It can be seen as a means of taking the first step in the general analytical model that Agawu proposes: 'informal data-gathering' which 'collect[s] as many significant musical features of the song as possible'.⁸¹ While such an analysis is obviously preliminary, partial, and fallible, it serves to demonstrate the fresh possibilities of an approach that is not immediately bound by the text or by tradition.

There are two dangers in exploring the role of performance in analysis that I am keen to avoid: seeing performance-focused analysis as an extra added on to traditional methods, or setting it up in opposition to them. Jennifer Ronyak has taken issue with the first of these dangers, but runs the risk of being drawn towards the second:

Until recently, there has ... been little room within the subdiscipline [of Lied studies] to think extensively about performance. When scholars have done so, apart from pragmatic discussions of performance practice, it has usually been as an afterthought

⁸⁰ Kofi Agawu, 'Theory and Practice in the Analysis of the Nineteenth-Century "Lied"', *Music Analysis* 11/1 (March 1992), 10.

⁸¹ *ibid.*, 11.

to the ... hermeneutic process. One simply adds a speculative or more concrete layer concerning how a performance may demonstrate or further complicate the range of meanings already inherent in the musico-poetic work...

In the case of the lied, to focus fully on performance – to take it as the starting and ending points of an investigation and not just a potential layer that may be added to the work – is inherently to challenge the assumptions and techniques at the heart of the hermeneutic traditions governing the study of the genre.⁸²

While Ronyak is clear that such traditions need not be ‘fully overthrown’ in order to focus on performance, she proposes that ‘the lied’s status as a favorite hermeneutic object makes it an ideal site within which to explore the myriad conflicts that exist between performance-centered and hermeneutic approaches in musicology and music theory in general’.⁸³ This focus on conflict emphasizes what seems to me to be a false dichotomy. A performance-centred approach *is* a hermeneutic approach. I contend that the relationship between performer and analyst need not be as ‘elusive and problematic’ as Janet Schmalfeldt has suggested.⁸⁴ By assuming the roles of Analyst and Performer separately (and despite her tongue-in-cheek acknowledgement that their discussion is an idealized one) Schmalfeldt embodies, in the resultant split musical personality, the perception of analysis and performance as independent routes towards a common goal. But all performers analyse, and I believe there is more to be gained by looking for connections between theoretical and practical approaches to analysis, than by presuming them to be in conflict with each other.

It is worth noting that, while there are currently only a few active promoters of Rangström’s music outwith Sweden, they are all performers. This suggests that, despite the aspersions cast by Stenhammar on Rangström’s knowledge of instruments, he had, at least, a thorough understanding of the capabilities of the human voice and of idiomatic piano writing. The soprano Anna Hersey has produced a series of articles giving an overview of Swedish and Danish art-song and detailed guidance on correct pronunciation, and her book *Scandinavian Art Song: A Guide to Swedish, Norwegian, and Danish Diction* has recently been published (Rowman & Littlefield, 2016).⁸⁵ Another American soprano, Kathleen Roland-Silverstein, has recently released an anthology of Swedish *romanser* designed for English speakers.⁸⁶ It includes information about the composers, English and phonetic translations of the poems, and the publisher’s website includes recorded recitations of the

⁸² Jennifer Ronyak, ‘Studying the Lied: Hermeneutic Traditions and the Challenge of Performance’, *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 67/2 (Summer 2014), 544-545.

⁸³ *ibid.*, 545.

⁸⁴ Janet Schmalfeldt, ‘On the Relation of Analysis to Performance: Beethoven’s “Bagatelles” Op. 126, Nos. 2 and 5’, *Journal of Music Theory* 29/1 (Spring 1985), 2.

⁸⁵ Anna Hersey, ‘An Introduction to Swedish Diction’, *Journal of Singing* 68/3 (Jan/Feb 2012), 301; ‘Language and Diction. Singing in Danish: A Guide to Repertoire’, *Journal of Singing* 70/4 (Mar/Apr 2014), 449; ‘Singing in Danish: A Guide to Diction’, *Journal of Singing* 70/3 (May/June 2014), 573.

⁸⁶ Kathleen Roland-Silverstein, ed., *Romanser: 25 Swedish songs with guide to Swedish lyric diction* (Stockholm: Gehrmans Musikförlag, 2013).

Swedish text.⁸⁷ The South African pianist Jeanne-Minette Cilliers was responsible for the formation of an online database of Swedish song translations and resources, specifically designed to ‘provide performers worldwide with all the necessary tools and resources to incorporate this glorious repertoire into recital programs’.⁸⁸ (My own first contact with Swedish song was also in the context of performance: a one-off opportunity to accompany the Swedish soprano Hélène Kimblad when she visited Scotland in 2007.) There is another connection between these three proponents of Swedish song besides their focus on performance: each believes that the language barrier is the primary cause of neglect of Scandinavian art-song and each is actively trying to break the barrier down. While the forced rhymes and clumsy grammar of translated song-texts have no doubt limited the international popularity of Swedish songs in general, Rangström’s work in particular faces a double disadvantage: we shall see in Chapter Two that Rangström’s song-writing style was consciously modelled on the Swedish language. This untranslatable affinity between melodic phrase and spoken word creates the potential for an appreciation of Rangström’s *romanser* that deepens in proportion to the hearer’s (or player’s) knowledge of Swedish.

The decision to restrict the scope of this thesis to Rangström’s *romanser* was primarily driven by my interest in performance as analysis: the intimate resources of the art-song genre impose a welcome limitation on the quantity of interpretative decisions and musical responses made in the course of a performance. Additionally, any genre that spans a composer’s working life and represents a sizable proportion of his output is an effective means of tracing his development and the varying influences on him. Beryl Foster makes this argument on behalf of Grieg’s songs:

Grieg wrote 181 songs ... [he] composed more vocal music than piano and chamber works together. This alone would make the songs especially noteworthy. Add to it that they were written throughout his life (from op. 2 to op. 70), show all the high and low points in his development as a composer, and reflect his innermost feelings – ‘written with my life-blood’, as he frequently described several of them – and they become a most crucial part of his musical oeuvre.⁸⁹

Niels Krabbe makes the same points on behalf of Nielsen – whose songs ‘comprise nearly 300 works and span his entire productive career’.⁹⁰ The case for Rangström’s songs is at least as strong. He wrote at least 245 of them.⁹¹ His first published song was written at the age of seventeen and his

⁸⁷ Gehrmans Musikförlag <<http://www.gehrmans.se/en/shop/song/romanser-25-swedish-songs-with-guide-to-swedish-lyric-diction-12185>> (accessed 19 April 2016).

⁸⁸ Jeanne-Minette Cilliers, <www.swedishsong.com> (accessed 1 June 2015). Unfortunately, this website is no longer active.

⁸⁹ Beryl Foster, *The Songs of Edvard Grieg* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2007), 1.

⁹⁰ Niels Krabbe, in the preface to Anne-Marie Reynolds, *Carl Nielsen’s Voice: His Songs in Context* (Copenhagen: Muesum Tusculum Press, 2010), 8.

⁹¹ The total is usually given as ‘about 250’, and is even occasionally rounded up to 300; 245 is the number that I have been able to verify. They are listed in Appendix A, a database of Rangström’s solo songs based on the lists of works provided in Helmer’s biography and online by the Swedish Music Information Centre. By gathering this information and restructuring it as a searchable catalogue, I have been able to identify patterns and

last, left unpublished, is dated about six months before his death. His songs were widely perceived to be his best work, by himself and by his critics, during his life and ever since. For example, when reviewing Rangström's 'Fem ballader' in 1926, Alf Nyman averred that:

None of Swedish song composition's younger cultivators can in power and indomitable individuality touch Ture Rangström. All the way from the Strindberg songs [1909] to these last ballads and *romanser* he appears as an innovator and pioneer.⁹²

After Rangström's death, many obituaries emphasized his contribution to the *romans* genre, and his songs quickly became the works that most often represented him in concert programmes. Within ten years of his death, one critic stated that, 'We know already ... that the songs are the most priceless things he left.'⁹³ Rangström himself said, 'I know in art nothing more beautiful than the meeting between poetry and music',⁹⁴ and in Smith's admittedly cursory account of Rangström, no genre other than art-song is even mentioned.⁹⁵

All this suggests that any attempt to explore Rangström's identity as a composer must consider the songs particularly carefully. However, to do so to the exclusion of all else, particularly as Rangström's oeuvre is so little known, would be profoundly misrepresentative. I have therefore endeavoured to discuss and analyse Rangström's songs in relation to the wider context of his total output, and to that end have included a timeline of their composition alongside Rangström's major works in Appendix B, Graph 3b. More significantly, I have chosen to use the titles of Rangström's four symphonies as the structure of my thesis. Given the time and effort required to compose symphonies, and their important place in any composer's output and legacy, it follows that the choice of a programmatic theme would be the subject of much thought on the part of the composer. It seems clear to me that Rangström's symphonic titles are considered and deliberate statements that are indicative of his personal interests and intentions at specific points or periods of his life, and such a grand means of self-representation could not be ignored. It should be said that my consideration of Rangström's *romanser* within the wider context of his large-scale work does not

tendencies in Rangström's composition, such as his overwhelming preference for minor over major, and for the keys furthest from C, as well as his sudden bursts of activity in particular years. The most pertinent of these patterns are presented in the form of graphs in Appendix B.

⁹² Alf Nyman, 'Rangström-ballader', *Sydsvenska Dagbladet*(?), 2 Jan 1926. 'Ingen av den svenska sångkompositionens yngre odlare kan i kraft och okuvlig egenart mäta sig med Ture Rangström. Alltifrån Strindbergssångerna till dessa sista ballader och romanser framstår han som en hydanare och vägrödjare.' From the clipping preserved in the Rangström Collection it is not clear which newspaper published this review, but from other articles it is apparent that Nyman was working for *Sydsvenska Dagbladet* in 1926. All similar deductions have been indicated with a bracketed question mark, as above.

⁹³ Alf Thoor, 'Stormen går i dur', *Röster i radio* No. 48 (1954). 'Vi vet redan ... att sångerna är det oskattbaraste han efterlämnade.'

⁹⁴ Ture Rangström, 'I romanskomponistens verkstad', *Röster i radio* No. 47 (1936). '... vet jag i konsten intet skönare än mötet mellan dikten och musiken.'

⁹⁵ Smith, *Nordic Art Music*, 88.

attempt to pin down precise correspondences or related musical processes across the genres, as Anne-Marie Reynolds does in the latter chapters of *Carl Nielsen's Voice*.⁹⁶ While there is scope for such studies in the future, the present intention is more straightforward. It is, firstly, to acknowledge the interaction between Rangström's life, his interests, his songs, and his symphonies. If, as mentioned above, identity is shaped by encounters with the outside world, and if the songs are read as expressions of identity, they must necessarily be placed in relation to Rangström's wider work and environment. Secondly, the symphonies help to maintain a loose chronology, helpful for tracking Rangström's compositional development and shifting artistic interests. Lastly, exploring the significance of Rangström's large-scale works challenges the appellation of miniaturist which was implied by Stenhammar's letter, and which rarely seems far from any composer who is best known for his songs.

'Chapter One: Presenting a Swedish Artist' places Rangström in his historical context, arguing that his identity as a Swedish composer was inevitably shaped by the personalities and ideologies that he encountered as a young man. This chapter will correct the misrepresentations that have dogged Rangström's reception and will explore his student years during which he came into contact with diverse and competing philosophies about humanity, society, and the arts. The views and voices of Johan Lindegren, Julius Hey, Hans Pfitzner, and Ferruccio Busoni all had an impact on the young Rangström, but it was to August Strindberg's memory that he dedicated his first symphony, thus establishing a connection to one of the most infamous Swedes of the day. This connection was frequently cited throughout his career and was at last almost literally set in stone, when Rangström conducted his own compositions at the unveiling of Carl Eldh's dark and powerful statue of Strindberg. Like the playwright, Rangström had a tendency to poeticize his experiences and to consciously present himself to real or imagined audiences, and so Lagercrantz's methodologies serve as a useful model in this chapter.

The title of Rangström's Second Symphony, *Mitt land (My country)*, indicates the importance of national identity in his composition and reception. 'Chapter Two: Expressing National Identity' begins by contrasting the nationalistic rhetoric surrounding the 1940 performance of this symphony in Dresden with Rangström's statement of intent during its composition in 1918. The chapter suggests that Sweden's history of empire-building (and -losing) and her subsequent neutrality shaped a particular form of national identity that should modify our interpretation of the Blood and Soil rhetoric of the 1930s. The lack of a direct threat to Sweden's autonomy encouraged a doubly-orientated sense of national identity that celebrated regional belonging as well as connections to

⁹⁶ Anne-Marie Reynolds, *Carl Nielsen's Voice: His Songs in Context* (Copenhagen: Museum Tusculum Press, 2010).

continental Europe. Rangström's use of speech-melody (a compositional technique learnt from his German singing teacher and adapted for the Swedish language) will be explored in this context of inward- and outward-looking nationalism. This chapter will trace Rangström's reception history, showing that his use of speech-melody was rarely well-understood by music critics, and was overtaken in the 1930s by vague assertions of Rangström's Swedishness. A series of brief case studies will connect the threads of Swedishness and speech-melody by identifying characteristics of Rangström's vocal writing that have their roots in Swedish language patterns.

'Chapter Three: singing a seascape' focuses on what is arguably the strongest thread in the reception of Rangström's music: its relationship with the archipelago landscape of Östergötland. The chapter aims to go beyond the contemporary programmatic readings of Rangström's Third Symphony (a piece that the composer enigmatically described as his 'life-symbol in notes') through a survey of his thematically-connected *romanser*. Three key tropes from the symphony (the night, the sea, and the stars) will be traced through Rangström's entire *romans* output in order to interpret their symbolism for him personally, as distinct from that inherited from the Lieder tradition. In the 1924 'Bön till natten', these three tropes are drawn together in a song that epitomizes Rangström's relocation of religious ideas into the archipelago seascape as well as the idealized 'Adagio' style that he promoted in response to the confusion of modern musical styles. This chapter will argue that, by using the theme of 'Bön till natten' in his Third Symphony, Rangström aligns the piece with two agendas, one a response to the past, and the blandness of Swedish salon music, and one a response to the present, and the cacophony of competing musical voices after the First World War.

In 'Chapter Four: Facing the Inexorable', the title of the Fourth Symphony (*Invocatio*) takes us into the realm of the supernatural, of dreams and myth, and of the dark and ominous Other which lies just beyond the visible and the rational. It is here that the sense of self is most under threat, as it negotiates its place in an overwhelming universe as well as at the centre of inner conflicts. The chapter is structured around three texts which all purport to be monologues in the face of death: Rangström's prose text *Dömd* (*Condemned*, 1917), the 1935 song 'Tristans död' ('Tristan's death'), and the 1941 song 'Sköldmön' ('The Shield-maiden'). Firstly, *Dömd* uncovers Rangström's fascination with psychoanalysis and his sense of living a proxy existence through the symbolic world of his songs. Rangström's self-analysis is then used as a means of interpreting the two case studies, which are similar in the subject matter of their texts and in the style of their settings, yet portray very different personas. This chapter will examine the complex interplay between the identities of poet, character, composer, and performer, and demonstrate that Rangström's modernist preoccupation with the unconscious in music was consistently expressed in Romantic terms.

Figure 1. Selected Swedish composers of the early twentieth century

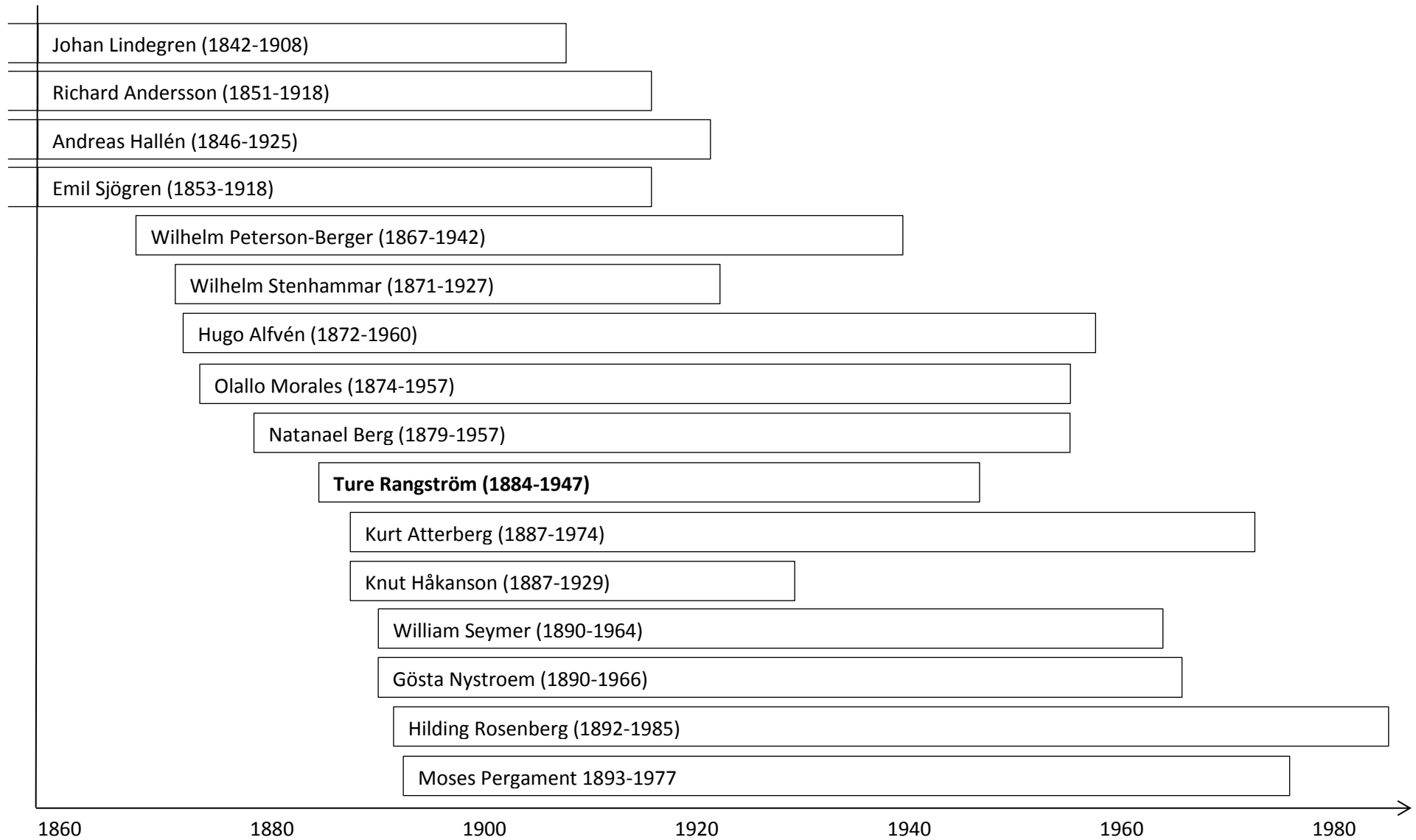
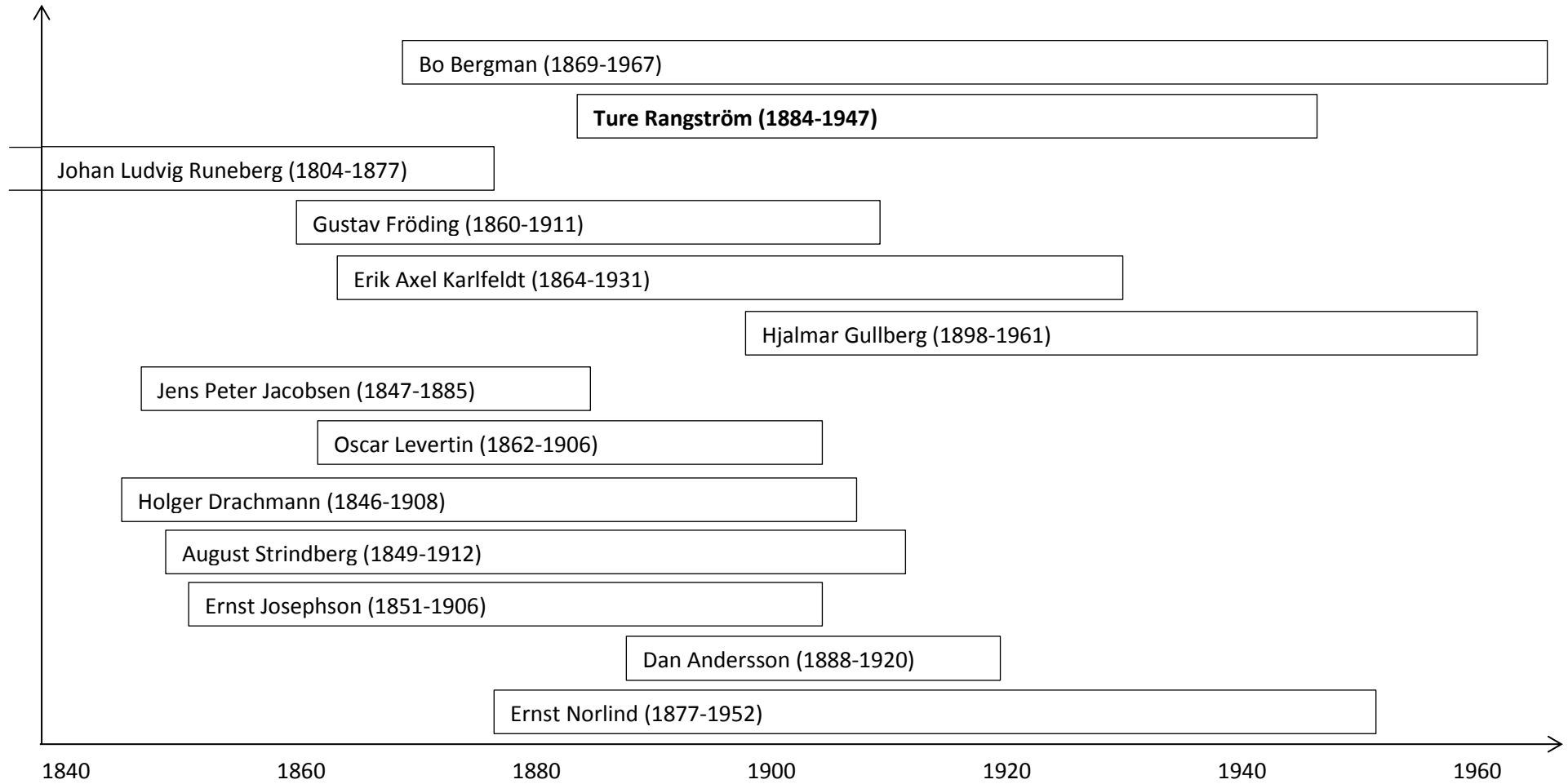


Figure 2. Timeline of Rangström's most frequently-set poets
(most frequent at top)



CHAPTER ONE
PRESENTING A SWEDISH ARTIST

‘Rangström and Strindberg are two names which, among the musically initiated, like to be named at the same time.’¹

– William Seymer

On 12 March 1915, Rangström’s First Symphony, *August Strindberg in memoriam*, was premiered in Stockholm by the Opera Symphony Orchestra. It was torn to shreds in Peterson-Berger’s review, but was appreciated by the audience and hailed by Olallo Morales as ‘significant and promising’ for a first symphony.² Rangström had already composed a set of four Strindberg songs (1909) and begun work on his opera *Kronbruden*, based on Strindberg’s play of the same name, but it was this symphony that cemented his connection to the author. The association only strengthened over time, with the symphony being performed as part of Rangström’s fiftieth and sixtieth birthday celebrations, and eventually at his funeral.³ ‘Rangström is a Strindberg admirer,’ Atterberg wrote, on the first of these occasions, ‘a musical Strindberg incarnation, i.e. a musical incarnation of the most beautiful and best of Strindberg.’⁴ Even allowing for some journalistic hyperbole, this quote is a powerful statement about Rangström’s perceived ability to embody Strindberg in his music. Indeed, Atterberg confusingly conflates several layers of identity here: Rangström seems to be equated with his music, Strindberg with the best of his writings, and the former with the latter. For Atterberg, apparently, the works and their respective creators are indistinguishable.

Rangström’s own understanding of identity is rather more refined:

A common card game with its fifty-two cards contains so many varied possibilities that no scientist can, other than theoretically, undertake to survey all the mixed results. It follows that the rather unpredictable notes in man, who has more than fifty-two aspects, can virtually never be calculated to give an exact, universal picture from his own author’s intuition or experience (we speak in this respect not about plagiarists, who lay out only bad patience). It follows, consequently, that one cannot depict Strindberg’s deck, which contains several thousand cards, with Rangström’s deck, which contains only a few.⁵

¹ William Seymer, ‘Rangström och Strindberg’, *Nya Dagligt Allehanda*, 19 May 1942. ‘Rangström och Strindberg är två namn, som bland musikaliskt initierade gärna nämnas samtidigt.’

² Olallo Morales, ‘En novitetsafton på Operan’, *Svenska Dagbladet*, 13 March 1915. ‘betydande och löftesrik’.

³ Eleven pieces of music were included in Rangström’s funeral service, and ‘Legend’, the 2nd movement of the 1st Symphony, was one of five pieces with a connection to Strindberg.

⁴ Kurt Atterberg, ‘Konsertföreningen’, *Stockholms-Tidningen(?)*, 22 November 1934. ‘Rangström är en Strindbergsbeundrare, en musikalisk Strindbergsinkarnation, d.v.s. en musikinkarnation av det vackraste och bästa hos Strindberg.’

⁵ Ture Rangström, ‘Strindbergssymfonien’, *Röster i radio*, No. 15 (1942). ‘Ett vanligt kortspel med sina femtiotvå lappar innehåller ju så många variationsmöjligheter, att ingen vetenskapsman annat än teoretiskt kan åtaga sig att överskåda alla blandningsresultaten. Därav följer att den ganska oberäknliga tonen i människan, som har fler än femtiotvå aspekter, så gott som aldrig kan beräknas giva en exakt, allmängiltig bild

Rangström recognizes here that a person's identity is multi-layered and variable: that the same individual can present many different faces. He certainly does not see himself or his music as an incarnation of Strindberg, although, to borrow his metaphor, it is possible that their card decks might contain some similar cards. This card analogy is helpful for conceptualizing identity as containing multiple aspects that can be distinct from each other while still belonging to each other, and this chapter will, as it were, start to shuffle through Rangström's deck. Within the framework of the sociological self (an identity "formed in relation to "significant others" ... and modified in a continuous dialogue with the cultural worlds "outside"⁶), it investigates Rangström's interactions with six individuals, including Strindberg, during his formative student years (1903-1907) and early career (up until Strindberg's death in 1912). Besides his school music teacher, Erik Återberg, Rangström had three music tutors – Johan Lindegren, Julius Hey, and Hans Pfitzner – and each represents a school of musical thought with which Rangström was obliged to engage. As well as these teachers, three people acted as particular sources of inspiration for Rangström during his student years, in one way or another: Ferruccio Busoni, August Strindberg, and Rangström's first wife, Lisa Hollender. These six people will be introduced in turn, with their different backgrounds and connections providing an overview of the historical and cultural context in which we must place Rangström's life and work, as well as tools for understanding his creative process and personality. However, it is the figure of Strindberg that dominates the chapter, even as he dominated the young Rangström's imagination: an idol of radical creativity to be revered and a model of self-presentation to be emulated.

Johan Lindegren: the Oracle

Just before Rangström turned nineteen, in November 1903, he began studies in composition with Johan Lindegren which were to last about six months. Lindegren (1842-1908) was based in Stockholm and was a significant figure in Swedish musical culture who commanded great respect as a teacher; Rangström called him 'The Oracle'.⁷ Through Lindegren, Rangström made musical connections in two quite different directions: backwards, to time-honoured compositional traditions, notably counterpoint, and outwards, among his contemporaries.

av sin egen upphovsmans ingivelse eller upplevelse (vi tala härvidlag icke om plagiatörer, som bara lägga dålig patience). Därav följer konsekvent, att man icke kan avbilda Strindbergs kortlek, som innehåller åtskilliga tusentals kort, med Rangströms kortlek, som bara innehåller ett fåtal.'

⁶ Stuart Hall, 'The Question of Cultural Identity' in *Modernity: an Introduction to Modern Societies*, ed. Hall et al. (Oxford: Blackwell, 1996), 597.

⁷ Helmer, *Ture Rangström*, 26.

Lindegren's lifelong contact with church music had given him a great affinity for counterpoint, and he was best known for his expertise in it. Hugo Alfvén's description of his first encounter with the name of Lindegren gives some idea of the latter's reputation.

A fellow student, Stålhammar, he was called, had advised me to seek out Lindegren. I had never heard of him before. He said that this Lindegren was very strict, but was incredibly learned and skilful. Someone who was called Sterky, and who composed as an amateur, had been in Paris for many years. When he came home he started with Lindegren. He said if Lindegren had lived in a large country he would have been world famous. He was an utter genius. He could do practically everything in terms of the most difficult contrapuntal forms. When I came to Lindegren – he was very strict, said Stålhammar, and if he became dissatisfied with a student, he could just go ahead and drive him to the door...⁸

Lindegren's teaching methods were just as strict as his manner: his students had to complete cantus firmus exercises in every key and in five styles of counterpoint, with the number of voices gradually increasing from two to five. For Rangström, this rigour must have been daunting. (When he began his lessons, he supposedly 'did not even know what the musical term "imitation" meant and was too proud to ask'.⁹) Through Lindegren's tuition he met the full weight of the Western classical tradition, and his reaction is telling – albeit complicated by other life events. When, after the summer of 1904, Rangström did not continue his lessons, Lindegren feared that they might have resulted in 'fugue-phobia' and have discouraged him from 'further advancing in the art of composition – although I may well be mistaken through and through'.¹⁰ In fact, there were more factors in play than a dislike of counterpoint: from December 1903, Rangström and his girlfriend, Lisa Hollender, who was his social superior, had been forbidden by her aunt (and guardian) to meet for a year, as a test of their relationship. At the same time, Rangström was working as a bank clerk, a job that he resented and felt to be soul-destroying. Could Lindegren have seen him there, he might have worried less about having put the young man off composing: in later life, Rangström joked that he 'wrote number 9s as

⁸ Per Lindfors, *Hugo Alfvén berättar* (Stockholm: Natur och Kultur, 1966), 16. 'En akademikamrat, Stålhammar, hette han, hade rått mig att söka upp Lindegren. Jag hade aldrig hört talas om honom förr. Han sa att denne Lindegren var mycket sträng, men var otroligt lärd och skicklig. En som hette Sterky och som komponerade som amatör, hade varit i Paris i många år. När han kom hem så började han för Lindegren. Han sa om Lindegren hade levat i ett stort land hade han varit världsberömd. Han var ett fullkomligt geni. Han kunde i praktiskt taget allt i fråga om de svåraste kontrapunktiska formerna. När jag kom till Lindegren – han var mycket sträng sa Stålhammar, och blev han missnöjd med en elev, så kunde han bara utan vidare köra honom på dörren...'

⁹ Helmer, *Ture Rangström*, 26. 'han visste inte ens vad den musikaliska termen "imitation" betydde och var för stolt att fråga'.

¹⁰ *ibid.*, 40. 'fugskräcken äfen tord ha afskräckt från vidare framträngande i tonsättningskonsten – ehuru jag mycket väl kan ha misstagit mig därutinnan.' (Letter from Lindegren to Rangström, 24 October 1904).

minims and Os as semibreves and so the director feared that I would bring disruption to Sweden's economic life'.¹¹

Rangström's compositional aspirations were not squashed in the slightest, but his response to Lindegren's compositional methods is less clear-cut. Counterpoint never became a feature of his style and he never wrote a full fugue. A 1926 article provides an insight into his attitude. In it he suggests that the 'romantic' composer creates a different kind of counterpoint from a purely formal technique:

Is it perhaps not the case that creative art-music can reveal both a feeling and a tune's polyphony, often fighting against one another? Exceedingly few masters approach mastery of both, none have reached them completely... And the counterpoint of feeling, which [the romantic composer] expresses through the word, the melody, the harmony, can often possess an ingenuity, which in its art need not be seen as less than the richest musical polyphony. The two arts can hardly be compared – basically, essentially different, they never meet, other than, exceptionally, in the same composer's work...¹²

This interaction between different elements in song was clearly of more interest to Rangström than counterpoint as a compositional technique. He associated the latter with absolute music, defining it in Eduard Hanslick's terms as music where 'the play of sounding moving forms is self-sufficient',¹³ and insisted that the former, though fundamentally different, was an equally worthy pursuit. His conception of counterpoint opens out from the music itself: the melody plays against the harmony, and both play against the words. In this 'counterpoint of feeling', the vocal line, piano accompaniment and the text each become 'voices', and the sentiments evoked in the listener by the interplay of these voices are as much a part of the composition as the tensions and resolutions created between the voices of traditional counterpoint. Rangström thus creates a meta-counterpoint between different musical elements. His attitude to past tradition was by no means one of rejection; as well as reworking the concept of counterpoint, he engaged with older musical styles through pastiche. There is, however, an implicit criticism of Lindegren's teaching in an unpublished statement that was probably intended as a preface to a set of five German songs titled 'Pastischen'. He wrote that, 'imitative exercises in old styles are easy to achieve; they can be found

¹¹ Cresc. 'Jeg var forbasket revolusjonær: En lyrisk-romantisk-realistisk Ture Rangström forteller', May 1946. 'Men jeg skrev 9-tall som halvnøter og nuller som helnøter og så fryktet direktøren at jeg ville bringe forstyrrelse inn i Sveriges økonomiske liv...' (Article in Elsa Nodermanns Papper, Vol. E.)

¹² Cited in Helmer, *Ture Rangström*, 238. 'Är det möjligen icke så att den skapande tonkonsten kan uppenbara både en känslans och en tonens polyfoni, ofta stridiga mot varandra? Ytterst få mästare närma sig behärsksningen av bådadera, ingen har nått dem helt... Och den känslans kontrapunkt, som han genom ordet, melodien, harmonien uttrycker, kan ofta äga en konstfullhet, vilken i sin art icke behöver stå tillbaka för den rikaste musikaliska polyfoni. De två arterna kunna svårligen jämföras – i grunden väsensskilda mötas de heller aldrig annat än undantagsvis i en och samma tonsättares verk...'

¹³ Rangström, 'Dikten och Musiken än en gång', *Svenska Dagbladet*, 26 January 1921. '... das Spiel der tönend bewegten Formen – sig själv nog...'

in all handbooks.’ Rangström’s aim was, instead, ‘to approach the old spirit with wholly modern means’.¹⁴

A more tangible response to Lindegren’s tuition can be found in the themes from the contrapuntal exercises that crop up here and there in Rangström’s work throughout his life. The most significant of these is a melody in C# minor, which returns in several instrumental works, including the Fourth Symphony, and which Helmer dubs ‘the Lindegren theme’. In the preserved exercises, Rangström’s writing displays a tendency towards regular phrases and closed endings, and although Lindegren sought to counter this by suggesting ties and suspensions, both became characteristic of Rangström’s work. Another feature of Rangström’s songs is the freedom of his harmonic progressions, which sometimes take him very quickly to remote keys. However, this need not be seen as a reaction against Lindegren’s strict exercises in each separate key. From Nathanael Berg, who undertook Lindegren’s ‘really sharp course in counterpoint’¹⁵ on Stenhammar’s recommendation, we have an account of his first lesson with the master:

I have had my first proper lesson with Director Lindegren. He has let me start a course, which simultaneously teaches harmony-counterpoint-musical form. For the first hour I had the task of writing examples where I should ‘prove the relationship between different keys, even the most removed from one another’. For as a rule one can state: ‘all the keys are related – if one can prove it!’¹⁶

Thus it may well be that Rangström’s idiosyncratic approach to key relationships, if not directly inspired by Lindegren’s teaching, was at least given room to develop.

Lindegren not only provided Rangström with a connection back to established traditions, but also outwards, to many of his fellow composers. Lindegren’s reputation and skill as a teacher were such that a significant proportion of two generations of Swedish composers were taught by him at some stage, either privately or as part of their conservatoire studies in Stockholm. Among them were Joseph Dente (1838-1905), Conrad Nordqvist (1840-1920), Alice Tegnér (1864-1943), Bror Beckman (1866-1929), Hugo Alfvén (1872-1960), Adolf Wiklund (1879-1950), Nathanael Berg (1879-1957), Sigurd von Koch (1879-1919), Harald Fryklöf (1882-1919), Melcher Melchers (1882-1961), Algot Haquinius (1886-1966) and Knut Håkanson (1887-1929).¹⁷ Rangström’s studies with Lindegren take on extra significance in the light of such a roll call, particularly as the elderly teacher was able to

¹⁴ Cited in Helmer, *Ture Rangström*, 112. ‘Imiterande övningar i gammal stil är lättvunna; de kan inhämtas i alla handböcker’; ‘... mit vollkommen modernen Mitteln dem alten Geist nahe zu kommen’.

¹⁵ Wallner, vol. 2, p. 355. ‘riktigt skarp kurs i kontrapunkt’

¹⁶ *ibid.* vol. 2, p. 356. ‘För Direktör Lindegren har jag haft min första egentliga lektion. Han har låtit mig börja en kurs, som utgör ett samtidigt stadium av harmonilära-kontrapunkt-musikformbildning. Till första timmen hade jag till uppgift att skriva exempel, däri jag skulle ”bevisa olika tonarters även de mest från varandra avlägsna, släktskap”. Ty som norm kan man uppställa: ”alla tonarter äro släkt – om man kan bevisa det!”’

¹⁷ Magnus Pereswetoff-Morath, ‘Johan Lindegren – kontrapunktiker – pedagog: Lindegren och hans lärjungar’, diss., Stockholm University, 1988. (Cited by Anna Reese, ‘Johan Lindegrens vägval’, MA diss., Uppsala University, 2007, pp. 82-83.)

be selective about the pupils he took on. Becoming a pupil of Lindegren can be seen as an admission to the circle of the Stockholm musical elite. It was a standard path to what moderate success was afforded by the Swedish music world, and Rangström was following many of his predecessors and contemporaries on it. The lessons with Lindegren gave them a connection to tradition, a common experience and shared knowledge – in essence, an initiation process.

That one man should have so broad an influence on a nation's musicians reflects not only his teaching ability, but also the limitations of Sweden's musical life at the time. The Royal Academy of Music in Stockholm was virtually the only institution in the country that offered advanced music tuition and there is some evidence that, in the 1880s, this level was slipping lower, into what Lindegren himself called 'deep decay'.¹⁸ The Academy had been established in 1771 by Gustav III, a great patron of the arts – a fact that allows its modern-day manifestation, *Kungliga Musikhögskolan* (The Royal College of Music), to claim the position of the second oldest music conservatoire in the world.¹⁹ However, the institution's 1881 regulations focused on preparing students for work as organists, teachers, or military musicians.²⁰ Bo Wallner investigates these changing standards in the context of Stenhammar's decision *not* to study at the conservatoire, and concludes that the new regulations meant that '[music] would, in other words, be supported in its socially useful functions – but no more.'²¹ Wallner goes on to quote from an 1884 article in the *Svensk Musiktidning* which declares, among other things, 'that the military musical directors never got to practice directing, that aural skills were substandard, and that, at a showcase, six of seven singers suddenly "reported themselves hoarse"'.²² This damning insight into the poor teaching and performing standards go some way towards explaining why Richard Andersson (1851-1918), a pianist who had studied with Clara Schumann, set up an alternative school of music in 1885 – and why Stenhammar might have chosen to attend that rather than the conservatoire. Initially a piano school, it quickly grew to include violin, organ, and harmony and counterpoint tuition, with the important names of Emil Sjögren (1853-1918) and Tor Aulin (1866-1914) briefly joining the staff list.²³ Despite this more

¹⁸ Johan Lindegren, 'Om vilkoren för blomstringen af vår nationella tonkonst. III', *Necken* (January 1880), 28. 'djupa förfall'

¹⁹ <<http://www.studyinstockholm.se/university/kmh-the-royal-college-of-music-stockholm/>> (accessed 20 April 2016). While this is rather a tricky claim to validate, giving the morphing nature of many music institutions, the KMH does predate major European state conservatoires such as Paris, Vienna, the Royal Academy of Music, etc. Because it was originally the conservatoire associated with the Swedish Academy of Music, it has been variously referred to (in source material and scholarship) as the Stockholm Conservatory or the Royal Academy of Music.

²⁰ Morales, Olallo, and Tobias Norlin, *Kungl. Musikaliska Akademien 1771-1921* (Stockholm: Lagerström, 1921).

²¹ Wallner, vol. 1, p. 133. 'Musiken skulle med andra ord stödjas i sina samhällsnyttiga funktioner – men inte mer.'

²² *ibid.* 'att de militära musikedirektörerna aldrig fick öva sig i att dirigera, att gehörsutbildningen var undermålig och att vid en uppvisning sex av sju sångare plötsligt "rapporterat sig hesa"...'.

²³ *ibid.*, vol. 1, p. 137.

specialized alternative, the limitations of the conservatoire continued to have an impact, no doubt feeding into two of the wider trends in the education of Swedish composers around the turn of the century.

Firstly, it was the norm for aspiring composers and musicians to spend a year or two studying abroad. Figure 3 (p. 69) shows that from Lindegren's student days right through to Rangström's, Germany was the default destination and Berlin by far the most popular city. (Sjögren and Alfvén were rather more cosmopolitan exceptions to the rule, spending time in France and Austria, and Italy and Belgium, respectively.) Germany's geographic proximity and historic connections to Sweden were doubtless factors in the formation of such a definite pattern, as well as the relatively low language barrier that German presented to the Swedes. In the 1920s, however, the travel plans of young Swedish composers reflected the reorientation of Europe towards Paris as the heart of cultural development. The new generation's dramatic shift of allegiance has been immortalized by Moses Pergament's (possibly apocryphal) telegram sent from Paris to Gösta Nystroem: WHAT THE HELL ARE YOU DOING IN GERMANY STOP HERE IS WHERE EVERYTHING IS HAPPENING STOP COME AT ONCE STOP MOSES.²⁴

A second feature of early twentieth-century Swedish musical culture is that several of its composers have been designated as largely self-taught – which is to say, that they never undertook formal studies at a conservatoire. Generally, though, this was replaced by private studies with Lindegren or at Andersson's school. What is worthy of note, then, is not the appearance of true autodidacts, but rather the place of the 'self-taught' label – sometimes self-applied – in a culture still marked by amateurism. Rangström would not have appreciated being put, in Stenhammar's 1917 letter to Nielsen, in the same category as Berg and Atterberg (whom he dubbed 'the vet' and 'the engineer'²⁵), and, indeed, it is hard to see why Stenhammar does not seem to consider vocal teaching and music criticism to be expressions of practical and theoretical musicianship, respectively. However, Rangström embraced the self-taught label as a sign of authenticity rather than amateurism, 'because art cannot be taught by another'.²⁶ He thought the term a valid one for composers like himself, who, despite some piecemeal or private teaching, had essentially learnt their trade on the job. 'And perhaps I should mention,' he wrote about the composition of *Ver sacrum*, an early instrumental piece, 'that during this "work" I have learned more than in all paid

²⁴ Gehrman's Musikförlag <http://www.gehrmans.se/en/composers/nystroem_gosta> (accessed 6 July 2016). Thomas Anderberg, in *Dagens Nyheter*, 4 December 2012, quotes the original text as 'Vad i all världen gör du i Tyskland? Det är här allt händer.' <<http://www.dn.se/arkiv/kultur/parisiskt-potpurri-somlos-forening-mellan-jazz-och-konstmusik>> (accessed 6 July 2016).

²⁵ Helmer, *Ture Rangström*, 25.

²⁶ *ibid.*, 50. 'ty konst kan ju icke läras av andra'. (From *Scenen*, 1922, 8.)

classes.²⁷ It should be noted that Stenhammar's reason for writing that the trio are 'not really musicians' is not that they are self-taught, but that they have full-time occupations in other fields. Just as well – for the self-taught description has also been applied to Stenhammar himself, not least by his most comprehensive biographer, Bo Wallner:

Let us ... not forget that Stenhammar was self-taught as a composer, despite some lessons with Sjögren and Hallén, [and] none of them, in today's meaning of the word, were skilled as either theory or composition teachers. We touch here a problem in Swedish romanticism which would be worth particular examination, but which now can only be suggested: the lack of a qualified, continuous, living training tradition for young composers. What was it Johan Lindegren had written in his article in the newspaper *Orfeus* [sic] 14 years earlier? He found the future for Swedish composition-talents, not least for the reason which we are now discussing, 'melancholy'.²⁸

In the small and inter-connected circle of Swedish composers around the turn of the century, it is easy to see the problem that Wallner touches on here: one can hardly move more than a single teaching generation without reaching someone self-taught, in the loose sense used above, or trained abroad. In many ways, Lindegren was as close as Sweden came to having a qualified teaching tradition. In 1880 he posed the question: 'Shall the next generation come to exhibit any single Swedish composer?'²⁹ It is possible that he himself was the best reason for the answer being yes.

Julius Hey: The Meistersinger

In October 1905, Rangström travelled to Germany to pursue his studies, as many Swedish composers had done before him. For seven months he was based in Berlin, but he seems to have been largely unimpressed by the city's musical life. When his singing teacher, the renowned Julius Hey (1832-1909), relocated to Munich, Rangström followed him there, after spending the summer of 1906 back in Sweden. He continued his lessons with Hey until, in October 1907, economic constraints forced him to cut his studies short by a full year. However, these two years of study and work experience (for Hey delegated some teaching to him) stood Rangström in good stead upon his return to

²⁷ *ibid.* 'Och så kanske jag skulle tala om att jag under det här "arbetet" lärt mer än under alla betalda lektioner.' (Draft letter from Rangström to Lisa Hollender and Ellen Rooswal, 2 January 1907.)

²⁸ Wallner, vol. 1, p. 473. 'Låt oss ... inte glömma att Stenhammar som tonsättare var autodidakt, trots en del lektioner för Sjögren och Hallén, där ingen av dem i den mening som vi idag lägger i orden var skickliga vare sig som teori- eller kompositions lärare. Vi berör här ett problem i svensk romantik som vore värt sin särskilda undersökning, men som nu bara kan antydas: avsaknaden av en kvalificerad, kontinuerlig, levande utbildningstradition för unga tonsättare. Hur vad det Johan Lindegren hade skrivit i sin artikel i tidningen *Orfeus* 14 år tidigare? Han fann, inte minst av det skäl som vi nu är inne på, framtiden för svenska kompositionsbegåvningar "vemodsfull".' (Wallner gives Lindegren's pseudonym, *Orfeus*, in place of the journal title, *Necken*.)

²⁹ *Orfeus* [Lindegren], 'Om vilkoren för blomstringen af vår nationella tonkonst. III', *Necken* (January 1880), 28. 'Skall då nästa generation komma att uppvisa någon enda svensk tonsättare?'

Sweden: throughout the 1910s his work as a singing teacher provided an important source of income.³⁰

Like Lindegren, Hey was an elderly man with a distinguished career behind him, and with strong ties to a particular musical tradition. In Hey's case, the connection was more direct, personal, and influential, leading to the man whose shadow, in Rangström's own words, 'at the turn of the century still lay giant-like over some continents and a piece of the universe': Wagner.³¹ In 1867, when King Ludwig II established the *Königliche Bayerische Musikschule* (Royal Bavarian Music School), at Wagner's instigation and with the intention of creating a German school of singing, Julius Hey was employed as its first vocal teacher. He was later responsible for coaching some of the singers at the first Bayreuth festival in 1876, including Georg Unger as Siegfried,³² but his most substantial contribution to the Wagnerian tradition was a phenomenally detailed treatise aimed at creating a German *bel canto* style. It runs to four volumes, the first of which deals entirely with spoken German, and its central thesis is that song should be a heightened form of vernacular speech: 'a singing of simplest truth clothed in a declamation of perfect style, the melodic rules of which emanate exclusively from the life-giving rhythm of our language'.³³ (The condensed version of his treatise, known as *Der kleine Hey*, remains a standard text in German vocal and elocution training.) For Rangström, Hey's tuition meant a good deal, both professionally and personally. The skills that Hey nurtured allowed him to gain a good reputation as a singing teacher, and thus a source of income, and in the obituary that he wrote for 'Papa Hey', his fondness is as evident as his respect:

His death will in the widest musical circles wake gloom and sorrow, for Hey was a banner-bearer and pioneer in his field and moreover a teacher who to a rare degree knew how to win his disciples' devotion. Those who had the fortune to pursue their studies under his leadership, and among them was also the occasional Swede, shall not forget his warm, enduring idealism[,] his willpower and the essence of his skilled, all-inclusive, intelligence. He shall stand for them as a last, bright memory of music's last golden age, of the Wagner[ian] struggle and of the day when one fought for great goals with great means. The undersigned has previously had occasion to occupy himself, in this newspaper, with Hey's artistic life-work and the fundamental meaning of his reformatory striving in the field of song.³⁴

³⁰ Helmer, *Ture Rangström*, 71.

³¹ Rangström, 'Musikens självbesinning I', *Stockholms Dagblad*, 2 October 1927. 'Vid sekelskiftet låg ju ännu Richard Wagers skugga jättelik över några världsdelar och ett stycke av universum.'

³² Elizabeth Forbes, 'Julius Hey', *Grove Music Online*, Oxford University Press.

<<http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/12967>> (accessed 6 July 2016).

³³ Julius Hey, *Deutscher Gesangsunterricht: Lehrbuch des sprachlichen und gesanglichen Vortrags* (Mainz: Schott, 1882-1886), vol. 2, *Gesanglicher Theil*, I, p. 83. (Cited by Michael Fend, 'German Bel Canto: Nineteenth-Century German Singing Manuals in a Political Context', *L'insegnamento dei conservatori, la composizione e la vita musicale nell'Europa dell'Ottocento*, ed. Licia Sirch (2012), 89-107.)

³⁴ Rangström, 'Julius Hey', *Svenska Dagbladet*, 24 April 1909. 'Dödsfallet kommer att i de vidaste musikaliska kretsar väcka förstämning och sorg, ty Hey var en märkesman och banbrytare på sitt område och därtill en

The nationalistic agenda behind Hey's work will be considered in Chapter Two, but we will look at the broader picture here – what Glenda Dawn Goss has described so well as the 'ritual that virtually every composer of Sibelius's generation would have to carry out: laying Wagner to rest.'³⁵

In 1900, the teenage Rangström had been hugely impressed by a performance in Stockholm of *Die Meistersinger*; on the other side of his student years, in 1909, he wrote a long and distinctive article in advance of the Swedish premiere of *Tristan und Isolde*, in which Wagner's pedestal position is unequivocal:

Many masters have told the tale before, the eternally living tale about mankind's hate and love. Now it is told for us by our time's great master – we listen to it from Richard Wagner's lips.³⁶

The unusual style of the article is worth mentioning briefly. Over several pages Rangström unfolds the twists and turns of the plot in grand style and with a plethora of exclamation marks, sometimes describing the characters' situation and sometimes addressing them directly. This can be seen as evidence of his deep emotional engagement with a narrative that later came to have personal significance in his life, but also as a literary manifestation of his 'counterpoint of feeling'. Here, by entering into imagined dialogue with the characters, his own response to the drama becomes part of it. His poetic approach was a deliberate reaction against music criticism that he saw as dull and anaemic. He sought a 'union of bold scholar and bold poet' who could '[raise] musical knowledge over sterile research and the aimless aesthetic level.'³⁷

It is in this 'poetic music-writing' style, in a sequence of articles from 1927, that we find one of Rangström's clearest responses to Wagner. His earlier reverence for Wagner crystallizes when he places him in an exclusive list of 'musical heroes': Bach, Mozart, Beethoven, Schubert (his personal favourite), and Wagner.³⁸ Much of the first article takes the form of a rant against the shifting of modern musical tastes: what was true yesterday becomes a lie today; each new style destroys the previous one like 'certain Negro tribes, with a fondness for eating up their parents'; and those 'who

lärare, som i sällsynt grad förstod att vinna sina lärlungars tillgifvenhet. De, som haft den lyckan att få bedrifva sina studier under hans ledning, och bland dem var äfven en och annan svensk, skola icke glömma hans varma, uthålliga idealitet hans viljekraft och hans kunniga, mångomfattande, intelligents väsen. Han skall för dem stå som ett sista, lysande minne om musikens sista storhetstid, om Wagnerkampen och om de dagar, då man för stora mål kämpade med stora medel. Med Heys konstnärliga lifsverk och den principiella innebörden af hans reformatoriska sträfvanden på sångens fält, har undertecknad förut haft tillfälle att sysselsätta sig i denna tidning...'

³⁵ Glenda Dawn Goss, *Sibelius: A Composer's Life and the Awakening of Finland* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009), 181.

³⁶ Rangström, 'Tristan och Isolde', *Svenska Dagbladet*, 12 February 1909. 'Många mästare ha förtalt den sagan förr, den evigt lefvande sagan om människors hat och kärlek. Nu berättas den för oss af vår samtids store mästare – vi lyssna till den från Richard Wagners läppar.'

³⁷ Rangström, 'Musikföreningen', *Svenska Dagbladet*, 1 December 1907. '... den förening af djärf forskare och djärf poet ... som höjer det musikaliska vetandet öfver den sterila forskningens eller den planlösa estetikers nivå.'

³⁸ Rangström, 'Musikens bildningsvärde', *Stockholms Dagblad*, 6 October 1927.

in devotion want to listen to Music itself ... get both soul and eardrums cracked by the Clamour'.³⁹ Amidst the dramatic metaphors an image emerges of Wagner as the last of 'the great dragons and dragon-slayers', whose shadow, at the turn of the century, obscured the sun.

Humanity looked to the west, where Brahms, Romanticism, Classicism, Beethoven and some others, had just gone down. Then beheld the east. No sunrise. Then the ravens started to call in the twilight – it was perhaps their time – and prophesied about themselves, for so the deceased Great Dragon had done, and it cannot be denied, that humanity listened quite a long time to these noises and found pleasure in them. Meanwhile, however, the noble birds hacked at each other and themselves – and that which was premiere raven yesterday (on the remains of the poor imitators of Wagner) has already lost feathers today.

If some occasional dazed songbirds (how is it really going with bird conservation in Scandinavia?) escaped unscathed from the battle, their own flight and future will have to prove it.⁴⁰

It is a grim picture that Rangström paints, portraying his own era as one of chaos and confusion, and his fellow composers as nothing more than squabbling scavengers. It communicates the frustration of a middle-aged composer who had seen his country's music fail to make the impact he had once hoped. Twenty years earlier, in his first article as *Svenska Dagbladet's* music critic, he had also spoken about 'modern music's chaotic desolation', advocating Carl Nielsen as 'the Spartan among effeminate Athenians' in whom hopes of a healthy and honest renaissance could be placed.⁴¹ There, too, Wagner was seen as a culmination of a tradition: 'Western music's homeland, that is, Germany, has with Brahms, Wagner, [and] Bruckner played out its ideal role – for the time being.'⁴² Rangström dismissed the current German bigwigs (Strauss, Mahler, Reger, and Pfitzner) along with those who tried to imitate Wagner, using the same disparaging term (*Wagnerepigonerna*) as in the quote above. For Rangström, there was no point in mimicry, or in clinging to what he saw as a degenerate tradition. He insisted on something new, but could not envisage it coming from Italy or France, where composers were 'hooked on sterile technical (harmonic) detail', or the immaturity of 'Russian

³⁹ Rangström, 'Musikens självbesinning I', *Stockholms Dagblad*, 2 October 1927. 'vissa negerstammar, som med förkärlek äta upp sina föräldrar'; '... som i hängivenhet vill lyssna till Musiken själv ... får både själ och trumhinnor spräckta av Larmet'; 'den siste store drakens och drakdödarens'.

⁴⁰ *ibid.* 'Mänskligheten såg mot väster, där hade Brahms, romantiken, klassicismen, Beethoven och några andra, nyss gått ner. Den skådade mot öster. Ingen soluppgång. Då började korporna gala i skumrasket, det var kanske deras tid, och profeters om sig själva, ty så hade den hädangångne Stordraken gjort, och det kan icke nekas till, att mänskligheten rätt länge lyssnat till dessa läten och funnit behag däri. Under tiden hackade dock det ädla flygfät löst på varann och sig själv – och det som var I:ma korp i går (på Wagner-epigonismens mull) har redan mist fjädrarna i dag. Om några enstaka yrvakna sångfåglar (hur är det egentligen med fågelskyddet i Skandinavien?) sluppit helskinnade från bataljen, får väl deras egen flykt och framtid bevisa.'

⁴¹ Rangström, 'Carl Nielsen: En betraktelse med programmatiska utvecklingar', *Svenska Dagbladet*, 24 November 1907.

⁴² *ibid.* 'Den västerländska musikens stamland, Tyskland alltså, har med Brahms, Wagner, Bruckner spelat ut sin ideella roll – tills vidare.'

chaos', and England (i.e. Elgar) 'must be classed as pending'. His answer: 'From the still healthy, unaffected and especially un-revered Scandinavia the renaissance shall come, for come it must!'⁴³

The tone of the articles could hardly be more different – optimistic enthusiasm in 1907 versus frustrated pessimism in 1927 – but the view of Wagner is consistent: the last true giant of the German tradition. Indeed, Rangström seems to blame the lack of a comparably influential figure for the disarray that he laments in the later article. Scandinavian music, with Nielsen as its standard-bearer, had not brought about the renaissance or gained the recognition that Rangström had anticipated, and although many composers *had* turned away from Wagner, they had done so in different directions.

We need not recapitulate history musically. We only state that the public, which at one moment reluctantly became assured that Debussy, Ravel, Reger, [and] Strauss stand 'uppermost', in the next moment lose their senses before Schönberg, Hindemith, Prokofiev, Milhaud and Krenek. The names are immaterial, for they are legion, and too many. But in each and every one of them lies concealed a stylistic agenda, no, unfortunately not well concealed, but unleashed like a cavalier's war cry over the field. And then humanity stands there and does not rightly know on which of the flying musical cavaliers it shall swear. But nothing is so easy as to swear on the fleeting, the mayfly, the fashion, the weather, the mood, and yourself. And so the game begins again, with hymns of praise, anathema, dissonances. And general uncertainty.⁴⁴

At the heart of Rangström's dissatisfaction is the lack of continuity and clarity. For all that he believed German Romanticism had run its race, he had hoped for the baton to be passed northwards, and for a fresh and vigorous Scandinavia to come into its own. Instead, the baton seemed to have been broken into splinters and scattered across Europe. The public were cheering on dozens of different runners and Sweden was effectively still on the side-lines, without a recognized part in the race at all. Rangström's position in this broader picture is ambiguous. Hey's tuition gave him a grounding in vocal technique that proved extremely useful both as teacher and composer, but it also gave Rangström's *romanser* an element of continuity with the Wagnerian tradition in an era that was marked by rupture and reorientation.

⁴³ *ibid.* 'hakat sig upp på en steril teknisk (harmonisk) detalj'; 'ryska kaos'; 'må ställas under afvaktan'; 'Från det ännu sunda, oberörda och säkerligen opåaktade Skandinavien skall renässansen komma, ty den måste komma!'

⁴⁴ Rangström, 'Musikens självbesinning I'. 'Vi behöva icke rekapitulera historien musikaliskt. Vi konstatera endast, att den allmänhet, som i ena ögonblicket motvilligt blir förvissad om att Debussy, Ravel, Reger, Strauss stå "främst", i andra ögonblicket mister besinningen inför Schönberg, Hindemith, Prokofieff, Milhaud och Krenek. Namnen äro oväsentliga, ty de äro legio och alltför många. Men i vart och ett av dem ligger ett stilprogram förborgat, nej, tyvärr icke väl förborgat, utan lössläppt som kavaljersparollen över fältet. Och sedan står mänskligheten där och vet icke rätt på vilken av de flyktiga musikaliska kavaljererna den skall svärja. Men intet är så lätt som att svärja på det flyktiga, på dagsländan, modet, väderleken, lynnet och sig själv. Och så börjar leken igen, med lovsånger, anatema, dissonanser. Och allmän osäkerhet.'

Hans Pfitzner: the Conservative

On his arrival in Berlin in 1905, Rangström planned to take composition classes with Hans Pfitzner (1869-1949), the man he listed as a 'German bigwig' alongside Strauss, Mahler, and Reger, in his inaugural article at *Svenska Dagbladet* two years later. Even accounting for the importance of a personal connection, the inclusion of Pfitzner's name in such company might come as something of a surprise. After all, even Michael H. Kater, who gives Pfitzner a chapter in his book *Composers of the Nazi Era*, designates him in its opening sentence as 'a hardly known German composer of the twentieth century'.⁴⁵ Celia Applegate's review of the same book dryly suggests that he may have 'remained at a kind of secondary level of fame ... because he managed to antagonize nearly everyone with whom he ever came in contact.'⁴⁶ He was known for his fierce conservatism and nationalism – what Edward J. Dent describes as his 'feverish horror and resentment at all music which is not German and at all music which breaks with the traditions of the nineteenth century'⁴⁷ – and his anti-Semitism and associations with Nazism reduced his appeal after World War Two. He still lacks a complete and critical biography and, despite the moderate success of his opera *Palestrina*, hindsight mocks an assertion from 1929 that 'of two living German composers it may safely be predicted that the history of music will preserve their names for hundreds of years – Richard Strauss ... and Hans Pfitzner'.⁴⁸ However, such statements put Rangström's list of bigwigs into context, demonstrating that Pfitzner's reception history is anything but straightforward and contains not only conflicting views but flat contradictions.

Pfitzner's career has typically been portrayed as slow-starting and lacking in security and recognition. Kater provides the following summary:

From [1890] on he held low-paying jobs as teacher of piano and theory in Koblenz and Berlin, for a few months also as Kapellmeister of the theatre in Mainz. He was Erster Kapellmeister at the Berlin Theater des Westens when, in 1908, he was appointed to the moderately prestigious post of opera director and head of the conservatory in Strasbourg, then in Imperial German Alsace...

Until 1908, then, when he was almost forty, Pfitzner found himself professionally and economically at sea; attempts to receive notice as a musician, from famous composers such as Brahms and Max Bruch, had ended in failure.⁴⁹

⁴⁵ Michael H. Kater, *Composers of the Nazi Era: Eight Portraits* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 144.

⁴⁶ Celia Applegate, 'Reviewed Work: *Composers of the Nazi Era: Eight Portraits* by Michael Kater', *Central European History* 34/1 (2001), 140.

⁴⁷ Edward J. Dent, 'Hans Pfitzner', *Music & Letters* 4/2 (1923), 128.

⁴⁸ Fritz Erckmann, 'Hans Pfitzner', *The Musical Times* 70/1036 (1929), 509.

⁴⁹ Kater, *Composers of the Nazi Era*, 145.

This rather grim account does not quite square with what Rangström's knew of Pfitzner. On arriving in Berlin in 1905, he clearly viewed Pfitzner as one of the best-known and most skilled teachers there.

My lessons in composition and instrumentation not yet started – looking for teachers – for I will not go to one of the most renowned immediately – but begin with someone less famous (they are all skilled) and then take a few months of polishing (including conducting studies) with, for example, Prof. Pfitzner (who I knew by reputation before).⁵⁰

This hardly marries with the idea of a low-paid and struggling teacher, and raises questions about Pfitzner's early reception outside of Germany which thus far seem to have been gone largely unasked. It is conceivable that Pfitzner's breakthrough work – incidental music for Ibsen's *Gildet på Solhaug* (*The Feast at Solhaug*, 1890) – had helped to spread his name among Scandinavian musicians, but Rangström, unfortunately, does not provide any concrete answer. Having revised his initial plan and gone straight to Pfitzner for lessons, he then says virtually nothing more on the subject. There are a handful of surviving exercises which suggest that he studied some orchestration, counterpoint, and Beethoven sonatas, but Helmer concludes, from the lack of evidence, that any studies with Pfitzner were 'short-lived, perhaps sporadic, and without ... tangible significance for Rangström's development.'⁵¹ He observes, furthermore, that although Rangström rarely kept his likes and dislikes hidden, he barely mentions Pfitzner in his reviews or articles.⁵² In one of the few exceptions, Rangström describes Pfitzner's 'interesting special status between the pseudo-classical and ultra-romantic parties', and suggests that he is primarily a song-composer: 'in the smaller forms his somewhat brittle, but aristocratically fine and, in any case, personal character finds its best expression.'⁵³ Rangström has left no more explicit response to one of the most outspoken and controversial figures in early twentieth-century Germany, 'the last rock against the flood of international musical production'.⁵⁴

Where Pfitzner *does* appear is in newspaper biographies of Rangström, where he is often mentioned as one of Rangström's teachers. There is thus an odd inconsistency between the public

⁵⁰ Cited in Helmer, *Ture Rangström*, 42. 'Mina lektioner i komp. och instrumentation ännu ej började – letar broman lärare – ty jag vill ej gå till någon af de namnkunnigaste genast – utan begynna med någon mindre berömd (skicklig äro de alla) och sedan ta ett par månaders afpolering (inkl. Dirigeringsundervisn.) hos t ex Prof. Pfitzner (som jag kände par renommé förut.' (Letter from Rangström to Lisa Hollender, 17-18 November 1905.)

⁵¹ Helmer, *Ture Rangström*, 42. 'kortvariga, kanske sporadiska och utan ... påtaglig betydelse för Rangströms utveckling.'

⁵² Pfitzner is correspondingly insignificant in Helmer's book. His only reappearance is in the 1930s, when Rangström recommended *Palestrina* for performance at the Stockholm Opera. Pfitzner offered the newer *Das Herz* instead, and it was staged in Stockholm in 1932 (Helmer, 466).

⁵³ Rangström, 'Kammarmusikföreningen', *Stockholms Dagblad*(?), 18 April 1913. '... intressant särställning mellan de pseudoklassiska och ultraromantiska partien'; '... i de mindre formerna vinner hans något spröda, men aristokratiskt fina och i hvarje fall personliga egenart sina bästa uttryck.'

⁵⁴ Erckmann, 'Hans Pfitzner', 509.

and private acknowledgements of Pfitzner's influence. The straightforward conclusion is that, although lessons with Pfitzner might have been unsatisfactory and brief, his name could still be used to bolster the pedigree of the younger composer. Once established, the exaggeration would be hard to retract, despite Rangström's later description of himself as essentially self-taught. We can only speculate as to the reason for the aborted composition studies. Pfitzner's notoriously difficult character could easily have led to a clash of personalities, or Rangström might have been dismayed to discover that this teacher, too, emphasized the importance of counterpoint. ('Pfitzner when contrapuntal is Pfitzner at his best,' one contemporary critic wrote; '[he] becomes contrapuntal when he is at his greatest emotional intensity.'⁵⁵) Perhaps the best reason, however, for Rangström's lack of engagement with Pfitzner and his compositional ideology lies in the fourth figure whom Rangström encountered during his student years: Ferruccio Busoni.

Ferruccio Busoni: the Visionary

In the first decade of the twentieth century, the virtuoso pianist and composer Ferruccio Busoni (1866-1924) was based in Berlin, where from 1902-1909 he organized a series of twelve orchestral concerts specifically aimed at promoting the work of young or unknown – and often non-German – composers. His generous commitment to the next generation of composers was also apparent in the circle of friends and disciples that built up around him. 'Both as man and as artist I prefer to look forwards rather than backwards,' he wrote in 1904, 'and I suppose that is why I prefer to have younger people around me.'⁵⁶ He habitually worked in the morning and received visitors through the afternoon, and Rangström was one of many aspiring composers who joined the ranks of his admirers. Indeed, the circle around Busoni seems to have been the only aspect of Berlin's musical life with which Rangström fully engaged during his time in the capital in 1905-1906. For Rangström, Busoni belonged to a whole new class of musician: a cosmopolitan intellectual, an internationally-renowned performer, and a personal acquaintance of many of the great names of the day. Although in his later work as a music critic Rangström hardly mentioned Busoni any more than he did Pfitzner, the rare appearances occur with a good deal more enthusiasm. Compare the rather dry and distant assessment of Pfitzner above with the following:

Ferruccio Busoni is not only one of our time's most interesting pianists but is also, as a composer, a speculative and cunning spirit; he belongs to the ultra-modernists; it is of course one of the reasons why his 'older' music – the 'Turandot' suite for example,

⁵⁵ Dent, 'Hans Pfitzner', 122, 123.

⁵⁶ Edward J. Dent, *Ferruccio Busoni: A Biography* (London: Eulenberg, 1974), 155.

which Fritz Stiedry played on Thursday at the Concert Society – is so well worth hearing ... it is continually interesting.⁵⁷

A comparison of Busoni's impact on Rangström with that of Pfitzner is necessary because of the former's 1907 *Sketch of a New Aesthetic of Music*. Its date of publication means that its ideas and arguments must have been current in Busoni's circle during Rangström's stay in Berlin, and Pfitzner's vitriolic reaction to it explains why Rangström might have found simultaneous relationships with both musicians untenable. Busoni's arguments will be briefly presented here, followed by Pfitzner's response and by the evidence that Rangström chose to align himself with the more visionary composer.

Busoni's essay, as he acknowledges himself, is loosely constructed, but it contains lofty rhetoric and vivid imagery. He emphasizes the need for musical freedom and the expression of emotion: as a relatively young art, he argues, music should not be bound by rules. Indeed, the truly creative artist will, in his pursuit of perfection, make his own laws, which should afterwards be annulled in order to avoid self-plagiarism.⁵⁸ He presents Bach and Beethoven as great composers, but 'as a *beginning*, and not as unsurpassable finalities', while Wagner is 'incapable of further intensification. His category begins and ends with himself'.⁵⁹ Busoni takes issue with the perceived dichotomy of absolute and programme music ('concepts [that] have become so petrified that even persons of intelligence hold one or the other dogma, without recognition for a third possibility beyond and above the other two'⁶⁰), and of major and minor ('they present the same face, now more joyous, now more serious; and a mere touch of the brush suffices to turn the one into the other'⁶¹). He outlines the limitations of conventional harmony, insists on the existence of 113 possible scales within a C-C octave, recognizes that a harmonic revolution is immanent, and suggests that, for example, tones might be split into three rather than two.

Pfitzner's vitriolic response (*The Danger of Futurists: On the Occasion of Busoni's Aesthetic*) is well-known, but the fact that it appeared ten years after Busoni's 1907 publication has often been brushed over.⁶² Della Couling is one of the few authors to draw attention to this gap, describing the composers' relationship through the period as 'amicable' and citing several occasions where they

⁵⁷ Rangström, *Dagens Nyheter*(?), 11 March 1921. 'Ferruccio Busoni är inte bara en av samtidens intressantaste pianister utan också som kompositör en spekulativ och förslagen ande; han hör till ultramodernisterna; det är naturligtvis en av anledningarna varför hans "äldre" musik – "Turandot"-sviten t. Ex., som Fritz Stiedry på torsdagsen spelade på Konsertföreningen – så väl låter höra sig ... den är fortfarande intressant.'

⁵⁸ Ferruccio Busoni, *Sketch of a New Aesthetic of Music*, trans. T. Baker (New York: Schirmer, 1911), 22.

⁵⁹ *ibid.*, 8-10.

⁶⁰ *ibid.*, 10.

⁶¹ *ibid.*, 27.

⁶² Hans Pfitzner, 'Futuristengefahr: bei Gelegenheit von Busonis Ästhetik', *Süddeutsche Monatshefte* (Leipzig-Munich, 1917).

performed each other's work.⁶³ Couling's assessment may be rather generous (her claim that Pfitzner 'detested' National Socialism suggests a tendency to sugar-coat), but the delay does prompt questions. It is hardly credible that Pfitzner could have spent a decade unaware of Busoni's views or that he might have significantly altered his opinion on them. Perhaps his tardy response was triggered by his mounting frustration at his lack of recognition and his growing fear that Busoni's radical ideas were in fact gaining ground. The phenomenal shift in Germany's fortunes during the First World War had also produced a more fertile environment for Pfitzner's aggressive nationalism, which asserted that the nation's decline was connected to its musical degeneration.⁶⁴ There was an additional practical incentive: the republication of Busoni's essay by Insel-Bücherei in the summer of 1917. Pfitzner's public response has achieved notoriety for its personal attack on Busoni and its failure to rationally criticize his opinions. As Couling witheringly observes, it is 'argument at a shamefully low level, its only consistent element being that it is virtually all based on false premises.'⁶⁵

Naturally, the ten-year delay of Pfitzner's public response to Busoni problematizes Rangström's position in relation to the two composers. The brevity of his time in Berlin (October 1905 to June 1906, and a fleeting visit in November 1907 en route back to Sweden) calls into question whether or not he chose a side in a debate that was not to explode onto the public music scene for another decade. However, the strength and stubbornness of Pfitzner's convictions, as well as the fundamentally different outlooks of the two men, support the assumption that Rangström would indeed have been aware of their opposing views, which Pfitzner outlines as follows:

Busoni places all his hopes for Western music in the future and understands the present and past as a faltering beginning, as the preparation. But what if it were otherwise? What if we find ourselves presently at a high point, or even that we have already passed beyond it?⁶⁶

Here, characteristically, Pfitzner overstates Busoni's attitude to the past and attacks a stance he had not taken, something to which Busoni objected in his public refutation of the attacks in June 1917. ('You proclaim me openly as a disowner and despiser of all great composers of the past without quoting any of my sentences as proof of such a monstrous accusation.'⁶⁷) Although Pfitzner's summary is plainly an exaggeration – Busoni's love and respect for the past is self-evident in his

⁶³ Della Couling, *Ferruccio Busoni: A Musical Ishmael* (Lanham: Scarecrow Press, 2005), 307. In 1905, Busoni conducted Pfitzner's music in his Berlin concert series; he performed his own piano concerto with Pfitzner as conductor in 1913, and Pfitzner's Trio in F major in 1914.

⁶⁴ Lorraine Gorrell, *Discordant Melody: Alexander Zemlinsky, His Songs, and the Second Viennese School* (London: Greenwood Press, 2002), 46.

⁶⁵ Couling, *Ferruccio Busoni*, 308.

⁶⁶ Pfitzner, 'Futuristengefahr', 1917.

⁶⁷ Busoni, *The Essence of Music and Other Papers*, trans. Rosamond Ley (London: Rockliff, 1957), 18. The open letter to Pfitzner was originally published in the Berlin *Vossische Zeitung* in June 1917.

piano repertoire⁶⁸ – it does capture the composers' opposing outlooks. Busoni was essentially forward-looking: passionate about nurturing the next generation of musicians, thinking radically about future developments, and advocating musical freedom. Pfitzner was essentially backward-looking, clinging to the achievements of the past and resisting any new elements which did not spring from his own narrow definition of what was acceptable in music. It is hardly surprising, then, that Rangström aligned himself with Busoni's ideology rather than Pfitzner's. It seems only natural that a young composer of the post-Breakthrough generation would be drawn to the buzz of optimism and internationalism in the well-connected Busoni's circle rather than the anti-modern, pro-German attitude of a famously unlikeable man. It is also possible that, given his minimal musical education, Rangström seized on Busoni's emphasis on formal freedom and personal expression as a welcome escape route from serious and traditional compositional training.

While Pfitzner left no apparent influence on Rangström, snippets of Busoni's rhetoric crop up in his writing throughout his career. Soon after his return from Germany, he echoed Busoni's call for music's liberation from rules about form ('it is still not the conspicuous and outward design which is most in need, but the formative spirit of the whole'⁶⁹), and elaborated on Busoni's comment about the 'ossified form'⁷⁰ of the aria:

The human voice, which with music's help and in music's form should interpret a human heart's joy and woe, had stayed with a stereotype and restrictive task, with the aria. One sang, and one sang about sorrow and hate and joy, but one knew in advance how one should sing in order to not disrupt one's public.⁷¹

Rangström also borrowed Busoni's image of art-music as young and vulnerable, describing Sweden's music as far younger than the Continental mainstream, dating only from about 1850:

Therefore we testified with young and childlike awe our dependence and blind trust in the fathers of music... Our music has lived in the idyll's pale and pleasant worlds. Pliable, meek – for it is young – susceptible to, more than that, covetous of all new impressions, easily transformed by these.⁷²

⁶⁸ Robert Rimm, *The Composer-Pianists: Hamelin and the Eight* (Oregon: Amadeus Press, 2002), 55. Busoni's repertoire comprised much of the traditional keyboard canon, including Bach, Mozart, Beethoven, Chopin, and Schumann, as well as composers who were less well-established.

⁶⁹ Rangström, 'Några musikaliska synpunkter', *Svenska Dagbladet*, 30 Decemeber 1907. 'det är fortfarande icke den i ögonen fallande och yttre gestaltningen som är mest af nöden, utan det helas formskapande ande.'

⁷⁰ Busoni, *Sketch of a New Aesthetic of Music*, 15.

⁷¹ Rangström, 'Modern Sångkomposition I', *Svenska Dagbladet*, 29 June 1909. 'Människorösten, som med musikens hjälp och i musikens former skulle tolka ett människohjärtas gjädje [sic] och ve, hade stannat vid en stereotyp och ofri uppgift, vid arian. Man sjöng, och man sjöng om sorg och hat och glädje, men man visste på förhand, hur man borde sjunga, för att ej störa sin publik.'

⁷² Rangström, 'Svenskt lynne – svensk musik', *Stockholms Dagblad(?)*, 17 December 1912. 'Däremot betygade vi med ung och barnslig vördnad vår afhängighet och blinda tilltro till de musikens fäder... Vår musik har left i idyllens bleka och behagliga världar. Böjlig, mjuk – ty den är ung – mottaglig för, met än så, begärlig efter alla nya intryck, lätt omformad efter dessa.'

The influence of Busoni's ideas is perhaps at its clearest in a speech on music's educational value that Rangström gave two decades after his studies in Germany. Compare the following extract from Busoni's *Sketch* and Rangström's comments below:

Music as an art, our so-called occidental music, is hardly four hundred years old; its state is one of development, perhaps the very first stage of a development beyond present conception, and we—we talk of "classics" and "hallowed traditions"! And we have talked of them for a long time!

We have formulated rules, stated principles, laid down laws—we apply laws made for maturity to a child that knows nothing of responsibility!

Young as it is, this child, we already recognize that it possesses one radiant attribute which signalizes it beyond all its elder sisters [i.e. architecture, sculpture, poetry, and painting]. And the lawgivers will not see this marvellous attribute, lest their laws should be thrown to the winds. This child—it *floats on air*! It touches not the earth with its feet. It knows no law of gravitation. It is well-nigh incorporeal. Its material is transparent. It is sonorous air. It is almost Nature herself. It is—free.

But freedom is something that mankind have never wholly comprehended, never realized to the full. They can neither recognize nor acknowledge it.

They disavow the mission of this child; they hang weights upon it. This buoyant creature must walk decently, like anybody else. It may scarcely be allowed to leap—when it were its joy to follow the line of the rainbow, and to break sunbeams with the clouds.⁷³

The task of speaking about music's educational value seems to me a fleeting, sky-high goal, like music itself, that language, words can never reach. And this fugitive, elusive being we would unite with worldly *values*, most relevant of all: our education.

For age upon age this union has, nevertheless, occurred. Humanity has never been able to exist without the deep instinct to gain the fleeting, floating, intangible notes to guide through life's wanderings, and what it gave us, how it shaped, formed us, is one of the finest chapters in the annals of mankind. For many it can sound like a fairy-tale. In fact, it *is* a fairy-tale, but living and real like no other.

Music and the desire for music [lit. will to music] is born of the same necessity as the world's religions. Music's innermost essence is longing, and it is this created longing in the notes that, through the music, gathers, excites and lifts us. It is hardly presumptuous to say that no art liberates like this one. Music, unbound by earthly stuff, only trembling air waves, has the mysterious power to bind and enchant and eternity's power to move the human spirit to unending flight. It does it without force. It is the floating art born of air. It is the ear that catches its play – but the heart trembles, and the heart soars with it.⁷⁴

⁷³ Busoni, *Sketch of a New Aesthetic of Music*, 4.

⁷⁴ Rangström, 'Musikens bildningsvärde'. 'Uppgiften att tala om musikens bildningsvärde förefaller mig, ärligt *musiken* själv, ett flyende skyhögt mål, som språket, ordet aldrig kan nå. Och detta flyktande, svårgripbara väsen skulle vi förena med det, näst jordiska *värden*, mest relativa av allt: vår *bildning*! Under sekel och åter sekel har likväl denna förening ägt rum. Mänskligheten har aldrig kunnat existera utan den djupa driften att vinna den flyende, svävande, ogripbara *tonen* till ledsagare genom livets vandringar, och vad den skänkt oss, hur den format, bildat oss, är ett av de skönaste kapitlen i mänsklighetens hävder. För mången kan det låta som en saga. I själva verket *är* det en saga, men levande och verklig såsom ingen annan. Musiken och viljan till

Until the end of his career, Rangström maintained the same preference for impulse over formula: 'It is a misfortune when music stiffens to a formal template. It must be a living expression of personality and personality development.'⁷⁵ Ultimately, it became part of his legacy:

When Ture Rangström passed away seven years ago, he was already a classic, but formulae for his art are still unwritten. His work draws back from analysis; it is as though the spirit in his work lies like a veil over the notation, and one comes there with scissors and ruler in order to examine more closely, where one does not have the right instrument for veils of spirit.

Without a doubt, Ture Rangström would be at peace with this state of affairs. Few have more consistently than him confessed to inspiration and impulse ... when his creative will flamed, theory and intellectual considerations became only pale shadows. "The technique has its own, living psychology," he once wrote about song composition, and with the hidden meaning that a rulebook should be as rich as life itself.⁷⁶

Rangström mimicked Busoni in thoroughly practical ways as well as rhetorical. While he was on the programme committee of the Concert Society (1927-1929) he championed the cause of modern music (even though he personally disliked and wrote poor reviews for some of the pieces chosen), much as Busoni's Berlin concerts had done twenty years earlier: he 'set a war-horn to his lips and [blew] a fanfare for the freedom of musical thought'.⁷⁷

We can see, then, that Rangström's rhetoric and his approach to composition was clearly, and no doubt consciously, aligned with Busoni's views about musical freedom and the creative drive. And yet, however much Rangström might have absorbed from Busoni and his circle, biographical accounts have always tended to pass over the connection in favour of referencing Pfitzner, and so it is unclear quite how much direct, personal contact he had with Busoni. An article from 1990

musik är född av samma nödvändighet som världens religioner. Musikens innersta väsen heter *längtan*, och det är denna i toner skapande längtan, som genom musiken samlar, eggjar, lyfter oss. Det är knappast förmätet att säga, att ingen konst befriar såsom den. Musiken, obunden av jordiskt stoff, dallrande luftvågor endast, har det hemlighetsfullas makt att binda och förtrolla och det evigas makt att resa människosjälens till oändlig flykt. Den gör det utan våld. Det är den svävande, luftfödda konsten. Det är örat som fångar dess lek – men hjärtat darrar, och hjärtat svingar med.'

⁷⁵ This quote is drawn from an interview that Rangström gave to a Norwegian paper during his only visit to Norway (to conduct a concert in Oslo, in May 1946). 'Det er en ulykke når musikken stivner til i formsjabloner. Den må være et levende uttrykk for personligheten og personlighetsutviklingen...' The title of the interview, taken from Rangström's description of himself as a young composer, demonstrates just how incompatible his attitude must have been with Pfitzner's: 'I was a confounded revolutionary' ('Jeg var forbasket revolusjonær').

⁷⁶ Alf Thoor, 'Stormen går i dur', *Röster i radio* No. 48 (1954). 'När Ture Rangström gick bort för sju år sedan, var han redan en klassiker, men formlerna för hans konst är fortfarande oskrivna. Hans verk drar sig undan analysen, det är som anden i hans verk låg som en slöja över notbilden, och kommer man då med sax och linjal för att undersöka närmare, då har man inte de rätta instrumenten för slöjor av ande. Utan tvivel skulle Ture Rangström vara tillfreds med detta sakernas tillstånd. Få har mer konsekvent än han bekänt sig till inspirationen och ingivelsen... när hans skapande vilja lågade, blev teori och intellektuella överväganden bleka skuggor bara. "Tekniken har sin egen, levande psykologi", skrev han en gång apropå sångkomposition, och med den undermeningen, att en regelbok skulle bli rik som livet självt.'

⁷⁷ 'Växande opinion', 7 November 1929. '... satt ett krigshorn för munnen och blåst en fanfar för den musikaliska tankens frihet.'

demonstrates not only how entrenched this one-sided reporting has become, but how it has complicated the placement of Rangström in relation to early twentieth-century music.

But who was he as composer: a turn of the century figure with roots in the national romantic or a forward-looking visionary with a pleasing expression in his art music?

A largely self-taught composer with large formal shortcomings in his training or an original artist with an unusual ability to allow the personal to break the framework of his time's conventions?

... He studied composition and counterpoint with Johan Lindegren for a short time, [who was] then mentor and advisor to most of the Swedish composers who have recently become famous.

Around 1905 he was in Berlin where his teacher was Hans Pfitzner, the arch-nationalist who became known for having left, exasperated, a gathering at the conductor Otto Klemperer's because there one read modern French poetry by Paul Claudel.

What Pfitzner's influence on Rangström is remains to be clarified. In any case, after Rangström's return to Sweden he came to intensify contacts with one of conservatism's red rags in Sweden: August Strindberg.⁷⁸

By mentioning only Lindegren and Pfitzner, and despite admitting the dubious extent of the latter's influence, Rangström's musical education is here portrayed as being entirely in the hands of conservatives. Any radical or modern elements in his music thus seem inexplicable, and therefore apparently original.

In fact, when Rangström returned to Stockholm in November 1907, the testimonials which he brought with him, commending him for further study, were from Busoni and Hey.⁷⁹ This seems a clear indication of which relationships were most formative for him, as well as of the direction in which his composition would develop. The questions asked in the article above are unhelpfully dualistic: Rangström's identity as a composer is not a case of Either/Or, but of Both. Through Julius Hey, and the nationally-orientated singing style that he taught, Rangström did have roots in national Romanticism. However, through Busoni's example, he was encouraged to look forwards and allow personal expression to take precedence over convention. His failure to complete a full and traditional course of study, with either Lindegren or Pfitzner, did lead to a lack of structural cohesion

⁷⁸ Hans Wolf, 'Omtvistad tonsättare sångare och dirigent', *Dagens Nyheter*, 28 October 1990. 'Men vem var han som tonsättare: en sekelskiftesgestalt med rötter i nationalromantiken eller en framåtblickande visionär med ett glädande uttryck i sin tonkonst? En till största delen självlärd tonsättare med stora formella brister i sin utbildning eller en originell konstnär med en ovanlig förmåga att låta det personliga bryta ramen för sin tids konventioner? ... Han studerade en kort tid komposition och kontrapunkt för Johan Lindegren, de flesta senare kända svenska tonsättares mentor och rådgivare då. Omkring 1905 befann han sig i Berlin där hans lärare var Hans Pfitzner, ärkenationalisten som blev känd för att förbittrad ha lämnat en sammankomst hos dirigenten Otto Klemperer för att man där läste modern fransk dikt, av Paul Claudel. Vilket Pfitznerns inflytande på Rangström kan ha varit återstår att klarlägga. I alla händelser kom Rangström efter återkomsten till Sverige att intensifiera kontakten med ett av konservatismens röda skynken i Sverige: August Strindberg.'

⁷⁹ Helmer, *Ture Rangström*, 56.

in large works, for which he was frequently criticized. And yet this allowed him to give free reign to a vivid imagination and his desire to express himself in his music.

August Strindberg: the Genius

The final sentence of the quote above, which claims that, on his return to Sweden, Rangström strengthened his contact with Strindberg, is evidence of a similar sequence of exaggeration and repetition. Rangström had never previously met Strindberg, so an intensification of contact was impossible. His own account suggests that, after a first encounter in 1909, he met the playwright several times over a period of some months. However, a stronger acquaintance became such an established fiction that, as mentioned in the Introduction, Horton's summary of Rangström's biography describes them as close friends. This section is therefore split into three parts. The first will set the record straight by outlining what is known about their relationship and tracing its development into hearsay; the second, following Lagercrantz's example, will establish some of the key terms in Rangström's 'dictionary'; the third will examine the way in which, like Strindberg, Rangström tended to present himself in a particular role at different periods of his life.

In Rangström's childhood home, Strindberg's books were kept on the 'forbidden' shelf,⁸⁰ which was by no means unusual: Strindberg's works were banned from some bourgeois households even until his death in 1912.⁸¹ It seems that Rangström and his literary-minded friends nevertheless found a way to access them, for Rangström later credited Strindberg as his first source of inspiration: 'Strindberg captured me first and did not let go; it was the fire, the idea, the pliancy and the defiance'.⁸² He certainly read a vast quantity of Strindberg's work while studying in Germany, and in 1909 he composed 'Fyra visor', a set of four songs to Strindberg texts which later that year became the pretext for a meeting with the elderly Strindberg. Rangström's description of this encounter, written in 1942, shows the extent of his reverence for the writer – and his awareness of the power of the anecdote:

Around these memories are grouped some details of personally private nature, which perhaps could justify this causerie – not, however, from the greedy anecdote's standpoint, but as testimony of a musician's meeting with his youth's great master-teacher and inspirer. For my generation, which has now reached its 50s-60s,

⁸⁰ Rangström, 'Strindberg och en musikanter', *Nya Dagligt Allehanda*, 13 May 1942.

⁸¹ Birgitta Steene, 'Liberalism, Realism, and the Modern Breakthrough: 1830-1890' in *A History of Swedish Literature*, ed. Lars G. Warne (Lincoln: Nebraska Press, 1996), 271.

⁸² Rangström, 'Dikten och Musiken än en gång'. 'Strindberg fångade mig först och släpper inte taget; det var elden, aningen, vekheten och trotset'.

Strindberg was the flaming torch in Swedish poetry; and the strong flame still lives with unabated power, despite world wars and their aftermath.⁸³

So much was later made of this 1909 meeting that it is worth looking at Rangström's account of it, bearing in mind that it was written long after the fact (on the thirtieth anniversary of Strindberg's death), and that, much like Strindberg himself, Rangström was not above poeticizing his experiences in order to portray himself in a particular role. Here, telling most of the tale in the third person, he is both narrator and protagonist. He presents himself as a tentative young artist approaching an unpredictable great one, risking the encounter 'with the master in the lions' den',⁸⁴ and ultimately receiving his blessing.

In any case, I sent up my hard-edged *visor* to the poet – Tor Aulin, the spirited violinist and conductor became the amiable intermediary... [He] rang me one day: Strindberg wants to meet you! I have had a note from him, it says: Rangström seems strong. Try him!

The musician-heart naturally quaked at this message. Youth was shy at the time. Would [his] strength hold at a personal meeting? There were strange legends about Strindberg's idiosyncrasy, one day red, the second day dead, [was] the so-called motto among his friends; no one knew what 'the powers' had to say to him, no one knew if he was really welcome, until he was thrown out, and then it was, of course, too late...

It happened one day in the autumn of 1909. Strindberg, in brilliant entertaining mood, opens the hall door with the notorious letterbox, through whose slit so many fateful acquaintances were begun and ended. A stately gentleman in a gentlemanly dressing-gown of the 90s style, with tassels and embroidery, bids the musician welcome. Which year? he asks. Eighty-four, the musician answers. So, *Kvarstadsresan's* year!⁸⁵ comes the immediate reply – and the guest, young as he is, perhaps more filled by Strindberg than Strindberg himself, understands at once, that this year does not discredit him in his master's eyes...

But how did the man look? Not a trace of prima donna! We music folk are used to seeing such, he was just a great and simple man, above all a man without affectation, he kept his lion's mane in check, a good and strong look was there, an almost reverent receiver of a young man, who for the first time stood before his idol, no coquetry, no pressure, just a hearty welcome, a noble handshake! So the discussion begins, the Strindberg songs are played, the poet finds the music better than when he played them himself!⁸⁶

⁸³ Rangström, 'Strindberg och en musikanter'. 'Kring detta minne grupperar sig en del detaljer av mänskligt privat karaktär, vilka måhända kunna göra detta kåseri berättigt, dock icke ur den giriga anekdotens synpunkt, men som vittnesbörd om en musikers möte med sin ungdoms store läromästare och inspirator. För min generation, den har nu hunnit till de 50-6- åren, var Strindberg det flammande blosset i svensk dikt; och den starka lågan lever ännu kvar med oförminskad kraft, världskrig och efterklangstider till trots.'

⁸⁴ *ibid.* 'med mästaren i lejonkulan'

⁸⁵ *Kvarstadsresan* is a fictionalized diary about getting married, written by Strindberg in 1884, the year of Rangström's birth.

⁸⁶ Rangström, 'Strindberg och en musikanter'. 'Jag sände i alla fall upp mina kantiga visor till diktaren – Tor Aulin, den frejdige violinisten och dirigenten, blev den älskvärda förmedlaren... Tor Aulin ringer mig en dag: Strindberg vill träffa dig! Jag har fått ett brevkort från honom, där står det: Rangström tycks stark. Pröva honom! Musikanthjärtat skalv naturligtvis vid detta budskap. Ungdomen var blyg på den tiden. Skulle kraften

Thus far, the meeting lives up to the cliché of a worshipper meeting his idol. For all Rangström's denial of Strindberg's prima donna tendencies, the narrative speaks for itself: the playwright went on to take issue with the lack of a black key between E and F, suggesting that it might be a joke of 'the powers' to have stolen a semitone. Although Rangström gave an explanation about equal temperament, Strindberg insisted that 'there is something wrong in the system ... [he] had himself been involved in piano-playing, he must have it right'.⁸⁷ Even in retrospect, Rangström seems unsure whether or not Strindberg was entirely serious; one can imagine his uncertainty at the time, and his reluctance to contradict such a notoriously unpredictable character.

However, when the discussion moved on to an operatic version of *Kronbruden*, on which Rangström had already begun to work, he did something of the sort: he explained that he wanted to cut the drama's last two scenes in his opera, because he saw Kersti's redemption – and therefore narrative arch – as already completed at the end of the fourth.⁸⁸

A moment's thought! Strindberg says. You have it right! Music sometimes has a higher moral than poetry! I hid these words in my innermost memory... a young musician met Strindberg!⁸⁹

Note that Rangström's narrative slips back into first person here, as though the moment of Strindberg's approval was a turning point in his development from the young musician portrayed in the article into the mature and assertive composer who is narrating the story. The fact that each artist had taken advice from the other (Strindberg had already warned Rangström against sounding too Norwegian in his compositions) no doubt meant a great deal to Rangström at the time – but it could later be used to put them on equal footing, giving an impression of an equality which was

hålla vid ett personligt möte? Det gick ju underliga sägner om Strindbergs egenart, ena dagen röd, andra dagen död, så hette valspråket bland hans vänner, ingen visste vad "makterna" hade att säga honom, ingen visste om han var riktigt välkommen, förrän han blev utkastad, och då var det ju för sent... Detta skedde en dag på hösten 1909. Strindberg, i briljant representationshumör, öppnar tamburdörren med den beryktade brevlådan, genom vars springa så många ödesdigra bekantskaper inletts och avslutats. En ståtlig herre i gentrymmanligt soignerad nattrock av 90-talets snitt, med tofsar och broderier, bjuder musikanten välkommen. Vilken årgång? frågar han. Åttifyra, svarar musikanten. Alltså Kvarstadsresans år! blir den omedelbara repliken – och gästen, ung som han är, kanske mer fylld av Strindberg än Strindberg själv, förstår genast, att detta årtal inte diskrediterar honom i hans mästares ögon... Men hur såg mannen ut? Inte ett spår av primadonna! Vi musikfolk är vana att observera sådant, han var bara en stor och enkel man, framför allt en man utan choser, han höll sin lejonman i tyglar, en god och stark blick var det, en nästan vördnadsfull mottagare av en ung människa, som första gången står inför sin idol, inga koketterier, inget tryck, bara ett hjärtligt välkomnande, ett nobelt handslag! Så börjar resonemanget, Strindbergs-visorna spelas, diktaren finner musiken bättre, än när han spelade dem själv!

⁸⁷ *ibid.* 'det är något fel i systemet ... Strindberg har själv sysslat med pianospel, han måste ha rätt'.

⁸⁸ It at this point in the play that, having confessed to the murder of her illegitimate child, Kersti is left alone in the mill while Näcken, the water spirit, plays the melody 'I hope that thy Redeemer still lives' on his fiddle. She reaches inner peace here, and the remainder of the drama is modelled on a passion play, portraying her suffering, her temptation, her trust in God, and her death, which brings about reconciliation between enemies.

⁸⁹ Rangström, 'Strindberg och en musikanter'. 'Ett ögonblicks tanke!, säger Strindberg. Ni har rätt! Musik har ibland en högre moral än dikten! Jag gömmer dessa ord i det innersta av mitt minne... en ung musikanter har träffat Strindberg!'

never truly there. This retrospective equality is epitomized by a verse from the song written to be sung around the tables at Rangström's sixtieth birthday banquet. While the text is plainly tongue-in-cheek, it is a useful indication of how Rangström's early career was afterwards interpreted by his colleagues, and it not only includes Rangström's meeting with Strindberg, but gives them parallel roles. (We will return to the large sombrero later in the chapter.)

Ture är uppåt, blir dirigent,
mest alla tidningars recensent
men först och främst komponist och sedd
i Sveriges största sombrero klädd.
Vännernas skara mångfaldigas
och ännu mera väninnornas.
Strindberg han träffa' i tornet det blå
och genast skrek Strindberg då:

Ture is on the up, becomes a conductor,
most of the papers' critic,
but most of all a composer and seen
wearing Sweden's biggest sombrero.
The troop of friends was growing
and even more so the (girl)friends'.
He met Strindberg in the Blue Tower
and immediately Strindberg cried:

Åh Ture, åh Ture,
om du gör musik så ska jag göra text!
Åh Ture, åh Ture,
du lägger en aln till min växt!

Oh Ture, Oh Ture,
if you do the music then I'll do the text!
Oh Ture, Oh Ture,
You add a cubit to my height!⁹⁰

Of course, the song is not meant to be taken seriously or literally – its purpose was to celebrate, gently mock, and elevate Rangström – but even so, it forms part of the trajectory from fact to fiction. There is no mention of Strindberg as Rangström's inspiration; if anything, the balance has shifted the other way. Strindberg is portrayed as a collaborator, grateful for the extra value that Rangström's music brings to his work. In reality, though Rangström met Strindberg several times, it was always an imbalanced relationship and it may even have ended on something of a sour note.

One day I sought 'the master' again – the word is too little rather than too much – he opens only the letterbox, I have a bad conscience, for I have submitted a proposal to the Academy's composer stipend! You'll never get it, says Strindberg, strong folk never get it! Unfortunately I got it. But [I was] ashamed...⁹¹

Rangström relates no subsequent meeting. With nothing more than the enigmatic phrase, 'So passed several months',⁹² his narrative moves directly to Strindberg's funeral. It raises the question of whether Rangström's relationship with Strindberg suffered the same fate he had attributed to others: abruptly ended through the letterbox. There is certainly a sense of awkwardness in Rangström's account of the exchange, born of his awareness that official success was more or less discreditable in Strindberg's eyes. (In August 1909, around the time that they had met for the first time, Strindberg had been passed over by the Swedish Academy for a Nobel Prize, and his

⁹⁰ Reproduced in *Musikern*, 1 December 1944.

⁹¹ Rangström, 'Strindberg och en musikanter'. 'En dag söker jag åter "mästaren" – ordet är snarare för litet än för stort –, han öppnar endast brevlådan, jag har dåligt samvete, ty jag har friat till Akademiens tonsättarstipendium! Det får Ni aldrig, säger Strindberg, det få aldrig starkt folk! Tyvärr fick jag det. Men skämdes...'

⁹² *ibid.* 'Så gick några månader...'

antagonism towards the cultural establishment became so virulent that his eventual recognition came from the public instead, who raised the funds to award him an anti-Nobel Prize in 1912.) The very lack of further details from Rangström suggests that the incident was, at the least, ambivalent. Another version of events, also dating from the time of Rangström's sixtieth birthday, shows just how much the anecdote could be spun:

Once, however, Rangström did not want to profane the poet's dwelling by entering, he thought he came with such crass information: he had been allocated a composer stipend and received a place as music critic. Then, he rejoiced to whisper the news through the letterbox before he went on his way again.⁹³

These are not Rangström's words, but although he can hardly be held responsible for rumour and exaggeration, his silence about the aftermath of the letterbox exchange allowed such alternative accounts to be heard, and is the best reason to suspect that this was his last personal contact with Strindberg. However, this need not imply an intentional breaking off of the connection. Strindberg was increasingly incapacitated by illness during the last months of his life and although he found visitors a helpful distraction (they seemed to 'deflect the hate-currents' that he thought might be causing his condition⁹⁴), maintaining the relatively new and extremely unequal relationship that he had with Rangström would have been an unlikely priority.

Rangström did not attend Strindberg's funeral, but, again, this does not indicate a break from Strindberg; in fact, he portrays it as quite the opposite. Most accounts of the event focus on the crowds that followed the procession, which included politicians, students and representatives of labour movements, and which have been subject to remarkable inflation.⁹⁵ Rangström's version smacks, aptly enough, of a very Strindbergian poeticization, and he sets himself apart, quite literally, from the hordes of mourners:

It was an early Sunday morning, shining bright just like any other. Stockholm and the fragrant spring greeted its faithful interpreter; I heard the bells playing in the distance, myself hidden in an old garden on Söder[malm]... It was not possible for a

⁹³ 'Försynt Rangström viskade i Strindbergs brevlåda', *Dagens Nyheter*, 19 November 1944. 'En gång ville emellertid Rangström inte profanera diktarboningen genom att inträda, han tyckte han kom med så krassa underrättelser: han hade tilldelats ett tonsättarstipendium och fått plats som musikrecensent. Då nöjde han sig med att viska nyheterna genom brevlådan innan han gick sin väg igen.' Although the tone of this account is hardly credible, it provides a detail which *if* true, helps to pinpoint the date: Rangström started work at *Stockholms Dagblad* as music critic in March 1910.

⁹⁴ Lagercrantz, *August Strindberg*, 376. (Letter from Strindberg to Nils Andersson, 8 November 1911). His illness was eventually diagnosed as stomach cancer.

⁹⁵ Lagercrantz avoids stating a figure here, but gives 10,000 as the police estimate of the crowd at Strindberg's birthday celebrations the previous month (p. 378) – it is easy to believe that this would be exceeded at his funeral. Vivian McGill's 1930 biography mentions 30,000 (New York: Brentano's, p. 2), and Sweden's official website now claims 60,000 (<<https://sweden.se/culture-traditions/august-strindberg/>> [accessed 20 April 2016]). In any case, the presence of vast crowds was hardly in accordance with Strindberg's desire to be buried at 8 am 'to avoid any curious bystanders' (Lagercrantz, p. 381).

hotly youthful heart to take part in the funeral train's throng. I experienced it as a memory, distant and infinitely close.⁹⁶

Rangström turns his non-attendance into a virtue: an indication of the emotional strength of his connection to Strindberg as well as its distinctiveness. While a sizeable proportion of Stockholm's population flooded the streets to share very similar experiences of the procession, Rangström sat alone in a garden and experienced the occasion in his own, unique way. Yet there is no need to doubt the sincerity of his emotion at the time simply because it made for a good story afterwards. Rangström's relationship with Strindberg can be understood as one of genuine inspiration which was later capitalized on, and his First Symphony provides a case in point.

That Rangström's first major work should be dedicated to the memory of his first source of inspiration comes as no surprise; the decision seems to have sprung from genuine respect and gratitude. However, it also proved fruitful, ensuring that Strindberg's name appeared thereafter in any decent biographical summary of Rangström's career. From there, it was a relatively small step to the statement that sits at the head of this chapter: 'Rangström and Strindberg are two names which, among the musically initiated, like to be named at the same time.'⁹⁷ Indeed, at least in print, it had become almost literally true. The 'Strindberg symphony' became an obvious choice for anniversary concerts and Strindberg's international fame even held the possibility of recognition abroad. (The outbreak of the First World War four-and-a-half months after the premiere seems to have delayed foreign performances, but the symphony was played in Copenhagen in 1918, was received with great enthusiasm at the Nordic Music Festival held there the following year, and awoke milder interest in Germany in 1928.⁹⁸) With hindsight, it is easy to read Rangström's dedication as a canny move, but at the time he was expressing unequivocal allegiance to a controversial and groundbreakingly modern character who had earned the disapproval of much of the cultural establishment: his future success was therefore partly dependent on the direction of Strindberg's reception history. The unveiling of Carl Eldh's statue of Strindberg (see Figure 4, p. 70) in 1942 is proof that the decision paid off. Rangström seems to have anticipated the opportunity that this presented and he composed a piece in readiness, one that quoted from his own previous Strindberg works, including 'Villemo' (from the 1909 'Fyra Visor') and the First Symphony. Sure enough, he landed the task of conducting his own music for the event, at which Strindberg was hailed 'as poet and democrat, as

⁹⁶ Lagercrantz, *August Strindberg*, 376. 'Det var en tidig söndagsmorgon, så skinande ljus som ingen annan. Stockholm och den doftande våren hälsade sin trognaste tolk; jag hörde klockorna spela på avstånd, själv gömd i en gammal trädgård på Söder ... det var inte möjligt för ett varmt ungdomshjärta att delta i begravningstågets trängsel. Jag upplevde den som ett minne, fjärran och oändligt nära.'

⁹⁷ Seymer, 'Rangström och Strindberg'.

⁹⁸ Helmer, *Ture Rangström*, 202-203; J.R., 'Den nordiska musikfesten i Köpenhamn', 17 June 1919; O.D., 'Kurhaus', *Wiesbadener Tagblatt*, 11 September 1928; fz., 'Symphoniekonzert im Kurhaus', *Wiesbadener Bodeblatt*, 12 September 1928.

the indomitable creator of imperishable spiritual and national values'.⁹⁹ This is an impressively selective way of remembering the author, as idealized as the massive, muscular statue itself, but it vindicated Rangström's past decision to align himself with Strindberg when his legacy was still unsettled.

There is, of course, a pleasing irony in the fact that the fictionalization of Rangström's acquaintance with Strindberg is precisely what Strindberg had done with his own relationships. Although Rangström's gradual elevation to friendship does not seem to have been deliberate on his part – he consistently used the language of a disciple – his poeticizing of his experiences and his conscious self-presentation are both habits which find a model in Strindberg. Strindberg's influence began early, and even as a young man Rangström's letters were prone to the dramatic exaggeration which also characterized the author's. As a teenager he wrote that:

[A] hideous oppression ... falls over me when I think about my future. My parents want such good [for me] as to force me into a path for which I have not the least inclination, where every trace of my personality, my me, should be killed. But sooner than that, I'd kill myself!¹⁰⁰

His sense of persecution, his mention of suicide, and his concern about his sense of self are all thoroughly Strindbergian, and so it is here that Lagercrantz's scholarly strategies start to come in to play. A common-sense look at the context lowers the likelihood of a genuine crisis: Helmer points out that Rangström's parents were essentially broad-minded people whose objections to such an unpredictable career as music were probably quite reasonable.¹⁰¹ The recipient of the letter was Rangström's girlfriend, Lisa, and so Rangström was enacting a Romantic cliché: the young artist, convinced of his as-yet-unacknowledged talent, pouring his heart out to his beloved. Like Strindberg, Rangström uses the idea of suicide for effect rather than with intent; right from these early letters, we can start to build up our 'Rangström dictionary'.

Feelings of deep despair afflicted Rangström at several periods in his life, usually in the context of difficult external circumstances. The most notable occurrences were in the spring of 1907 in Munich, a time of financial strain and relative social isolation, then in the final months of the First World War, and towards the end of 1925, after an unsuccessful stint of conducting in Gothenburg and during the break-up of his first marriage. This last was undoubtedly the most extreme episode. 'If I was "sick", I don't know,' he wrote, 'but I've certainly become soul-sick, with all kinds of black

⁹⁹ -tis, 'Diktaren och demokraten Strindberg hedrad i brons och hyllad i ord' [The poet and democrat Strindberg honoured in bronze and hailed in words], *Svenska Dagbladet*, 20 June 1942. '... som diktare och demokrat, som den obändige skaparen av oförgångliga andliga och nationella värden'.

¹⁰⁰ Cited in Helmer, *Ture Rangström*, 24. '... den ohyggliga beklämning, som öfverfaller mig, när jag tänker på min framtid. Mina föräldrar vilja ju så godt som tvinga mig in på en bana, för hvilken jag ej har den ringaste håg, där hvarje spår af min personlighet, mitt jag, skulle dödas. Men förr än det sker, dödar jag mig själf!' (Letter from Rangström to Lisa Hollender.)

¹⁰¹ Helmer, *Ture Rangström*, 24.

night despair, and even with a bit of neurasthenia.¹⁰² The fact that Rangström describes even the worst manifestation of his despair as being just on the border of a nervous breakdown reduces the likelihood that he suffered from, for example, clinical depression. On this particular occasion, the pressured circumstances make situational depression a feasible (though unverifiable) diagnosis, but otherwise, his talk of despair can be assigned to the emotional, rather than the mental, sphere.

The fact that Rangström produced no compositions in 1925 is a strong indication of its anomalous status. Usually, he turned to work as a means of countering his state of despair:

In my earliest years (it is so long ago!) when life once was at its most harsh, I happened one powerless morning to read one of those profound words of wisdom which are wont to adorn the wall calendars of German homes: To work and not despair! It became just as good as a penitential sermon for one who had forgotten his catechism, and from that hour I have lived by those words... And my despair I shall save for the dreary night when 'the work' runs out.¹⁰³

The idea of work as a bulwark against despair and a refuge from life's problems recurs frequently in Rangström's writing, as do references to powerlessness, which was a major component of his feelings of despair. This attitude of defiant creativity in the face of difficulty is summed up in what Helmer describes as Rangström's life motto: *Trots Allt* (Despite everything). This finds its most explicit expression in Rangström's comments about his final, unfinished opera, *Gilgamesj*, written when he was suffering from his terminal illness:

The saga is an illusion. The will is an illusion; life and death is an illusion. The only thing that remains human is the mighty word Despite Everything! Despite everything you shall will, despite everything you shall create, despite everything you shall live and lift things, so that your death does not become more paltry and more impoverished than you yourself.¹⁰⁴

Like this quote, a discussion of Rangström's sense of self in the face of existential questions about life and death hardly belongs here chronologically, and will be dealt with in Chapter Four. However, another of Rangström's key words that appears here – 'the will' – crops up early on in his writing.

During his studies in Germany, as well as reading a lot of Strindberg, Rangström engaged with current philosophies in the form of Otto Weininger's *Geschlecht und Charakter* and Nietzsche's *Also Sprach Zarathustra*. While Helmer connects misogynistic elements in some of Rangström's texts

¹⁰² *ibid.*, 294. 'Om jag varit "sjuk", vet jag icke, men själssjuk lyckades jag säkert bli, af all sorts nattsvart förtviflan, och till och med en smula neurastenisk.' (Letter from Rangström to Omon Håkanson, 16 November 1925.)

¹⁰³ *ibid.*, 197-198. 'I min tidigaste urålder (det är så länge se'n!) då lifvet en gång slet som värst, råkade jag en vanmäktig morgon att läsa ett af dessa djupa visdomsord som pläga pryda de tyska hemmens väggkalendrar: Arbeiten und nicht versweifeln! Det blef ju så godt som en botpredikan för den som glömt sin katekes, och från den stunden har jag lefvat på det ordet... Och min förtviflan skall jag spara till den trista natt då 'arbetet' tryter.' (Letter from Rangström to Wilhelm Stenhammar, 9 September 1918.)

¹⁰⁴ Cited in Helmer, *Ture Rangström*, 441; taken from the programme of *Gilgamesj*'s premiere. 'Saga är bländverk. Vilja är bländverk, liv och död är bländverk. Det enda som återstår människan är det mäktiga ordet Trots allt! Trots allt skall du vilja, trots allt skall du skapa, trots allt skall du leva och lyfta tingen, så att inte din död blir futtigare och fattigare än du själv.'

to Weininger's influence, the impact of Nietzsche's thinking is much more apparent, with some sense of Nietzsche's 'will to power' lying behind Rangström's use of 'the will'. His determination to become a composer despite his parents' concerns and to persist in his relationship with Lisa Hollender despite her guardian's objections can both be seen as assertions of a will which doubtless found resonance in Nietzsche's words:

How did I ever bear it? How did I survive and surmount such wounds? How did my soul rise again out of these sepulchres?

Yea, something invulnerable, unburiable is with me, something that would rend rocks asunder: it is called MY WILL. Silently doth it proceed, and unchanged throughout the years.¹⁰⁵

In Rangström's use of the word, the focus is not on Nietzsche's proposition that all living things strive for increased dominance, but rather on his portrayal of the *Übermensch* as one whose power over himself means that he is entirely a creation of his own will. Thus when Rangström wrote to Stenhammar that he appreciated his 'straight and supportive will ... in this land of flat indifference and cowardly accommodation',¹⁰⁶ he clearly saw both Stenhammar and himself as belonging to the 'creating ones ... higher men' and not to the populace who 'know not what is great and what is small, what is straight and what is honest'.¹⁰⁷ During Rangström's time in Munich, where he sometimes felt as if his soul were 'wrapped by a tremendous concentration of the will',¹⁰⁸ his letters draw on Messianic language, as Nietzsche's work does, but with a straight face. 'My kingdom is not of this world,' he wrote to Lisa on Easter Sunday, 1907. 'I am a tree, where all winds shall blow. And the greenery is not for anyone – least of all myself. For it is for everyone.'¹⁰⁹ In just a few self-aggrandizing lines, Rangström manages to echo Nietzsche's subtitle for *Zarathustra* – 'a book for all and none' – as well as Christ's words to Pilate in John 18:36. (Helmer draws a further connection, to Ernst Josephson's poem 'Jag är ett träd', in which a fruitful tree is robbed of its leaves by a summer storm and despairingly – that key word again! – stretches its bare branches to the skies, longing for the winter's concealing snow. The image does not fit Rangström's circumstances directly: in the spring of 1907, after a relatively unproductive spell, he began to sketch ideas for future works and produced his first songs for several months. He was therefore no longer a bare tree at the time of

¹⁰⁵ Friedrich Nietzsche, *Also Sprach Zarathustra Part 2*, trans. Thomas Common (1909), Chapter 33 (Project Gutenberg <<http://www.gutenberg.org/files/1998/1998-h/1998-h.htm>>, [accessed 25 July 2016]). The original German edition was published between 1883 and 1891.

¹⁰⁶ Cited in Helmer, *Ture Rangström*, 197. 'en rak och stödjande vilja ... i detta land af flat likgiltighet och fegt tillmötesgående'. (Letter from Rangström to Stenhammar, 13 February 1918.)

¹⁰⁷ Nietzsche, *Also Sprach Zarathustra*, Chapter 73, Sections 12 and 8.

¹⁰⁸ Cited in Helmer, *Ture Rangström*, 54. 'höljet genom en oerhörd viljans concentration.' (Letter from Rangström to Lisa Hollender, 8 April 1907.)

¹⁰⁹ *ibid.*, 53. '... mitt rike är ej af denna världen. Jag är ett träd, där alla vindar skola fläkta. Och det grönska är ej till för någon – allra minst mig själf. Ty den är till för alla.' (Letter from Rangström to Lisa Hollender, 31 March 1907.)

writing, but had begun, as it were, to regain his greenery.) The Nietzschean sense of superiority reappears in another distortion of Christ's words: 'If I seem proud – be assured that my pride is not of this world. That also applies to the cause, not my 'self' – and my cause will triumph one day.'¹¹⁰

Rangström's cause, the goal towards which he willed himself – despite inner despair and outward adversity – was to become a full-time, professional composer, and not another *söndagskomponist* (Sunday-composer). He used this term disparagingly of composers who had to practice their art in their spare time and support themselves with a job in some other field. It has its origin in an encounter between Franz Berwald (1796-1868) and Liszt:

When Frans Berwald, during his period as orthopaedic director in Berlin, one day appeared at Liszt's with some great chamber music in his ceremonious frock coat's back pocket, this surprized question came to the practically constrained private man: 'Now, but when does Mr Berwald compose?' The historic answer came promptly and without irony: 'On Sundays!' On Sundays, yes; Swedish music is the art of Sundays, the pastime of spare moments. And it is not only Berwald who has tested the matter. A composer's existence has enough difficulties even today in this country...

But apparently Berwald did not lose his good temper – despite everything.¹¹¹

At the time of Rangström's writing, Berwald was the best that Sweden had to offer in the way of a historical composer who was native-born as opposed to imported from continental Europe. Rangström's account is not a criticism of him, but of the national culture which failed to value him at the time. 'Sunday-composer' is, therefore, not so much a derogatory description of individuals as an implicit criticism of cultural establishment. In his inaugural article at *Svenska Dagbladet*, Rangström made it clear that he held the nation responsible for nurturing its leading figures:

A great and wealthy nation can afford to stick with mediocrities – a little, poor land, and perhaps linguistically, geographically isolated, must have great men, [in order] to not duck under the edge of history's mirror, and the will towards great men is its dearest possession and foremost duty.¹¹²

¹¹⁰ *ibid.*, 54. 'Om jag förefaller högmodig – så var försäkrad, att mitt högmod ej är af denna världen. Det gäller också saken, ej mitt 'själf' – och min sak skall en gång segra.' (Draft letter from Rangström to Henning Mankell, 4 May 1907.)

¹¹¹ Rangström, 'Berwald-afton', *Svenska Dagbladet*(?), 17 March 1908. 'När Frans Berwald under sin ortopediska direktörsperiod i Berlin en dag uppenbarade sig hos Liszt med några större kammarmusikverk i den siratliga syrtutens bakfickor, blef dennes förvånade fråga till den praktiskt ansträngde privatmannen: "Nå, men när komponerar då hr Berwald?" Det historiska svaret kom prompt och utan ironi: "På söndagarna!" På söndagarne, ja; den svenska musiken är söndagskonsten, de lediga stundernas tidsfördrif. Och det är icke bara Berwald som fått pröfva saken. En tonsättarexistens har nog än i dag sina svårigheter i detta landet... Men Berwald förlorade tydligen icke sitt goda lynne – trots allt.'

¹¹² Rangström, 'Carl Nielsen', *Svenska Dagbladet*, 24 November 1907. 'En stor och rik nation kan ha råd att hålla sig med medelmåttor – ett litet, fattigt land, och kanske språkligt, geografiskt isolerad, måste ha stora män, att icke dyka under historiens spegelrand, och vilkan till de stora männen är dess dyraste ägodel och främsta plikt.'

Rangström's rhetoric smacks of Nietzsche's proposition that 'mankind must work continually at the production of individual great men – that and nothing else is its task',¹¹³ although he has downsized the idea to fit Sweden, and, indeed, sees it as less important for nations that are already dominant.

As we have begun to form our Rangström dictionary, it has become evident that his time of study in Germany from 1905-1907 was highly formative. The terms and attitudes that reoccur throughout his life (despair, the will, the motto 'despite everything', and the expectation of a culture-supporting state) all have their origins in this period, and in the philosophies and experiences that he encountered during it. Strindberg's influence is particularly profound: for Rangström he was not only an inspiration and an idol, but also a model of Swedish genius whose habit of self-presentation was adopted by the young composer in various ways. As we shall see, Rangström's ability to project the persona of a confident and creative artist shaped his career, even as it obscured his vulnerabilities from the public gaze.

Rangström followed in his master's footsteps through his enthusiastic assumption of different roles. During his time in Munich, he embraced the role of the poverty-stricken student artist: hungry and lonely, but bursting with euphoric creativity. From 1907, as a young music critic, he flung around words like 'standard-bearer' and 'pioneer', relishing his place on the frontlines of musical developments. As an older man reflecting upon his childhood, Rangström habitually wrote of himself as Anders Johann (his first two forenames), even as Strindberg bestows his otherwise unused first name, Johan, on the protagonist of his purportedly autobiographical novels. A major challenge facing Strindberg scholars is their subject's ability to adopt multiple personas in his life and work, and although the need for scepticism is somewhat less acute where Rangström is concerned, there is a good deal of evidence for the deliberate nature of his self-presentation. In some cases, as with the incident of Strindberg's letterbox, this self-presentation takes the form of redaction: there are details that Rangström chooses *not* to tell us. For example, Figure 5 (p. 71) shows the various non-compositional posts that Rangström held during his career (not including his extensive but undocumented work as a singing teacher throughout the 1910s). From 1930, he spent five years working as press secretary for the Stockholm Opera, but there is virtually nothing to show for it. After years of carefully collecting any newspaper clipping that mentioned his name, he all but abandoned the habit: it seems that there was little from this period that he wanted to preserve. It is a clear indication that his administrative role was not one of which he was proud. He had become a Sunday-composer after all.

Rangström's work as a music critic necessitated the assumption of various roles – as when he was obliged to review a concert including his own works – and it provides evidence of the relish with

¹¹³ Friedrich Nietzsche, 'Schopenhauer as Educator' in *Untimely Meditations*, ed. Daniel Breazeale, trans. R.J. Hollingdale (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 161.

which he slipped into separate personas. A prime example dates from 1920, when Rangström reviewed-in-advance Stenhammar's cantata *Sången* (commissioned for the 150th jubilee of the Music Academy, and for which Rangström had provided the text) after the style of several other critics. Printed after the fact, in 1922, it is a fascinatingly layered reflection of Rangström: not mere mimicry of his colleagues, but a revelation of his own perception of how he was seen by them. As Glimstedt of *Aftonbladet* he comments on the text's 'Nordic brilliance' and heartfelt expression despite 'obvious weaknesses', while as Andreas Hallén he takes issue with the fact that older composers more connected to the Academy had been passed over for the commission. The most vicious words are put in Peterson-Berger's mouth: he mocks the young Swedish composers' clique and its proclamation of pioneers, and assigns Rangström to Nietzsche's class of lower humanity.¹¹⁴ These last comments are extreme, but no more so than those which the real Peterson-Berger had made in a 1913 review of a vocal recital by Clary Morales.¹¹⁵ Rangström had preserved that article in his collection of clippings and in his memory; that its rhetoric returns here the better part of a decade later shows how deeply it was felt.

A lighter-hearted example of Rangström's ability to observe himself with ironic distance occurred in 1942, when a short and anonymous description of a concert appeared in *Röster i Radio*. 'Ture Rangström has produced a couple of hundred songs,' it said, 'of which, thank God, only some pieces are sung, for the others are in general so dreary. Mea Åkerman [the soloist] is a courageous girl, who takes a couple of songs out of obscurity.'¹¹⁶ Kurt Atterberg sprang to his colleague's defence, demanding in an outraged letter that the writer be sacked and that the person responsible for assigning them the task be given a 'serious lecture'.

It is clear that the writer is in the dark [lit. floats in innocence] about how proud we should be that in Rangström we own a *romans* composer who belongs to the category of quality where the names of Schubert, Schumann, Brahms, [and] Hugo Wolf figure.¹¹⁷

An editorial comment clarified what had happened, as did a letter from Rangström published the following day:

¹¹⁴ Cited in Helmer, *Ture Rangström*, 248. 'nordisk glans'; 'uppenbara svagheter'.

¹¹⁵ Peterson-Berger, 'Clary Morales' konsert', *Dagens Nyheter*, 25(?) September 1913. This concert is a perfect example of the claustrophobic nature of Swedish musical culture. Rangström and Peterson-Berger both reviewed the concert, in which Clary was accompanied by her husband Olallo Morales, who was also a critic and composer and whose works were included in the programme. To top it off, Clary had also studied with Julius Hey; it was through her that Rangström had been able to make contact with him.

¹¹⁶ *Röster i radio* No. 4 (1942).

¹¹⁷ Kurt Atterberg, 'Röster i radio skämmer ut sig' [*Röster i radio* embarrass themselves], *Nya Dagligt Allehanda*, 14 April 1942. 'Det är tydligt, att skribenten svävar i okunnighet om att vi böra vara stolta över att i Rangström äga en romanskomponist, vilken tillhör den kvalitativa kategori, där namnen: Schubert, Schuman, Brahms, Hugo Wolf figurera.'

Mr Editor

In yesterday's number of your honoured newspaper Kurt Atterberg very kindly and like a colleague took my part in defence against a supposed attack in Röster i Radio – and I thank him for his lovely words.

However, Rangström's attacker happened to be none other than – Rangström himself! I wrote the little notice for the programme on request and as I have a good sense of humour – though now and then I compose in minor – and furthermore don't take myself too seriously, I drew up the same in somewhat self-ironic form.

The actual April Fool was, however, the Radio Service's type-setter, because he forgot my signature TR – or else he thought I was absolutely right in the criticism of my own songs!

Yours faithfully,

Ture Rangström¹¹⁸

It is necessary to explore this humorous side of Rangström's character in order to counterbalance the egocentricity that is evident in his earlier writing. While even from an early stage his reviews are marked by wit and sarcasm, his ability not to take himself too seriously is something that seems to grow with age – perhaps as his sense of security in his role increased. His 1945 tribute to past and present music critics is a case in point: in a satire seething with Biblical and battle imagery, he proposes the fratricidal Cain as an appropriate patron saint for the 'gruesome and fascinating profession [in which] he [Rangström himself] has no doubt handled both the knife and the poisoned pen, after his own humble ability'.¹¹⁹ Figure 6 (p. 72) shows him among the ranks of his caricatured colleagues in a rout of hapless performers, along with some of his comments about them and the mellowing of the profession since Peterson-Berger's death.

These last two examples of Rangström's humour are from his later life, when his position as a well-known composer was assured. In Stockholm during the 1910s, he took himself rather more seriously as a young and original artist, and even used his manner of dress to project this persona – something which lent itself very easily to caricature, as we saw in the reference to his large sombrero in the sixtieth birthday song. A mocking little article from the same time (November 1944) observes that 'every other day he composes a *romans* there [at home, on Södermalm] and never is a

¹¹⁸ Rangström, Letter to the editor, *Stockholm Tidningen*, 15 April 1942. 'Hr redaktör! I gårdagens nummer av en ärade tidning har Kurt Atterberg mycket vänligt och kollegialt tagit mig i försvar gentemot ett förment angrepp i Röster i Radio – och jag tackar för de älskvärda orden. Emellertid råkar Rangströms angripare icke vara någon annan än – Rangström själv! Jag skrev på begäran den lilla notisen till programmet och eftersom jag har gott humör, fast jag då och då komponerar i moll, och dessutom inte tar mig själv så högtidligt, så avfattade jag densamma i en något självvirkonisk form. Det verkliga aprilnarrit ställde emellertid Radiotjänsts sättnisse till, ty han glömde bort min signatur T. R. – eller också tyckte han att jag hade alldeles rätt i kritiken av mina egna visor! Med utmärkt högaktning, Ture Rangström.'

¹¹⁹ Rangström, 'Den blodige musikrecensenten', *Sydsvenska Dagbladet*, 6 May 1945. '... ohyggliga och fascinerande yrket, han har utan tvivel både hanterat kniven och giftpennan, efter egen ringa förmåga...'

higher collar than his found in Stockholm ... [he] has had the same necktie for forty years.'¹²⁰ The accompanying caricature is shown in Figure 7.3 (p. 73); the other images go to show that this assertion is not without basis. In Figure 7.5, Rangström himself is absent, but his wooden pen is propped up alongside the famous collar. That such a still life was deliberately arranged and photographed indicates the extent to which both items were seen as representative of Rangström. The newspaper which published it passed it off as:

... a surrealist joke by one of his friends, who believes that Mr Rangström's special necktie fashion, his collar, his hairbrush and his penholder – the latter two those which their owner persistently used ever since childhood – are adequate to express his personality in a picture, with the addition of a bunch of flowers and a little grinning Japanese ivory mask.¹²¹

The pen is, of course, a tangible link to Rangström's compositions; the flowers may be only incidental, or possibly a nod towards Rangström's love of the outdoors. (The Japanese mask is rather more inexplicable.) The article does not identify the friend responsible for the photograph, but elsewhere it is the critic William Seymer (1890-1964) who gives the most detailed description of Rangström's appearance and the impact it had, looking back from 1952. It is Seymer who takes Rangström's dress code into the realm of symbolism:

During the time before the First World War, Ture Rangström was a type apart, a character in the crowded streets. His wobbly, broad Borsalino hat, the long, black coat and father-killer collar, the upright posture – they were all things which marked a personality outside the everyday and which one noticed. One might venture to say that his hat to some extent symbolized a feature of his music: the youthful defiance, the opposition towards the time-honoured idyll.¹²²

The caricatures on their own might suggest that Rangström's manner of dress was mere persistence in the fashions of his youth, but Seymer's account clarifies that he had *always* appeared strikingly unusual. It shows that Rangström was keen to stand out rather than to fit in – to be different and seen as different – and Seymer is right to note how easily this attitude transfers from Rangström's wardrobe to his work. What he does not consider is how much Rangström's garb helped in establishing his reputation as a distinctive compositional voice, and whether or not it was an

¹²⁰ 'Namn och Nytt', *Dagens Nyheter*, 20 November 1944. 'Varannan dag gör han där en romans och aldrig i Stockholm en krage fans högre än hans... Han ... har haft samma halsduk i fyrty år.'

¹²¹ 'Tonsättarjubileum', w/b 26(?) November 1944. '... ett surrealistisk skämt av en av hans vänner, som anser, att hr Rangströms speciella halsduksmod, hans krage, hans hårborste och hans pennskaft – de två sistnämnda de samma som deras ägare envist brukat alltifån barnaåren – äro tillräckliga för att i bild uttrycka hans personlighet, med tillsats av en blombukett och en liten grinande japansk elfenbensmask.'

¹²² William Seymer, 'Ture Rangström', in *Kungliga Teatern Operan Program* (1952), 2. 'Under tiden för första världskriget var Ture Rangström en typ för sig, en profil i gatuvimlet. Hans svajiga, breda borsalinohatt, den långa, svarta livrocken och fadermördarekragen, den rakryggade hållningen – det var allt saker, som präglade en personlighet utanför vardagen och som man uppmärksammade. Man kan kanske våga påstå, att hans hatt i någon mån symboliserade ett drag i hans musik: det ungdomliga trotset, fronderandet mot den hävdvunna idyllen.'

affectation designed to set him apart and make him particularly memorable. This was certainly the effect it had on Seymer, intentionally or otherwise.

In an earlier article from 1934, Seymer describes Rangström's appearance in much the same way, but what is remarkable here is the role that he ascribes to Rangström. It bears comparison with Rangström's tale about meeting Strindberg, but the parts have been reassigned: Rangström has taken Strindberg's place as the famous name who waits at home for shy young composers like Seymer to come calling.

He who forms these lines likes to remember how he once as a young music student met Ture Rangström at the Swedish composers' and pianists' local, the Östermalm Cellar, where the old, blind man and fine professor Lennart Lundberg used to visit and where also such a personable fellow as Sigurd von Kock [sic] figured with fondness. Rangström was already then a familiar name and an original phenomenon – his long, black frock coat, his high father-killer collar and his black, broad sombrero marked a personality. Art-music's adepts listened, overcome, and with intensive interest, to his opinions of musical things, and went from the meeting with a spirit of burning enthusiasm. I also remember how, shy and scared, one sneaked up to his little chateau on Södra Badstugatan [sic] in order to show one's fumbling attempts at composition, and receive encouragement and sage advice, and of course also criticism.¹²³

Seymer was of Rangström's generation; it is extraordinary that he had such reverence for a man only six years his senior. While the picture of Rangström receiving younger artists at home is a replica of his encounters with Strindberg – the house is even elevated to a 'little chateau' as if to match Strindberg's Blue Tower – the image of him holding forth to a circle of eager listeners is thoroughly Busonian. Rangström seems to have moved from the role of disciple to mentor with remarkable ease and swiftness. Perhaps timing helped him: the First World War prevented younger composers from gaining experience abroad as he had done, and he was one of the last of his generation to meet Strindberg personally and receive his commendation. His place on the frontlines of musical developments, both in criticism and composition, made him a key player, and he clearly knew how to cultivate a persona to match.

Stenhammar also made a connection between Rangström's dress and his character, identifying quite a different personality trait. He drew a parallel between Rangström's black, tightly-buttoned coat and his tendency to withdraw behind a shield of pride or antagonism when events

¹²³ William Seymer, 'Ture Rangström 50 år', *Vår Sång* (November 1934), 214. 'Den, som formar dessa rader, minns gärna hur han en gång som ung musik-studiosus mötte Ture Rangström på svenska tonsättares och pianisters stamtillhåll, Östermalmskällaren, där gamle blide och fine professor Lennart Lundberg brukade vistas och där också en så personlig typ som Sigurd von Kock med förkärlek figurerade. Rangström var ju redan då ett bekant namn och en originell företeelse – hans långa, svarta bonjour, hans höga fadermördare och hans svarta, breda sombrero präglade en personlighet. Tonkonstens adepter lyssnade betagna och med intensivt intresse till hans yttranden i musikaliska ting och gingo från sammankomsten med en i anden brinnande entusiasm. Jag minns också hur man blyg och rädd smög upp till hans lilla chateau på Södra Badstugatan för att visa upp sina fumliga försök i komposition och erhålla uppmuntran och välvisa råd och naturligtvis också kritik.'

threatened to affect him too deeply.¹²⁴ It is an insightful observation, indicative of the strength of their relationship and of the concern that Stenhammar had for his younger colleague, whom he helped out of financial difficulties on several occasions. To the list of defence mechanisms, Helmer adds Rangström's music (both the process of composing and the finished product) and a forced hilarity in social situations. The latter is plainly expressed by the young Rangström himself: 'in the company of others, however – forced merriment, funny, full of crazy ideas – hey, hang it, absolutely damned mad ideas! – I have become an excellent actor.'¹²⁵ This gap between internal and external experience is brought into a musical context in an early letter to Lisa in 1903, in which a creative persona is projected in order to conceal insecurity:

You came to toast with me, Ingalill. And I saw in your dark forest-lake eyes, completely confused, the tears almost kept from overflowing. I was gripped by dizziness and had to support myself against the doorpost. All the bystanders smiled. Then I went to the piano and played a boisterous waltz.¹²⁶

Helmer sits firmly on the fence as to whether this incident was actual or imagined, arguing that it is an effective self-portrait either way. It seems odd that Rangström would address Lisa as Ingalill (Little Inga), unless one considers that later in life he often used literary figures to represent himself and his beloved; it is possible that here he is identifying Lisa with the addressee of Gustaf Fröding's poem *Ingalill*. If that is the case, then it is an incredibly loaded shorthand, given that the second verse of the poem essentially comprises a marriage proposal – one which is particularly apt for a young man wooing a woman above his station, as Rangström was:

Inga lilla, Ingalill, sjung visan för mig,
mitt halva kungarrike det vill jag giva dig
och allt mitt guld och silver i borgen.
Min kärlek är mitt silver och guld i min borg,
mitt halva kungarrike är hälften av min sorg
säg, Inga lilla, räds du för sorgen?

Little Inga, Ingalill, sing the song for me,
my half of the kingdom I will give to you
and all my gold and silver in the castle.
My love is my silver and gold in my castle,
my half of the kingdom is half of my sorrow,
say, little Inga, do you fear sorrow?¹²⁷

Rangström's use of literary references is a distancing strategy borrowed from Strindberg, and it allowed him to use fictional characters as proxies through which he could let his desires be known, removing the sense of his own agency and therefore responsibility. (As we shall see in Chapter Four, this became particularly apparent during his affair with Omon Håkanson.) The anecdote also suggests that Rangström learned early on to use music as a coping mechanism, here retreating to

¹²⁴ Helmer, *Ture Rangström*, 198.

¹²⁵ Cited in Helmer, *Ture Rangström*, 35. 'I andras sällskap däremot – forceradt munter, lustig, full af galna infall – hej för tusan, alldeles förbannadt tokiga infall! – Jag har blifvit en utmärkt skådespelare.' (Draft letter from Rangström to Gunnar Bolin, 4 September 1902.)

¹²⁶ *ibid.*, 34. 'Du kom för att skåla med mig, Ingalill. Och jag såg in i dina mörka skogstjärnsögon, helt förvirrad, tårarne höllo nästan på att bryta fram. Jag greps af svindel och måste stödja mig mot dörrposten. Alla kringstående drogo på munnen. Då gick jag till pianot och spelade upp en bullrande vals.' (Letter from Rangström to Lisa Hollender, 28 August 1903.)

¹²⁷ Gustaf Fröding, 'Ingalill', *Gitarr- och dragharmonika* (Stockholm: Albert Bonniers, 1891).

the piano in order to play music that covered and contradicted his emotion. The implication for the study of Rangström's *romanser* is that, though a particular song might be an expression of personal emotion, it could equally be a means of obscuring or processing with it. Indeed, Rangström himself claimed that 'he always composed better after a crash [i.e. crisis], and thus the situation was, for his part, saved'.¹²⁸ Such a statement is, of course, yet another self-portrayal, in which Rangström emphasizes the creativity with which he responded to personal crises. The Strindbergian habit of self-presentation proved unshakeable: throughout his life, Rangström would continue to associate himself and others with literary characters, to cultivate and project a creative persona, and to poeticize his experiences.

Lisa Hollender: The Beloved

With Elisabet Hollender (1882-1968) we reach the last and, in some ways, the most elusive personality with whom Rangström engaged during his formative years. She has appeared here and there in the narrative thus far, usually in the role of the distant beloved to whom the young artist pours out his soul. She was the first of three women in Rangström's life – discounting those occasionally hinted at by his contemporaries, as in the sixtieth birthday song – and she played a significant part in his formative years. Their relationship was often under strain, both before and during their marriage, not least due to their different social backgrounds.

Because her parents had divorced when she was small, Lisa had been raised by her widowed aunt in an affluent home; her bourgeois education included needlework and music, and she studied piano with Richard Andersson. Her aunt, Olivia Fahnehjelm, was protective of her ward, and insisted that the young couple spend a year without contact in order to test the strength of their feelings for each other. For Rangström, 1904 was therefore a 'year of longing', during which Lisa appears in his fragmentary journal in idealized form, pure and bright; in Helmer's opinion, this year of separation may have been a factor in Rangström's later difficulty in relating well to women.¹²⁹ It certainly meant that, at this crucial stage in his emotional development, he was interacting more with an imagined and unrealistic persona than with the real woman who inspired it. His two years of study in Germany from 1905 only compounded the problem: the geographical distance resulted in a great disjuncture between the emotional intimacy revealed in Rangström's letters and the impossibility of physical closeness. The couple were engaged in July 1906, while Rangström was home for the summer, but during his time in Munich the following year, Rangström clearly grew attached to Hey's daughter

¹²⁸ Cited in Helmer, *Ture Rangström*, 271. '... han alltid komponerade bättre efter en krasch, och därmed var ju situationen för hans del räddad.'

¹²⁹ Helmer, *Ture Rangström*, 39.

Otti. His engagement with Lisa was even broken off for a few months, but the couple were eventually married in October 1908 – after Lisa’s aunt had ensured through a pre-nuptial agreement that Rangström would have no access to Lisa’s personal assets.

Because so much of their pre-marital relationship was maintained by letter, there is a relative dearth of information after their wedding, but it seems that financial difficulties (especially Lisa’s off-limits assets) were a regular matter of tension in their marriage and a significant factor in its failure. That Rangström first moved out of the family home within a week of the death of Lisa’s aunt is telling, given that her will maintained the same conditions. For Rangström, this strained arrangement was a constant reminder of his social inequality, as he confided to Stenhammar in a letter asking for a loan.

For me, the crucial thing is that I don’t have that kind of relationship with my wife, have not done so for many years, and after the inheritance saga it is an impossibility for me to even think on it, so much so that my entire inside is in rebellion – thus in the relationship, that I with equanimity could apply to her resources for the relatively little things it draws on; the way out is, besides, through pacts and constant, unnecessary conflicts, cut off, for my part. For a long time – it is more than thirteen years – a quiet hell has burned in that area; now I am not able any more.¹³⁰

In fact, the marriage struggled on for several more years. By the time the couple applied for divorce in 1925, Rangström had fallen for Omon Håkanson, the wife of his fellow composer Knut Håkanson (1887-1929), and once more he bared his soul in eloquent and emotionally intimate letters to a woman who was, according to social convention, just out of his reach.

Helmer suggests that Rangström’s wider attitude towards women was affected by the difficulties of his marriages and was given expression in his mature works: ‘For [Rangström], the woman appeared as unreliable and treacherous ... over the years, friendship between men became a stronger emotional contact.’¹³¹ This summary certainly tallies with the lines from Rangström’s 1940 libretto *Hägring (Mirage)* where the wronged husband in a love triangle laments the treachery of both his wife and friend, yet says: ‘A woman is false to every heart-blood; perhaps, then, I mourn most for the man. For falsehood does not fit men.’¹³² Such misogynistic moments in Rangström’s works pale in comparison with those in Strindberg’s, and to what extent they were encouraged or

¹³⁰ Cited in Helmer, *Ture Rangström*, 253. ‘det för mig afgörande, är att jag icke står i det förhållande till min hustru, har icke gjort det sedan många år, och efter arfshistorien är det en omöjlighet för mig att tänka ens därpå, så mycket mer som hela mitt inre är i uppror – alltså i det förhållande, att jag med jämnmod kunde anlita hennes resurser för de relativa småsaker det rör sig om, utvägen är för öfrigt, genom paktum och ständiga konflikter i onödan, afskuren för min del. Sedan länge – det är mer än tretton år – har ett stilla helvete brunnit på den kanten, nu orkar jag icke mera.’ (Letter from Rangström to Stenhammar, 2 January 1921.)

¹³¹ Helmer, *Ture Rangström*, 253. ‘För honom framstod kvinnan som opålitlig och svekfull ... vänskap mellan män kom med åren att framstå som en fastare känslomässig kontakt.’

¹³² Cited in Helmer, *Ture Rangström*, 253. ‘En kvinna är till hvarje hjärtblod falsk, kanhända sörjde jag då mest för mannen. Ty falskhet passar ej för män.’

condoned by the playwright's attitude to women, as well as given precedent, is hard to measure. Helmer lays the blame at Otto Weininger's feet instead, through Rangström's reading of *Geschlecht und Charakter* while studying in Germany.¹³³

'A manifold of reflexes...'

Questions about influence and identity in Rangström's formative years may not have simple answers, but this chapter has shown that by challenging recycled misrepresentations in Rangström's reception, we can at least avoid asking the wrong questions altogether. The repeated descriptions of Pfitzner and Lindegren as Rangström's only composition teachers, though technically true, are misleading, and cannot be easily reconciled with Rangström's self-identification as a self-taught composer or with his essentially forward-looking orientation. The process of his tuition with Lindegren brought him into the Swedish mainstream, but his reaction to its content was distinctively modern: traditional forms were simply tools which he used on a more conceptual level, as in his pursuit of the 'counterpoint of feeling', or when it suited him, often in the context of pastiche, allusion or quotation. 'Do not speak about influences,' Helmer warns, in the epilogue of his biography, 'speak about a conscious dialogue with other composers and their music.'¹³⁴ He hits on one of the main difficulties faced by the Rangström researcher: that so much of what has been left us, in both music and prose, is self-aware and deliberate.

In his dedication of his first article as a music critic to Nielsen (in 1907) and of his first symphony to Strindberg (in 1914), Rangström was clearly aligning himself with the personalities of the Breakthrough generation; he sought to be a spokesman for a Scandinavian renaissance that was never fully realized. He saw and welcomed the end of Germany's musical hegemony – a view entirely incompatible with Pfitzner's abhorrence of internationalism – and yet he struggled to negotiate the twentieth century's sudden diversification of musical styles. Like Busoni, he understood Wagner's music as a closed circle, and yet he went on to teach and compose with Hey's thoroughly Wagnerian singing style in mind (something that the following chapter will investigate in detail). Meanwhile, Busoni's opinions about musical freedom gave him the ideal justification for pursuing personal expression over intellectual discipline, and even gave value to his claims to be self-taught.

This self-applied label is an indication of how little Rangström felt obliged to acknowledge the impact of Lindegren's and Pfitzner's tuition. And indeed, their influence – particularly Pfitzner's – is largely one of absence. This can be seen in the brevity of the lessons, in Rangström's relative

¹³³ Helmer, *Ture Rangström*, 47.

¹³⁴ *ibid.*, 461. 'Tala inte om påverkningar, tala om en medveten dialog med andra tonsättare och deras musik...'

silence about both men in his private and public writing, and, as we shall see in some of the case studies, his idiosyncratic approach to form, texture, and harmony. It is important to emphasize, however, that Rangström saw himself as a self-taught *professional*, never as an amateur. He constantly referred to himself as a musician, a composer, a tone-poet – and he would ‘give a dozen living doctors of music for one old, half-dead composer’.¹³⁵ He felt music to be at the core of his existence, and being a self-taught musician only underlined this: it was really a claim to have been taught by music itself. While there is evidently some justification for Stenhammar’s designation of Rangström as a dilettante, there are two important caveats which remove some of the sting from the comment. Firstly, given that early twentieth-century Sweden lacked a viable alternative to piecemeal private tuition, a stint of study on the Continent, or learning on the job, elements of auto-didacticism were a common feature of her composers’ careers. It did not denote a lack of talent or potential, as is clear from Stenhammar’s description of Rangström as ‘the most originally gifted’ of his three recommendations to Nielsen. Secondly, Stenhammar’s letter was written only a decade into Rangström’s compositional career: there was still time for the younger man to get to grips with large, orchestral forms. In fact, over the next five years, Stenhammar would manoeuvre Rangström into a position to succeed him as the conductor of the Gothenburg Symphony Orchestra, and so provide him with a direct opportunity to interact on a daily basis with orchestral instruments and forms. Stenhammar’s written reservations about Rangström’s professional status are thus qualified by their context of practical support and commendation.

In Strindberg, both we and Rangström have a model of how one man can present many faces and whose work can span multiple cultural movements; when his example is considered alongside the various traditions with which the young Rangström came into contact, it is hardly surprising that Rangström’s music does not slot neatly into a particular category. ‘The self is not a thing to itself,’ Strindberg said through his fictional persona in *The Serving Maid’s Son*. ‘It is a manifold of reflexes, a complex of drives and desires.’¹³⁶ This chapter has built up an impression of Rangström through his reactions to the various musical philosophies and personalities that he encountered as a young composer. He emerged from his student years with his compositional orientation clearly set towards the new and the radical. He was not willing to be bound by tradition. ‘So it has been,’ he wrote while he was in Munich. ‘So it is – The wrong conclusion: So it shall be.’¹³⁷

¹³⁵ Rangström, ‘Den blodige musikrecensenten’, *Sydsvenska Dagbladet*, 6 May 1945. ‘... ger jag ett dussin levande musikkdotorer för en gammal halvdöd komponist...’

¹³⁶ Steene, 248-9.

¹³⁷ Helmer, 44. ‘Så var det. Så är det – Felkonklusionen: Så skall det vara.’

Figure 3. Study locations of Swedish composers in Rangström's lifetime

	Composer's year of birth	Private study in Sweden	Stockholm Conservatory	Berlin	Leipzig	Dresden	Munich	Vienna	Paris	Other
Johan Lindegren	1842	■								
Andreas Hallén	1846				■	■	■			
Robert Andersson	1851	■		■						
Emil Sjögren	1853	■		■				→		
Wilhelm Peterson-Berger	1867		■			■				
Henning Mankell	1868		■							
Wilhelm Stenhammar	1871	■		■						
Hugo Alfvén	1872		■			■				■
Olallo Morales	1874		■	■						
Sigurd von Koch	1879	■		■		■				
Natanael Berg	1879	■	■							
Ture Rangström	1884	■		■			■			
Kurt Atterberg	1887		■	■						
Gösta Nystroem	1890		■						■	■
Hilding Rosenberg	1892		■	■		■	■	■	■	
Moses Pergament	1893			■						■
Dag Wirén	1905		■						■	
Lars-Erik Larsson	1908		■		■			■		
Gunnar de Frumerie	1908		■					■	■	
Erland von Koch	1910		■	■					■	
Allan Gustaf Pettersson	1911		■						■	
Karl-Birger Blomdahl	1916		■							
Sven-Erik Bäck	1919	■								

Destinations are in order of increasing distance from Sweden (left to right, excluding 'Other').

Swedish locations are shown in blue, German in black, and Vienna and Paris in red.

The arrow indicates travel to, rather than settled study in, a city.

The composers shown here are those included in a booklet celebrating the fiftieth anniversary of the publisher *Nordiska Musikförlaget* in 1965.

Figure 4: Carl Eldh's statue of Strindberg



Tegnérlunden, Stockholm
Author's photograph

Figure 5: Posts held by Rangström

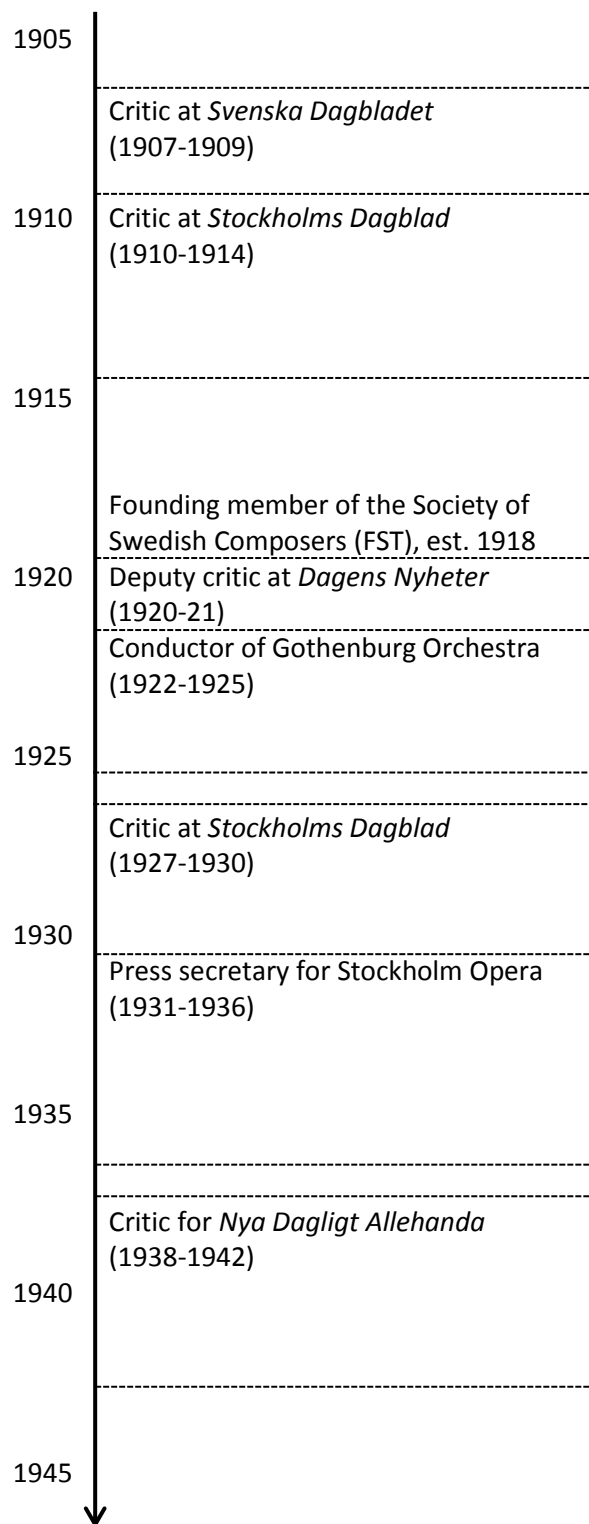


Figure 6: 'The bloody music critics'

'A son of Cain, a masterful maestro, a pamphleteer of rank, a newspaper writer of the flaming pen's grace, he [**Peterson-Berger**, the bull; *Dagens Nyheter*] should not be suspected or accused of such stupidity as moral ideals and ethical supremacy! It is just the opposite of his being, which is that of the predator, the strong tiger, the wolf, the fox: cunning, cleverness, the imagination and superior strength of the primeval forest... How Swedish people in the long run shall now find themselves with music, when the wild animal's majestic bellowing has been silenced, we must leave in the Norns' deft hands...'



'Den blodige musikrecensenten', *Sydsvenska Dagbladet*, 6 May 1945
Caricature by Anders Sten, article by Ture Rangström (the scythe-wielding snake)

'**Moses Pergament** [the eagle; *Aftontidningen*] no longer smashes window panes, since with his collected work in several parts he persuaded us of his undeniably significant talent as musical image-disperser and animator.'

'**Curt Berg** [the spider; *Dagens Nyheter*] has entered politics, or at least an annex of the same.'

'**Atterberg** [the vulture; *Stockholms Tidningen*] gracefully swings both his incense and his vessel of wrath.'

'**Sten Broman** [bottom right; *Sydsvenska Dagbladet*], this life-lusty, wild cannibal, starts to show rebellious signs of wisdom and love for humanity.'

Figure 7. Rangström and his collar through the years



Figure 7.1
1908



Figure 7.2
c. 1925
Rangström sent signed copies of this photo as postcards, and frequently used it as a publicity photo.



Figure 7.3
20 November 1944
'Namn och Nytt', *Dagens Nyheter*



Figure 7.4
c. 1921
Rangström in his Borsalino hat.



Figure 7.5
28(?) November 1934
Rangström's collar and tie, hairbrush and penholder, photographed as a joke before his fiftieth birthday.

CHAPTER TWO

EXPRESSING NATIONAL IDENTITY

It [Rangström's Second Symphony] is Swedish music all the way, harsh and weather-beaten in the expression and forthright and personal throughout... It has, in all its homophony and uniform colouring, personal style and stature; it has the gnarled nature of the fir and the skerry's ruggedness. And it is Swedish. Even *Storsvensk* – there is not a little of the Carolean manifestations of power in the instrumentation's favouritism of strong brass.¹

Rangström conceived his Second Symphony during the final months of the First World War and it was premiered in 1919. These dates, taken together with the overt patriotism of the title, *Mitt Land* (*My country*), the dark key of D minor and the harsh orchestral timbres, could easily suggest that the work was an assertion of Swedishness written in direct response to the horrific impact of the war across much of Europe. The quote above, taken from a 1934 concert review, shows how thoroughly the work's later reception was bound up with nationalist ideas. The term *Storsvensk* is a loaded one, literally meaning 'Great Swedish', and traditionally associated with a belief in Sweden's role as a leading political and military power. It is used by the reviewer alongside a reference to the Caroleans, that is, the troops of Charles XI and Charles XII, who were the final kings to rule during Sweden's *Stormaktstid*, the seventeenth-century Age of Greatness (literally, 'time of great power'). Rangström's symphony is thus presented as a highly nationalistic piece of music. The composer himself produced a similar message about the work during the Second World War, a couple of months before he travelled to Dresden to conduct a concert that included *Mitt land*.²

It [the symphony] resulted, without a doubt, from the impression of the war years' wolf-times and from the composer's irrepressible desire to preach in harsh tones to forgetful Swedish senses about the ancient national power's significance.³

Rangström made this statement in the context of German-Swedish cultural cooperation, and the appearance of nationalistic readings of *Mitt land* during the 1930s suggest that Blood and Soil ideology was gaining ground in Sweden. Although Helmer presents the Dresden concert as an apolitical opportunity for Rangström to promote his music outwith Sweden, in the very same sentence he also describes it as a deliberate demonstration that 'the belligerent Nazi Germany was

¹ 'Konsertföreningen', 8(?) February 1934. 'Det är svensk musik hela vägen, kärv och väderbiten i uttrycket och alltigenom rättfram och personlig... Den har i all sin homofoni och ensartade kolorit personlig stil och resning, den har furans vresighet och skärens skrovlighet. Och den är svensk. Storsvensk t.o.m. – det finns ej så litet av karolinska kraftyttringar i instrumentationsens favoriserande av starkt bleck.'

² The concert, on 3 March 1940, was billed as a Swedish concert, but it was also a Rangström concert: the programme consisted entirely of his works. A musical tribute to Stockholm, his *Divertimento elegiaco* and the orchestrated version of *Kung Eriks visor*, with Sven Nilsson as soloist, comprised the first half, and *Mitt land* the second. (Programme in *Tidningsurklipp 1940*, The Rangström Collection.)

³ Per Lindfors, 'Ture Rangström och hans Strindbergssymfoni', *Röster i radio* No. 4 (1940). 'Det tillkom utan tvivel genom intryck från krigsårens vargatider och av tonsättarens lite obändiga lust att i kärva toner predika för glömska svenska sinnen om den urgamla nationalkraftens betydelse...'

not isolated from the outside world' and admits that 'how Rangström experienced and perceived this he has not conveyed.'⁴ In fact, the concert was organized by the *Nordischen Gesellschaft* (The Nordic Society), which had been set up in 1921 to promote German-Scandinavian relations and by 1940 was a direct means of cultural propaganda overseen by the prominent Nazi Alfred Rosenberg (1893-1946).⁵ Moreover, Rangström's speech at the post-concert banquet indicates his willingness to adapt to his audience: he spoke about the role of German music in Swedish culture, which he had previously derided.⁶ Helmer is overly coy about this concert (which took place just over a year before Germany's invasion of Denmark and Norway on 9 April 1941) and so he sidesteps the chance to explore Swedish attitudes towards Hitler's Germany. He does not observe, for example, that Rangström's habitual translation of song texts into German petered out after the First World War but started up again between 1937 and 1943.⁷

Rangström's 1940 description of the symphony as a war-inspired sermon about national pride has virtually nothing in common with his original statement of intent. In June 1918, when he wrote to Stenhammar about his initial inspiration for the symphony, he seemed astonishingly unconcerned with the events in Europe or Sweden's position relative to them:

But the symphony I would like to achieve! It should be a piece of simple, faithful homage to our old, delightful, poor land, with granite, much granite, summer night and the Baltic and forest and fairy-tales.⁸

The only similarity between the two statements is the country of Sweden; the surrounding rhetoric is strikingly different. In 1918, Rangström gave expression to a heartfelt patriotism that was politicized only in retrospect. His gaze was firmly focused on Sweden's landscape and legends, to the point of escapism, and as such, it is a manifestation of the peculiar form of nationalism that had developed in Sweden by the turn of the century.

This chapter will argue that early twentieth-century Swedish national identity was doubly-orientated, placing importance on regional identity as well as on connections to continental culture.

⁴ Helmer, *Ture Rangström*, 328. '... det krigförande Nazi-Tyskland inte var isolerat från omvärlden. Hur Rangström upplevde och uppfattade detta har han inte meddelat.'

⁵ Jonathan Petropoulos, *Art as Politics in the Third Reich*, (London: University of North Carolina Press, 1996), 68.

⁶ Rangström, 'Svenskt lynne – svensk musik', *Stockholms Dagbladet*, 17 December 1911. 'We also consider the insignificant German [Johan Helmich] Roman as our art-music's father. [It] may be [so] – for fatherhood cannot now be proved once and for all. It did not occur to us that Swedish art-music should own its origin in Swedish temper and Swedish temper's depth.' ('Vi anse också den obetydliga tysken Roman som vår tonkonsts fader. Må vara – ty faderskapet kan nu en gång för alla ej bevisas. Att svensk tonkonst skulle äga sitt ursprung i svenskt lynne och svenskt lynnesdjup, föll oss ej in att tänka.')

⁷ See Appendix B, Graph 4. While these changes are probably due to the commercial opportunities of reaching the German-speaking market rather than any personal political orientation on Rangström's part, they are evidence of the economic and cultural ties that Sweden maintained with Germany during both World Wars.

⁸ Cited in Helmer, *Ture Rangström*, 186. 'Men symfonin vill jag gärna nå! Ett stycke enkel, trogen hyllning till vårt gamla härliga, fattiga land, med gråsten, mycket gråsten, sommarnatt och Österhaf och skog och sagor, skulle det bli.' (Letter from Rangström to Stenhammar, 18 June 1918.)

Rangström's setting of Bo Bergman's 'Pan' will provide a case in point and open up a discussion of speech-melody, a compositional technique that Rangström understood to be both nationally and universally valuable. The reception history of Rangström's speech-melody has been marked by misunderstanding, which has led to two problematic positions: unverified assertions about the Swedishness of Rangström's music and unexplained references to his implementation of speech-melody. This chapter will bridge the gap between these positions through three further case studies, examining the connection between musical features in Rangström's songs and characteristics of the spoken Swedish language. That is to say, it will aim to provide some justification for the 'Swedish' label through a clarification of Rangström's use of speech-melody.

Inward-looking and outward-looking nationalism

Sweden's neutrality over the last two centuries stands in dramatic contrast to her previous history, and a brief overview is necessary here in order to highlight some of the key events, personalities and eras that helped to shape the country's culture and society, as well as its relationship to its Nordic neighbours, in the early twentieth century.

Sweden's influence over Finland dates from the legendary crusade led there in the middle of the twelfth century by Sweden's patron saint, Erik IX, in order to 'Christianize' the pagan Finns, and a more substantiated expedition a hundred years later. (Swedish rule in Finland lasted until 1809, when it became a Grand Duchy of the Russian Empire, and even today the Swedish language is a recognized minority language in the country.) In 1397 the Kalmar Union brought the Scandinavian nations and their overseas territories together under a single monarch, Margaret I (1343-1412), but this arrangement broke down within a few generations, after which dominance of the Nordic region see-sawed between Denmark and Sweden. Territorial borders shifted frequently, but Sweden's monarchy sustained a remarkable level of continuity: the descendants of Gustav Vasa (1496-1560), who led a rebellion against the Danish Christian II in 1520 and initiated the Swedish reformation early in his reign, ruled until 1818. The Age of Greatness was established by Gustav Vasa's grandson, Gustav II Adolf (better known as Gustavus Adolphus, 'The Lion of the North'), who became king in 1611 at the age of 17, and who inherited wars against Denmark, Poland and Russia along with the crown. His engagement in the Thirty Years' War resulted in the first major Protestant victory (at the Battle of Breitenfeld on 17 September 1631) and in Sweden's emergence as a significant power in Europe. At various times during the next 80 years, the Swedes held sway over territory in modern-day Norway, Denmark, Finland, Russia, Latvia, Estonia, Poland and Germany. In 1699, however, the new rulers of Russia, Poland and Saxony, and Denmark, conspired to break up Sweden's empire, and

although Charles XII (1682-1718) dealt with the immediate threat, his decision to march on Moscow in 1708 proved disastrous. Russia's scorched earth tactics and the most severe winter in half a millennium decimated the Swedish army, which was defeated by that of Peter I at Poltava the following summer.⁹

During the eighteenth century Sweden was marked by internal political manoeuvrings and shifting relationships with Russia, which had become the dominant Baltic power. Gustavus III (1746-1792) was the most significant monarch from a cultural perspective: as well as the Swedish Academy of Music, he established the Royal Theatre, the Royal Ballet, and the Royal Opera, the last of which provided the stage for his own assassination at a masked ball. His son, Gustav IV, who became king at 13, was deposed in 1809 after the loss of Finland to Russia. His uncle and successor, Charles XIII, lacked a surviving heir and the physical health required to rule effectively; the House of Vasa was on its last legs. The search for a suitable crown prince eventually settled on Jean-Baptiste Bernadotte (1763-1844), one of Napoleon's marshals, who had impressed the Swedes by his generous treatment of their prisoners in Lübeck in 1806. While acting as regent, his military and diplomatic exertions on behalf of his adopted country resulted in the transfer of Norway from the Danish to the Swedish crown, and set up a peace that lasted throughout his reign – and, indeed, up until the present day.

Sweden's history of dominance (more often than not) over her neighbours and the decline of her seventeenth-century empire inevitably shaped ideas about national identity in Rangström's day. We have already come across the term *Storsvensk* and the associated desire to see Sweden re-establish herself as a significant power in Europe. We will shortly encounter a second term, *ursvensk*, which crops up repeatedly in Rangström's reception. It defies direct translation, but the prefix *ur* can mean 'from', 'from within', or 'out of', and so the whole word describes (as a noun or an adjective) someone who is essentially Swedish, a Swede of Swedes, or a Swede from of old. There are obvious implications here about racial purity, but the term need not be read as an exact ideological equivalent of the German *Urdeutsch*. Though both are often connected to idealized masculinity or national landscapes, the Swedish term seems to be more preoccupied with nostalgia for the past (often, but not necessarily, the Viking era) than with an agenda for the present – a difference in focus that fitted a country whose empire-building days were done.

Sweden's neutrality was, as we will see, a significant factor in the formation of national identity in the twentieth century, but it also had a broader impact on the country's culture. In the field of Swedish literature, where the modernist decade is generally held to be the 1940s, Susan Brantly has suggested that Sweden's neutral status provided a barrier that delayed the wave of

⁹ Stephanie Pain, '1709: The year that Europe froze' in *The New Scientist*, 4 February 2009.

modernist movements that swept across much of the West in the wake of World War One.¹⁰ A similar time lag is apparent in the development of musical styles, resulting in the categorization difficulties that were mentioned in the Introduction. It is not that modernism was simply delayed, but rather that its emergence was less decisive than elsewhere: it lacked traction in a culture where tradition had not been thoroughly destabilized. Thus the tonal harmonic language associated with Romanticism persisted well into the twentieth century, despite the sporadic appearances of serialism in works such as Hilding Rosenberg's First String Quartet, which in 1923 was hailed by the young critic Moses Pergament as the beginning of a new era.¹¹ As in the literary world, the conservative heavyweights of Swedish music's previous generation were still, to a large extent, the arbiters of taste, and the resistance of personalities like Peterson-Berger surely contributed to the delayed acceptance of modernism. For him, in Rosenberg's quartet, 'hell opened up for everyone';¹² his review twisted Goethe's statement about a quartet resembling 'four rational persons conversing together'¹³ into a description of the players as 'four Konradsbergers faced with a quartet of the fifth'.¹⁴ Konradsberg was a mental hospital. Peterson-Berger's response also incorporated a criticism that would continue to be levelled at modernist compositions for years to come: it lacked national distinctiveness, sounding 'exactly like the work of the American, English, French, German, and the Italian cacophonists.'¹⁵ The prevalence of such attitudes is crucial for understanding the music of Rangström, who clearly demonstrated a desire to be both modern and Swedish. As the debate polarized around him, he who had once seen himself on the front lines of musical culture found himself passed by and could, in his mid-40s, describe himself as 'an old-fashioned musician of the old school'.¹⁶ Despite the progressiveness in Rangström's personal development as a composer, his position relative to the European mainstream, where modernism was seen to go hand-in-hand with internationalism, seemed to move backwards. This is a matter to which we will return in Chapter Three.

Sweden's neutrality and autonomy not only helped to preserve, in Horton's phrase, 'the spirit of national romanticism', but shaped understandings of national identity itself. It reduced the threat of imminent invasion and there was no need to inspire patriotism for the sake of military

¹⁰ Susan Brantly, 'Into the Twentieth Century: 1890-1950' in *A History of Swedish Literature*, ed. Lars G. Warne (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1996), 308.

¹¹ Moses Pergament, *Svenska Tonsättare* (Stockholm: Gerber, 1943), 102.

¹² Per Broman, 'New Music of Sweden' in *New Music of the Nordic Countries*, ed. John David White (Hillsdale: Pendragon Press, 2003), 459.

¹³ A. D. Coleridge, trans., *Goethe's Letters to Zelter* (London: George Bell & Sons, 1892), 369. (Letter dated 9 November 1829.)

¹⁴ Helmer, 300. 'fyra konradsbergare framför en kvartett av den femte'.

¹⁵ Broman, 'New Music of Sweden', 459.

¹⁶ Rangström, *Stockholms Dagblad*, 6 October 1928 (cited in Helmer, *Ture Rangström*, 300). 'en efterbliven musikanter av gamla skolan'.

recruitment. Nor was there a drive for political independence, as there was in Norway before 1905 and in Finland in 1917. Consequently, one of the most common features of nationalism – the unification and mobilization of the people’s political will for a set purpose – did not form part of Swedish national identity. The difference this made to the country’s cultural outlook is, of course, hard to quantify, but Finland provides a helpful contrast. In pre-war Finland, Sibelius and his contemporaries faced a similar risk of cultural marginalization as their Swedish colleagues did. As Glenda Dawn Goss is at pains to emphasize, the motto of the Järnefelt circle was initially ‘through the national to the all-European’,¹⁷ but Finland’s fight for national independence and the horrors of the 1918 civil war undermined such an agenda. The importance of the National superseded that of the International; it became the ultimate goal rather than a means of reaching a broader one. On the Swedish side of the Baltic, however, the outward-looking approach continued to thrive. The publisher *Nordiska Musikförlaget* summarized it well in 1965, looking back over its fifty year history.

Swedish musical life belongs – or should belong – intimately to Scandinavian musical life, and the northern musical life, in its turn, to the international. Only in a musical world where the exchange of ideas is close and regular can the music of a small country attain greater striking power.

Nordiska Musikförlaget considers as one of its most urgent tasks to ensure that these lines of communication to the rest of the world are kept open and that new contacts are established... We are striving to make Swedish music not merely a concern of Sweden but also a living concept in other countries as well – by its being played, heard and studied there...

Swedish-Northern-International is thus our main theme.¹⁸

The ‘exchange of ideas’ often took the form of festival concerts in Denmark or Germany, for example a three day extravaganza of Swedish music performed in Dortmund in June 1912 (see Figure 8, p. 113) and a Nordic Music Festival in Copenhagen in June 1919, or through the tours of national orchestras. Itinerant virtuosi also played a part, sharing the same repertoire in multiple countries. Swedish singers, who tended to find a place on the world stage far more readily than their composing compatriots, were perhaps the most effective means by which Rangström’s music could reach an international audience. Operatic stars such as Set Svanholm, Jussi Björling, Brita Hertzberg, and Birgit Nilsson often presented *romanser* in recitals alongside their appearances in opera houses across Europe and in America, and all kept Rangström’s music in their repertoire. When Svanholm showcased Swedish *romanser* in Budapest, the reviewer declared that it was worth organising such a concert for Rangström’s music alone, and at the Metropolitan Opera a recital that included Rangström *romanser* prompted a rave review in the New York Times. Svanholm even brought the

¹⁷ Glenda Dawn Goss, *Sibelius: A Composer’s Life and the Awakening of Finland* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009), 136.

¹⁸ *Nordiska Musikförlaget 1915-1965*, p. 3, 12.

set of 'Kung Eriks visor' ('King Erik's songs') to the Carnegie Hall, as the Swedish element in a Scandinavian Gala concert.¹⁹ The Finnish singer Aulikki Rautawaara was a particular proponent of Rangström's music, which she described as her great love, and she performed it across much of Northern Europe.²⁰ However, although Rangström's songs were performed abroad, they were never published outside Scandinavia, and although he translated many of his song texts into German, there is no evidence that non-Swedish-speaking singers adopted them into their repertoire.

As well as seeking to make connections abroad, Sweden's musical culture looked inward, in line with a peculiar, introverted aspect of nationalism which had begun to develop in the previous century:

Because of Sweden's political position during this period, there was little need for self-assertion toward other nations and the country's ethnic character was not threatened. Folkloristic interest and other processes of identity-formation were directed to the provinces (*landskap*) instead of to the national level...²¹

The absence of an external threat meant that there was no 'need' to promote a unified Swedish identity and so allowed space for the celebration of regional difference. Artur Hazelius' 1891 project to create Skansen, an outdoor museum designed to celebrate rural ways of life, is a clear manifestation of this regional nationalism. The archaeologist Johan Hegardt has said that 'it may not be an overstatement that Skansen is one of the most significant expressions of Swedishness. It is a miniature not so much of Sweden, but more of the idea of Sweden, the dream-society and its history.'²² Skansen's emphasis on regional distinctions is, in many ways, a logical extension of Järnefelt's and Nordiska Musikförlaget's motto: just as the authentic expression of national spirit was seen as a means of making international impact, expressing a regional identity was evidence of true Swedishness. Indeed, regional identity carried greater historical weight than national, because Sweden's regions, as recognized entities, predate the country's modern form. As the balance of Baltic power shifted across the centuries, whole regions (*landskap*) were sometimes traded as part of peace treaties. As we saw in the Introduction, way of life was a key part of regional identities, and their enduring importance and depth is demonstrated by the tendency among contemporary

¹⁹ Viktor Lányi, *Pesti Hírlap*, 21(?) October 1942, quoted in 'Set Svanholms konsert – "en kulturgärning"', *Stockholm Tidningen*(?), 29 October 1942. 'Bara för honom har det varit värt att anordna denna svenska romansafon'; Noel Straus, 'Svanholm scores in his recital bow', *New York Times*, 15 March 1948; "'Kung Erik" i Carnegie Hall', *Norrköpings Tidningar*, 12 February 1951.

²⁰ 'Rangström är min stora kärlek, säger Rautavaara [sic]', *Helsingborgs Dagblad*, 29 October 1944.

²¹ Bladh, 'Selma Lagerlöf's Varmland' in *Nordic Landscapes*, 222.

²² Johan Hegardt, 'Time Stopped. The open-air museum Skansen of Artur Hazelius' in *Manufacturing a Past for the Present: Forger and Authenticity in medievalist texts and objects in nineteenth-century Europe*, ed. János M. Bak, Patrick J. Geary and Gábor Klaiiczay (Leiden: Koninklijke Brill NV, 2015), 287.

Swedes to associate themselves with the ancient regions rather than the modern administrative areas.²³

An article from 1954 provides a kind of musical parallel to Skansen: a tour of the nation's regions through the works that represent them. The writer has enthusiastically preserved for us, as Figure 9 (p. 114) shows, the mid-century perception that different composers, and their works, belong to the various regions of Sweden. He makes no attempt to equate landscape features with musical ones, and in many cases he simply cites programmatic works (Peterson-Berger's Third Symphony *Lappland* [sic], Alfvén's Fourth Symphony *I havsbandet* [*In the stretch of sea*],²⁴ and Atterberg's Third Symphony *Västkustbilder* [*West-coast pictures*], as well as Rangström's *Mitt land*). The writer details the aspects of each landscape, but only rarely associates them with specific musical features; his understanding of musical regionalism remains firmly in the realm of the composer's intention and the audience's reception. By assigning a symphony titled 'My Land' to a specific region, he is also heavily underlining the view that a strong regional identity represents a national one.²⁵

Rangström holds an anomalous place in this article. Firstly, he appears more frequently than any other composer: he is mentioned in the context of three different regions, although there is no doubt that his strongest association is with Östergötland. Secondly, it is when the author discusses Rangström that he comes closest to making tangible connections between landscape features and musical timbres:

Ture Rangström is undoubtedly the sea's and the archipelago's born singer. His muse has its residence in Östergötland's barren and rugged sea nature. No one can render as well as him the terrifying atmosphere of autumn sea nights, the great seas' unending battle-song, the summer nights' mild, unending melancholy. The orchestral poems 'Havet sjunger', 'En höstsång' and the song cycles 'Havets sommar' and 'Notturmo' bear witness to this. All the defiantly harsh and gnarled angularity in this nature speaks of his music. In the second movement of his symphony 'Mitt land' (The wood, the wave, the summer night) meeker tones are allocated – here the shore-wood's prickly lines are replicated, the waves' silver play towards the shore, the whole landscape's infinite blue.²⁶

²³ Olwig and Jones, 'Introduction' in *Nordic Landscapes*, xviii.

²⁴ Alfvén's Fourth Symphony is in fact titled *Från havsbandet*; the writer may have confused it with Strindberg's 1890 novel *I havsbandet*. Peterson-Berger's Third Symphony is now better known as *Same-Ätnam* (*Saamiland*).

²⁵ DA CAPO, 'Svenska landskap i svensk musik', *Engelhom's Tidning*, 12 October 1954.

²⁶ *ibid.* 'Ture Rangström är otvivelaktigt havets och skärens borne sångare, men hans inspirationskälla ligger längre söderut. I Östergötlands karga och kantiga havsbandsnatur har hans musa sitt hemvist. Ingen har väl som han kunnat återge skräckstämningarna från höstliga havsnätter, de stora sjöarnas stolta oändliga kämpasånger, sommarnätternas blida, oändliga vemod. Orkesterdikterna "Havet sjunger", "En höstsång" och sångcyklarna "Havets sommar" och "Notturmo" bär vittne härom. Allt det trotsigt kärva och knotigt kantiga i denna natur talar ur hans musik. I andra satsen till hans symfoni "Mitt land" (Skogen, vågen, sommarnatten) anslås mjukare toner – här återges strandskogens taggiga linjer, vågens silverlek mot stranden, hela landskapets oändliga blånad.'

Thirdly, and most remarkably, in this paragraph there is a reversal of the roles of music and landscape. Throughout the rest of the article, the writer holds up music as capable of representing, describing, or calling to mind particular landscapes, but when he reaches Östergötland, he says that *the landscape speaks of Rangström's music*. It is a startling statement, one that demonstrates the depth of the perceived connection between Rangström's music and the landscape in which he made himself at home. The nature of Rangström's relationship with the archipelago environment will be dealt with in the following chapter; here, its mere existence suffices to show that Rangström is thoroughly representative of Sweden's regional nationalism.

Inward-looking and outward-looking nationalism in 'Pan'

The 1924 song 'Pan' exemplifies Rangström's expression of both inward-looking and outward-looking nationalism. It was initially passed over by critics in favour of the previous song in the 'Fem ballader' set – 'Flickan under nymånen' ('The girl under the new moon') – with Alf Nyman dismissing it in half a sentence: 'Less persuasive is the impression of the third setting, "Pan"'.²⁷ However, many Swedish singers brought the song into their repertoires, at home and abroad, and it gained such popularity with audiences that it could eventually be seen as representing the entire *romans* genre.²⁸ A concert in July 1952 gives some indication of its significance for the Stockholm public. The popular singer and actor Sven Olof Sandberg, just returned from a two-year trip to the United States, sang a programme of English-language songs that, according to *Stockholm Tidningen*, proved 'too foreign' for the 5000-strong audience: "Sing in Swedish," sounded from the public, and Sven Olof answered immediately with Ture Rangström's *Pan*.²⁹ It is worth noting that the writer in *Stockholm Tidningen* uses Sandberg's Christian names at precisely the point in the story where he resorted to Swedish; *Morgon-Tidningen* becomes still more familiar by using his nickname, SOS.³⁰ Regardless of whether the inclusion of 'Pan' was planned or was a hasty programme alteration, it was clearly a way for Sandberg to re-establish his credentials as a Swedish artist, a demonstration that he had returned home linguistically and musically as well as physically.

denna natur talar ur hans musik. I andra satsen till hans symfoni "Mitt land" (Skogen, vågen, sommarnatten) anslås mjukare toner – här återges strandskogens taggiga linjer, vågens silverlek mot stranden, hela landskapets oändliga blånad.'

²⁷ Alf Nyman, 'Rangström-ballader', *Sydsvenska Dagbladet*(?), 2 January 1926. 'Mindre övertygande är intrycket av den tredje sättningen, "Pan"...'.

²⁸ Yngve Flyckt, railing against the rise of pop music, wrote that '*Romanser* are not sung nowadays, but hit songs... I dare to assume that popular music also sits better with the majority than, for example, Rangström's "Pan".' ('Det sjungs inte romanser numera, utan schlager... Jag vågar förmoda att schalegrn också ligger bättre till för flertalet än exempelvis Rangströms "Pan".'.) 'Med ögat i högtalren', *Expressen*, 24 October 1953.

²⁹ 'Sven Olof Sandberg drog 5,000 till Tivoli', *Stockholm Tidningen*, 11 July 1952. 'för utländsk'; "Sjung på svenska", ljudet från publiken, och Sven Olof svarade genast med Ture Rangströms Pan.'

³⁰ RG, 'Sven Olof Sandberg', *Morgon-Tidningen*, 11 July 1952.

Rangström's setting was evidently seen as thoroughly Swedish, but Bergman's text demonstrates the outward-orientated aspect of Swedish national identity. The subject of the poem is the Greek god Pan, but the location is stereotypically Swedish: Pan sits with his back against a fir tree.

'Pan'

Middagsstillhet och klöverånga.
Ljuset flamar och smälter i ro
över åsarnas långa
kammar, där molnen bo.

Här i backen sitter Pan
lat, med nacken mot en gran.

När han börjar spela,
spela träden, susar säden,
lyssnar hela
jorden till hans kväden.

Livets stora hunger
stiger stark och god,
och mitt sommarblod
sjunger.³¹

'Pan'

Midday stillness and clover-scent.
Light flames and melts in peace
over the ridges' long
combs, where the clouds live.

Here in the slopes sits Pan,
lazy, with his back against a fir.

When he starts to play,
the trees play, the corn sighs,
the whole earth listens
to his song.

Life's great hunger
rises strong and good,
and my summer blood
sings.

The poem begins in tranquillity, with a gentle haze of nature images – clover-scent, long ridges, and the vast, light sky – described in unhurried and irregular lines, which Bergman breaks according to rhyme rather than rhythm. A change begins in the third stanza, 'when he starts to play'. The trees and corn are heard whispering in the repeated 's' sounds ('spela träden, susar säden, lyssnar hela jorden...') and the rhyme within the second line signals an increase in pace and intensity: six straight lines of trochaic metre now build up dramatically to the middle of the final verse. The fervent tone here is punctuated by the repetition of the unvoiced consonants 'ts' and 'st'. (Such internal and initial rhymes were, of course, a feature of the skaldic tradition and of the Poetic Edda.³²)

Livets stora hunger
stiger stark och god,
och mitt sommarblod
sjunger.

³¹ Bo Bergman, *Livets ögon* (Stockholm: Albert Bonnier, 1922).

³² The Poetic (or Elder) Edda is a thirteenth-century collection of mythological and heroic poems, including the Niebelung legend, composed some centuries earlier. The Prose (or Younger) Edda was written by the Icelandic historian Snorri Sturluson around 1220, and comprises a prose paraphrase of these poems (and others which are not extant) as well as a treatise on skaldic techniques.

Only in the penultimate line do we become aware of a first-person narrator, as though the speaker has been so caught up in the scene that his identity was, hitherto, indistinguishable from it. This poem is thus a celebration of a deep oneness with nature. The landscape it describes is one that Helmer recognizes instantly and unequivocally: 'the heat-hazy light of a Swedish high summer day.'³³ He specifies the setting as Swedish not because it is ambiguous and therefore requires clarification, but because it is so clear as to carry significance. For Helmer, its point is the 'melt[ing] together' of what is archaic and what is Swedish, but this assessment is not entirely convincing. Firstly, there is no real mingling or merging of the archaic and the Swedish – Pan has simply been dropped into a Swedish landscape – and so 'relocation' is a more helpful term than 'melting together'. Secondly, by the turn of the twentieth century, the figure of Pan had been so thoroughly appropriated by Romantic artists and poets that any association with classical myth was secondary to his role as a signifier of nature and eroticism: 'the Romantics ... rediscovered the pastoral deity shyly lurking as the Universal Soul of Nature and thus made him into a major poetic motif'.³⁴ His appearance in multiple national landscapes had rendered him pan-European, and the years around the turn of the century had seen a surge of renewed artistic interest in him. In Germany, for example, 'Pan' was the title of a short-lived but influential arts journal which ran from 1895-1900.³⁵ In Britain, a third of all references to Pan in poetry dating from Shakespearean times until the middle of the twentieth century occurred between 1895 and the end of the First World War.³⁶ In Sweden, and across Scandinavia, Pan was 'a favourite figure of the 1890s, ... a darkly erotic, Dionysian force'.³⁷ In Bergman's poem, then, Pan is not an ancient or exotic stranger, but a familiar trope that aligns the work with a relatively recent and decidedly international artistic trend. The text connects Swedish poetry with continental trends and so places Sweden, culturally if not geographically, in contact with continental Europe. In bringing the Universal into typically Swedish surroundings, it promotes the Swedish landscape as equally worthy as any of Pan's other locations. Into a national consciousness dogged by a sense of isolation and peripheralism, it etches the words *Pan was here too*.

The text of 'Pan' thus makes connections outwith Sweden as well as revelling in her distinctive landscape, and Rangström's setting does much the same through the technique he called

³³ Helmer, 279. '... det värmedallrande ljuset en svensk högsommardag...'

³⁴ Howard W. Fulweiler, 'Reviewed Work: *Pan the Goat-God: His Myth in Modern Times* by Patricia Merivale' in *Victorian Poetry* Vol. 8, No. 2 (Summer, 1970), 173.

³⁵ The digital archives can be viewed at <<http://www.ub.uni-heidelberg.de/Englisch/helios/fachinfo/www/kunst/digilit/artjournals/pan.html>> (accessed 13 July 2016).

³⁶ Patricia Merivale, *Pan the goat-god: his myth in modern times* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1969). Merivale cites Helen H. Law's 1955 survey of Classical references in British poetry, which shows that Pan is the most-referenced mythical figure.

³⁷ Susan Brantly, 'Into the Twentieth Century: 1890-1950' in *A History of Swedish Literature*, ed. Lars F. Warne (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1996), 283.

språkmelodi.³⁸ The term is not his invention: like the technique itself, it was borrowed from Julius Hey and translated into Swedish. Michael Fend has put Hey's work in a nationalistic context, that is, as part of a deliberate and long-term effort to establish a German vocal style that was distinct from Italian school of singing. German opera was difficult to understand as long as the Italian vowel-focused style dominated the singers' training, and it was Wagner and Hey who first promoted semi-vowels and consonants as not only important for comprehension, but as possessing expressive potential.³⁹ Rangström was well aware of this emancipatory aspect of the Hey's method, as well as the ostensible paradox created by his adoption of it, namely, the use of a German technique to develop a Swedish style.

... this technique is, despite its original nationally German stamp, not only German – but, like all truly national values, a quite universal human good. For with its creation, or perfection, the German art of singing was emancipated definitively from the Italian. This is considered to be the height of all song and is considered so partly to this day – that was and is also natural, in a certain sense. But the fallacy was to want to set it as the automatic norm, the automatic ideal for all singing. The basic proposition, that all song is a heightened, more potent speaking, is very plausible. The proposition is also Hey's – and it is clear that the Germanic and Romance 'speaking', the respective languages, are too different from each other in their nature for the vocal rules of thumb to, without effort, become those of the other...

And the Italian is also a purely instrumental art, the physical instrumental timbre its chief claim, the instrumental virtuosity its best attraction. With the Germanic languages the matter is rather different; these 'unsingable' languages cannot offer such rich opportunities for spiritual expressiveness, sound-symbolic effects... The most insignificant Romanesque phrase sounds good read out offhand – a Nordic poem must be personally animated in order to ring out, and then preferably not as an empty bell!⁴⁰

³⁸ Hereafter, *språkmelodi* will be translated as 'speech-melody' unless the context suggests that it refers not to the musical technique, but to the spoken intonation of the Swedish text.

³⁹ Michael Fend, "German Bel Canto": Nineteenth-Century German Singing Manuals in a Political Context', *L'insegnamento dei conservatori, la composizione e la vita musicale nell'Europa dell'Ottocento*, ed. Licia Sirch (2012), 89-107.

⁴⁰ Rangström, 'Modern sångkonst. Julius Hey', *Svenska Dagbladet*, 18 Septemeber 1908. '... denna teknik är trots sin ursprungligen nationellt tyska prägel icke enbart tysk – utan som alla verkligt nationella värden ett ganska allmänmänskligt godt. Ty med dess skapande, eller fulländning, emanciperades nämligen den germanska sångkonsten definitivt från den italienska. Denna ansågs ju vara höjden af all sång och anses så delvis än i dag – den var och är det naturligen ock i viss mening. Men felslutet var att vilja sätta den som den direkta normen, det direkta idealet för allt sjungande. Den grundläggande satsen, att all sång är ett stegradt, potenseradt talande är ju mycket antaglig. Satsen är också Heys – och det är klart att det germanska och romanska "talandet", de respektive språken till sin natur äro hvarandra alltför olika, för att det enas sångliga rättesnöre utan vidare skall kunna bli det andras... Och den italienska sången är också en rent instrumental konst, den instrumentalfysiska klanga dess hufvudfordran, den instrumentala virtuositeten dess bästa lockmedel Med de germanska språken står saken annorlunda; dessa "osångbara" språk, hur rika tillfällen till själslig expressivitet, till ljudsymboliska verkningar erbjuda de ej... Den obetydligaste romanska fras läser sig utan vidare som ett klingande spel – en nordisk dikt måste vara personligt besjälad för att klinga, och då helst icke som den tomma bjällran!'

Rangström understood that, given the linguistic proximity of Swedish to German ('the relationship can hardly be denied'),⁴¹ Swedish vowels were just as incompatible with the dominant, Italian school of singing as were their German counterparts. But, although he used Hey's treatise with his own pupils, he acknowledged that the technique could not simply be transferred without adaptation from one language to the other:

A transplantation of the Hey method, a transposition to other Germanic languages, is of course not the easiest matter. It has, however, been successfully undertaken, for example to English and Danish. The intention of these lines was also to prove to singers, and those interested in song, their own tongue's significance for a real, a long-lasting school of singing.⁴²

The precise details of an adaptation of the method from German to Swedish are less important here than Rangström's intention: he saw the technique as a means of furthering and conserving Swedish song. Here, again, there is a doubly-orientated nationalism. Speech-melody ensured a style of singing that was indisputably national but also outward-looking: rooted in the vernacular while simultaneously elevating it to compete with the more mainstream schools of singing. Rangström makes no claim to exclusivity or precedence; on the contrary, he advocates the method as a tool of universal benefit for national cultures.

Manifestations of speech-melody outwith Sweden

Very few composers seem to have made deliberate use of speech-melody as a compositional technique, and, consequently, it remains relatively unexplored territory for research. Even in the reception of the two composers who are best known for having incorporated the speech of their national language in their work, Janáček (1854-1928) and Mussorgsky (1839-1881), the process has been assumed much more frequently than it has been investigated. While in Rangström's case such assumptions amount to little more than unsubstantiated statements in even the briefest of biographical summaries, Janáček's use of speech-melody has long been widely accepted while being poorly understood, and as such it serves as a cautionary example. Even scholars who acknowledge that Janáček's musical motifs were not direct transcriptions of Czech speech sometimes fall into the habit of assumption over exploration. So, for example, Mirka Zemanová spends a couple of pages explaining that the speech-melodies that Janáček notated from daily life were not intended to be properly sung or to be used as thematic material, yet still introduces opera after opera with an

⁴¹ *ibid.* 'kan väl icke fränkännas släktskapen'

⁴² *ibid.* 'En omplantering af den Heyska metoden, en transponering till andra germanska språk, är naturligen icke den lättaste sak. Den har dock med framgång företagits, så t. ex. till engelskan och danskan. Meningen med dessa rader var ock att visa sångare och sångintresserade på det egna tungomålets betydelse för ett verkligt, ett konserverande sångstudium.' The mention of English and Danish adherents of the style is intriguingly – and frustratingly – lacking in detail: it is not clear whose work Rangström had in mind.

almost identical (and undeveloped) reference to its basis in speech-melody.⁴³ Janáček's approach was certainly very different to Rangström's, and had a veneer of scientific method: observation and transcription of spoken phrases, followed by time measurements probably made from memory.⁴⁴ Although early scholarship accepted these collected speech-melodies as objective records, they are now understood to be quite distinct from the speech which Janáček heard: already 'artistically stylized objects' rather than literal transcriptions.⁴⁵ What is more, Janáček never claimed to use his collected speech-melodies in his vocal works and Derek Katz has found only one case where he has clearly done so.⁴⁶

On the contrary, Janáček objected so fiercely to the popular understanding of his works as based on his notated speech-melodies that it is astonishing how long the misconception has persisted. 'Is it conceivable,' he wrote, 'that I could furtively take collected speech melodies, these cuttings from alien souls so sensitive that they hurt, and "compile" my work out of them? How is it possible to spread such nonsense?'⁴⁷ Janáček's compositional process was far more subtle: he was consistently focused on the ability of spoken intonation to communicate emotion and the possibility of transferring this potential to song. He saw speech-melodies as 'windows into people's souls', as 'the expression of the whole state of the organism and all the phases of the mental activity which follow from it',⁴⁸ and Zemanová observes that Janáček tends to portray heightened emotional or mental states with wider intervals.⁴⁹ This emphasis on the paralinguistic qualities of speech-melody (that is, its ability to convey personal emotion and experience apart from the text) pervades even the nationalistic rhetoric which surrounds Janáček's use of the term. In his reaction to hearing *Jenůfa* sung in German by the Vienna Court opera, he sees the communication of a distinctively Czech emotion as being at the heart of the opera's success:

A Czech heart is settled inside a hard shell of foreign words... The melodic sweetness of the Czech word has disappeared in the German version, the musical union of speech-melody has thinned out... [but] even a Czech speech-melody in German chills, and produces tears... Our passion, kept in place by the notes even in the German

⁴³ Mirka Zemanová, *Janáček: A Composer's Life* (London: Murray 2002). Pages 75 and 76 form the only real attempt to get to grips with the compositional process; pages 99, 143, 166, 177 and 205 feature similar statements about the opera under discussion being determined, as previous ones had been, by speech-melody. For example: 'As in Janáček's previous operas, the melodic line is largely based on speech melodies' (p. 177).

⁴⁴ Derek Katz, *Janáček beyond the borders* (Woodbridge: Boydell and Brewer, 2009), 14.

⁴⁵ Miloš Štědroň, 'Direct discourse and speech-melody in Janáček's operas' in *Janáček Studies*, ed. and trans. Paul Wingfield (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 80.

⁴⁶ Katz, 26-27. The phrase in question is a 5-year-old boy's response to the question, 'What is love?', overheard in 1903, a few months after the death of Janáček's daughter. It appears, adapted, in the opera *Osud (Fate)*, which was begun that year and completed in 1907.

⁴⁷ Leoš Janáček, 'Around *Jenůfa*' in *Janáček's Uncollected Essays on music*, ed. and trans. Mirka Zemanová (New York: Marion Boyars, 1989), 91.

⁴⁸ *ibid.* 'An interview in the *Journal Literární svět*', 121-122; Zemanová, 75.

⁴⁹ Zemanová, *Janáček*, 208.

version, remained the same passion of which our blood, our body is capable! It is because of this that the work has triumphed... *it is what has not been translated from the Czech that has triumphed: speech-melody, the seat of the emotional furnace.*⁵⁰

Derek Katz observes that, as Janáček was neither serialist nor neo-classicist, placing him in the category of 'pioneering ethnographer' was a way to grant him 'credibility as a modernist while grounding his music in a local culture'.⁵¹ However, as we have seen, there is very little direct correspondence between the speech that Janáček heard, the speech-melodies that he notated, and the melodies that appear in his operas. Moreover, though folk music and culture were a major influence in Janáček's compositional style, it seems that his interest in speech-melody was initially born of a compulsive curiosity about human nature rather than a nationalist agenda. As one contemporary critic observed, '*Jenůfa* is no Czech national opera. It has nothing to do with national historical dreams... *Jenůfa* is human opera that takes place among Moravian peasants.'⁵² It is notable, then, that Rangström's staging of Strindberg's play *Kronbruden*, which contains very similar plot elements, has been touted as a great Swedish opera.⁵³ No doubt this is partly due to Strindberg's status as a national literary figure, but his version also features distinctively Swedish and/or supernatural elements, such as the flower crown traditionally worn by virgin brides, the ambiguous *jordegumma* ('old woman of the earth') who acts as midwife to Kersti but sometimes appears to sport an animal tail, and the water-sprite, Näckén. While *Jenůfa* remains firmly in the real world of human drama, *Kronbruden* draws on Nordic mysticism and folklore, and so retains its status as a national opera.

Mussorgsky's attention to speech-melody, like Janáček's, was not primarily motivated by national sentiment, though nationalist ideas certainly informed its context. His often-quoted statement of intent, written after his composition of *The Marriage* (1868), shows that realism was his main aim:

Here's what I would like. That my characters speak on stage as living people speak, but so that the character and force of their intonation, supported by the orchestra

⁵⁰ Janáček, 'Moravany! Moravaan!' in *Janáček's Uncollected Essays*, 40.

⁵¹ Katz, *Janáček beyond the borders*, 3.

⁵² Max Brod, *Prager Sternenhimmel: Musik- und Theatererlebnisse der Zwanziger Jahre* (Vienna: Paul Zsolnay, 1966), 33. (First published in 1923.)

⁵³ The opera singer Einar Beyron, for example, described it as 'the greatest and most monolithic work that Swedish music-drama possesses' ('det största och mest helgjutna verk svensk musikedramatik äger') in an interview with *Göteborgs Tidningen*, 11 February 1951. The plot similarities between *Kronbruden* and *Jenůfa* demand some chronological details of the works' origins: Janáček's 1904 opera was based on Gabriely Preissove's play *Její pastorkyňa*, which he saw performed in Brno in 1893. There is no evidence that Strindberg knew of this work when he wrote his play *Kronbruden* (1901); nor is there any indication that Rangström heard of *Jenůfa* before composing his version of *Kronbruden* in 1915. (*Jenůfa* was first performed in Germany in 1918, more than a decade after Rangström had completed his studies there.) It seems that the plot elements common to both plays (the murder of an illegitimate child in order to preserve social standing, the discovery of the corpse on the mother's wedding day, and even the location of a village mill) must have been drawn independently from parallel folk traditions.

which is the musical background for their speech, hit the target head-on; that is, my music must be an artistic reproduction of human speech in all its most subtle windings.⁵⁴

Like Janáček, Mussorgsky sought to capture in music the same emotive power of natural speech, but descriptions of his approach have often tended towards the pseudo-scientific; Taruskin, for example, mentions the technique as ‘meticulously objective’ and ‘systematically applied’.⁵⁵ At least in Mussorgsky’s work the result is more tangible than in Janáček’s. Robert Oldani has identified various characteristics of Mussorgsky’s style as arising from his application of the speech-melody principle (though Mussorgsky did not use the term himself; *opéra dialogué* was the designation bandied about by the Mighty Handful in the 1860s). Most are hardly surprising: accented syllables fall on strong beats, unaccented syllables never appear on the beat, even on weak ones, note lengths are neither very long nor very short, and melismas are avoided. The ‘mute ending’ is more distinctive, with unaccented syllables at the end of a word set as quavers or triplets, followed by a rest on the next beat.⁵⁶ It is worth noting that these features are exclusively rhythmic; it is the stress of spoken Russian, rather than the intonation, that has occupied Mussorgsky’s attention. However, one feature – a full beat anacrusis to open some phrases within settings of blank verse – is, in fact, *not* a natural speech pattern in Russian and seems to have been used instead for rhetorical effect. Mussorgsky’s application of general speech patterns and his focus on rhythm is a very different approach from Janáček’s compulsive notation of specific phrases from individual voices and his interest in pitch. Of the two, Mussorgsky’s is the closer parallel to Rangström’s use of speech-melody.

Rangström heard *Boris Godunov* in Stockholm in 1911 and was deeply impressed by it. Mussorgsky’s aim to convey the characters’ emotion was certainly realized for Rangström, in an experience that parallels Janáček’s reaction to hearing his own opera in German: the emotion carried by the melody superseded the foreign language. ‘Darkly, deeply, passionately – hard and impenetrable as a gloomy death anthem and saturated by a sad yearning without equal,’ Rangström wrote in his review, ‘Russian art-music’s foremost stage work spoke to our hearts.’⁵⁷ His praise for Mussorgsky is loaded with superlatives and a Busonian reference to the composer’s inner creative drive, and the emphasis on realism is stronger even than that on nationalism.

⁵⁴ Cited by Robert W. Oldani, ‘Mussorgsky, Modest Petrovich’ in *Grove Music Online* (Oxford University Press). <<http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/19468>> (accessed 13 July 2016). (Letter from Mussorgsky to Lyudmila Shestakova, 30 July/11 August, 1868.)

⁵⁵ Richard Taruskin, ‘Boris Godunov’ in *The New Grove Dictionary of Opera* (Oxford University Press). <<http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/O006575>> (accessed 13 July 2016).

⁵⁶ Caryl Emerson and Robert William Oldani, *Modest Mussorgsky and Boris Godunov: Myths, Realities, Reconsiderations* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 252.

⁵⁷ Rangström, ‘K. Teatern: Boris Godunov’, *Stockholms Dagblad*, 27 April 1911. ‘Mörkt, djupt, lidelsefullt – hårdt och ogenomträngligt som en dyster ödes hymn och mättadt af en sorgsen trånad utan like, talade den ryska tonkonstens främsta sceniska verk till våra hjärtan.’

Mussorgsky, one of life's unfortunates and an artistic pioneer, now stands, thirty years after his death, as without question the most significant and distinctive of the composers who implemented Russian music's national fight for freedom. An uncompromising pursuit of nature and truth, an undeniable artistic idealism, characterizes his life and activity and gives to his art-music the convincing stamp of inner necessity. He has been called a musical realist; musical expression's values of truth are, for him, of greater importance than all conventional laws of beauty – and yet his daring, deconstructing art never lacks beauty's equilibrium and flexibly formed clarity. He, more than anyone, is the Russian folk-soul's tone-poet.⁵⁸

Helmer notes that much of what Rangström commends in Mussorgsky matches how he saw himself: truly original and imaginative despite some technical deficiencies (Mussorgsky, too, was an autodidact), and with deep roots in his homeland.⁵⁹ Although Rangström had promoted the universal value of speech-melody principles for any language, he seems not to have recognized them at work in Mussorgsky's opera. Even when *Boris Godunov* returned to Sweden in 1929, he gave no text-based explanation of Mussorgsky's 'concrete, simple, realistic ambition to express a people's soul-life in notes'.⁶⁰ He did, however, re-express his belief in the universal worth of the authentically national. His last word on the opera was truncated by a printing error, which reproduced the penultimate line twice, but Rangström kept a copy with the original ending pencilled in: 'A good and worthily performed work like this speaks to all peoples.'⁶¹

The reception of Rangström's *romanser*

There is very little concrete information about Rangström's approach to speech-melody, but to mention the principle without at least an attempt to understand the process would run the risk of contributing to the same kind of misrepresentation that has dogged Janáček's music. The rest of this chapter aims to render the rather opaque concept a little more transparent through a succession of brief case studies. First, however, it will outline the reception history of Rangström's *romanser*, looking in particular at the ways in which Rangström's style of vocal writing was described by his contemporaries, and tracing its simplification into unsubstantiated assertions of Swedishness.

⁵⁸ *ibid.* 'Moussorgsky, en af lifvets förolyckade och en konstens banbrytare, framstår nu, trettio år efter sin död, som den utan all fråga mest betydande och egenartade af de tonsättare, hvilka genomförde den moderna ryska musikens nationella frihetskamp. En omutlig sträfvan efter natur och sanning, en obestridlig konstnärlig idealitet, präglar hans lif och verksamhet och gifver åt hans tonkonst den inre nödvändighetens öfvertygande stämpel. Man har kallat honom en musikens realist; det musikaliska uttryckets sanningsvärden äro för honom af större betydelse än alla konventionella skönhetslagar – och dock saknar hans djärfva, nedbrytande konst aldrig skönhetsens jämnvikt och plastiskt gestaltade klarhet. Han är den ryska folksjälens tondiktare mer än någon.'

⁵⁹ Helmer, *Ture Rangström*, 64, 302.

⁶⁰ Rangström, 'Boris Godunov – en märklig repris och ett märkligt gästspel', *Stockholms Dagblad*, 16 March 1929. 'Han hade den konkreta, simpla, realistiska ambitionen att uttrycka ett folks sjäsliv i toner.'

⁶¹ *ibid.* 'En god och värdefullt framförd sak som denna, talar *til* [sic] *hela folken*.' [The last three words added by hand.]

During the 1910s, Rangström's interest in speech-melody was not explicitly picked up on by critics, with Swedes and non-Swedes alike tending to attribute the characteristics of Rangström's declamatory vocal writing to personal style or modern influences:

Copenhagen, 1912

It was fantastic texts by August Strindberg he had set to music. Leaping, rapidly changing music – with [a] declamatory vocal part – almost like something by Debussy, translated to Swedish. And yet – despite everything – even this most new-fangled Swede has so much innate vocal instinct that even his wildest thing *can* be sung – especially by an artist like Forsell, who here was absolutely sublime.⁶²

Stuttgart, 1913

Ture Rangström is a very intelligent Lieder composer of the new-modern direction – with his own style and that disposition that lets the imagination go on expeditions in the darkness of the music – who places a particular emphasis on the declamation in the vocal part.⁶³

Stockholm, 1918

As [a] song composer he has created a completely new style. The voice is handled [as] purely declamatory and generally moves by leaps in fifths, sevenths, ninths, sometimes even tenths; the accompaniment therefore gives the purely musical base. Rangström's masterly treatment of the vowels with consideration of their timbral value for the voice part is unique.⁶⁴

There are common observations here about the large leaps and declamatory style of Rangström's vocal lines, but also an emphasis on the novelty of his writing – a unanimous categorization of Rangström as a modern composer. It also seems that Hey's technique and tuition had developed Rangström's sensitivity to the physical demands of the written text and the abilities of the human voice. Indeed, Hey's method was an acknowledged factor in Rangström's success as a singing

⁶² Hbh, *Politiken*, 6(?) November 1912. 'Det var fantastiske Tekster af August Strindberg, han havde sat i Musik. Springende, hastigt skiftende Musik – med deklamerende Sangstemme – nærmest som noget af Debussy, oversat paa Svensk. Og dog – trods alt – har selv den mest nymodens Svensker saa meget medfødt vokalt Instinkt, at selv hans vildeste Ting *kan* synges – navnlig da af en Kunstner som Forsell, der her var aldeles sublim.'

⁶³ A. Pyrola, 'Das schwedische Musikfest in Stuttgart', *Allgemeine Musik-Zeitung* (June 1913). 'Ein sehr intelligenter Liederkomponist von neomoderner Richtung – mit eigenem Stil und jener Veranlagung, die Phantasie Forschungsreisen im Dunkel der Musik machen zu lassen – ist Ture Rangström, welcher besonderes Gewicht auf das Deklamatorische in der Gesangstimme legt.'

⁶⁴ William Seymer, 'Ungsvensk tonkonst', *Musik* (February 1918). 'Som sång komponist har han skapat en aldeles ny stil. Rösterna behandlas rent deklamatoriskt och rör sig merendels sprängvis i kvinter, septimor, nonor, iblan älven decimor, ackompanjemangerna ger däremot det rent musikaliska underlaget. Enastående är Rangströms mäterliga behandling af vokalerne med hänsyn till deras klangliga valör för sångstämman.'

teacher,⁶⁵ if not in his compositional style. In the last review, William Seymer does pick up on the importance of vowels – a key tenet of Hey’s technique – but fails to make the Wagnerian connection. References to ‘speech-song’ and Wagner do occasionally crop up in the 20s and 30s, but without any discussion about adapting the principle for Swedish speech patterns.

‘Speech-song’ from the Wagnerian music-drama forms the general historical basis of this new, highly declaimed vocal style, which could be characterized as a pathetically heightened naturalism in wilful duel with all the old-fashioned melodiousness and with the time-honoured laws of melody. Here one is far from the tranquil, form-bound world of the aria and the ‘Lied’. Intervals of the octave and the ninth, of augmented and diminished fifths, of major and minor sevenths, but in between a pure speaking on one and the same note are among the most distinctive [features].⁶⁶

We have already encountered many of the ideas that Alf Nyman brings into play here: he acknowledges the Wagnerian origins of speech-melody; he echoes Rangström’s description of it as a heightened form of speech; his reference to naturalism parallels Mussorgsky’s aim of realism; he sees Rangström’s style as new and consciously opposed to tradition; he even recognizes the Busonian rejection of restrictive form. However, he also tosses impressionism and cubism into the mix – the latter a movement which is occasionally cited in connection with Rangström’s four-square use of block harmonies and repeated motifs. It crops up again in a 1934 article by music writer Folke H. Törnblom, which demonstrates that categorizing Rangström was problematic even during his lifetime. Rangström’s dismissal of the sentimentalized Swedish idyll genre is succinctly expressed – he never splashed in ‘the idyll’s duck-pond’ – but little else is so clear cut.

... his musical style is really a conglomeration of styles, held together by his personality, which perhaps still has something of ‘much granite’ in its harshness and primitive power. Rangström is both [sic] romantic, impressionist, and expressionist. The romantic Lied’s strong dramatic element is sublimated by him; his music also has something of the impressionist painters’ technique of pure, unmixed colours, [and] of expressionism’s concentrated expression, married to rhythmic and massed effects of consonantly bright colours, of cubism’s block-formed structure. But everything is in the highest degree subjectively perceived and performed; Rangström has – to say it again – always been ‘himself’...

Otherwise [aside from some strophic, closed melodies], a daring and particularly free recitative-like delivery, a kind of final consequence of Wagnerian ‘speech-song’, is typical for the Rangström *romans* voice part. A persistent speaking on one and the

⁶⁵ ‘Våra tonsättare’, *Svenska Dagbladet*, 19 March 1914. ‘That Hey’s song-style has also won confidence in our country is shown by the great number of pupils his disciple has collected and the surprisingly good results he achieves with them.’ (‘Att Heys sångstil vunnit förtroende äfven i vårt land, visar det stora antalet elever hans lärjunge samlat och de öfverraskande goda resultat han når med dem.’)

⁶⁶ Alf Nyman, ‘Rangström som sångkompositör’, *Musikjournalen* (Aug-Sept 1926). “‘Talsången’ från det Wagnerska musikdramat utgör den allmänna historiska förutsättningen för denna nya, starkt deklamerade sångstil, vilken skulle kunna betecknas som en patetiskt stegrad naturalism, i uppsåtlig tvekamp med all gammaldags sångbarhet och med den hävdvunna melodikens lagar. Man är här långt från arians och ‘liedens’ stillsamt formbundna värld. Tonsteg på oktaven och nonan, på överstigande och förminskade kvinten, på stora och lilla septiman, men dessemellan ett rent talande på en och samma ton hör till det mest utmärkande [drag].’ (The underlined text was marked by Rangström.)

same note – even in songs with distinctive melody something of this is noticed, in that the voice part likes to repeat its notes ... interspersed with leaps of diminished or augmented fifths, of sevenths, major and minor, of octaves, ninths, tenths.⁶⁷

Törnblom's article, and its potpourri of influences and -isms, represents a shift in Rangström's reception. The quote above contains most of the characteristics that had been noted right at the start of Rangström's career – although the assertion of a general 'newness' has been dropped in the pursuit of specificity. However, Törnblom also brings in some of the terms that marked Rangström's later reception: after mentioning Rangström's frequent use of 7th chords, he claims that, 'otherwise, Rangström's harmonies are those of late Romantic music, but perhaps more manly, proud, harsh, and a tad Nordic-ly abrupt and brusque'.⁶⁸ The introduction of Romanticism as a label is sudden but perhaps unsurprising in the cultural context: by seeking a distinctively Swedish style and resisting atonality, Rangström had removed himself from the cosmopolitan mainstream of modernism. As for the abrupt and Nordic manhood, it is clearly connected to the ideas about heroic masculinity and *ursvensk* character that were current in the 1930s. Along with extensive references to Sweden's landscape (which will be the focus of the following chapter), this stereotype of harsh, manly, Swedishness dominated Rangström's reception for the rest of his life, and after his death:

1934

Ture Rangström is a singer – and an *ursvensk* one. Here it shall not be entered into how in his first and later orchestral poems he created, with his typically dark and minor-marked musical language, a Swedish art-music [of] distinctive and manly style, how in his music he gave something of the Sweden which is not only sunny idyll and mild meadows but also barren granite, grey stone, turf-covered cottages and knotted, wind-gnarled firs. And strongly turbulent, autumn-whipped sea. For the sea has probably always been his primary source of inspiration. We will dwell instead on his ballad and *romans* composition, where he has perhaps given his utmost as composer.⁶⁹

⁶⁷ Folke H. Törnblom, 'Ture Rangström', *Ord och bild* (1934). 'idyllens ankdamm'; 'hans musikaliska stil är egentligen ett konglomerat av stilar, sammanhållet av hans personlighet, som kanske dock har något av "mycket gråsten" i sin kärvhet och primitiva kraft. Rangström är både romantiker, impressionist och expressionist. Den romantiska liedens starka dramatiska drag är sublimerat hos honom, hans musik har också något av måleri-impressionismens teknik med rena, oblandade färger, av expressionismens koncentrerade uttryck, givet med rytmik och massverkan av samklingande ljusstarka färger, av kubismens blockartade struktur. Men allt är i högsta grad subjektivt uppfattat och utfört, Rangström har – än en gång sagt – alltid varit "sig selv"... Typiskt för den Rangströmska romansens sångstämma är annars ett djärvt och synnerligen fritt recitativiskt föredrag, ett slags yttersta konsekvens av Wagnersk "talsång". Ett ihållande talande på en och samma ton – även i sånger med utpräglad melodi förmärkes något av detta, i det att sångstämman gärna repeterar sina toner ... interfolieras av språng på septimor, stora och små, på oktaver, nonor, decimor.'

⁶⁸ *ibid.* 'För övrigt är Rangströms harmonik den senromantiska musikens, men kanske mera manlig, stolt, kärv och en smula nordiskt tvär och korthuggen.'

⁶⁹ William Seymer, 'Ture Rangström 50 år', *Vår Sång* No. 9 (November 1934), 214. 'Rangström är sångare – och en ursvensk sådan. Här skall ej närmare ingås på hur han i sina första och senare orkesterdikter med det typiskt mörka och mollmärkta tonspråket skapade en svensk tonkonst egenartad och manlig stil, hur han i sin musik gav något av det Sverige, som ej enbart är solig idyll och mjuka lövängar utan också karg granit, gråsten, torvtäckta torp och knotiga, vindvresiga furor. Och starkt stormande, höstpiskat hav. Ty havet har nog alltid

1940

Rangström's strongly personal, harsh and minor-emphasized musical language was, however, and remains, firmly rooted in Swedish temperament, Swedish nature and tradition, without being bound by particularly folk-like expressions and means of expression.⁷⁰

1941

As a composer, Rangström has, to an usually high degree, his own tone, his own musical language, which is so distinctly personal that there can never be any doubt about who the author is, whichever of his works one happens to listen to. And Ture Rangström sings. The song is his natural means of expression, whether it be our colloquial song, a *romans*, or an instrumental work. And taciturnity is the most characteristic [thing] here, which is to say that his motifs are abrupt and that he would rather repeat them than musically develop them...

Rangström is surely a lyricist through and through, but just as surely his musical language has much of undressed stone, of bedrock, that Swedish granite, sometimes rather harshly, in both melody and harmony. In the songs, one often finds something of speech-song, something recitative-like; he also has a sensitive ear for and knowledge about the words' prosodic character, all of which he makes use of...

The Swedish folk music, the folk *visa*, has also sometimes been crooned as an undertone in some of his (as a rule) minor-sprinkled *visor*, but without being directly employed, borrowed or disguised folksong. Rangström still always sings with his own original melody.⁷¹

1944

Ture Rangström has really cultivated minor sounds even to monotony, but he never overdoes it in tearfulness. A determined inner tension, a manly, honest, fighting

varit hans främsta inspirationskälla. Vi skola istället dröja vid hans ballad- och romans-komposition, där han kanske givit sitt yppersta som tonsättare.'

⁷⁰ H. M.-g. [H. Malmberg?], 'Ture Rangström', 23 October 1940. 'Rangströms starkt personliga, kärva och mollbetonade tonspråk var dock och är alltså stadigt förankrat i svenskt kynne, svensk natur och tradition utan att vara bundet vid speciellt folkliga uttryck och uttrycksmedel.' (The underlined text was marked by Rangström, in the copy held in the Musik- och teaterbibliotek archives at Gäddviken, Box 409.)

⁷¹ E. M. Stuart, 'Kortfattade biografier över samtida svenska tonsättare. II Ture Rangström', *Musikern* (November 1941), 399. 'Såsom kompositör har Rangström i ovanligt hög grad sin egen ton, sitt eget tonspråk, som är så utpräglat personligt, att där aldrig kan bli någon tvekan om vem som är upphovsmannen, vilket av hans verk man än råkar lyssna till. Och Ture Rangström sjunger. Sången är hans naturliga uttrycksätt, vare sig det gäller vårt talspråks beteckning sang, en romans, eller ett instrumentalverk. Och ordknapphet här det mest karakteristiska, vilket vill säga att hans motiv äro korthuggna och att han hellre upprepar än musikaliskt utvecklar dem... Visst är Rangström lyriker till hela sin läggning, men lika visst har hans tonspråk mycket av otuktad sten, av urberget, den där svenska graniten, något kärvt stundom, i både melodi och harmoni. Ofta finner man i sångerna något av talsång, något recitativiskt, han har ock ett lyhört öra för och vetskap om ordets prosodiska karaktär, vilket allt han också gör bruk av... [H]ar också den svenska folktonen, folkvisan stundom nynnad som en underton i några av hans som regel mollbestänkta visor, men hos Rangström dock utan att vara direkt upptagen, lånad eller förklädd folkvisa. Rangström sjunger ändå alltid med sin egen original-melodi.'

spirit stops him from giving himself over to sniffing sensitivity, and the uprightness in his posture corresponds to a certain obstinate stiffness in the musical language.⁷²

Rangström stands today as straight and unshakeably firm in his musical faith as he did the first time he put on his cloak, tied his artistic tie and set the broad-brimmed hat on his proud head. He stands where he stands, Swedish to the fingertips, a singer and poet of the sea and the archipelago, a man with a heart in his breast, a distinctive personality, an artist of the noblest standard, a giant in Swedish music.⁷³

(from sixtieth birthday song)

Hail, you Viking, late-born in time,
bolt upright and stiff-necked and ready for battle
– but always gentle before the heart's roar
the forests' darkness and the valleys' lightness...
Oh Ture, oh Ture!
As strong as granite and as weak as a reed!
Ah Ture, ah Ture,
for you, wild strawberries grow in the snow!⁷⁴

1947 (from obituaries)

There was something of Viking inheritance in Ture Rangström's tall figure with the straight back, but he also showed a distinctive blend of this Norse, harsh manhood and the finest and noblest chivalry. His musical language owns a similar mixture of harsh, defiant minor and romantic sensibility of a highly personal kind...

In [vocal composition] he has for four decades been one of our time's most individual masters. His *romanser* stand on their own. It has been said that Rangström is our time's Schubert. The comparison falters, but there is still a bit of truth in it. Despite the minor-intonated Nordic sound Rangström shows the same smooth finesse and expressiveness as Schubert in the treatment of the human voice. There are not many, in fact hardly any, who in this respect can stand at Rangström's side in our days. His instrumental work – a further couple of symphonies, a long line of other orchestral works and occasional chamber music works – show a relatively simple homophonic structure, but the timbre one recognizes. His musical language is clearly Nordic but

⁷² Kajsa Rootzén, 'Ture Rangström', *Svenska Dagbladet*, 29 November 1944. 'Ture Rangström har väl odlat mollklängen ända till monoton, men han slår aldrig över i gråtmildhet. En bestämd inre anspänning, en manligt redbar kampvilja hindrar honom från att ge sig hän åt det snyftande känslösamma, och det rakryggade i hans hållning motsvaras av en viss egensinnig stamhet i tonspråket.'

⁷³ G.N. 'Ture Rangström', *Göteborgs Handels- och Sjöfarts-Tidning*, 29 November 1944. 'Rangström står den dag i dag är lika rak och orubbat fast i sin musikaliska tro som han gjorde det första gången han axlade slängkappan, knöt sin konstnärrosett och satte den bredbrättade hatten på sitt stolta huvud. Han står där han står, svensk uti fingertopparna, en havets och skärgårdens sångare och skald, en människa med hjärta i bröstet, en egenartad personlighet, en konstnär av ädlaste lödighet, en rese i svensk musik.'

⁷⁴ 'Hell dig du viking av senfödd tid, kapprak och nackstyv och klar till strid – dock alltid mjuk inför hjärtats brus[,] skogarnas mörker och dalens ljus... Jo Ture, jo Ture! Så stark som granit och så svag som ett rö! Åh Ture, åh Ture, för dej växer smultron i snö!' (Reproduced in *Musikern*, 1 December 1944.)

never builds on folk tune without blending together romantic and impressionist elements in a markedly personal, often dramatically charged way.⁷⁵

Rangström shall come to be remembered as one of the Swedish song's finest innovators. He was *ursvensk* in type and disposition, gnarled as a wild oak in his artistic temperament, heartwood through and through as person and musician.⁷⁶

He was, to the last, a worthy stoic, a gallant, *ursvensk* man's man.⁷⁷

It is quite evident from this sample of quotes that little effort was made to explain or analyse Rangström's Swedishness in detail. (References to landscape features provide a frequent but still superficial exception, as when, for example, bare granite is compared to the harsh harmonies or timbres in Rangström's writing; this aspect of Rangström's Swedishness will be considered in the following chapter.) Some writers resorted to folk-song as an alleged source for the sounds that were felt, in some obscure way, to be Nordic, but most simply praised his style with the same handful of adjectives: harsh, minor, upright, defiant, personal. Thus the stage was set for a steady simplification of Rangström's reception: he was understood to be one of the best Swedish composers (at least in song composition) and his music was known as distinctively Nordic and especially personal. It did not matter, as far as his role as a national composer was concerned, that his interest in speech-melody had so rarely been noticed or understood. On the contrary, as Per Lindfors wrote in 1940, it meant that his status as 'living propaganda for the genuinely national' did not rest on 'some kind of

⁷⁵ Sten Broman, 'Ture Rangström avliden', *Sydsvenska Dagbladet*(?), 13 May 1947. 'Det fanns någonting av vikingaarv i Ture Rangströms resliga gestalt med den raka ryggen, men han visade också en säregen blandning av denna fornnordiska, kärva manlighet och det finaste och ädlaste ridderlighet. Hans tonspråk äger en liknande blandning av kärvt, trotsigt moll och romantisk sensibilitet av högst personlig art... På detta område har han i fyra decennier varit en av vår tids mest personliga mästare. Hans romanser står i särklasse. Det har sagts, att Rangström är vår tids Schubert. Jämförelsen haltar, men det ligger ändå ett stycke sanning i den. Trots den mollbetonade nordiska klangen visar Rangström samma smidiga finesse och uttrycksfullhet som Schubert i behandlingen av människorösten. Det finns inte många, ja knappast någon, som härvidlag kan ställas vid Rangströms sida i våra dagar. Hans instrumentala verk – ytterligare ett par symfonier, en lång rad andra orkesterverk och enstaka kammarmusikverk – visar en relativt enkel homofon struktur, men klangen känner man igen. Tonspråket är tydligt nordiskt men bygger aldrig på folkton utan sammansmälter romantiska och impressionistiska element på ett utpräglat personligt, ofta dramatiskt laddat sätt.'

⁷⁶ Einar Sundström, 'Ture Rangström – en ursvensk som människa och musiker', *Stockholms-Tidningen*, 12 May 1947. 'Ture Rangström skall ihågkommas som en av den svenska sångens yppersta förnyare. Han var ursvensk till typ och läggning, knotig som en vildvuxen ek i sitt konstnärliga temperament, kärnved alltigenom som människa och musiker.'

⁷⁷ William Seymer, 'Ture Rangström', in *Kungliga Teatern Operan Program* (1952), 16. '... han var in i det sista en värdig stoiker, en tapper ursvensk *karl*.'

stereotyped national formalism with obvious harmonic or melodic clichés' but on something far less musically concrete but more powerful: 'the spiritual content' of his music.⁷⁸

After Rangström's death, the tendency to summarize his style in glowing but general (or even erroneous) terms only grew stronger. When Helmer's biography was published fifty years later, although *Kronbruden* had been staged several times and the symphonies recorded, Rangström remained best known for his songs. But the role that speech-melody played in his compositional development was left unclarified, and so when it was reintroduced in summaries of Rangström's work, as in the surveys of Scandinavian music that were mentioned in the Introduction, it appeared simply as an unexplained assertion. Rangström's reception has therefore ended up with two unsubstantiated conclusions: that he used speech-melody (though it is never clear *how*), and that his music is essentially, indisputably Swedish (though it is never clear *why*). The aim of the following case studies is to bridge the gap between these conclusions, arguing that some of the key identifying features of Rangström's songs are due to his use of speech-melody, and therefore are rooted in the Swedish language.

Manifestations of speech-melody within Rangström's *romanser*

As far as Rangström's contemporaries were concerned, the most notable aspects of his melodic idiolect – that is, his personal, distinctive, melodic language – were large, awkward intervals and declamatory writing with repetition of the same pitch. Both appear to an extent in the song 'Pan', along with several other regular features of Rangström's vocal writing that can be seen as manifestations of Rangström's speech-melody. We will therefore revisit 'Pan' in order to introduce these features, which will then be investigated more fully through three brief case studies. Together, they will help to clarify the ways in which Rangström implemented his ideas about speech-melody – a process that remains rather elusive in his own writing. In 1945, in an interview about his relationship to poetry in general and to Bo Bergman's in particular, he made the following statement:

Very rarely has a poem enticed me through purely music-associated elements; in contrast, the poem's *språkmelodi* means something extraordinarily crucial for a composer who strives beyond the cantilena's primitively graceful allure. This *språkmelodi* should be followed in all respects, both its, so to say, inner and outer

⁷⁸ Per Lindfors, 'Ture Rangström och hans Strindbergssymfoni', *Röster i radio* No. 4 (1940). '... levande propaganda för det äktnationella...'; '... någon slags stereotyp nationell formalism med givna harmoniska eller melodiska klichéer, hans ideal har helt avseende på det andliga innehållet...'

rhythm, its psychological and timbral balance, its risings and fallings and its stringent rendering of the poem's meaning.⁷⁹

Here, Rangström clearly begins with the spoken speech-melody: it is the natural lilt of the poem's language that grabs his composer's attention, rather than any more obviously musical connections. And indeed, the characteristics Rangström gives to the spoken speech-melody do not map directly onto musical terminology, with the single exception of 'risings and fallings' and its immediate parallel in musical pitch. His statement thus raises more questions than it answers. What distinguishes inner and outer rhythm? What is the relationship between the psychology and the timbre of a text? And how exactly does a song's speech-melody help communicate the poem's meaning? The following case studies suggest some possible explanations (see Appendix C for the song scores).

'Pan' – introducing Rangström's speech-melody

The primary melodic motif of 'Pan' is established by the solo piano in the opening bar: a haunting line of four descending crotchets. The left hand contributes a rolling broken chord figure which was initially conceived, in the partial sketch, as a straight, ascending arpeggio pattern. Rangström's simple alteration to his original idea gives the music a subtle lilt, reminiscent of rippling water or a sighing breeze. When the voice begins, the piano continues its motif, unruffled, and the vocal line merely wanders around the notes of the chord provided by the accompaniment. The singer is entering the world created by the pianist and is content to relax in its harmonies without disturbing anything – an effective depiction of the 'midday stillness' in Bergman's opening verse, where nature is described so softly that the observer's presence goes unnoticed. The piano and voice meld together by bar 6, where they rock gently between D#m and G#⁶ chords. There is a hint of the note-repetition so often mentioned by critics in the repeated pitches at the start of each phrase, but it is only a hint; a more dominant feature here is the rhythmic flexibility of the vocal line, which gives space to stressed vowels and double consonants. This kind of free-flowing melody finds its most famous expression in another Bergman setting, 'Melodi', one of the most enduringly popular of Rangström's songs, and we will return to it later in the chapter.

At the end of the verse, the piano slides into D# major and then sets up a recitativo section with alternating chords in the bass (now G#m and C⁷) and bird-like interjections – Pan's idle flute-

⁷⁹ Rangström, 'En skald och hans tonsättare', *Musikvärlden* (June 1945). 'Ytterst sällan har en dikt lockat mig genom rent musikaliskt-associativa element, däremot betyder diktens *språkmelodi* något utomordentligt avgörande för en tonsättare, som strävar längre än till cantilenans primitivt behagfulla tjusning. Denna språkmelodi skall följas till alla delar, både dess så att säga inre och yttre rytm, dess psykiska och klangliga balans, dess höjningar och sänkningar och dess stringenta återgivande av diktens mening.'

playing – from the right hand. The music takes on an air of hushed expectancy, with *misterioso ppp* marked for the piano and *pp* in the voice part; it is as though the observer is half-whispering so as not to disturb Pan. As the singer describes Pan sitting lazily against a tree, both melody and harmony sink by semitones, as if they too are weighed down by midsummer drowsiness. The piano chords in bar 13 are formed by pairs of tri-tones, so even the tonality is hazy; the tonic is distant, half-forgotten, and there is certainly no rush to get back to it. In this recitative-like section, Rangström is audibly closer to *Sprechgesang* than speech-melody and so it is helpful to think of the two styles as part of a spectrum between song and musical speech, as in Figure 10 (p. 115), with any song's place on the spectrum determined by the relative importance given to melodic and linguistic considerations.

When Pan 'starts to play', the flute motif picks up pace and volume, culminating in a trill that Helmer likens to the ending of a cadenza. Pan thus becomes the soloist to nature's orchestra, as the pianist and singer unite on the main melody for the first time with the words 'the trees play, the corn sighs' (bb. 16-17). In Rangström's sketch of the song, these six bars appear in their entirety and almost unchanged (see Figure 11, p. 116). By way of contrast, the first and last verses do not feature in the sketch at all, and even the recitativo material is fragmentary, with only the piano part clearly identifiable. It is as if the setting for these lines as the heart of the poem came to Rangström fully formed and was the kernel from which the outer sections grew. The downward direction of each phrase and the foursquare rhythm – four bars of straight crotchets – are two of the most consistent stylistic features in Rangström's *romanser*. In 'Pan', where every single vocal phrase ends with a falling interval, both these features have a straightforward explanation based in the Swedish language: in spoken Swedish, each line *does* conclude with a downward inflection that Rangström has simply reflected in his melodic line, while the regularity of Rangström's rhythm is justified by Bergman's sequence of disyllabic words, in which the emphasis always falls on the first syllable:

spe-	la
träd-	en,
sus-	ar
säd-	en,
lyss-	nar
hel-	a
jord-	en
till	hans
kväd-	en.

Rangström's tendency towards foursquare rhythm sometimes risks creating a rather plodding or clunky melody; in its most extreme form, it can result in a page filled with even quavers, often moving pitch only on the beat or the half-bar. The crotchet phrases in 'Pan', however, produce quite the opposite effect: carried forward by the piano's offbeat arpeggios and a surge towards *poco forte*,

this passage feels broad, sweeping and extremely lyrical. Helmer considers it to be ‘one of the greatest moments in the art of Swedish *romanser*’.⁸⁰ But here we hit the first paradox of Rangström’s implementation of speech-melody, one that the following case studies will attempt to resolve: rhythmic freedom (which we will shortly see in ‘Melodi’) and rhythmic regularity (which we will come across again in ‘Den enda stunden’) appear to be manifestations of the same method.

In the final verse of ‘Pan’, as in Bergman’s text, the intensity increases towards the ending; as consonants begin to punctuate the text, so the accompaniment provides syncopation under the melody’s crescendo, with *tenuto* chords of increasing strength. The build-up in the vocal line comes not through an ascending melody, but through a series of falling intervals that follow the spoken intonation of the words, where the pitch drops on the second syllable. The effect is of a climax which comes in waves or, perhaps to match the text’s ‘sommarblod’ (summer-blood), in pulses. In the arch of the singer’s phrase, this word is the keystone: the intervals increase in size until its octave leap and then decrease again afterwards. Harmonically, it is a moment of clarification in the midst of increasing tension, with a bar of solid, triumphant B major. (Rangström could have resolved directly here, skipping to bar 29 with the single ‘sjunger’ that Bergman wrote. Instead he extends the cadence, adding harmonic complexity to the left hand’s pedal chords, repeating ‘sjunger’, and withholding resolution for a full two bars.)

Table 1: The climax of ‘Pan’

Bar	23	24	25	26	27	28	29
Text	<i>hunger</i>	<i>stiger</i>	<i>stark och god</i>	<i>sommarblod</i>	<i>sjunger</i>	<i>sjunger</i>	<i>sjunger</i>
Vocal Interval	4 th	5 th	5 th (dotted)	8 ^{ve} (dotted)	6 th	7 th	6 th
Chord	B ⁷ (V ⁷)	E ^{maj7} (I ^{maj7})	G#m ⁶ /E# (iii ⁶)	B/F# (V)	F#m ⁷ b5/B (ii ⁷ b5)	Am/B (iv)	E (I)

On the singer’s final ‘sjunger’, the piano soars back in with the main melody and takes over as the voice drops to the mediant and then vanishes altogether. The moment of impassioned inspiration is over; the song is spent. The tempo and dynamics relax throughout the postlude and the crotchet melody is reduced to rocking chords. Here we can see two more characteristics of Rangström’s music: his predilection for ‘hairpin’ dynamics and short, repeated phrases. In his songs, he usually marks a crescendo and/or a diminuendo in virtually every bar, and sometimes even on the same note (as on ‘lat’ in bar 13). This comes across as a notational tic of a composer who was trained as a singer; his hairpins indicate phrasing as much as dynamic. The habit filtered into his instrumental writing – as in the piano’s closing bars in ‘Pan’ – and it was not the only feature of

⁸⁰ Helmer, *Ture Rangström*, 280. ‘ett av de stora ögonblicken i svensk romanskonst.’

Rangström's song-writing idiolect to do so. One of the consistent observations of Rangström's orchestral writing is his tendency to use short, repeated phrases. 'Even when he towers up his music in proud symphonic stature,' Julius Rabe wrote in his review of *Mitt land*, 'it sings, cresting and sinking in pace with the singer's breast'.⁸¹ While some criticized Rangström's chopped-up phrases, Rabe was prepared to value the fresh insight that a singing composer could bring to instrumental genres: 'Through this special position Rangström already has the potential to give something new and original.'⁸²

The falling vocal intervals of the final verse are not harmonically awkward, such as the ones that critics so often picked up on, but they do follow a pattern that is worth noting: in Rangström's large, descending intervals, the rhythm is generally weighted in favour of the first syllable. We will see this in this chapter's final case study, 'En gammal dansrytm', but the fact that in the last verse of 'Pan' it is applied even to disyllabic words, which just moments ago were equally weighted, suggests that Rangström kept his musical and linguistic considerations in an active and healthy dialogue. In the 1945 article already quoted, where he gives his fullest (yet still rather opaque) explanation of speech-melody, this is essentially what he goes on to say.

[In following the text's *språkmelodi*] the composer is not weighed down by anything [lit. nothing black lies about the composer's feet]; on the contrary, for it is precisely here that his imagination and expressive ability as melodic creator can blossom in freedom, boldness and unambiguous artistic consistency. We Swedish composers have a little difficulty with this elasticity in rhythm and phrase. We very easily declaim wrongly. We are very square. Sometimes it is as if the old Edda came out and danced stiff-legged *slängpolska* in our beautiful songs. Such cases are one of the few musical inheritances from the heathens.⁸³

This is an extraordinary statement in several ways. Firstly, Rangström asserts that speech-melody need not limit artistic freedom and may in fact enable it. We should not be surprised, then, by elements of unpredictability in Rangström's text-setting: he clearly has in mind a deeper stylistic consistency than mere rule-keeping. Secondly, Rangström stereotypes the music of his compatriots as stiff and square; moreover, he seems to tie this squareness to 'wrong' declamation. It is hard to tell whether his use of 'we' is mere rhetorical habit or a frank acknowledgement of his own tendency towards the four-square. Lastly, his attitude towards traditional culture appears to be one of dismissal, if not outright disdain. The historical value and cultural distinctiveness of the Edda is hard

⁸¹ Julius Rabe, *Göteborgs Handels- och Sjöfarts-tidning*, 25 February 1921. 'Även när han tornar upp sin musik i stolt symfonisk resning, sjunger den, häver och sänker den sig i takt med sångarens bröst.'

⁸² *ibid.* 'Redan genom denna särställning har Rangström förutsättningar att ge något nytt och originellt.'

⁸³ Rangström, 'En skald och hans tonsättare'. 'Men därmed läggs ingen black om tonsättarens fot, tvärtom, ty det är just här hans fantasi och uttrycksförmåga som melodisk skapare kan blomma upp i frihet, djärvhet och otvetydig artistisk konsekvens. Vi svenska komponister har litet svårt för denna elasticitet i rytm och fras. Vi har mycket lätt att deklamera fel. Vi är mycket fyrkantiga. Ibland är det, som om den gamla Eddan vore ute och dansade stelbent slängpolska i våra vackra visor. Det är i så fall ett av de få musikaliska arven från hedenhös.'

to overestimate, but here Rangström associates it with the *slängpolska*, a fairly generic folk-dance in which partners spin each other on the spot or while progressing around a room. This is not the attitude we would expect from a man identified as *ursvensk* and perhaps it can best be understood as a rejection of clichéd or stereotyped folk influences in favour of the gestures of art-music. Rangström's emphasis on creative freedom harks back to Busoni (the epitome of a progressive, cosmopolitan artist) and his view that a true composer will form his own laws in the production of a particular piece without being bound to them thereafter.

In 'Pan', we can see some of the characteristics of Rangström's vocal idiolect: downward directed phrases, often short and repeated, constant crescendos and diminuendos, recitative-like moments, large vocal intervals, some four-square rhythms, and some rhythmically flexible melodic lines. It is a helpful starting point, but one song can hardly be expected to produce ideal examples of each and every feature. Three slightly earlier songs – 'Melodi' and 'Den enda stunden'(1917) and 'En gammal dansrytm' (1915) – will therefore now be explored as manifestations of particular elements of Rangström's speech-melody method.

'Melodi' – inner and outer rhythm

After its publication in 1917, 'Melodi' had a positive reception and it soon became one of Rangström's most frequently performed and cited songs. It was a staple of the *romans* genre, to the point that Rangström claimed that it 'often [got] on the originator's nerves', and eventually began to promote Stenhammar's setting as a 'far finer, more mature and more spiritualized' alternative.⁸⁴ (The two versions had, by coincidence, been written on the very same day, during a summer without personal contact between the composers.)

The performance directions specify that the vocal part should be 'free declamation', but the simultaneous request for *legato sempre poco rubato* reveals a very different understanding of declamation from that of the critics' caricature of large intervals and repeated notes. The key characteristic of the declamatory style in 'Melodi' is flexibility. The basic minim beat stays consistent throughout the piece, along with the accompaniment's fluid figuration in triplet semiquavers, but until the postlude, the time signature changes at every single bar-line. This is primarily a reflection of the unequal line lengths of Bergman's text, where the second line is almost half the length of the first (9 syllables, followed by 5, then 7). By constantly shifting metre, Rangström begins each line on the first beat of a new bar without having to increase the note values in the shorter lines. To do so would be to disturb the declamatory style: it is by restricting the vocal part almost entirely to

⁸⁴ Rangström, 'En skald och hans tonsättare'. '... ofta går upphovsmannen på nerverna. Stenhammars tonsättning är långt finare, mognare och mer förändligad.'

crotchets and quavers that Rangström is able to maintain a speech-like rhythm. The table below shows that the flexibility of Rangström's 'Melodi' exists within a more regular pattern than may be perceived at first: five of the six half-verses follow the same pattern of time signature changes. (The exception is in the second half of Verse 1, where 'susa' falls on beat 2 of bar 6, suggesting that there are more considerations in play than a simple 'new line = new bar' rule.) Although the first half of Verse 2 matches the other half-verses in terms of time signature, it differs melodically from the rest of the piece, and so it often provides a break from the various patterns discussed below.

Table 2. Structure and time-signatures in 'Melodi'

	Verse 1			Verse 2		Verse 3		Postlude	
	Prelude	A	B	C	B'	A'	B''		
Bar(s)	1	2-4	5-7	8-10	11-13	14-16	17-19	20	21
Beats per bar	2	3, 2, 4	2, 3, 4	3, 2, 4	3, 2, 4	3, 2, 4	3, 2, 4	4	3

Despite the consistency of Bergman's scansion and Rangström's pattern of repeating time-signatures, 'Melodi' gives an impression of irregularity. This is because Rangström has varied the rhythms of most lines between verses. In the text below, syllables with the value of a crotchet (and the dotted minims at the end of each half-verse) have been shown in bold, and rhythmically matching lines have been given the same colour and a designated letter. It is immediately apparent that none of the verses – or even the half-verses – follow quite the same pattern (see Table 3).

'Melodi'

a Bara **du** går över **markerna**,
 b lever **var källa**,
 c **sjunger** var tuva **ditt namn**.
 d **Skyarna** brinna **och parkerna**
 b **susa och fälla**
 c **lövet** som guld i **din famn**.

d **Och** vid de skummiga **stränderna**
 e **hör** jag din **stämmas**
 f **vaggande vågsorl** till **tröst**.
 d **Räck** mig de älskade **händerna**.
 e **Mörkret** skall **skrämmas**.
 c **Kvalet** skall släppa **mitt bröst**.

a Bara **du** går över **ängarna**,
 b bara **jag ser dig**
 g **vandra i fjärran förbi**,
 d **darra** de eviga **strängarna**.
 e **Säg** mig vem **ger dig**
 g **makten som blir melodi?**

'Melody'

If you but walk over the grounds,
 each spring lives,
 each tussock sings your name.
 The skies burn and the gardens
 whisper and drop
 leaves like gold in your arms.

And by the frothy shores
 I hear your voice's
 lapping wave-murmurs as comfort.
 Give me your beloved hands.
 Darkness shall be frightened.
 Angst shall leave my breast.

If you but walk over the meadows.
 if I but see you
 wander by in the distance,
 the eternal strings tremble.
 Tell me, who gives you
 the power that becomes melody?

Table 3. Rhythmic variation in ‘Melodi’

	Verse 1	Verse 2	Verse 3
Line 1	a	d	a
Line 2	b	e	b
Line 3	c	f	g
Line 4	d	d	d
Line 5	b	e	e
Line 6	c	c	g

The balance between repetition and variation is fascinating: each verse has four or five different lines and one or two pairs that match; each half-verse has two lines in common with another half-verse; Line 4 is the only one to take the same rhythm in each verse, but the switched time-signatures in Verse 1 mean that the bar-lines fall in a different place there. When pitch and bar-lines are brought into consideration, only four bars appear twice in exactly the same form (bars 2 and 14, 3 and 15, 7 and 13, 11 and 17) and if the register of the accompaniment is taken into account, then bars 7 and 13 are the only identical bars in the piece.

Line 4 is an interesting case. In the rest of the song, crotchets are almost always placed on syllables which would naturally be stressed in a recitation of the poem. In Line 4, however, Rangström’s rhythm works *against* the natural speech pattern, with a crotchet given to the conjunction ‘och’ in Verse 1 and the unstressed third syllables of ‘älskade’ and ‘eviga’ in Verses 2 and 3 respectively. In each case, it would have been more faithful to spoken Swedish to put the crotchet two syllables earlier: ‘brinna och’, ‘älskade’ and ‘eviga’. That Rangström has deliberately written something counterintuitive here is suggested by the fact that the melody also defies expectation, going against the intonation of natural speech as well as the relationship between melody and harmony that is established in the rest of the song. That is, in the spoken text these unstressed syllables would fall in pitch, but Rangström writes them all as f#, the highest pitch throughout the whole vocal line. Secondly, these melodic F#s are unusual in that they match the bass note in the harmony: throughout much of the song, the vocal line floats a third above the piano’s bass note, switching from major to minor, but moving to the same note as the bass only at the end of each verse. Apart from the different melody at the start of Verse 2, the crotchet F#s are the only other place in the song where this occurs.

Rangström’s departure from the most natural spoken rhythm could simply be a case of musical considerations taking precedence over linguistic ones; it certainly helps him to avoid excessive repetition of the same rhythm (crotchet – quaver – quaver). But Rangström’s own terms, ‘inner and outer rhythm’, come in useful here. Despite going against the inner rhythm of ‘brinna och’, ‘älskade’ and ‘eviga’, Rangström follows the ‘outer’ rhythm of Bergman’s text: the natural lilt of

the words that often flow through several lines without regard for the written breaks. In the spoken text, the overall rhythm is essentially dactylic, with the trochaic feet at the end of lines 2 and 5 forming the exception which is the driving force behind Rangström's shifting time-signatures.

Bara du	går över	markerna,
lever var	källa,	
sjunger var	tuva ditt	namn.
Skyarna	brinna och	parkerna
susa och	fälla	
lövet som	guld i din	famn.

Rangström's setting reflects the dactylic nature of Bergman's text *not* through rhythm, but through melody. That is, rather than simply using triple time, he has formed a melody out of three-note groups where the first and last are the same pitch and the middle note is a semitone or tone lower. (Apart from the disyllabic endings of lines 2 and 5, the exceptions to this are, as we have seen before, the half-verse endings and the first half of Verse 2.) Rangström's three-note groups always consist of a crotchet and a pair of quavers, but he varies which comes first, creating little eddies in the rhythm whenever four quavers appear together – an effective portrayal of the rippling grass and water caused by the passage of the speaker's beloved. The consistent melodic pattern applied to this fluctuating rhythm keeps the sense of the dactylic lilt in Bergman's text, even though it results in high pitches on longer notes for some unstressed syllables. Thus the outer rhythm trumps the inner rhythm. This balance between realized expectation and unpredictability is part of what makes 'Melodi' so effective: it is cohesive without being repetitive and sensitive to the text without being ruled by it.

'Den enda stunden' – the psychological and timbral balance

'Den enda stunden' ('That one moment') is the most popular of the Runeberg songs that form the 1917 collection 'Idyll'. These fifteen songs technically give Runeberg third place in the ranks of Rangström's most favoured authors (after Bergman and himself) but the fact that they all belong in one set, composed in less than a month (13 March – 6 April 1917) makes this an anomalous position. The formal clarity of Runeberg's texts made them popular with composers right across the Nordic countries, and for Rangström, 'Runeberg's marvellous simplicity ... [was] a natural reaction and recreation' after works of grandeur and pathos.⁸⁵ Indeed, the simplicity of 'Den enda stunden' is perhaps its most immediately striking feature. Its form is strophic – AA', with only two bars of variation in the second verse – and the rhythms are incredibly uniform. The vocal part opens each verse with a graceful line of descending quavers, but thereafter repeats the same rhythm in all but

⁸⁵ Helmer, *Ture Rangström*, 160. 'Runebergs vidunderliga enkelhet ... som en naturlig reaction och rekreation...'

one bar (bar 13, where the first syllable of ‘minnet’ is given a full crotchet). This is a direct reflection of the text, where the rhythmic similarity of each line (x / x / x, where x is unstressed and / is stressed) takes complete precedence over the occasional vowel rhymes as the most striking structural feature. Under the singer’s phrases, the piano part mostly consists of crotchet chords with bar-long portato markings and two chords per harmony. This slow and homophonic accompaniment is an example of Rangström’s ‘Adagio’ writing, which crops up in key pieces throughout his career and which he conceptualized as a powerful stillness that opposed the ‘clamour’ of modernity. Rangström’s Adagios often have connotations of holiness or confession (as will be explored more deeply in Chapter Three); in ‘Den enda stunden’ the style conveys the hallowed nature of the speaker’s memories.

The steady descent of the increasingly chromatic piano chords is responsible for the harmonic direction of the piece; the vocal line, on the other hand, returns to a repeated E at the end of almost every phrase. The equal weighting of these quavers is one of the song’s most noticeable characteristic, and perhaps the feature of Rangström’s idiolect with the strongest roots in the Swedish language. Swedish has long consonants (indicated by doubling) as well as long vowels (usually before a single consonant). In this it differs from English and – more pertinently, for Rangström’s adaptation of Hey’s techniques – from German. For example, the long vowel in the German ‘beten’ (to pray) gives the spoken word a slightly longer duration than ‘betten’ (beds), which has a short vowel. In Swedish, in stressed syllables, the double consonant after a short vowel is lingered on, either with a straightforward lengthening of voiced consonants such as nn or mm, or by the insertion of a glottal stop in unvoiced consonants such as dd or ck. Thus ‘beten’ (lures) has the same approximate duration as ‘betten’ (bites), a linguistic feature known as complementary quantity.⁸⁶ A glance through the text of ‘Den enda stunden’ shows that almost every line ends with two syllables that match in overall length, due either to a long vowel or a long consonant.

‘Den enda stunden’

‘That one moment’

Allena var jag,
han kom allena;
förbi min bana
hans bana ledde.
Han dröjde icke,
men tänkte dröja,
han talte icke,
men ögat talte. —
Du obekante,
du välbekante!

I was alone,
he came alone;
across my path
his path led.
He did not linger,
but thought of lingering,
he did not speak,
but his eyes spoke. —
You unknown [one],
you well-known [one]!

⁸⁶ Anna Hersey, *Scandinavian Song: A guide to Swedish, Norwegian, and Danish Repertoire and Diction* (London: Rowman & Littlefield, 2016), 16.

En dag försvinner,
 ett år förflyter,
 det ena minnet
 det andra jagar;
 den korta stunden
 blev hos mig evigt,
 den bittra stunden,
 den ljuva stunden.

A day vanishes,
 a year flies away,
 one minute
 chases the next;
 that short moment
 was with me forever,
 that bitter moment,
 that sweet moment.

The equal weighting of the quavers at the end of each line emphasizes the gravitational pull of E throughout the piece, contributing to the sense of tonal ambivalence created by the incorporation of Phrygian elements in the ostensible key of A minor. The final bars of each verse highlight E and A as alternative centres of gravity, as an enigmatically incomplete Eb⁹ chord resolves first to E minor and then to A. The gesture is thoroughly cadential, but the harmony is unconventional: in the first bar the bass note slides up a semitone and in the second it shifts down a tri-tone. The text of these concluding bars of each verse ('you unknown one, you well-known one' and 'that bitter moment, that sweet moment') provides a clear justification for the two tonal centres as musical parallels of the conflicting emotions that coexist in the speaker's memory.

It is in these bars that the left hand of the accompaniment drops into the bass for the first time; up until this point, the range of the piano has been limited to a-e'', which is little more than the vocal range. The deep, *pianissimo* chord on 'obekante' (unknown one) is extremely effective, like an audible shiver, and the change in register separates these bars from the rest of the verse. The timbral distinction reflects the shift in the speaker's thoughts as she switches from describing her lover in the third person to referring to him in the second person. Perhaps here we can begin to understand what Rangström meant when he wrote about speech-melody's psychological and timbral balance. At the end of the first verse, the speaker slips from verbally recalling a memory to speaking within it, a change that Runeberg indicated with a dash between the eighth and ninth lines. In the text there is thus a psychological shift inwards, one which could be portrayed in recitation by an introverted tone or lowered voice. Rangström's setting, with its registral shift and rhythmic augmentation in the piano part, and low-pitched vocal melody, is following both the speaker's state of mind and its physical manifestation. Although there is no evidence that Rangström was influenced by Janáček's ideas about speech-melody, or, indeed, that he was even aware of them, this interpretation of his method finds something in common between the two composers: the belief that the sound of speech provides an insight into the speaker's emotional state, and that music can therefore represent both.

‘En gammal dansrytm’ – rendering the poem’s meaning

Helmer gives our fourth and final case study a very specific and rather curious place in Rangström’s musical development. Whenever he mentions it, it appears in connection with two later songs, ‘Frühlingsfeier’ (‘Spring’s celebration’) and ‘Tristans död’ (‘Tristan’s death’). Helmer describes them as:

... three songs about love, composed at about 10 year intervals: triumphant in *En gammal dansrytm* (1915), orgiastic in *Frühlingsfeier* (1924), tragic in *Tristans död* – the three songs have the same key (B minor) and are also motivically related to one another.⁸⁷

One cannot dispute the underpinning theme of love, nor the dates of composition and the common key. However, Helmer’s claim of a motivic relationship is rather more obscure. With the unpublished and unrecorded ‘Frühlingsfeier’ forming something of a missing link, it is hard to make any connection between the first and last songs in the supposed chain. The only justifying details which Helmer produces are the *portamento* anacrusis of ‘En gammal dansrytm’, which is developed into a fully extended upbeat in ‘Frühlingsfeier’, and the ecstatic endings of ‘Frühlingsfeier’ and ‘Tristans död’. This feels rather flimsy, particularly given the frequency with which Rangström used extended upbeats and the key of B minor throughout his career.⁸⁸ But Helmer also reads ‘En gammal dansrytm’ as sufficiently ‘powerful and expansive’ for it to be placed alongside the full-bodied, operatic setting of ‘Tristans död’, which has all the weight of Wagnerian association behind it and which (as even Helmer acknowledges) barely qualifies as a *romans* rather than a concert aria.⁸⁹

‘En gammal dansrytm’, on the other hand, incorporates several elements of folk music that could potentially place it at the other end of the art-song spectrum, close to a *visa*. In fact, it is the third song in a set called ‘Sex visor’ (‘Six songs’) and its title has an obvious connection to traditional culture: ‘an old dance rhythm’. This immediately raises the possibility of pastiche, which had been a regular compositional strategy for Rangström ever since the 1909 German song-set ‘Pastischen: Fünf alte Gedichte’ (‘Pastiches: Five old poems’), in which he first sought to capture the essence of old music with modern means. Set Svanholm’s performance of ‘En gammal dansrytm’ in a New York recital supports a reading of the song as a portrayal of folk culture with some ironic distance: his

⁸⁷ Helmer, *Ture Rangström*, 355. ‘... tre sånger om kärlek, komponerade med ungefär tio års mellanrum, segrande i *En gammal dansrytm* (1915), orgiastisk i *Frühlingsfeier* (1924), tragisk i *Tristans död* – de tre sångerna har samma tonart (h-moll) och är även motiviskt besläktade med varandra.’ ‘Frühlingsfeier’ was written a few months after ‘Pan’ and shortly after Omon and her husband had visited Rangström on Gräsmarö; perhaps due to its intensely personal associations, it was never published. ‘Tristans död’ was composed soon after Rangström and Omon had begun divorce proceedings, and will be examined in Chapter Four.

⁸⁸ Rangström wrote 31 songs in B minor; it is second only to F# minor among his most commonly used keys (see Appendix B, Graph 2a) and Helmer considers it to be his ‘most significant key’ (Helmer, 455).

⁸⁹ Helmer, *Ture Rangström*, 355.

interpretation was praised as ‘duly sarcastic and powerful’.⁹⁰ It seems that Svanholm, at least, did not take the song as seriously as Helmer asks us to. Given Rangström’s assertion that speech-melody should ‘render the poem’s meaning’, the following analysis of his setting of the text will illuminate his understanding of Bergman’s poem and therefore the wider debate about its meaning and its position in his output.

Bergman’s text is cleverly crafted. Like ‘Melodi’, it is formed of three verses with very varied line lengths and a consistent rhyme scheme. But whereas in ‘Melodi’ the ABCABC pattern was sometimes obscured by enjambment, in ‘En gammal dansrytm’ the insistent repetition of the same rhyme throughout each verse dominates the structure. This unusual rhyme scheme of AAAAAAAB avoids monotony thanks to the wide range of line lengths (2 to 13 syllables) and even becomes witty, as the hearer wonders or anticipates how, on each successive line, the rhyme will be reached. There is thus a sense of lightness in the text which is at odds with Helmer’s interpretation of power and eroticism, but it is communicated paralinguistically rather than directly through the literal meaning of the text. Indeed, the semantic content of the first few lines of each verse is fairly limited – to the point that translation becomes difficult.

‘En gammal dansrytm’

‘An old dance rhythm’

Och vill du väl,
så får du väl,
så har du väl
min hela själ
till träl
att älska och pina och trampa ihjäl
med tramp av din häl,
du höga, du svingande vilda i dansen.

And you want well,
so you get well,
so you have well
my whole soul
as slave
to love and torture and trample to death
with the stamp of your heel,
you high, you swinging wild [one] in the dance.

Men får du min,
så tar jag din.
Så våga, vinn
och dansa in
rätt in
i lågornas rike och brinn och brinn
med syn och med sinn.

But you get mine,
so I take yours.
So to dare, win
and dance in
right in
to the flames’ kingdom and burn and burn
with sight and with mind.

Det brinner en eld, han brinner så klar i dansen. A fire burns, he burns so clear in the dance.

Och se vi gå
som lågor gå
i dans och slå
ihop och nå
det blå

And see, we go
like flames go
in [the] dance and merge
together and reach
the blue

⁹⁰ Noel Straus, ‘Svanholm scores in his recital bow’, *New York Times*, 15 March 1948. Svanholm followed the *En gammal dansrytm* with *Tristans död*, but there is no suggestion in the review of a connection between the two.

– och jorden blir aska under oss två.	– and the earth becomes ash under us two.
Vi saliga två,	We blessed two,
det är blåsande eld som bär oss i dansen.	it is blowing fire that carries us in the dance.

Clearly, this text requires a context to make sense of it. In the second verse, for example, the literal translation given above ('But you get mine, so I take yours') is missing a noun, but in the context of a dance, the movement would provide the meaning: 'you get my *hand*, so I take yours'. This allusion to the physical gestures of a dance aligns the text with the genre of a sung folk-dance, where words and movements often explain each other.⁹¹

Rangström's setting implies this context in several ways. For a start, he highlights the last words of each verse ('i dansen'; 'in the dance') with a pause beforehand and sharp piano chords. The left hand of the piano part features two typical elements of folk-music: a polka figuration and open fifths. At the same time, the lilt and lightness of Bergman's opening lines are exaggerated through a series of falling sevenths in dotted rhythms – an example of the large intervals so often noted by contemporary critics. The discrepancy here between the vocal and piano parts (dotted quavers against crotchets with acciaccaturas) creates a loosened sense of rhythm which nods towards folk-like heterophony. The music is strictly strophic, with only a couple of rhythmic adjustments in the vocal line to allow for the slight changes in the scansion of lines 6 and 8 between verses. Rangström's approach to Bergman's varied line lengths is completely different from that which we saw in 'Melodi', where he constantly adjusts time signatures in order to accommodate them. Here, he packs even the wordiest lines into a single bar, and in the tongue-twisting triplets that result, we can see the same principle at work as in some sung folk-dances: rhythm is prioritized over meaning; sound over sense. That is, the rhythm of the words, and the rhymes which highlight it, are more integral to the song than the literal meaning of the words themselves.⁹²

However, Rangström has not simply mimicked a sung folk-dance using art-song's instrumentation. For one thing, he has littered the score with instructions about changing the tempo (*rubato*, *ritenuto*, *stringendo*, *vivo*) which are antithetical to the steady beat required by a sung dance. Nor do the melody's leaping sevenths fit within a traditional idiom, for all that they are closely related to the intonation and rhythm of the spoken text. This can stand as representative of Rangström's relationship to national music traditions: rather than borrow and adapt a traditional tune, or compose a faux-folk melody, Rangström has done something far less tangible and less overtly Swedish. By applying the principle of speech-melody, he has created a vocal line that is more connected to Sweden's language than to its music. He *has* drawn on some features of folk music, but

⁹¹ The Swedish midsummer dance 'Sju vackra flickor i en ring' ('Seven beautiful girls in a ring') is an example of this genre: its lyrics describe the girls circling, turning, and picking a partner from the ring of boys.

⁹² As in, for example, the Gaelic *puirt à beul* (tunes of the mouth), which feature nonsensical lyrics or non-lexical vocables, and commonly refer to the physical movements of a dance.

they are either very generic (the polka rhythm and strophic form) or appear only in principle (the prioritization of rhythm and rhyme over meaning). In 'En gammal dansrytm', Rangström has not recreated a sung folk-dance, but rather has composed an art-song that recreates the feeling or the idea of a folk-dance. Rangström's setting suggests that he understood the poem as communicating the sensation of dancing, rather than as a coherent picture of a courting couple. Certainly, the latter lines of each verse describe a wild and all-consuming love, portrayed as fire, but the erotic subtext picked up on by Helmer is trumped by Rangström's constant musical reminders of an on-going, heel-stamping, hand-clapping dance.

Speech-melody and Swedishness

We have seen in this chapter that Rangström's use of speech-melody and his Swedishness have dominated his reception, although the former was rarely apparent to his contemporaries and the latter was seemingly self-evident. There is a discernible shift from the technical observations of critics in the 1910s, who identified specific features of Rangström's music, to the nationalist rhetoric in the 1930s, which increasingly valued less tangible characteristics. By no means should we dismiss the stereotype of Rangström's music as dark, harsh, upright, and manly; passages such as the opening bars of *Mitt land* certainly answer to that description. However, the extent to which such characteristics were prioritized by critics over the lyrical and sentimental aspects of Rangström's style must be understood as part of a wider preoccupation with the *ursvensk* concept, and the stereotype must be supplemented with more objective considerations of Rangström's musical characteristics and expressions of national identity.

It is to that end that this chapter's case studies have explored the demonstrable connections between characteristic features of Rangström's melodic idiolect and the intonation and rhythm of the Swedish language. The falling phrases of 'Pan' match the natural downward intonation of the spoken text; the shifting bar-lines and flexible melody of 'Melodi' capture the lilt of the words; the equal quavers of 'Den enda stunden' correspond to long consonants; and the dance-like features in 'En gammal dansrytm' enhance the rhythm and the meaning of the text. However, Rangström's use of speech-melody should not be too narrowly defined. Even across these four case studies we have seen it manifest in different ways. For Rangström, the speech-melody technique was about compositional freedom rather than rule-keeping, and his implementation of it was an essentially subjective process. His text settings certainly depended on the rhythm, intonation and meaning of the words, but they were also shaped by his imaginative response to the poem as a whole. The characteristic lilt and long consonants of the Swedish language can be connected to musical features

of his *romanser*, but the ways in which musical and linguistic considerations were mediated by the composer's fertile imagination remain open to interpretation.

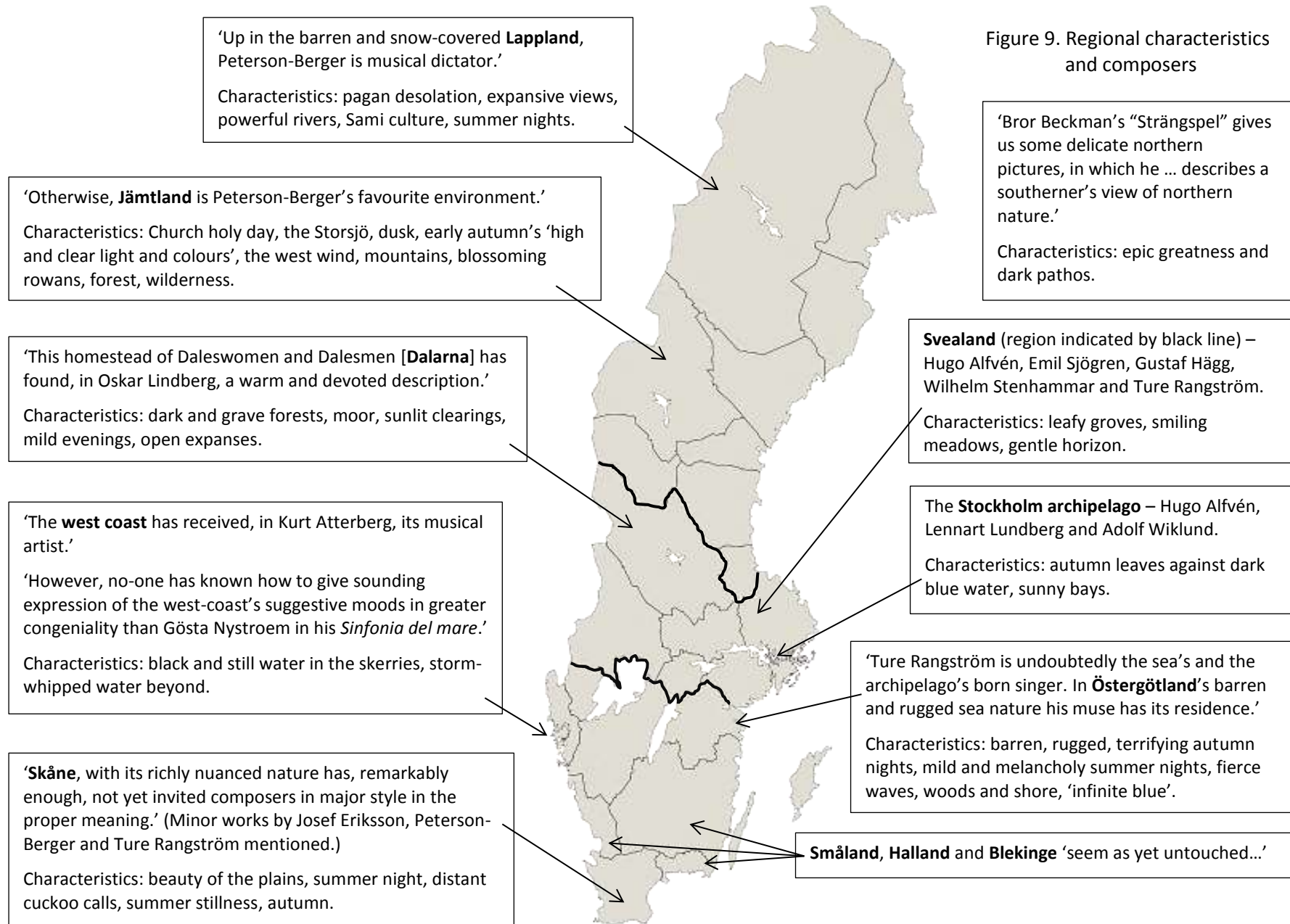


Figure 9. Regional characteristics and composers

Text by DA CAPO, ‘Svenska landskap i svensk musik’, *Engelhoms Tidning*, 12 October 1954.

Figure 10. The song-speech spectrum

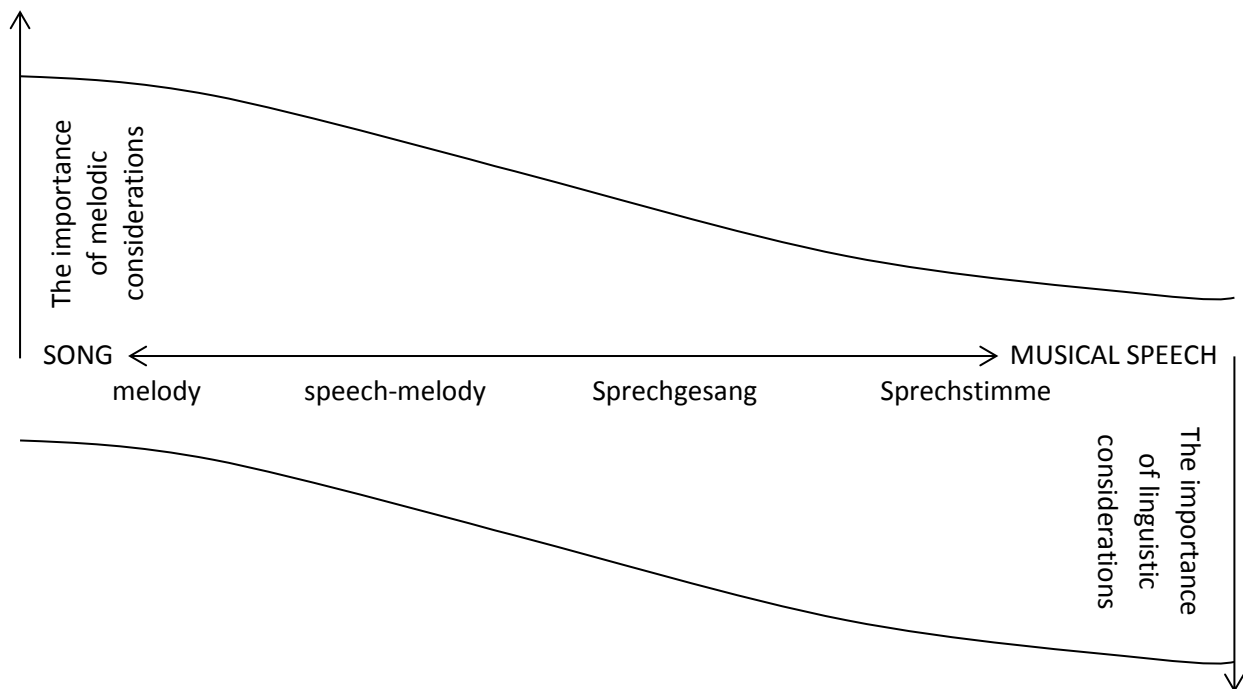


Figure 11. Annotated sketch of 'Pan'

The image shows a handwritten musical sketch on a page with several staves. At the top left, there is a handwritten number '157'. The sketch is divided into several sections, some of which are annotated with boxes and numbers:

- Bars 16-20:** This section is annotated with a box labeled '1.' covering the left-hand arpeggios. Another box labeled '2.' is placed over the right-hand melody in bar 20.
- Bars 21-26 (partial draft):** This section is annotated with a box labeled '3.' covering a portion of the right-hand melody in bar 21.
- Bars 6-15 (partial draft, piano only):** This section is annotated with the handwritten text 'Rimpia 19.6.54' written across the staves.
- Bar 29 (piano only):** This section is annotated with the handwritten text '19.6.54' written across the staves.

The sketch includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and chords, along with some handwritten annotations and corrections.

Bars 16-20: The straight left-hand arpeggios (Box 1) have their 3rd and 4th notes reversed in the published song. Here, bar 20 (Box 2) is in E major with b¹ or e¹ in the melody and B₁ in the bass; the published version is in C# minor with c#¹ in the melody and C# in the bass.

Bars 21-26: The right hand of bar 21 is an octave lower than in the final version, and is followed by the piano chords of bars 22-25. The only recognizable part of the vocal line (Box 3) corresponds to bars 26-27 in the published song.

Bars 6-15: Bar 6 appears without its third beat, bar 9 in enharmonic form, then the figure that repeats in bars 10-12, and finally a precursor to the flute-like cadenza of bars 14-15.

CHAPTER THREE
SINGING A SEASCAPE

I am certainly a native Stockholmer, and, moreover, a half-breed between Skåne and Sörmland, but that does not stop me from adding to myself one more landscape for soul and heart. It is Gryt's beautiful archipelago in south Östergötland, which in a strange way mixes the shapes of the wild and stony west coast with the Mälars idyll's charms, and where oak forests go right down to the seashore.¹

– Ture Rangström

Rangström's association with the seascapes and skerries of Östergötland is arguably the strongest thread in the reception of his music. References to wind-gnarled pines and stormy seas abound; granite seems as ubiquitous as in Sweden's bedrock itself. We have already seen, in Chapter Two, that many Swedish composers were credited with representing specific regions of the country, but that Rangström's music was singled out for its particularly vivid portrayals of the archipelago landscape. Rangström's connection to Östergötland is exceptional not simply because it was a strong relationship, but because it was an adopted one. He was a Stockholmer by birth and a 'half-breed' of Skåne and Södermanland by descent, but he became an Östergötlander by choice.² According to William Seymer, Rangström wrote music for both his 'birth' landscape and his adopted one – and it is immediately evident that his most significant works belong to the latter:

Ture Rangström was a born Stockholmer and Söderbro-er. But as a composer and as a man, he divided his favours between the city and the skerries down in Fångö, Harstena and Gräsmarö, in Gryt's archipelago. In Stockholm's honour he wrote the orchestral prelude 'Our City' and the little – one is tempted to say delicate – suite 'A little Stockholm music'. As a local patriot he composed the melody for the chimes of the Citizens' Hall. The archipelago was acclaimed in the symphonies, the tone-poems and several of the *romanser*.³

At the time of writing (1952), Rangström's reputation had already rested for some time on the genres that Seymer squeezes into the last sentence. By way of contrast, the pieces written for

¹ Rangström, 'Fredagsbesök hos Ture Rangström' ('Friday visit to Ture Rangström') in *Röster i radio* No. 31 (1946). 'Visserligen är jag infödd stockholmare och dessutom halvblod mellan Skåne och Sörmland, men det hindrar inte att jag lagt mig till med ytterligare ett landskap för själ och hjärta. Det är Gryts vackra skärgård i södra Östergötland, som på ett sällsamt sätt blandar former från vild och stenig västkust med mälaridyllens behag och där ekskogen går ända ner till havsstranden.' Mälaren is a large and island-strewn lake that extends about 70 miles west from Stockholm.

² Rangström's description of himself as a half-breed reflects the fact that his mother, Charlotta Andersson, came from Nyköping in Södermanland (about 60 miles south of Stockholm), and his father, John, from Skåne (Sweden's most southerly province). This reference to Skåne reveals the importance and persistence of regional identities: John Rangström had lived in Stockholm from the age of 10 (Helmer, 13).

³ William Seymer, 'Ture Rangström' in *Kungliga Teatern Operan Program* (1952), 14. 'Ture Rangström var född stockholmare och söderbro. Men han delade sina gracer som komponist och människa mellan staden och skären nere i Fångö, Harstena och Gräsmarö i Gryts skärgård. Till Stockholms ära hade han skrivit orkesterpreludiet "Vår stad" och den lilla man frestas säga, delikata sviten "En liten Stockholms-musique". Som lokalpatriot komponerade han melodien för Medborgarhusets klockspel. Skärgården hyllades i symfonierna, tondikterna och flera av romanserna.'

Stockholm are relatively trivial and not well known. In this they are typical of Rangström's 'Stockholm' music, which was often composed for festive or ceremonial occasions, sometimes borrowed melodies from the eighteenth-century musician Carl Michael Bellman, and has not been performed much since.⁴ Seymer's summary demonstrates (perhaps unintentionally) that the works that most defined Rangström's musical character were those inspired by the archipelago landscape.

In the light of this duality in Rangström's compositions, we might expect a tug-of-war in his reception, with both regions seeking to claim the composer as their own. This chapter will begin by investigating the lack of such either/or attitudes and by reconciling the apparently paradoxical portrayals of Rangström as a cosmopolitan composer and a salt-stained seafarer through the Swedish concept of *hembygd* (which loosely means 'home-place'). It will explore contemporary understandings of the relationship between Rangström's music and the Östergötland landscape, and will argue that his activities in the archipelago offer a significant interpretative strategy for assessing his music. The reception and biographical context of Rangström's Third Symphony, the explicitly landscape-inspired *Sång under stjärnorna* (*Song under the stars*), will be examined with these attitudes in mind.

Scholarly interest in the relationships between landscape and music is growing, not least in the emerging field of ecomusicology.⁵ However, the art-song genre has yet to come under sustained scrutiny in this context.⁶ This chapter will use Rangström's *romanser* as a hermeneutic tool in order to reach an interpretation of his Third Symphony that goes beyond the programmatic readings that have dominated its reception. The landscape tropes in the symphony (night, sea, and stars) will therefore be traced through the texts of Rangström's *romanser* in order to uncover the personal symbolism of each one. The song 'Bön till natten' incorporates all three tropes and Rangström used its melody as the main theme of the Third Symphony; it will be examined for the textual and musical meaning that it draws into the symphony, revealing the symphony to be an expression of

⁴ The clock melody that Seymer mentions – a few dozen bars restricted to an octave range in order to be playable on seven bells – is a striking exception. The opening of the Citizens' Hall in 1940 received a good deal of press attention and an estimated 15,000 people attended the ceremony where the tune was first heard ('Söders egen melodi', *Dagens Nyheter*, 28 October 1940). Apart from a hiatus when a mechanical failure led to the installation of an electronic replacement, it has sounded daily ever since and is therefore in all probability Rangström's most frequently played piece of music (Helmer, 383).

⁵ Aaron S. Allen tentatively outlines the emerging field as follows: 'ecomusicology considers the relationships of music, culture, and nature; i.e., it is the study of musical and sonic issues, both textual and performative, as they relate to ecology and the environment.' ('Ecomusicology: Ecocriticism and Musicology', *Journal of the American Musicological Society*, Vol. 64, No. 2, p. 392.)

⁶ Daniel Grimley's consideration of Grieg's *Haugtussa* song-cycle is an exception; it deals with the historical and political contexts of the work, which support its categorization as a form of *Heimatkunst*, but also landscape's abstract quality as a spatial and temporal structure. [Grimley, 'Grieg, Landscape and the *Haugtussa* Project' in *Grieg: Music, Landscape and Norwegian Identity*, (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2006), pp. 109-146].

Rangström's relocation of religious ideas into the archipelago seascape, as well as a response to the confusion of modern musical styles.

At home in Stockholm; at home on Törnsholmen

From the start of Rangström's compositional career, Helmer says, the Gryt archipelago was 'the second and basically, perhaps, the most important pole of his existence.'⁷ The comment comes immediately after a description of Rangström's Stockholm home, thus setting up the two locations as antipodes. This apparent duality of archipelago and city goes beyond Rangström's music into the realm of lifestyle. In photographs, he often appears to be in one of two roles: either a city man, impeccably dressed in his black suit and famously high collar, or else an archipelago-man (*skärkarl*), revelling in the summer months of freedom and privacy on a small island in Östergötland (see Figure 12, p. 156). However, such juxtaposed images were hardly unusual in Sweden's summerhouse culture, when many city-dwellers holidayed in rural, water-side cottages. Rangström's annual retreat to Gryt could therefore easily be seen as the epitome of idealized Swedish life – the act of a modern, city man who is nevertheless at home in the wild – and Stockholmers did not begrudge Gryt's inspirational influence on Rangström's musical life. On the contrary, the archipelago was accepted as a fruitful place of work for Rangström and his sense of belonging there was indulged and celebrated. In 1934, a group of friends and colleagues organized a public collection in order to purchase the island of Törnsholmen as a gift for Rangström's fiftieth birthday, and the official appeal acknowledged Gryt as 'the area where the composer has a penchant for staying during his holidays, and from which the greater part of his work comes.'⁸ There was certainly a contrast between Rangström's ways of life in Stockholm and Gryt, but this did not entail opposition.

A 1919 interview with Rangström gives us further cause to question the assumed dualism of urban and rural landscapes. It was conducted at the Rangström family home at 30 Bastugatan, Södermalm, which it portrays as a sanctuary in the middle of an expanding city:

Stockholm has become a great city, it is constantly said. The town grows still; stone colossi lift ever higher towards the sky and in the outskirts they march out in mighty columns and conquer new areas. The idylls are disappearing: perhaps one or two remain in the nook of some yet unconquered outskirt, but in the city itself there are no more.

But is it so certain? There are enough such small, hidden, still places remaining, if one goes to the trouble to look for them.

⁷ Helmer, *Ture Rangström*, 60. 'den andra och i grunden kanske viktigaste polen i hans tillvaro.'

⁸ 'Tonsättaren Ture Rangström', 1934 (The Rangström Collection, Gäddviken, Fiftieth Anniversary). 'den trakt, där tonsättaren med förkärlek vistats under sina ferier, och där större delen av hans production tillkommit.'

If one goes to Södra Badsungatan [sic], uphill from the Mariahus one comes after a while to a red fence, which rears up along the street for a good way ahead. At one place in this red timber screen is a gate. Now, if one, like the undersigned, is expected by those that live behind [it], one climbs in and wanders through a little garden down to a building in old-fashioned style.

Here lives the composer Ture Rangström, and a tone-poet could hardly search out a more wonderful haven. From the house's sun-parlour one sees out over Riddarfjärden and the town's smoke-swept mass of houses. Here is what the harassed big-city man longs for: peace and quiet.⁹

The interviewer goes on to explain that in fact the house is a busy workplace, attended by a stream of singing pupils, but the perception of it as a haven still dominates his account. His impression of Stockholm's intense urban development needs to be put in its historical and geographical context. Industrialization and urbanization came relatively late to Sweden: the Second Industrial Revolution is generally dated from 1870 until the First World War, but in Sweden from 1890 or 1900 until 1950, and it was therefore on ongoing development throughout Rangström's lifetime. When he and Lisa set up home together at 30 Bastugatan they had no running water in the kitchen, nor an indoor toilet – living conditions more typical of country cottages than a middle-class city home. Despite being in the city centre, their house was built on a clifftop and boasted impressive views over the Old Town and Riddarfjärden (see Figure 13, p. 157). In early twentieth-century Stockholm, then, the stereotypical dualism of rural and urban landscapes rather breaks down. Urban expansion occurred among a maze of islands, bridges and waterways; bare rock and open water remained a feature of the city landscape.

Stockholmers clearly appreciated Rangström's adoption of the archipelago landscape as a source of inspiration; Gryt's inhabitants, meanwhile, apparently came to accept him as a local. The note of condescension in this 1934 article from an Östergötland paper suggests that this status was unusual, and something of an achievement for an outsider.

He has lived in the district on weekdays and weekends, become like one of the natives. "Ture Rangström is on shore. His boat is at the dock." How many times have

⁹ Henri, 'Tonsättare. Ture Rangström', *Svenska Dagbladet*, 6 October 1919. 'Stockholm har blivit en storstad, heter det städigt. Staden växer alltjämt, stenkolosserna lyftas allt högre mot skyn och i utkanterna marschera de i väldiga kolonner ut och erövra nya områden. Idyllerna försvinna, kanske dröjer en och annan kvar i någon ännu icke erövrad utkantsvrå, men i själva staden finnas de icke mer. Ja, är det så säkert? Det finns nog sådana små undangömda stilla platser kvar än, om man gör sig besvär att söka efter dem. Om man går Södra Badsungatan uppför från Mariahussen kommer man efter en stund till ett rött plank, som reser sig utmed gatan ett gott stycke framåt. På ett ställe i den röda tramuran är en port. Om man nu i likhet med signaturen är väntad till dem som bo innanför, stiger man in och vandrar genom en liten trädgård ner mot en byggnad i gammaldags stil. Här bor kompositören Ture Rangström, och en mera underbar tillflyktsort skulle en tondiktare väl knappast leta upp. Från husets glasveranda ser man ut över Riddarfjärden och stadens röksvepta husmassor. Här finns det som den jäktade storstandsmänniskan längtar efter: stillhet och ro.'

we heard that? He is as famous and well-known a person in Gryt as in Stockholm. And that is saying a lot for a non-native-born.¹⁰

The importance of regional identity permeates this article. The author, Seth Jonsson, uses three different words for native or local in quick succession: *urinvånarna*, literally ‘the ur-inhabitants’ i.e. the original residents; *infödning*, ‘native-born’; and *hembygd*, which loosely means ‘home-place’. The first two terms incorporate the idea of descent, and so Rangström is necessarily excluded from them, as far as Gryt is concerned. The last, however, is a more open concept that allows for means of belonging other than ancestry. It is a fundamentally subjective term, applicable to any place where one feels at home or to which one has a strong connection. Crucially, it incorporates no sense of exclusivity: one can have several *hembygder*. Thus Rangström could speak of ‘adding to [himself] one more landscape for soul and heart’ without disowning his native city, and his sense of regional belonging could be celebrated as authentically Swedish even though it was an adopted relationship.¹¹

Perhaps Rangström’s strongest statement of belonging to the Gryt archipelago comes from a short interview that was published in *Röster i radio* in 1946. It begins with the quote at the head of this chapter; the remainder is reproduced below in full. His affection for Törnsholmen is apparent, his praise of Gryt’s environment hyperbolic and his sense of ownership palpable. What is most notable, though, is the way in which his description is coloured by the concept of landscape as an interactive experience.

I have now visited various islands and woods there [in Gryt’s archipelago] for almost 40 years, [for] the last eleven years returning to my own little islet in my own cottage which good fellows gave me for my fiftieth birthday.

Törnholmen [sic] is its name. In the northwest, the crag shoots out like a wild boar’s head, towards Finnfjärden and the Baltic, but in the wild boar’s hackles, in the southeast too, I have a smiling meadow strewn with dog-roses. My kingdom is not more than one and a half hectares, but it is enough for all that an old sea-rover needs. Together with my boat, a 17-foot open skiff with jib and spritsail, I now run riot down here about five months in the year. Sometimes we go out on the open sea, for it is a good oak boat. Sometimes, when there is a lull, we row to land for provisions; it takes six hours there and back. It is good for patience. My piano is transported here on a cattle ferry. Sometimes there are storms. Then we must leave

¹⁰ Seth Jonsson, ‘Klanger från Östgötaskären’, *Östgötabygd Jultidning*, December 1934. ‘Han har levat med i bygdens vardag och helg, blivit som en av urinvånarna. ”Ture Rangström är i land. Hans båt ligger vid bryggan”. Hur många gånger ha vi hört det? Han är en lika känd och välkänd person i Gryt som i Stockholm. Och det vill säga mycket för en icke inföding.’

¹¹ The concept of *hembygd* should not be equated with the German *Heimat*, although both concern local identity and can provide a means of mediating between local and national identities. *Heimat* has been exploited for political ends; indeed, Celia Applegate has even designated it an invented tradition that ‘offered Germans a way to reconcile a heritage of localized political traditions with the ideal of a single, transcendent nationality’ [*A Nation of Provincials: The German Idea of Heimat* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1990), 13]. *Hembygd*, on the other hand, remains a straightforward, everyday, and essentially descriptive term.

the ferry somewhere along the way. But the piano has become accustomed to it. It is a so-called archipelago piano, impervious to the shifts of fate.

Here is the purest air, the bluest sea, and the whitest night violets. The hundred islets one senses by the smell if the boat brushes past at dusk. In the autumns it is haunted: the old dead Ålanders and other seas' spectres wander in closed ranks between the junipers up towards the cottage, so that your heart sits in your throat. The seals howling outside Harstena are foreboding. It is a grand place for music! And loneliness is a gift.¹²

Rangström's experience of Gryt's archipelago was one of close interaction – and even of imagined communion with his predecessors in it. His observations of Törnsholmen's orientation and shape are those of a mariner: they place it in relation to *other* landscape features and are not discernible from the island itself. His boat trips gave him an intimate knowledge of the archipelago, rendering its islands familiar by sight and scent, and keeping him alert to the changes in weather. There is even the suggestion that his interaction with the seascape shaped his character, as it exercised his patience during his long rows and – though he projects this onto his instrument – as he became used to submitting to the vagaries of its weather. The landscape also provided a tangible connection to the past: Rangström seems to have relished an eerily powerful awareness that long-dead seafarers had inhabited the landscape before him. Clearly, the archipelago inspired Rangström's creative imagination not merely through its aesthetic attractions, but through his daily and yearly relationship with it as a seascape to be explored, enjoyed, and respected, as well as observed. Occasionally, this direct interaction with the environment seems to have given rise to a specific breakthrough in composition:

I woke in my cottage in Gryt's archipelago one morning with a steaming southwester, which was about to tear down the boat at the jetty. At that time I had long wrestled with the poem for a new opera, and while I went down to the jetty and out in the water and saved the boat from going the way of all the world in the storm, it clarified for me, and I felt the music for the opera 'Gilgamesj' coming inside me.¹³

¹² Rangström, 'Fredagsbesök hos Ture Rangström'. 'Där har jag nu vistats på diverse öar och klabbar i bortåt 40 år, sen elva år tillbaka på en ägandes liten holme i en ägandes stuga som goda medmänniskor skänkte mig till min 50-årsdag. Törnholmen [sic] är dess namn. I nordväst skjuter klippsetsen ut som ett raggigt vildsvinshuvud mot Finnfjärden och Östersjön, men i nackåret på vilodgalten, i sydost alltså, har jag en leende äng översållad av nyponrosor. Mer än 1 ½ hektar är icke mitt rike, men det räcker till allt vad en gammal sjörövare behöver. Tillsammans med min båt, en 17-fots öppen eka med fock och sprisegel, huserar jag nu härnere ungefär fem månader om året. Ibland går vi ut i öppna sjön, ty et är en bra ekbåt. Ibland när det är stiltje ror vi till land för att proviantera, det tar sex timmar fram och tillbaks. Det är nyttigt för tålamodet. Mitt piano forslas hit på oxfärja. Ibland blir det storm. Då måste vi släppa färjan nånstans på vägen. Men pianot har vant sig därvid. Det är ett s. k. skärgårdspiano, oemottagligt för ödets växlingar. Här är den renaste luft, det blåaste hav och de vitaste nattvioler. De hundra skären känner man igen på doften om båten i skymningen stryker förbi. På höstarna spökar det, gamla avdöda ålänningar och andra havets gengångare vanka i slutan tropp mellan enbuskarna upp mot stugan, så att hjärtat sätter sig i halsgropen. Sälarna tjuer utifrån Harstena bådar. Det är en utmärkt plats för musik! Och ensamheten är en gåva.'

¹³ N., 'Ture Rangström i stan, har snart ny opera färdig', *Söderköpingsposten*(?), 7 October 1946. 'Jag vaknade i min stug i Gryts skärgård en morgon med rykande sydväst, som höll på att slita båten nere vid bryggan. Jag hade då länge brottats med dikten till en ny opear, och medan jag gick ner till brygga och ut i vattnet och

With such anecdotes in circulation, it is hardly surprising that landscape should be considered a crucial means of interpreting Rangström's music. In his contemporary reception, this occurred on several levels and with varying degrees of sophistication.

Music and landscape in Rangström's reception

In Rangström's contemporary reception there was, firstly, a widespread understanding that Rangström's music described the landscape, in a straightforward translation of visible into audible. The standard observation, which we have already seen in Chapter Two, was that his harsh orchestral timbres and angular homophony portrayed the barren granite outcrops of the skerries. The emphasis on granite seems to have originated with Rangström himself. It appeared during his early days as a music critic, in an article promoting the Swedish landscape as the obvious new direction for Swedish art-music:

Let it be that our temperament waits only for the simple, meagre, but strong art-music, which knows its innermost, highest individuality and melds it together with Swedish nature and the landscape's own essence. Much granite – fir and pine in thorny dark stretches – a light, melancholy, shimmering Mälars idyll – a red cottage with white trim – long winter nights, short sunny days and much, much granite...

'Do you remember that spruce's sighing,
at whose root your dwelling is fixed' –

What are we waiting for? Is it not enough?¹⁴

Granite thus underpinned Rangström's intentions as a composer and it became an immovable feature of his reception. One of the few contemporary English-language accounts of his compositional character starkly describes him as 'a piece of granite'.¹⁵ But even here we cannot escape the possibility that Rangström was shaping the public perception of his music, across both a language barrier and the Atlantic: the author, Eric Westberg, was a close personal friend.

Although Rangström aspired to portray idyllic, sunlit landscapes as well as dark and dramatic ones, it was the latter that found lasting resonance with his hearers. In fact, in the following quote, Seymer sets the two in opposition, perhaps having mistaken Rangström's dismissal of the idyll as a genre of sentimental salon music for disinterest in the gentle landscapes that had inspired them.

räddade båten från att gå all världens väg i stormen, klarnade det för mig, och jag kände musiken komma inom mig till operan "Gilgamesj".'

¹⁴ Ture Rangström, 'Svenskt lynne – svensk musik', *Stockholms Dagblad*, 17 December 1911. 'Låt vara, att vårt lynne endast väntar på den enkla, fattiga, men starka tonkonst, som känner dess innersta, högsta egenart och smält den samman med den svenska naturen och landskapets eget väsen. Mycket gråsten – gran och tall i taggade mörka sträckor – en ljus, emodigt skimrande Mälarsidyll – en röd stuga med hvita knutar – långa vinternätter, korta solskensdagar och mycket, mycket gråsten... "Minnen du den granens susning, vid hvars rot ditt bo är fästadt" – Hvad vänta vi på! Är det icket nog?'

¹⁵ Eric Westberg, 'The war's effect on modern Swedish music', *Musical Courier*, 8 January 1920.

He is certainly Swedish in his music, but it is not the pale, weak, national tones that we are accustomed to, not the sunny meadow and the forest idylls that shine towards us; he makes himself the interpreter of the Swedish granite, the bedrock, the mysticism of the wild skerries and the unending seas... He is dramatic, pathetic, fiercely bleak and harsh in his emotive-poems...¹⁶

This portrayal of Rangström as an interpreter of the archipelago seascape draws on the Swedish concept of *landskap* – that is, landscape as experiential as well as visible. Rangström's music is understood as a communication of his emotional reaction to the landscape rather than a sonic representation of it: internal sensation becomes more important than external observation; the subjective overtakes the objective. This was Rangström's own view. 'Music becomes our experience,' he wrote in 1942. 'I cannot sing a forest or spring or sea without my own impression – conscious or unconscious – of what a forest, spring or sea is becoming crucial for the music.'¹⁷

Although most of Rangström's reception gravitates toward these two understandings of how his music relates to landscape, there are two rarer views that turn these perceptions upside down (see Figure 14, p. 158). We came across one of them in the previous chapter: the notion that 'all the defiantly harsh and gnarled angularity in this [archipelago] nature speaks of [Rangström's] music.'¹⁸ For the writer, at least, the archipelago landscape called to mind Rangström's music; the landscape represented the music rather than the other way around. There was thus a two-way relationship at work, and Rangström made an impact on the lived landscape (the one formed by human interactivity with the physical environment) even as it had an impact on him. His musical expression of his experience of the landscape became part of the writer's subsequent experience of the landscape. Ultimately, by composing music in and about Gryt's archipelago, he shaped the landscape's meaning for others. This third understanding of the music-landscape relationship reverses the descriptive role of the first; the fourth understanding reverses the interpretative role assigned to Rangström's music in the second.

The fourth view of the music-landscape relationship appears in Seth Jonsson's article that acknowledged Gryt as Rangström's *hembygd*. He suggests that the archipelago landscape, and the way Rangström acted within it, rendered his music more comprehensible to the listener:

¹⁶ William Seymer, 'Gestalter ur Stockholms musikliv i nutid', *Idun* No. 11, 16 March 1919. 'Han är visserligen svensk i sin musik, men det är icke den blonda, veka nationaltonen vi äro vana vid, icke de soliga ängs- och skogsidyllerna, som lysa oss till mötes, det är den svenska graniten, urberget, de vilda skärens och det oändliga havets mystik han gjort sig till tolk för... Dramatisk, patetisk, våldsamt dyster och kärv är han i sina känslöbikter [sic]...'

¹⁷ Rangström, 'Strindbergssymfonien', *Röster i radio* No. 15 (1942). 'Tonen blir vår upplevelse. Jag kan inte besjunga en skog eller källa eller ett hav utan att min egen uppfattning – medveten eller omedveten – av vad som är skog, källa eller hav blir avgörande för tonen.'

¹⁸ DA CAPO, 'Svensk landskap i svensk musik', *Engelhorn's Tidning*, 12 October 1954. 'Ingen har väl som han kunnat återge skräckstämningarna från höstliga havsnätter, de stora sjöarnas stolta oändliga kämpasånger, sommarnätternas blida, oändliga vemod... Allt det trotsigt kärva och knotigt kantiga i denna natur talar ur hans musik.'

How long he has honoured Gryt's waters with his sailing-boat, I do not know for sure, but the tales about it are lost in the annals of antiquity [*urtiden*]...

It was always the same nature he chose; he did not go beyond the 10 km² or so where his most beloved natural scenery dominated. And he always remained the same lyrical Viking, who enjoyed the peace of the relative wilderness, not in inactive rest, but with the calm which in light summer days and summer nights gave birth to songs and symphonic poems in his life's perhaps best and most joyous moments.

Anyone who met Ture Rangström in Gryt's archipelago perhaps understands more about his artistic creation than one who only met him wearing the notorious, unchanging cravat customary in Stockholm. His music has strong Viking and bard features, but with such captivating lyrical traits as in "Melodi". Perhaps it is the sounds from Gryt's skerries and the enchanting meadows or marshes inside the storm-lashed cliffs which are his true native tones [*hembygdstoner*]. There, nature is usually barren, the bays are vast and move gently out to the seaway, but there are good harbours and calm coves where idylls bloom. Ture Rangström has often wrestled with the wind and waves in his little open boat, of the pilot-boat type; he has sailed in the storm, rowed in the calms with strong arms, which scorned the motor's help; he has, during week-long trips with his boat, harboured in friendly coves and seen many nights fall silently and clearly around the islands and the water. But he has also anchored for tough weather and in the storm's noise heard the eternal shadows' voices become the noise of mighty wings in the night.¹⁹

Jonsson suggests, here, that anyone who knew Rangström only as the suave city-man would have an imperfect understanding of his music; for those who saw him in Östergötland, its meaning was clearer. That is, Rangström's interaction with the archipelago landscape made sense of his music. The last sentence refers to 'Vingar i natten' ('Wings in the night'), a Bergman poem and one of Rangström's most popular songs; Jonsson implies that the song-setting is a direct recreation of Rangström's personal experience of storms among the skerries. Jonsson does not develop his assertions with critical clarity, but instead summarizes Rangström's 'Stockholm' persona through his dress (i.e. stiff and unvarying) and assigns the heritage-heavy terms 'Viking' and 'bard' to his 'archipelago' persona before launching into a vivid description of Rangström's activities within the landscape. However, Jonsson's evident preoccupation with *ursvensk* character does not negate his

¹⁹ Seth Jonsson, 'Klanger från Östgötaskären'. 'Hur länge han gjort Gryts farvatten den äran med sin segelbåt, vet jag inte säkert, men berättelserna därom förlora sig i urtidens hävder... [A]lltid var det samma natur den ungefärliga kvadratmil, där hans mest älskade natursceneri dominerade. Och alltid förblev han samma lyriske viking, som njöt den relativa vildmarkens ro, inte i dådlös vila, men med det lugn, som i ljusa sommarkvarn och sommarnätter födde sånger och symfoniska dikter i hans livs kanske bästa och mest glädjefyllda stunder. Den som mött Ture Rangström i Gryts skärgård, förstår kanske mer om hans konstnärliga skapande än den, som endast mött honom iklädd den beryktade oföränderliga kravatten till Stockholmsbruk. Hans musik har ett starkt drag av viking och bard men med ett så betagande lyriskt drag som i "Melodi". Kanske är det klanger från Grytsskären och de bedårande ängarna eller sänkorna innanför stormpiskade klippor, som äro hans rätta hembygdstoner. Karg är naturen där oftast, fjärdarna äro milsvida och röras lätt upp till sjögång, men där finnas goda hamnar och lugna vikar, där idyllen blommar. Ture Rangström har ofta brottats med vind och vågor i sin lilla öppna båt av lotsbåtstyp, han har seglat i storm, rott i stiltje med starka armar, som ännu försmått motors hjälp, han har under veckolånga färder med sin båt hamnat i vänliga vikar och sett många nätter tigande och klara falla kring öar och vatten. Men han har också ankrat för hårda väder och i stormens brus hört de eviga följeslagarnas röster bli till bruset av väldiga vingar i natten.'

point, namely, that Rangström's behaviour in the archipelago provides a means of understanding his music. Given Rangström's own insistence that his subjective experience of the landscape was 'crucial for the music', investigating these experiences is a correspondingly crucial part of the interpretative process.

The reception and context of *Sång under stjärnorna*

Rangström's Third Symphony (1929) is one of his most explicitly landscape-inspired works, and its reception is marked by the widespread understanding that his music represented and/or interpreted the archipelago landscape. Its title, *Sång under stjärnorna* (*Song under the stars*), establishes a nocturnal setting and a connection to Rangström's favourite genre, both of which were reinforced by the composer's programme note for the premiere, which took place at the Concert Society in Stockholm on 8 January 1930. He described the one-movement symphony as 'a solo song, without words, set for large orchestra'²⁰ and identified his inspiration as 'lonely, night-time sailing trips'. However, his insistence that this was 'not intended to fetter the listener's imagination through the influence of any programmatic order of events'²¹ was, in the main, blithely ignored. The critic Patrik Vretblad wrote that, in the piece, 'the composer allows us to follow him on an adventurous sail out among treacherous skerries during a strong wind (the brass section was also frequently used here) alternating with calmer moments, when one must assume that the boat escaped into the leeward passage'.²² Even a reviewer who acknowledged Rangström's title as 'a symbolic hint' was seemingly unable to break away from a programmatic interpretation, and the stereotype of harsh masculinity:

The work was, by its creator's own admission, composed under the impression of a difficult, nocturnal sail, and therefore gives expression to both nature-moods and tempest-depictions as well as, according to the Beethovenian formula, happy and thankful feelings after the storm.

The work is both like and unlike both its older siblings. It has, in outer respects, their solid structure, dark, manly appearance and tall posture. The similarities in characteristics are also striking: the same brooding seriousness, unwavering directness and grim harshness. But, again, the piece lacks the Strindberg Symphony's fairy-tale beauty of romance and legendary mystique. Nor does it appear hewn in Swedish granite, as the symphony "Mitt land" does.²³

²⁰ Cited in Helmer, *Ture Rangström*, 307. 'en solosång, utan ord, satt för stor orkester'.

²¹ *ibid.*, 309. 'ensamma, nattliga hafsseglatser'; 'åsyfter icke att klafbinda åhörarens fantasi genom påverkan af något programmatiskt händelseschema.'

²² Patrik V[retblad?], 'Konsertföreningen', *Socialdemokraten*, 10(?) January 1930. '... låter tondiktaren oss följa med på en äventyrlig seglats ute ibland lömska skär under en stark blåst (blåsorkestern blev också nu flitigt använd) växlande med lugnare ögonblick, då man får anta att snipen kom i lä undan stråket.'

²³ R.N., 'En ny symfoni av Rangström', *Stockholms-Tidningen*, 9 January 1930. 'en symbolisk antydning'; 'Verket har, enligt sin skapares egen utsago, komponerats under intryck av en hård, nattlig seglats och ger följaktligen uttryck för såväl naturstämningar och ovädersskildringar som, enligt beethovenianskt recept, glada och

The suggestion of symbolic meaning behind the title originates from an enigmatic phrase from Rangström's programme note, in which he describes the symphony as 'a life's symbol in notes'.²⁴ There is clearly a level of personal expression in the work that evaded many of its contemporary hearers; understanding the piece as a representation or interpretation of the archipelago landscape is an incomplete reflection of its composer's intention. Rangström's programme note ventures towards the deeper view that the lived landscape was a means of interpreting his music: 'Those who have dwelt alone, in a cockleshell, among breakers, under the sea's eternal stars, know what the sailor sings about then.'²⁵ Rangström implies that the wordless song of the Third Symphony can be best understood through an experience of the landscape, one unfamiliar and unavailable to most of his hearers. However, he also expressed such experiences through songs *with* words, and so an exploration of his *romans* output can illuminate the symbolism of the symphony.

This chapter will trace the tropes of night, sea and stars through Rangström's entire *romans* production in order to reach an interpretation of the Third Symphony that goes beyond that of its contemporary reception. There is, however, a crucial piece of biographical context to set in place before undertaking this survey: Rangström's courtship of and marriage to Omon Håkanson. This relationship corresponded with the least productive phase of Rangström's compositional career, the decade between 1925 and 1935 (see Appendix B, Graph 3b). He wrote only a handful of songs, incidental music for a few plays, and, right in the middle, the Third Symphony. Rangström's infatuation with Omon began in the summer of 1924, when he was 'alone with [his] island'²⁶ and during their affair they holidayed in Östergötland (though a few miles north of Rangström's usual haunts);²⁷ the relationship can therefore be considered part of his activity within, and experience of, the landscape.

Omon was ten years Rangström's junior, with literary interests, and with Javanese heritage on her mother's side of the family that contributed to her reputation as an exotic beauty. Her husband, the composer and critic Knut Håkanson, was a friend of Rangström and an admirer of his music. In 1922 he had written a hugely positive overview of Rangström's songs, concluding:

Ture Rangström now stands in the middle of his life's full and flourishing high summer. His way has gone, without major deviations, straight upwards, and we have

tacksamma känslor efter stormen. Verket är både likt och olik sina båda äldre syskon. Det har i yttre avseende deras fasta struktur, mörka, manliga utseende och resliga hållning. Likheten i karaktärsdragen äro även frapperande: samma grubblande allvar, orubbliga rättframhet och bistra kärvhet. Men återigen saknar stycket Strindbergssymfoniens sagosköna romantik och sägenomspunna mystik. Ej heller verkar det hugget i svensk granit, som symfonien "Mitt land" gör.'

²⁴ Cited in Helmer, *Ture Rangström*, 307. 'en lifssymbol in noter'.

²⁵ *ibid.*, 309. 'den som vistats ensam i ett nötskal, bland bränningar, under havets eviga stjärnor, vet varom sjömannen då sjunger.'

²⁶ *ibid.*, 271. 'ensam på min ö' (Letter from Rangström to Omon, 8 June 1924.)

²⁷ Helmer, *Ture Rangström*, 294.

every hope and the right to expect many things yet from him and his manly artist's will.²⁸

In March 1924, Håkanson recycled parts of the two-year-old text for the *Borås Tidning* as an introduction to a local concert of Rangström's music. He sent the clipping to Rangström with a note scribbled 'in wild haste', assuring the composer that 'your suite was, despite little Weman's assertions, really good, and it was fun to play it!'²⁹ Håkanson's tone is brisk and friendly, and he is clearly keen to see Rangström when he visits Stockholm in April. On 26 March, Rangström wrote a set of three sonnets, playfully dedicated to Knut, Omon, and their son, and although Helmer – with hindsight – flags up their allusions to Shakespeare's *Othello* as ominous, there was no apparent cause for concern at the time.³⁰

On 9 and 10 June, another triptych unleashed a flood of songs, but this time all three were dedicated to Omon. Immersed in a landscape that he felt to mirror his enraptured state, Rangström composed a song per day for eleven days. ('Pan', with its connections between landscape, music, and eroticism, was one of them.) Rangström wrote letters to Omon which must have been as persistent and fervent as his songs, for the Håkansons returned them, a move that prompted protestations of innocence from Rangström and apparently blocked his creative flow. Ten days of compositional silence followed. Helmer points out that:

... only when he had received a somewhat conciliatory reaction from Omon did the will to work return. 'Now you are good again', he wrote on 1 July, and it is hardly a coincidence that the song *Det finns väl så många i världen att äga* [*There are so many in the world to own*] came the same day.³¹

Thereafter, songs continued to '[flow] as if from an open artery'³²: he composed fourteen in less than three weeks. At the end of the month the Håkansons came to visit Rangström, who genuinely seemed to see himself as the injured party. He felt that 'I had to justify myself against a preconceived opinion – and it is thus an unworthy shadow on our friendship'.³³ The mood seems to have been one of reconciliation rather than confrontation, and Rangström's *romanser* even played

²⁸ Knut Håkanson, 'Svenska sångkomponister II' in *Ares* No. 9 (1922). 'Ture Rangström står nu mitt i sin levnads fulla och blomstrande högsommar. Hans väg har gått utan större avvikelser i rak linje uppåt, och vi ha alla hopp och rätt att vänta ännu många storverk av honom och hans manliga konstnärsvilja.'

²⁹ Letter from Knut Håkanson to Ture Rangström, 4 March 1924. 'I vild hast'; 'Din svit gick trots lille Wemans påståenden, riktigt bra, och det var roligt få spela den!' (Tidningsurklipp 21-25 in The Rangström Collection). The suite mentioned was probably the *Divertimento elegiaco*, published in 1920.

³⁰ Helmer, *Ture Rangström*, 272.

³¹ *ibid.*, 281. '... först när han hade fått något slags försonlig reaktion från Omon, återvände arbetsviljan. "Nu är du god igen", skrev han den 1 juli, och det är väl knappast någon tillfällighet att sången *Det finns väl så många i världen att äga* tillkom samma dag.'

³² Cited in Helmer, *Ture Rangström*, 287. 'lyriken har flödat som en öppnad pulsåder.' (Letter from Rangström to Stenhammar, 20 August 1924.)

³³ *ibid.* 285. 'Jag hade att försvara mig mot en förutfattad mening – och det är dock en ovärdig skugga på vår vänskap.' (Letter from Rangström to Omon, 29 July or possibly 28 August 1924.)

their part. Knut wrote a few days afterwards that ‘your music charms, warms and disarms with the wide embrace and great heart of openness, beauty and warmth.’³⁴

Knut might have been less forgiving – and less complacent – had he heard the four songs that Rangström composed later in August, all to texts by Heinrich Heine, and none of them ever published. The theme of clandestine and ill-fated love is startlingly clear in the ‘Tragödie’ set: ‘Flee with me and be my wife ... if you do not go with me, I will die here and you will be lonely and alone’; ‘A young man loved a girl; they secretly fled away from home’.³⁵ The fourth text, ‘Frühlingsfeier’, continues the theme of love and death through its portrayal of distraught girls searching a dark forest for the slain Adonis. One of Rangström’s most prolific periods of composition ended, then, on a rather ominous note. It was the last music he was to write for almost two years and the next text that he would set was to be by Omon. Although their correspondence petered out through the winter, it was renewed during the summer of 1925 – a summer with a very different mood for Rangström than the one that had preceded it. He had lost his conducting post in Gothenburg, he was about to lose his marriage, and his time on Gräsmarö felt ‘empty, lazy, sluggish’ and was marked by the ‘strong personal depression’ that was discussed in Chapter One as the closest that Rangström came to experiencing diagnosable depression.³⁶ He composed nothing.

Helmer’s account of Rangström’s affair with Omon is a little blurry in its chronology, pieced together as it is from their surviving letters, which were returned to each other upon their divorce. He does not attempt to deduce at what point their relationship was consummated, but he does attribute the Håkansons’ 1925 relocation to Helsingborg to Knut’s desire to distance his wife from Rangström’s attentions.³⁷ The move was unsuccessful and their contact continued, to the growing disapproval of many acquaintances. From the language in Rangström’s letters, it seems that a line must have been crossed in the late summer of 1925. In July, he wrote that he could ‘regret nothing... Not that love became passion, because the beautiful love still lives just as pure’.³⁸ By October, however, having moved out of his family home the previous month, he wrote to Omon of a ‘fall’ and a loss of innocence:

I know only that we are not wretched offenders – and that I, nevertheless, regret nothing, wish nothing undone, because I am bound to you forever, whether to go

³⁴ *ibid.* ‘nu charmerar, värmer och afväpnar din musik med öppenhetens, skönhetens och värmens breda famn och stora hjärta.’

³⁵ Heinrich Heine, ‘Tragödie’, *Neue Gedichte* (Hamburg: Hoffmann und Campe, 1844). ‘Entflieh mit mir und sei mein Weib ... Gehst du nicht mit, so sterb’ ich hier und du bist einsam und allein’; ‘Ein Jüngling hatte ein Mädchen lieb, sie flohen Heimlich von Hause fort’.

³⁶ Cited in Helmer, *Ture Rangström*, 291. ‘tom, lat, trög’; ‘en stark personlig depression’. (Letter from Rangström to Omon, 19 July 1925.)

³⁷ Helmer, *Ture Rangström*, 292-293.

³⁸ Cited in Helmer, *Ture Rangström*, 293. ‘Jag kan intet ångra... Icke att kärleken blef lidelse, ty den vackra kärleken lefver ännu lika ren.’ (Letter from Rangström to Omon, 1 July 1925.)

under or to live; it becomes another necessity. But I want to live, if only you are with me. And then, with or without a confession of sin, to forgive ourselves – because no one else does.³⁹

By the end of the year, Omon, too, had determined to get a divorce. This was a drawn-out process and it was not until a week before Christmas in 1927 that she and Rangström were finally married. Knut, having ensured that his children would live with a nanny rather than with their mother and the man he now called 'the great life-destroyer',⁴⁰ died two years later, at the age of forty-two. The Third Symphony premiered less than a month afterwards, on 8 January 1930.

Between the autumn of 1924 and the beginning of fresh divorce proceedings a decade later, Rangström wrote only thirteen songs, most of which were not published until after his divorce from Omon, and four of which never were. It is a remarkable statistic that Rangström produced more songs in a month of courtship than he did in a decade of marriage. It must be said, however, that his relationship with Omon was hardly the only factor in play: their affair had resulted in a degree of social isolation; there were tensions at the Concert Society and *Stockholms Dagblad*, which led to Rangström stepping down from the board of the former and losing his critic's post at the latter; and from 1931 he had to endure five years of being a Sunday composer, working as the Opera's press secretary. Rangström did not stop composing altogether: he produced a fair quantity of incidental music (for Strindberg's *Till Damaskus*, Ibsen's *Brand*, Lagerkvist's *Han som fick leva om sitt liv* and Shakespeare's *Macbeth*, *Coriolanus* and *Henry IV*) as well as a smattering of minor instrumental and choral works. The dearth of *romanser*, however, indicates a lack of the poetic inspiration that he relied upon, far above disciplined and deliberate work processes, when composing within the art-song genre.

In this compositionally barren context, the Third Symphony takes on an extra weight of significance. In the middle of a period in which Rangström all but ceased to express himself in his accustomed genre, he produced a work invested with personal meaning – but wordlessly, through symbols. The following surveys trace the appearance of night, sea, and stars in Rangström's songs throughout his career, adding to the Rangström 'dictionary' by exploring the associations that each held for him. (The prevalence of these tropes in the Lieder tradition must of course be taken into account, as Rangström 'saw' these themes through the lens of inherited tradition.) All three tropes connect in the song 'Bön till natten', which was composed in the summer of 1924 and from which Rangström borrowed the opening theme of the Third Symphony. The songs in general, and 'Bön till

³⁹ *ibid.*, 294. 'Jag vet bara att vi icke äro usla förbrytare – och att jag likväl intet angrar, intet önskar ogjort, ty jag bands för alltid till dig, om för att gå under eller lefva, det blir en annan nödvändighet. Men lefva vill jag, om blott du är med. Och då, med eller utan syndabekännelser, förlåta oss själfva – ty ingen annan gör det'. (Letter from Rangström to Omon, 16 October 1925.)

⁴⁰ Helmer, *Ture Rangström*, 295. 'den store lisförstöraren'.

natten' in particular, will be investigated here not only for their own merits, but as a means of better understanding the larger work, and, by extension, the composer himself.

Landscape tropes in Rangström's *romanser*

The Night Songs

Helmer states that 'ever since "Notturmo" for piano (1903), "night" in Rangström's poetic imagination can often be an agonized state.'⁴¹ He thus places Rangström's understanding of this ubiquitous trope firmly in the mainstream Lieder tradition, where physical darkness had long been used as an image or setting for mental or emotional disturbance. Although factually accurate, Helmer's summary is over-simplified. The following survey of Rangström's night songs reveals that the idea of night carried many complementary associations for Rangström and that, even as a metaphor for anguish, it often occurred in the context of landscape.

To undertake a detailed survey of the subject of night in Rangström's songs would be beyond the reach of this chapter: night appears in the text, title or setting of more than 40 songs, with a corresponding abundance of nuance and association. A broad approach is therefore called for here. First, texts where night is simply an incidental setting, or mentioned in passing, have been discounted.⁴² The remaining texts have then been gathered into five overlapping categories depending on their focus: love, summer nights, landscape, a dark or disturbed mood, or a sense of comfort (see Figure 15, p. 169). The first group, Love, is the least distinguishable from the Lieder tradition: a handful of gentle poems that extol or directly address a beloved. However, where this category meets the next (Summer Nights) a more recognizably Nordic love song emerges, in which the distinctively short summer night prompts thoughts of love. The high-latitude phenomenon of long, light evenings, though not strictly a feature of the physical landscape, is frequently a key element in the experience of it, i.e. in the lived landscape. An argument could therefore be made for considering the Summer night category a subset of the next (Landscape/Seascape) but in some of the texts, the landscape aspect is simply a background. Only texts where it comes into focus have been included in the Landscape category. The fourth category incorporates a range of moods (bleak, bitter, haunting, anguished, and so on) in which darkness is more than physical, carrying a sense of

⁴¹ *ibid.*, 140. 'alltifrån *Notturmo* för piano (1903) kunde "natten" i Rangström [sic] poetiska fantasi ofta vara ett ångestfullt tillstånd.'

⁴² For example, 'En gammal nyårsvisa', which retells a ballad about supernatural comings and goings on New Year's Eve, and 'Välkommen åter snälla sol', which celebrates the returning summer sun. Two texts with explicitly night-related titles (Ernst Norlind's *Natt* and Ola Hansson's *Månskensstycke*) proved unattainable and are therefore not included in Figures 15 and 16.

mental disturbance or existential angst. In a few texts, this is resolved by, or juxtaposed with, the idea of night as a bringer of relief or rest, giving us Comfort as the fifth and final category. Grouping the night songs in these five categories allows us to make some observations which are no less important for being general. It is immediately apparent that many of the texts – more than half – belong to more than one category, suggesting that poets regularly followed similar chains of association when writing about the night. It is these established associations that have to be accounted for before attributing any particular night symbolism to Rangström. There is, however, evidence for the centrality of Landscape – or, as it so often is, Seascape – in Rangström's personal associations with night.

Each category's significance can be measured in three ways: firstly, and most obviously, the number of texts it contains; secondly, the number of texts that are exclusive to it and thus validate it as an independent category rather than an extension or subsection of another; thirdly, the number of categories with which it overlaps. The second and third measurements are not as contradictory as they might appear to be at first glance: overlapping with multiple categories indicates a theme's breadth – the diversity of connections which can be drawn from it – and does not preclude it from also containing its own exclusive texts. By the first of these measures, Landscape/Seascape emerges as the most significant category within Rangström's night songs, although the heavily overlapping section of Dark/Disturbed songs comes a very close second. The positions are reversed according to the second measure: eight exclusively Dark songs to Landscape's six. Crucially, though, Landscape is the only category that overlaps with all four others. When mapping the themes of the night songs, it is thus quite literally central.

There is some vindication here of Helmer's assertion that in Rangström's *romanser*, as in much of the wider art-song tradition, night represents an anguished state of mind. However, the fact that Rangström set his own texts as well as existing poetry provides an ideal means of gauging the relative importance of all five categories for him personally. Ten of the Landscape songs are settings of his own poetry, as indicated by the dotted lines in Figure 15. Apart from the 1920 'Kvällsvisa' ('Evening's song'), they belong to the 'Havets sommar' and 'Notturmo' sets, which Rangström composed in 1913-15 and 1917, respectively. Without exception they all portray the sea as well as the night, cementing the relationship between these two tropes in Rangström's output. Even their titles ('The sea's summer' and 'Nocturne') perch on either side of the porous border between the two categories. In fact, only one of the 'Notturmo' songs is fully nocturnal: the first portrays twilight, the third dawn, and in all three an emotional connection with the seascape is central. Conversely, 'Havets sommar' vividly describes a summer day in the skerries, from dawn's invigorating joy to a dark and foreboding moonrise, and yet night is mentioned not only in the first and last songs, where

we would expect it to appear, but also in the hazy musings of the fourth ('I middagshettan', 'In the midday heat') and the angst-ridden sixth ('Efter strider', 'After battles'). This rather bizarre disregard for chronology indicates the dominance of night in Rangström's perception of the seascape. The reverse – that is, the dominance of the seascape in Rangström's perception of night – can be demonstrated simply by removing Rangström's texts from the equation altogether, as in Figure 16 (p. 160). With Rangström's texts excluded, the balance between the categories shifts dramatically. The categories of Love, Summer Nights and Comfort remain virtually untouched. The Dark category loses a few of its shared songs, but gains significance relative to the other categories: it becomes the unquestionably dominant theme and retains all eight of its 'exclusively dark' songs. Meanwhile, the formerly central category of Landscape shrinks drastically and contains just one song ('Gammal bonde', 'Old peasant') that is not incorporated into any other section.

Helmer's statement that night 'can often [represent] an agonized state' is therefore perfectly true, but it is certainly not the whole truth. It is a misleading simplification for two reasons. Firstly, it reinforces the mainstream elements in Rangström's night symbolism at the expense of the distinctively northern imagery of light-filled summer nights. Secondly, it fails to reflect Rangström's preoccupation with landscape, let alone the extent to which his own poetry dwelt on the composite trope of a nocturnal seascape. Rangström claimed that the central motivation for his forays into poetry was that he had not found existing works that conveyed what he wished to. To use his own words, his texts were 'expressions of personal sentiments, which hitherto he had not found in the available literature'.⁴³ Figures 15 and 16 show that there was no shortage of angst-ridden nocturnal poetry, but Rangström clearly felt the need to express something else as well, and so his personal associations with night are far from a foregone conclusion. This overview of the night songs has been necessarily broad, but thirteen of the songs from Figure 15 also number among Rangström's sea songs, and the following survey will cover the composite trope of nocturnal seascape in more detail.

The sea songs

Fewer than twenty of Rangström's songs focus directly on the sea, but they are dominated by the composer's own texts even more dramatically than the night songs are, and thus offer significant insight into what the sea symbolized for Rangström. The ten songs of 'Havets sommar', the three of 'Notturmo', and 'Kvällsvisa', together make up more than two thirds of the sea songs, and overwhelmingly weight the 1910s as Rangström's most sea-focused decade (see Figure 17, p. 161). Of the final four songs, three are also night songs, and appeared in Figure 15. Before considering

⁴³ Helmer, *Ture Rangström*, 146. '... uttryck för personliga stämningar, vilka han dittills icke funnit i den tillgängliga litteraturen.'

Rangström's own texts, we will look briefly at these other four songs in order of increasing symbolic complexity, as suggested by the number of night song categories to which each belongs.

Bergman's 'Havet' ('The sea') is the most straightforward of the four and was composed in 1916, in between 'Havets sommar' and 'Notturmo'. Unlike the others, it has no connection to the night, and consists almost entirely of a vibrant description of (ostensibly, at least) the sea. Only in the final line does Bergman introduce the persona of a Nereid, and the possibility that 'it' refers to the sea-nymph, whose characteristics match that of its environment. The overwhelming impressions are of constant movement, unpredictability, and vivid colour. Bergman highlights this last element with three stark phrases: *grönt som ärg, svart av hot, vit och kall* (green as tarnished copper, black with threat, white and cold). This uncompromising colour palette is also, as we shall see, a feature of Rangström's texts in 'Havets sommar'.

'Sommarnatt' ('Summer night') was composed in 1938 but never published. It is the third of three songs with texts by Helge Gräslund, a native of Gräsmarö in Gryt's archipelago and a personal friend of Rangström. Rangström wrote that the text took 'its modest and true-hearted uprightness from that part of the world – somewhere in Östergötland's stretch of coast – where the people have a beloved gentleness like the nature itself, where the oak wood goes right down to the seashore, [where] almost nothing can stop the storm that rumbles and rages around the outermost, wild skerries'.⁴⁴ The title of the set, 'Hem och hav' ('Home and sea'), underlines the sense of a community nestled in its landscape that is so effortlessly captured in Gräslund's simple text.

'Sommarnatt'

'Summer night'

Sjön sjunger kring hållarna.
Tystnaden riktigt hörs
ovan dningens eviga brus.
Innanför byarnas olåsta hus
sömmen av intet störs.
Kring hållarna sjunger sjön.

The sea sings around the outcrops.
The silence is truly heard
above the swell's eternal roar.
Inside the villages' unlocked houses
nothing disturbs the sleep.
Around the outcrops the sea sings.

These six lines encapsulate the idea of landscape as experience rather than observation. There is no visual aspect here at all, only an auditory landscape of waves against rock and an experiential one of utter security – the polar opposite of the angst-ridden night pictures in the Dark category of Figure 15.

The song of the sea also plays a part in the haunting 'Sjöfararen vid milan' ('The seafarer at the charcoal pit', 1918), but it is a rather different one. There, the sea-wind stirs the dust around the

⁴⁴ Cited in Helmer, *Ture Rangström*, 366. '... sin försynta och trohjärtade redlighet från den trakt på jorden – någonstans i Östergötlands havsband – där folket har en vänsäll blidhet som naturen själv, där ekskogen går ända ned till havsstranden, fast ingenting kan hindra stormen att mullra och rasa kring de yttersta, vilda skären.'

charcoal pit and fills the woods with its song, triggering in an old sailor a powerful and sorrowful longing to be at sea once more. The symbolism is straightforward but layered: the sea represents freedom, adventure, youth and life – or, just perhaps, an afterlife. In this text, seascape is set against landscape, motion against stasis, and the elements of air and water against those of earth and fire. The seafarer is ‘bound’ to the charcoal pit, surrounded by pines, standing over glowing coals, hemmed in by shadows and falling night. By way of contrast, the wind that plays with the coal-dust comes from where ‘sails shine on the sea’s wide space / and the waves throw themselves with thunder and with foam / against the beaches of foreign lands.’⁴⁵ However, this sense of optimism, freedom, and the association of the sea with youth is counterbalanced even within this one poem by a second association: death. The old seafarer is sorrowful to the point of death and his longing for the sea goes hand-in-hand with a desire to be free from the pain of old age, all in the context of a darkening and chilling twilight. The ostensibly contradictory use of the sea as the location of youthful memories and as a metaphor for death is a feature of Rangström’s own texts about the sea, and we will return to it in a moment.

‘En båt med blommor’ (‘A boat with flowers’) is the only song in Figure 15 to belong to four out of the five categories (Love, Landscape, Dark, and Comfort). It is addressed to a beloved, follows a twilight voyage downriver as a metaphor for death, and yet exudes a sense of contentment that alleviates the dark imagery. The sea clearly symbolizes death, in a direct contrast to ‘life’s lands’ past which the boat sails, but the lovers’ unity trumps any uncertainty or fear. ‘We are not separated, as before, on the murky sea, / my heart shall be close to your heart / and together we sail in the night, together...’ Indeed, the rapturous final lines establish the song as a *Liebestod*: ‘The moment that quenches the last starry flame / grants a higher joy than life could’.⁴⁶

The non-Rangström sea texts, then, encompass a range of associations; once again we must turn to Rangström’s own poetry in order to distinguish any sea-symbolism that is peculiar to him. Rangström’s song-cycle ‘Havets sommar’ and the 1917 set ‘Notturmo’ both predate his setting of Fröding’s ‘Sjöfararen’ text and, between them, foreshadow its double association of the sea with youth and death.⁴⁷ For Rangström, who often produced a set of songs within weeks if not days, ‘Havets sommar’ was a relatively long-term project: the first fragments of texts appear in a sketchbook from 1909; the first poems were written in June 1911; the last song-setting dates from May 1915; and the complete cycle was then published the following year. That said, much of the

⁴⁵ Gustaf Fröding, *Gitarr- och dragharmonika* (Stockholm: Albert Bonnier, 1891). ‘seglen de glänsa på havets vida rum / och vågorna de kasta sig med dån och med skum / mot stränderna av främmande länder.’

⁴⁶ Oscar Levertin, *Dikter: Tredje samlingen* (Stockholm: Albert Bonniers, 1912). ‘lifvets länder’; ‘Vi skiljas ej, som förr, på dunkla hafvet / mitt hjta skall ditt hjärta vara nära / och samman segla vi i natten, samman...’; ‘Den stund, som släcker sista stjärneflamman, / beskär en högre fröjd än lifvet kunnat...’

⁴⁷ Rangström could, of course, have already encountered Fröding’s text before writing his own poetry.

composition happened in short bursts of activity: eight of the texts were written in a month, around the turn of the year 1912-1913, and six of the settings in the first fortnight of August 1913. The three-song set 'Notturmo' was produced in 1917, Rangström's most fruitful year for *romanser*, and then 'Kvällsvisa' in 1920. Table 4 highlights the key idea(s) of each of Rangström's sea texts (see Appendix D for the complete texts and translations).

In 'Havets sommar', images of night, dreams, sunlight, and death abound, all set in a closely observed seascape. There is evident support here for Helmer's rather off-hand designation of the sea as an 'element of death and atonement in Rangström's image-world',⁴⁸ but there is also something less tangible in play: the sea as a location of youthful memories and of the elusive promise of something *more* – a golden dream or a moment of inspiration. There are elements of youthful optimism and promise right from the start of 'Havets sommar', although Rangström's association of the sea with youth first appears explicitly in the third song from 'Notturmo', and later in 'Kvällsvisa'. What these more subtle associations have in common is a sense of potential, which provides an important foil for the bleaker symbolism of death.

In 'Notturmo' and 'Kvällsvisa', this sense of longing for something as yet unrealized is effectively expressed by Rangström's use of the same soft and persuasive verbs in all four poems (swelling, sounding, trembling, bursting, yearning, rising, etc). However, in 'Havets sommar', the language is strikingly different: it is very direct and uncompromising. Rangström uses stark colours (black, blue, blood-red) and often pairs them with a noun to form a composite word (foam-white, sun-white, sun-red, rust-yellow). Then there are his composite nouns and adjectives (sea-foam, sun-smoke; winter-frozen), all formed from thoroughly everyday words. And lastly, he names vegetation with almost unpoetic precision (lichen, seaweed, bog-myrtle, arum lily, cotton-grass, clubmoss). The overall impression is one of vibrancy, vigour, and – despite the repeated references to dreams – of reality. These are no second-hand descriptions; they come with the authority of one who has seen and felt everything about which he writes. Rangström seems to have experienced the vibrancy of the Östergötland seascape in an almost synesthetic way:

But now Finnfjärden sparkles in the evening fire like an F sharp major triad for large orchestra with six trumpets! Orange and sulphur-green in the west, silver-grey in the east; and the dashing southeast, which sometimes sports monsoons around the spring, sweeps with uneasy, heaving swells over black depths and pale shoals; it twists and tosses, because there is a storm out in the sea.⁴⁹

⁴⁸ Helmer, *Ture Rangström* 423. '... dödens och försoningens element i Rangströms bildvärld.'

⁴⁹ Rangström, 'Dolce far niente', *Svenska Dagbladet*, 12 June 1943. 'Men nu sprakar Finnfjärden i aftonbranden som en Fiss-durtrekläng för stor orkester med sex trumpeter! Orange och svavelgrönt i väster, silvergrått i öster; och den käckä sydosten, som stundom leker monsun om våren, sveper med oroligt kullrande dyningar över svarta djup och bleka grundbottnar, den vrider och kastar, ty det är storm ute i havet.'

Table 4. Summary of Rangström's sea texts

Havets sommar	
1. Gryning (Dawn)	The dawn offers a 'dream of life' but there is an enigmatic note in the repetition of 'a harbour, a grave becomes ours'.
2. Solstänk (Sun-splash)	A vivid description of the sights and sounds of seabirds and the shoreline.
3. Regnvisa (Rain-song)	The sea waves seem to hold the promise of a dream that is as unattainable as the sun.
4. I middagshettan (In the midday heat)	'Quiet death' lives in a shrine-like tarn, where all life's emotions sink, as the sea's eternal lullaby sings on.
5. Julidagen (The July day)	Scent and colour are the focus here, and 'the heart carries a golden dream over [the] waves'.
6. Efter strider (After battles)	A drastic change in mood: black, scarred cliffs prompt angst-ridden thoughts of a 'dream of life that disappeared'.
7. Solnedgång (Sunset)	A magical sunset 'fastens the heart to the sea's dream-world' but ends with a 'last birdcall, lamenting in the west'.
8. Skymning (Dusk)	Sea-foam glides silently like swans sleeping in night's embrace while dawn waits in the bays.
9. Månskensstycke (Moonlight piece)	The landscape itself sleeps and dreams, and an ominous, red moon rises 'through the night's dead, out of the sea'.
10. Natt (Night)	We steer over – and towards – 'the evergreen forests of the deep', where the dead sleep.
Notturmo	
Havet susar (The sea sighs)	A star rising from the sea inspires a moment of profound joy.
En värld a skräck (A world of fear)	Sailing in 'a world of fear and dead dreams', the light of the torch in the prow defies a threatening eternity.
En dyning sucker (A swell sighs)	The morning breeze and rising sun clear the mist and darkness, and 'you see what all dreams yearn [for]: your youth's summer-sea'.
Stilla visor	
Kvällsvisa (Evening's song)	A star above the waves prompts memories of childhood dreams as 'everything that hurt' sinks into the sea.

Given the similar colour palette of the language in this description and in 'Havets sommar', it is surely no coincidence that the song-cycle is in B minor and that its melodies circle around the dominant, F#. Perhaps it was this acutely observed and personally experienced seascape that Rangström could not find portrayed in existing poetry. The specificity of his sea songs is far removed from the generic landscapes of the broader Lieder tradition, in which rivers, forests, and mountains (let alone the local vegetation) are almost always unidentified. The geographical anonymity of Lieder landscapes, and the illusion of universality that they create, is doubtless a reflection of nineteenth-century German nationalism just as Rangström's precisely-located sea songs are a product of his twentieth-century sense of Swedishness. James Parsons has pointed out that:

[The Lied] played a considerable part in giving voice – literally as it happens – to a burgeoning German national identity, so much so that by the second half of the nineteenth century the Lied had become a kind of sounding manifestation of cultural hegemony. It may not be too fanciful to suggest that the Lied's development parallels that of Germany itself: from a collection of independently governed agencies bound only by language in the eighteenth century to a united country in 1871.⁵⁰

The generic depictions of nature in Lieder, then, and their assumption of universality, appeared in the context of a people moving towards national unity. Rangström's sea songs, in contrast, were composed in a country that was well-established and had enjoyed a century of peace; their intimately-observed details exemplify the regional diversity and sense of local belonging that were seen as part of Swedish identity in the early twentieth century.⁵¹

Just as Rangström's *romanser* differed, in the specificity of their landscapes, from the generic portrayals of nature in the Lieder tradition, so their vividness was a deliberate contrast to the limited palette of Swedish salon music. Rangström had little patience for this style, which had dominated the previous generation of Swedish composers (notably, in the music of Emil Sjögren and Wilhelm Peterson-Berger), and which he saw as shallow and sentimental.⁵² We have already come across the 1911 article in which he promoted the Swedish landscape as a source of inspiration, but he did so as a direct alternative to what he saw as a clichéd and innocuous genre:

The idyll was unassuming. Both in sorrow and joy. Our 'sorrow in rose-red' is already world famous – not least from the last world exhibition, where it officially appeared as our art music's only character and label. Nor was it without truth. Our music has actually, for a hundred years, been ashamed to mourn in anything but in rose-red, and God knows, if it dared to rejoice in anything but in winter-grey. They were the idyll's Swedish colours... Our music gave too many beautiful words about emotions,

⁵⁰ James Parsons, 'Introduction: why the Lied?' in *The Cambridge Companion to the Lied*, ed. James Parsons (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 4.

⁵¹ Helmer has pin-pointed the exact locations of the places that inspired each of the 'Havets sommar' texts (pp. 136-137). He was aided by Per Gräslund, son of Helge Gräslund (who was a friend of Rangström and the author of 'Sommarnatt') and a researcher of the archipelago lifestyle.

⁵² Helmer, *Ture Rangström*, 64.

but not emotion itself (for that we did not dare to feel), but above all it gave so very little of real acts, of enhanced, saturated personal power...

What are we now waiting for? What does the music of the 'royal Swedes' wait for?

Is it for a sorrow in black and a joy in red, or is it for the monumental lyric poetry in Swedish, in gold and blue, which our art music does not own, but our literature has imagined and hinted at[?]⁵³

Rangström's sea texts clearly match the agenda he laid out in this article. The specificity of his landscape writing deters any attempt to stereotype, and his bold use of colour stands out from the dichromatic tendencies of salon music. The realism of his landscape observation, including detailed flora and fauna, coexists with internal perceptions, in particular, his highly personal association of the sea with youth and dreams, as well as the more widely recognized symbolism of death.

The pre-symphony star songs

While the majority of Rangström's poetry deals with the night and/or the sea, only three of his own texts refer to stars – and one of them is negative ('no star gleams' in the anguished night of 'En värld av skräck'). And whereas the sea songs were almost all composed in the 1910s, the star songs (including those with texts by other authors) are spaced out across three different stages of Rangström's career (see Figure 18, p. 162). Stars appear in two of his earliest published songs, then in a handful of songs from 1917 and 1920, and then in five of his mature *romanser*. The Third Symphony, his wordless, orchestral star song, stands in the 13-year gap between the second and third clusters, as does the song with which it shares its main melody, 'Bön till natten'. By exploring the symbolism of Rangström's star songs, the following survey will shed light on the meaning of the symphony.

Rangström set Karl-Erik Forsslund's 'Vita liljorna dofta' ('White the lilies smell') in 1902; it was his earliest song to be published. The poet compares his 'dream bride' to three pairs of nature images: she is whiter than fragrant lilies and lilies of the valley, purer than the stars which blossom like yellow roses, and more distant than the sea and sky. The stars are a direct metaphor for purity,

⁵³ Rangström, 'Svenskt lynne – svensk musik'. 'Idyllen var anspråkslös. Både i sorg och glädje. Vår "sorg i rosenröt" är ju redan världsbekant – icke minst från en sista världsutställningen, där den officiellt figurerade som vår tonkonsts enda karaktär och märke. Det var icke heller utan sanning. Vår musik har verkligen under hundra år blygts för att sörja annat än i rosenrött, och gud vet, om den vågat glädjas annat än i vintergrått. Det var idyllens svenska färger... Vår musik gaf alltså många vackra ord om känslorna, dock icke känslan själf, ty den vågade vi icke känna, men framför allt gaf den så oerhördt litet af verklig handling, af stegrad, mättad personlig kraft... Hvad vänta vi nu? Hvarpå väntar de "kungliga svenskarnen" musik? Är det på en sorg i svart och en glädje i rött, eller är det på den monumentala lyrik i svenskt, i guld och blått, som vår tonkonst icke äger, men vår litterature har anat och antydt...' Rangström's reference to 'sorrow in rose-red' is a quote from a lengthy poem by Esaias Tegnér (1782-1846) written in 1836 for the fiftieth anniversary of the Swedish Academy. It extols the cultural glory-days of Gustav III, and stereotypes the Nordic bard as essentially melancholic even in the midst of merriment.

in the innocence of the bride: 'purer than all gold, you shine without guilt, clearer than all golden stars'.⁵⁴ Rangström never set another of Forsslund's poems; by way of contrast, 'Stjärnöga' ('Star-eye') was the first of many Bergman poems to grab his compositional interest. Rangström was still a teenager when he set it in 1904, but the poem's world-weary protagonist seems far older. Facing 'the road that goes forward through dark countries',⁵⁵ the speaker directly addresses the star as a benevolent and constant guide in the face of life's fleeting experiences. The final request introduces religious associations:

ur 'Stjärnöga'	from 'Star-eye'
Tag mina händer och led mig in i ditt ljusa rike. Stjärnöga, giv mig din fred och låt mig varda din like.	Take my hands and lead me into your bright kingdom. Star-eye, give me your peace and let me be your equal.

These ideas of guidance through death and into glory, of peace bestowed, and of transformation into another's likeness are all drawn from the Christian doctrines of resurrection and eternal life, with Bergman's protagonist appealing to the personified star to fulfil Christ's role.

The grand themes of purity and eternity reappear in the first of Rangström's own star texts, alongside two new associations: atonement, and musical inspiration. In 'Havet susar', a single star's reflection in the summer sea provides atonement 'for anguish and lust, crime and lament, deed and dream',⁵⁶ as well as a rapturous moment of inspiration which 'sweetly devastates' the heart:

ur 'Havet susar'	from 'The sea sighs'
Klingar det en ton i natten, bär den nattens hemlighet, stigande från stilla vatten, liv och död och evighet, oändlighetens aning.	It sounds a note in the night, it carries the night's secret, rising from still waters, life and death and eternity, infinity's idea.

This is the only star text to directly link the appearance of a star with the sounding of a musical note. That the words are Rangström's own suggests that this correspondence between the visual and the aural spheres is one that he himself experienced; years later, in his 1941 poem 'Avsked till båten' ('Farewell to the boat'), and in a similar context of death and eternity, he writes that 'another [world] lies hidden in the twilight's tone'.⁵⁷ However, Rangström's setting of 'Havet susar' pushes us to understand the sounding tone as a metaphor for inspiration rather than a truly synesthetic

⁵⁴ Karl-Erik Forsslund, 'Vita liljorna dofta'. (Forsslund's publisher, Wahlström & Widstrand, were unable to confirm which of his works contains this poem.) 'Renare än allt guld, strålar du utan skuld, klarare än alla gyllne stjärnor.'

⁵⁵ Bo Bergman, *Marionetterna* (Stockholm: Albert Bonnier, 1903). 'vägen som går fram genom mörka länder'.

⁵⁶ 'kval och lystnad, brott och klagan, dåd och dröm...'

⁵⁷ Rangström, 'Avsked till båten', September 1941 (Elsa Nodermann Papper). 'en ny ligger gömd i kvälldagerns ton'. The word 'ton' can be translated as either 'note' or 'tone'.

impression. That is to say, rather than writing a particularly striking note or chord to coincide with the words 'klingar det en ton', Rangström brings back the melody of the first verse; the sight of the star thus gives rise to the sound of the song. The second 'Notturmo' song captures the same dual association of atonement and inspiration negatively, that is, by the stars' absence:

ur 'En värld av skräck'

from 'A world of fear'

Stilla skrider, –
 evig sorg, som ingen klagan höjer,
 kval, där ingen stjärna glimmar –
 natten hän mot mörkrets tider.
 Evtigt stum är natten.

Silently, the night –
 eternal sorrow, that no lament lifts,
 anguish, where no star gleams –
 glides away towards the hours of darkness.
 The night is forever mute.

Without the atoning presence of the star, there is no relief from internal turmoil, nor is there song: night itself is struck dumb.

The associations shift somewhat in 'Under Vintergatan' ('Under the Milky Way'), composed just one month later. There is some overlap – Rangström's use of 'rolöst, hemlöst' in 'En värld' may well have been borrowed from Bergman's text – but here the stars *prompt* anxious thoughts rather than relieving them. In Bergman's text, the sight of the Milky Way's 'bridge' in the heavens serves as a starting point for a wanderer's musings about his place in the world. His bleak awareness of passing time has much in common with 'Stjärnöga', but the emphasis here, in keeping with the Wanderer trope, is on isolation, estrangement and a powerful, though shapeless, longing.

'Under Vintergatan'

'Under the Milky Way' [lit. the Winter Street]

Högt i det höga slår
 vintergatan sin bro.
 Ensam och fri jag går
 som i en främmad stad.

High in the heights,
 the Milky Way sets its bridge.⁵⁸
 Alone and free I go,
 as in a foreign city.

Hemlös, fast jag har hem,
 rolös, fast allt är ro,
 längtar jag, men till vem?
 hoppas jag, men på vad?

Homeless, though I have a home,
 restless, although all is at rest,
 I long, but for whom?
 I hope, but in what?

Snön gör det tyst, och år
 läggs till årens rad.
 Vänner, ungdom och tro
 djupt i det djupa bo.⁵⁹

The snow makes it silent, and year
 is added to the line of years.
 Friends, youth and faith
 live deep in the depths.

The sense here of weary nostalgia carries over to an extent in Rangström's next star song, the 1920 setting of his own poem 'Kvällsvisa' ('The evening's song'). However, that text has much more in

⁵⁸ Bergman's use of the verb 'slår' (to beat or strike) is rather unusual and tricky to translate. Here, 'set' has been used, being a verb with a flexible enough meaning to leave space for interpretation.

⁵⁹ Bergman, *Marionetterna*.

common with 'Havet susar' and its image of a solitary star over the sea. It uses the same vocabulary of dreams, waves, and bright and gentle night, and its sense of nostalgia is softer, sweeter, and less hopeless than in 'Under Vintergatan'.

'Kvällsvisa'

Stundar nattens blida fall,
går en dynings drömska svall
trött i sorl mot stranden.
Står en stjärna över våg,
bärs en dröm i drömmars tåg
stilla över landen.

Stjärnan darrar blek och klar,
allt som sårat allt som skar
sjönk i djupens strömmar.
över hav och över land
spinner minnets tysta hand
ljusa barndomsdrömmar.

'The evening's song'

The night's gentle fall draws near,
a swell's dreamy surge moves,
tired of rippling against the shore.
A star stands over the wave,
carries a dream in dream's train
quietly over the land.

The star trembles pale and clear,
everything that hurt, everything that will
sank in the deep currents.
Over sea and over land
memory's silent hand spins
bright childhood dreams.

'Kvällsvisa' is the last of Rangström's star songs that predates the Third Symphony. Thus far in Rangström's output, stars have symbolized purity, eternity, dreams, a longing for something Other, and a source of comfort or atonement. In terms of this last association, Rangström's own texts strikingly prefigure the language and imagery of Bergman's poem 'Bön till natten', which was published in 1922 and which he set in the summer of 1924. It is not strictly a star song (it is addressed to the personified night in much the same way as 'Stjärnöga' is addressed to a star) but Rangström's recycling of its melody as the main theme of his Third Symphony places it right at the centre of this survey. Through this, and Bergman's use of deep water as a simile for night, 'Bön till natten' is connected to all three of the symphony's key tropes. The correspondences between Bergman's text and Rangström's go some way towards explaining its prominent position in Rangström's output and, eventually, its inclusion in his funeral service: Rangström had ventured into poetry to express ideas that he had not found in existing works, and in 'Bön till natten' some of those very ideas appear, condensed into Bergman's economical, disciplined style, and imbued with the characteristic melancholy of the poet whose work Rangström set more often than any other's.

'Bön till natten'

Slut är dagens lust som larmar
vild och kort.
Djupa natt, i dina armar,
bär oss bort.

Vid ditt bröst det nådefulla
skyl vår skam,
medan glömskans timmar rulla

'Prayer to the night'

Ended is the day's desire that clamours
wild and brief.
Deep night, in your arms,
carry us away.

At your merciful breast
cover our shame,
while oblivion's hours roll

smärtlöst fram,	painlessly forth,
som en flod, där allt får drunkna glider kall över dolda brott och sjunkna syndafall.	like a flood, where everything may drown, glides coldly over hidden crimes and sunken falleness.
Du som ensam dig förbarnar och ger svar, milda natt, i dina armar, håll oss kvar. ⁶⁰	You who alone have pity and give answer, mild night, in your arms, keep us.

The extent to which Rangström's writing prefigured and echoed Bergman's poem is noteworthy. The approaching night embraces, as in 'Skymning' and (less directly) in 'En dyning suckar'; it covers crime and sinful desire, as in 'Havet susar'; it is mild, as in 'Kvällsvisa'; and it offers forgetfulness, like the deep water of 'I middagshettan'. The idea of comfort, as everything troublesome sinks into the depths, also appears explicitly in these last two texts. Bergman's concept of merciful night clearly resonated with Rangström during the summer of 1924, though he extends it to apply to nature in general. Alone on Gräsmarö, he wrote to Omon that nature was:

... my only truly great source of health in times of need; its melancholy matched with mine – its joy could be dark and its health was related to mine. And nature never wounded. To live a fresh and healthy and simple life with it – yes, of course that would be a mercy and a happiness.⁶¹

Weeks later, after the Håkansons' visit, Rangström then wrote to Stenhammar, 'my summer has been merciful'.⁶²

These ideas of mercy and atonement are loaded with religious meaning; that and the metaphor of night as reconciling death, gently ending the clamour of life, reinvigorated a long-term aim of Rangström's to compose a secular mass. About a fortnight after composing the 'Bön till natten', Rangström wrote to Bergman soliciting a text for such a project:

It is 'Bön till natten' that gave me the impulse, but I have already carried the idea [for] several years, and it is conceived as a contemporary life-or-death mass, a kind of profane requiem, for believers and unbelievers, mostly the latter. Formally imagined for great resources: choir, soloists, with orchestra. But there is a lack of a strong poem for such a work.⁶³

⁶⁰ Bo Bergman, *Livets ögon(?)* (Stockholm: Albert Bonnier, 1922).

⁶¹ Cited in Helmer, *Ture Rangström*, 272. '...min enda riktiga stora hälsokälla i nöden, dess svårmod stämde med mitt, dess glädje kunde vara mörk och dess hälsa var släkt med min. Och naturen sårade aldrig. Att lefva ett friskt och sundt och enkelt lif med den – ja visst vore det en nåd och en lycka.' (Letter from Rangström to Omon, 17 June 1924.)

⁶² *ibid.*, 287. 'Min sommar har varit nåderik...' (Letter from Rangström to Stenhammar, 20 August 1924.)

⁶³ *ibid.*, 277. 'Det är Bön till natten som gifvit mig impulsen men idén bär jag sedan några år, och det är tanken på en nutida lufs- eller dödsmissa, en art profant requiem, för trogna och otrogna, mest det sista. Formellt sedt tänkt för den stora apparaten: körer, soli, med orkester. Men det är den starka dikten som saknas för ett sådant verk.' (Letter from Rangström to Bergman, 25 June 1924.)

Bergman politely declined the suggested collaboration, citing the impossibility of producing such a text to order. But the request on its own is significant enough, for what it reveals of Rangström's reading of 'Bön till natten'. The poem clearly triggered his desire to deal with the grand themes of life and death in a quasi-religious manner, imbuing landscape with the divine qualities of eternity and purity. That the secular mass never appeared raises the significant possibility that the Third Symphony incorporates some of Rangström's thwarted ideas along with the melody of the song that awakened them. It may be that the use of the 'Bön till natten' there symbolizes something pseudo-spiritual: Rangström's personal experience of transcendence in the archipelago seascapes, and the invocation of the personified nature that, for him, took on the role of a deity. This certainly tallies with the composer's own designation of the 'Bön till natten' melody, where it appears in the symphony, as a 'light-hymn' (*Ijushymn*).⁶⁴ We will return to the hymn-like characteristics of 'Bön till natten' later; first we must complete this survey of the star symbolism in Rangström's texts and *romanser*.

Rangström's epigraph for the Third Symphony backs up the theory that the work relocates religious ideas into the archipelago landscape. Its title, 'Stella maris' ('Star of the sea'), has been attributed to the Virgin Mary for at least a thousand years, but is also a name for the Pole Star, which has been used for maritime navigation for even longer. Quite apart from Rangström's original intention to compose a secular mass, there is a good extra-textual reason for expecting his addressee to be the star rather than the saint: Sweden's four-hundred-year heritage of Lutheranism renders a prayer to Mary unlikely. Although Rangström's text does draw on some of the language and ideas of the Latin hymn 'Ave Maris Stella', which asks Mary to 'send forth light to the blind' (*profer lumen cæcis*) and to 'bestow a pure life' (*vitam præsta puram*), the connection is not strong or exclusive enough to outweigh the more straightforward reading of the text. There is a far closer resemblance, in the image of the star standing over the sea, to 'Havet susar' and 'Kvällsvisa', where the idea of eternity was evoked with no sense of personal deity. There is therefore no need to move from the assumption that Rangström's text is directed to the Pole Star.

'Stella maris'

'Star of the sea'

Stella maris! Eviga fackla
över tidens hav och ström.
Natten brusar. Fästen vackla.
Lys mig genom dödens dröm.

Star of the sea! Eternal torch
over time's sea and current.
Night roars. Strongholds falter.
Light me through death's dream.

Stella maris! Eviga bölja
över brusten spant och sten.
Djupen blåna. Morgnar följa.
Tvag mig vitnat kall och ren.

Star of the sea! Eternal wave
over broken ribs and stone.
The depths turn blue. Mornings follow.
Wash me whitened cold and clean.

⁶⁴ *ibid.*, 312. Rangström made the comment in a radio broadcast, 21 November 1930.

Stella maris! Sjunkande stiga
med en bränning ingen vet,
vill jag i ditt ljus och viga
mig till rymders evighet.

Star of the sea! Sinking to rise
with a burning no one knows,
I want [to be] in your light, and consecrate
myself to the heavens' eternity.

There are clear echoes, here, of the earlier star songs – and, indeed, some foreshadowing of the later ones. The association with eternity has been one of the strongest threads throughout the survey, first appearing explicitly in 'Havet susar' but implicit in several other songs. The plea for light and guidance through death, as well as the disciplined rhyme scheme and regular rhythms, comes straight from 'Stjärnöga', while the idea of purity in verse two links right back to 'Vita liljorna dofta' and appears in negative (that is, as an awareness of guilt that must be dealt with) in 'Stjärnöga', 'Havet susar' and 'Bön till natten'. 'Stella maris' confirms Rangström's tendency to reattribute divine characteristics to features of the natural world, and to relocate religious ideas in landscapes. It implies a transfer of allegiance from the Christian God of his country's religious heritage to a romanticized and personified view of nature. But it is also the last time that we see a star's transcendence and purity provoking a sense of guilt. Rangström's request for cleansing does not return again; attitudes of defiance, affirmation or resignation begin to appear instead in his star songs. Indeed, the symphony's position at the chronological centre of the star songs lends it the potential to be seen as a pivot point – an interpretation that will be considered as we complete this survey.

The post-symphony star songs

It was not until 1933, several years after composing the Third Symphony, that Rangström returned to the trope of stars in his songs. It was another Bergman text that led the way, but its mood is dramatically different from any of the preceding star songs. 'Jordens önskan' is the first in a set of five Bergman songs entitled 'Trots allt' ('Despite everything'), and its mood is as defiant as the title suggests. The setting of a night-time storm is far more dynamic than any of the pre-symphony songs.

'Jordens önskan'

'The earth's wish'

Det går en storm som ett rövarskratt,
en jättelek, ett gudaspratt.
Se himlen kastar stjärnor i natt.
Du mörka jord, tag fatt.

The storm is like a robber's laugh,
a giant's game, a god's trick.
See the sky throw stars at night.
You dark earth, catch [them].

Och har du en önskan nu, så låt
den ropa mot skyn som en despot.
Det hjälper aldrig med suck och gråt
och önsknigar efteråt.

And if you have a wish now, then let
it cry against the sky like a despot.
It never helps to sigh and cry
and wish afterwards.

Vad önskar du jord, vid stjärnors språng
i dånande rymder natten lång?
Önskar du död och tystnad en gång?
Nej, liv! Nej, storm! Nej, sång!⁶⁵

What do you wish, earth, on the stars' leap
in thundering heavens the night long?
Do you wish death and silence some time?
No, life! No, storm! No, song!

Bergman's description of the storm as 'a giant's game, a god's trick' develops something of the angst that underpins 'Under Vintergatan': both poems create a sense of smallness in the face of the universe. Here, though, that universe is uncaring and even violent, personal experiences are reduced to the whim of a greater power, and the tyrannical heavens are to be railed against. The final line introduces a new and life-affirming note into the star symbolism in Rangström's songs. Before, the star was petitioned for peace and purity; here, life, storm, and song are demanded of it.

This more assertive tone continues in two songs from the cycle 'Den Utvalda' ('The Chosen One'), completed in 1938 and premiered six months before the outbreak of the Second World War. For Rangström, the set of nine songs represented 'humanity's capacity, at once proud and humble, to discover in the dark hours its liberating genius, its own free-born spirit!'⁶⁶ Hjalmar Gullberg's text is a complex entwining of Biblical imagery and oriental details with pantheistic ideas and pictures of timeless and triumphant love. Stars appear twice: in the seventh song, 'Fråga och svar', and the ninth and last, 'Soluppgång' ('Sunrise'). The primary association in both texts is love, though with a touch of eternity. In 'Fråga och svar', a series of opposites are used to illustrate love:

ur 'Fråga och svar'

from 'Question and answer'

som är av eld och vatten, luft och jord:
motsatsers enhet, skepp och ankar grund,
orkan i skog och stjärna över hav!
O Evighet, som skiftar var sekund,
Du är min vaggga och min grav!⁶⁷

[love] is of fire and water, air and earth:
opposites' unity, ship and anchorage,
the hurricane in the forest and stars over the sea!
O Eternity, which changes by the second,
You are my cradle and my grave!

Each pair of opposites incorporates the idea of motion versus stasis: the ship's freedom of movement is countered by the security of the anchorage; the brief violence of a hurricane tearing through a forest is set against the constancy of the stars over the endless sea; life begins in a rocking cradle but ends in the stillness of a grave; even Eternity itself, that great Stasis, becomes changeable. The old association of stars with eternity has reappeared, but in the secondary role of a metaphor for love. The final song is even more straightforward, with the stars becoming more pictorial than

⁶⁵ Bo Bergman, *Trots allt* (Stockholm: Albert Bonnier, 1931).

⁶⁶ 'Svensk konsert av Stockholms radioorkester', *Röster i radio* No. 25, 1939. '... människornas förmåga, på en gång stolt och ödmjuk, att i de svåra stunderna upptäcka sin befriande genius, sin egen friborna ande!' (It is worth noting that there are two copies of this concert announcement in the Rangström collection at *Musik- och Teaterbiblieket* – or rather, one and a half, for one has been cut just above Rangström's name, preserving only the bottom half of the programme. The other copy reveals a possible explanation for Rangström's apparent desire to create a selective record: the preceding piece was by Knut Håkanson.

⁶⁷ Hjalmar Gullberg, *Att övervinna värld(?)* (Stockholm: Norstedts, 1937).

metaphorical. The text describes a glorious and hope-filled ‘morning without equal’ after the lovers’ night together, when ‘I was you, you were me under eternal stars.’⁶⁸ In both of these Gullberg texts, the stars’ association with eternity and love links back to the earliest songs, but the context has transformed. The expressions of guilt and longing have disappeared; in ‘Den Utvalda’ the stars appear in relation to a celebratory and fulfilled love.

In August 1941, following a couple of unproductive years in terms of song-writing, Rangström produced a little burst of compositions: six songs in just over two weeks. In two of them, the star motif returns. First is Karin Boye’s ‘Stjärnornas tröst’ (‘The stars’ solace’), the central song in a set of three composed by Rangström some months after the poet committed suicide. It has much in common with earlier Bergman poems: the star is addressed directly, as in ‘Stjärnöga’, and there is a sense of alienation, as in ‘Under Vintergatan’. The poem is bleak without being bitter, and the star’s message is one of dignity in the face of decay:

‘Stjärnornas tröst’	‘The stars’ solace’
Jag har frågat en stjärna i natt -- ett ljus långt bort där ingen bor --: 'Vem lyser du, främmande stjärna? Du går så klar och stor.'	I asked a star last night -- a light far away, where no one lives --: 'Whom do you light, strange star? You move so large and clear.'
Hon såg med en stjärneblick, som gjorde min ömkan stum: 'Jag lyser en evig natt. Jag lyser ett livlöst rum.	She said, with a starry gaze that made my pity grow mute, 'I light an eternal night, I light a lifeless space.
Mitt ljus är en blomma som vissnar i rymderns sena höst. Det ljuset är all min tröst. Det ljuset är nog till tröst. ⁶⁹	My light is a flower that withers in the heavens' late autumn. That light is all my solace. That light is solace enough.'

The recent death of the author complicates the question of Rangström’s motivation in setting the text (something to which there will be good reason to return in Chapter Four) and it is telling that Rangström set another text about stars just a week later: ‘Sorgen och stjärnan’ (‘Sorrow and the star’) by Gunnar Ekelöf. Here, although the poet writes that the power of sorrow and death overwhelm that of joy and life, a star’s power is greater still.

‘Sorgen och stjärnan’	‘Sorrow and the star’
Och sorgens makt är större än glädjens makt i mig, jag glädes inte förrän den har förvandlat mig.	And sorrow’s power is greater than joy’s power in me, I rejoice not before it has transformed me.

⁶⁸ ‘En morgon utan like...’; ‘Jag var du, du var jag under eviga stjärnor’.

⁶⁹ Karin Boye, *Gömda land* (Stockholm: Albert Bonnier, 1924).

Och dödens makt är större
än livets makt i mig,
jag föddes inte förrän
den har förvandlat mig.

And death's power is greater
than life's power in me,
I am not born before
it has transformed me.

Må vindens sus i skogen
bli äldre än mitt liv,
må ödemarkens stjärnor
stå kalla över mig:

May the wind's sigh in the forest
become older than my life,
may the stars of the wilderness
stand cold over me:

En stjärnas makt är större
än sorg och köld i mig,
jag vilar inte förrän
hon blivit sol för mig.⁷⁰

A star's power is greater
than sorrow and cold in me,
I rest not before
she becomes the sun for me.

The rather enigmatic final line keeps the poem's tone ambivalent, but it is also far from the resignation of Boye's text. With the poems being so close in their date of composition as well as their theme, it is difficult to consider them other than in relation to each other, and, equally, in the context of Rangström's life situation at the time. The previous winter, he had been diagnosed with and treated for cancer in his throat and though he had set neither poet before, the Ekelöf and Boye triptychs were the first songs he composed after his convalescence. There is no reason to doubt that Karin Boye's suicide was the primary motivation for Rangström's settings of her poetry, but what prompted his subsequent turn to Ekelöf's text is less transparent. It may be that its more assertive tone provided an antidote to Boye's text; the repeated word 'makt' (which can carry the meaning of power, authority, potency, might, etc.) is certainly far more prominent in Rangström's prose than 'tröst' (comfort or solace). Ever since his student days, he had preferred to respond to despair with defiance rather than defeatism. 'What we call "happiness" – What is it?' he had written in Munich. 'A second of thanklessness – a minute of lying – and an hour of folly. No, we have to fight, fight as long as the powers last...'⁷¹ The language of Ekelöf's text marries far better than Boye's does with Rangström's attitudes, and with the motto 'Despite everything!', to which he clung even in his terminal illness.

This motto ('Trots allt') is the title of Bergman's 1931 anthology of poetry and of the set of songs that opens with 'Jordens önskan'. It is also Helmer's direct explanation of the star symbolism in Rangström's work: 'Throughout his life Rangström's "despite everything" and "stars" are two

⁷⁰ Gunnar Ekelöf, *Sorgen och stjärnan* (Stockholm: Albert Bonnier, 1936).

⁷¹ Cited in Helmer, *Ture Rangström*, 55. 'Det vi kalla "lycka" – hvad är det? En sekund af tanklöshet – en minut af lögn – och en timmes dårskap. Nej, vi ha att kämpa, kämpa så länge krafterna räcka...' (Draft letter from Rangström to Bror Beckman, 13 March 1907.)

different expressions for the same resistance to the depressive pull of “despair”.⁷² ‘Jordens önskan’ and ‘Sorgen och stjärnan’ certainly fit with this interpretation, but this survey has shown them to be the exceptions rather than the norm. Rangström’s star symbolism shifted throughout his life: stars represent the guiltless purity of an idealized bride in ‘Vita liljorna dofta’ but are the witnesses of ecstatic and fulfilled love in ‘Soluppgång’; they are a source of constant guidance and peace in ‘Stjärnöga’ but become a lonely, dying light in ‘Stjärnornas tröst’; they inspire feelings of estrangement and yearning in ‘Under Vintergatan’ but a defiant affirmation of life and song in ‘Jordens önskan’. Despite the breadth of meanings involved, there is an underlying pattern to the shifting symbolism. In the pre-symphony songs, there is a common association with something unattainable (for example, a state of purity, or another world) while in the post-symphony songs the focus is on life *now*, to be lived despite everything, in all its pain and all its fullness.

The temptation to read ‘Stella maris’ and the Third Symphony as a turning point is, however, an unhelpful one. The reference to storm-lashed strongholds in ‘Stella Maris’ catches something of the natural and supernatural tumult in ‘Jordens önskan’, and its religious symbolism (consecration, and the allusion to baptism in verse two) bears comparison with that in ‘Den Utvalda’, but these elements are not strong enough to shift the balance from the pre-symphony longing for the Unattainable to the post-symphony embracing of the Now. ‘Stella maris’ is better understood as the centre of a web of association than as the fulcrum of a shift in symbolism. The question that naturally follows is whether there *is* an identifiable trigger for the post-symphony shift in symbolism, but there are no straightforward answers. The plea for cleansing in ‘Stella maris’ *might* reflect a conscience troubled by the affair with Omon and the death of Knut. The life-affirming aspects of the later songs *might* simply be the response of an aging composer who was determined to enjoy his last years to the full. The joyful love in ‘Den Utvalda’ *might* have a connection to Rangström’s relationship with Elsa Nodermann, and the bleakness and defiance of ‘Stjärnornas tröst’ and ‘Sorgen och stjärnan’ could well be Rangström’s reaction to his cancer diagnosis and treatment. Such speculations would require consideration in a far broader context than the star songs and so are beyond the scope of this survey.

Summary of the surveys

The survey of Rangström’s night songs has demonstrated that, although many of them are characterized by a state of angst or anguish, most either incorporate or focus entirely on other associations, and so demand a nuanced interpretation. (This openness to alternative symbolism will

⁷² Helmer, *Ture Rangström*, 149. ‘Livet igenom är Rangströms “trots allt” och “stjärnan” två olika uttryck för samma motstånd mot det depressiva suget från “förtvivlan”.’

be crucial as we explore the meaning that 'Bön till natten' brings to the Third Symphony.) Indeed, an emphasis on dark and disturbed moods risks aligning Rangström's night songs with the mainstream symbolism of the Lieder tradition at the expense of the distinctively Nordic and personal associations of bright summer nights and seascapes. The way in which Rangström's texts dominate the Landscape category is a clear demonstration of his personal contribution to the nexus of night symbolism, as well as evidence of the extent to which the composite trope of nocturnal seascape occupied his imagination.

The sea survey uncovered Rangström's use of the sea in conjunction with two contrasting ideas: either a sense of unbounded potential – often in the form of youthfulness or dreams – or a metaphor for death or eternity. His sea texts are marked by vivid language and realistic depictions of the observed landscape as well as strong internal perceptions of the experienced landscape, both of which can be found in instrumental form in the Third Symphony. That is, Rangström's timbral palette represents the seascape in sound, stirring up powerful impressions of wind and waves through sweeping gestures, trilling woodwind, ostinati, and roaring timpani and brass. However, the piece is simultaneously an emotional and personal reaction to the seascape. Rangström's grandson described his encounter with his grandfather's orchestral music in just these terms:

His original sound-world always makes me listen up and prick up my ears. He is found somewhere there in the music, with his unmistakable brand. A defiant chord. An F sharp with brass in the bass. A feeling of the sea and waves. Or is it a black starry sky?⁷³

In Rangström's sea pieces, then, the pictorial and the psychological always seem to go hand in hand.

The star survey uncovered a broad shift across Rangström's career, from an aspiration towards purity and eternity to an affirmation of love and life; the text of 'Stella maris' aligns the Third Symphony primarily with the former set of ideas. The symphony thus appears as a last expression of longing for an unattainable Other and as an example of Rangström's propensity for reattributing divine characteristics and roles to features of the natural world. 'Bön till natten' forms a key part of this tendency: its text echoes the imagery and language of Rangström's previous star texts and triggered a desire to compose a secular requiem mass. The appearance of its main melody in the Third Symphony, along with the confirmatory ideas in the epigraph 'Stella maris', brings with it the spiritual associations of guilt and atonement.

⁷³ Ture Rangström (the younger), 'Ture Rangström – en upptäcktsresa', 1989(?) (Elsa Nodermanns Papper). 'Hans originella klangvärld får mig alltid att lyssna till och spetsa öronen. Det är där i musiken han finns någonstans, med sitt omisskännliga bomärke. Ett trotsigt ackord. Ett fiss med bleckblås i botten. En känsla av hav och vågor. Eller är det en svart stjärnhimmel?'

'Bön till natten' and the idea of *Adagio*

Rangström's use of 'Bön till natten' in his Third Symphony draws ideas from the text into the wordless symphony, but the musical material also carries meaning. The *molto adagio* marking at the top of the song has more significance than a mere tempo marking; the piece can be considered as a manifestation of Rangström's concept of a powerful, calm Adagio that transcends the competing voices of the modern world, as this concluding section of the chapter will demonstrate.

Musically, 'Bön till natten' is quite simple (see Appendix C for a copy of the manuscript). In the first bar, the piano states the motif that, in the Third Symphony, is transferred to the horn section: tenuto octaves descending from the Eb tonic to the raised 5th. Rangström's *con portamento* marking asks the impossible of the pianist, and suggests that he may already have had an orchestral instrumentation in mind. The voice enters with the same pattern in the following bar, and lines of descending crotchets are a recurring feature of the melody. The time signature changes in order to incorporate Bergman's uneven line lengths, as it does in 'Melodi', but the piano's steady crotchet chords remain rhythmically consistent throughout, changing harmony on the bar or half-bar. The piece gives the impression of harmonic homogeneity, but Rangström creates this by drawing from a palette of related chords rather than repeating the same progressions; there are only two occasions where neighbouring chords recur in the same figuration.⁷⁴ Despite the lack of moving inner voices, Rangström creates the impression of a chorale through the deep bass octaves, the homophonic texture, the lack of rhythmic variation, and the regular cadential gestures. In his comments on the symphony, Rangström designated the 'Bön till natten' theme a light-hymn, and the quasi-religiosity of his material matches the spirituality with which he invested the seascape it portrays.

The melody of 'Bön till natten' is the basic motif of the Third Symphony, as Axel Helmer has shown in one of the lengthiest analyses contained in his biography of Rangström.⁷⁵ The song's opening bar of descending crotchets appears at the start of the symphony in horn semibreves, transposed down a tone to Db. The cellos and bassoons present the opening vocal line in its entirety ('Ended is the day's desire that clamours wild and brief'); it shortly reappears in the violins and flute, not only shifted in register, but also transposed into F# major, the key that Rangström associated with sunset over Finnfjärden. Both this melodic line and the stepwise descent of the opening bars reoccur frequently throughout the symphony, in various guises: inner voice, bass line, countermelody (sometimes inverted), and as the motif used to transition from one section to the

⁷⁴ These repetitions occur in bars 2-3 and 18-19 (the opening of verses 1 and 4) and in bars 8 and 23 (the opening of verse 2 and the cadence at the end of verse 4).

⁷⁵ Helmer, *Ture Rangström*, 310-323. *Sång under stjärnorna* is the only one of the four symphonies to which Helmer dedicates an entire chapter.

next. The symphony is presented as a one-movement work, and its structural cohesion is largely dependent on the motivic unity provided by the 'Bön till natten' theme. The pinnacle of the whole work is undoubtedly the sweeping reiterations of the descending four-note phrase that build to an expansive climax very similar to that of 'Pan'. Helmer dubs this descending phrase the *utandingslinje*, the 'exhalation line', and connects it to a handful of other songs ('Under Vintergatan', 'Den enda stunden', 'Tristans död', and 'Sköldmön').⁷⁶ The motivic similarity is not equally clear across all his examples – his inclusion of 'Sköldmön' is puzzling – but there is nevertheless a point to be made here about the relationship between Rangström's orchestral and vocal writing: even in his instrumental works, Rangström seems to have been guided by a singer's sense of phrasing.

The chorale-like 'Bön till natten' and its reappearance as a 'light-hymn' in the Third Symphony are both manifestations of the archetypal Adagio that Rangström described in an article from 1927 (that is, after the composition of 'Bön till natten' and during or before his work on the Third Symphony). For Rangström, the ideal Adagio stands in powerful opposition to the clamour of modernity:

Nothing shouts louder than imagined power and nothing shuts up more deeply than power itself. No orchestral clamour goes up against the silence in the pause and no silence speaks more powerfully than the quietly sounding Adagio. How was it with God's spirit, the storm and the western breeze?

So, the matter is clear. All this we know already – but why then do we quarrel so unutterably helplessly, we musicians of today? We stack the new, newest and exclusively blessed style-direction on the other; what was true yesterday is already [a] lie today; no, as fast as the transformation goes, the judgement of extermination goes ahead of the values of Now. And while our prophets preach in the east and west and the Aesthetes talk with overflowing mouths, the money bags start to rattle on the composers' music desks ... and Mercury moves into Apollo's temple.

The rushing pace of the age (that poor, threadbare scapegoat!), the post-war wildness, the unnatural lack of equilibrium (funnily enough) of 'mechanization', thousands of malnourished souls, as many exalted minds, ten thousand bad habits and even worse dealings – all this, which may seem to be a legally mitigating circumstance, gives us, however, no real cause for concern, nor should it. It does not belong to Music's world of the mighty, calm Adagio, which swells out over the clamour and speaks through its sounding silence.⁷⁷

⁷⁶ *ibid.*, 321.

⁷⁷ Rangström, 'Musikens självbesinning I', *Stockholms Dagblad*, 2 October 1927. 'Intet ropar ju högre än den inbillade makten och intet tiger djupare än makten själv. Intet orkesterlarm går upp mot tystnaden i pausen och ingen tystnad talar mäktigare än det stilla tonande Adagio. Hur var det med Guds ande, stormen och västanfläkten? Nå, saken är klar. Allt detta veta vi förut – men varför bråka vi då så utsägligt vanmäktigt, vi nutidens musikanter? Den ena nya, nyaste och allenast saliggörande stilriktningen stapla vi på den andra, vad som var sanning i går, är redan --- lögn i dag, nej, än hastigare går förvandlingens, förintelsens dom fram över Nuets värden. Och medan våra profeter predika i öster och väster och Estetiken pratar munnen överfull, börja guldsäckarna rassla på komponisternas Musikbyråar ... och Merkurius flyttar in i Apollos tempel. Tidens jakt (den stackars trådslitna syndabocken!), efterkrigsårens hejdlöshet, "mekaniseringens", lustigt nog, så onaturliga brist på jämnvikt, tusen undernärda själar, lika många exalterade sinnen, tiotusen dåliga vanor och

Rangström's prose is characteristically overblown and difficult to interpret, but the overall picture is clear enough: in a culture knocked off-balance by industrialization and war, blown to and fro between competing stylistic voices, and increasingly preoccupied with commercial success, Rangström's calm Adagio stands as something greater, truer, and longer-lasting. There are religious references scattered sarcastically through his article: God's spirit, blessed styles, prophets, and the temple of Apollo now desecrated by commercialism. Rangström even makes a loose allusion to the prophet Elijah's experience of God as recorded in 1 Kings 19, where God's presence appears not in storm, earthquake or fire, but as a 'still, small voice', or 'a sound, a thin silence'.⁷⁸ The parallel breaks down in the detail, but its broad message is that true power and a sense of the sacred is found, perhaps unexpectedly, in stillness rather than tumult. Moreover, in the Biblical context, Elijah represents a lone voice of belief in an idolatrous land, and the still voice brings assurance of eventual victory. Similarly, Rangström writes as though the rest of the musical world has been distracted from music's true nature while he alone has kept faith in its power. He holds up the ideal Adagio as a means of overcoming the difficulties and distractions of the age that (to borrow a line from 'Bön till natten') 'clamour wild and brief'. He looked forward to such a time at the conclusion of his article:

But for that little romantic, every (or almost every) redeeming spark within us, we should try to set up a modest temple of meeting, where life's inmost [self] would resound, like the sea-shell, with the unending, and where it could possibly also be set to music and composed...

And so perhaps it happens one day, that the Clamour is silenced. It is still.

For Music speaks...⁷⁹

For all that Rangström clearly does not consider himself to be among the many competing prophets, his idealized Adagio is one aspect of *his* 'style-direction', one that incorporates harmonic security and rhythmic simplicity. His article reveals a deep disinclination to let his music be disturbed by war or mechanization, and represents a significant shift in attitude from the pioneering language of his twenties. The agenda implied by Rangström's Adagio article allows us to read the Symphony as a response to the disruption to musical developments after the First World War. Rangström's use of tonality and inherited form is a deliberate adherence to the continuity of tradition over the trends that he saw as faddish and fleeting. (His single-movement approach to symphonic form was hardly

ännu sämre affärer – allt detta, som kan tyckas vara en juridiskt förmildrande omständighet, ger oss dock ingen verklig anledning till oro, eller borde icke göra det. Det hör icke till Musikens värld av mäktigt stilla Adagio, som sväller ut över larmet och talar genom sin tonande tystnad.'

⁷⁸ 1 Kings 19:12, King James Version and English Standard Version (in footnote).

⁷⁹ Rangström, 'Musikens självbesinning II', *Stockholms Dagblad*, 3 October 1927. 'Men åt den där lilla romantiska, allt – (eller nästan allt) försonande gnistan inom oss skulle vi kunna försöka resa ett blygsamt samlingsstempel, där livets innersta skulle genljuda, liksom Havssnäckan, av oändligheten, och där det möjligen också kunde musiceras och komponeras... Och så händer det kanske en dag, att Larmet tystnar. Det är stillhet. Ty Musken talar...

radical by the late 1920s; it had precedent in, for example, Sibelius' Seventh Symphony, which premiered in Stockholm in March 1924.⁸⁰) Rangström's idealized Adagio manifests itself in various contexts (for example, thoroughly religious in the monastic setting of the 'Procession' from *Till Damaskus* or hallowing a bitter-sweet memory in 'Den enda stunden') but its appearance in 'Pan' confirms its connection to landscape. In 'Pan', when the voice soars through lines of four descending crotchets with the words 'the trees play, the corn sighs, the whole earth listens to his song', the Adagio style portrays ecstatic union with nature. The similarly expansive, sweeping passages of the Third Symphony thus belong to two agendas.

Just as the Adagio stands as Rangström's response to his present (the confusion of competing styles), his focus on landscape is, as we have seen, a reaction to the past (the blandness of the Swedish salon style and the generic portrayals of nature in the Lieder tradition). These two aspects of Rangström's style – the Adagio, and the preoccupation with landscape – overlap in their pseudo-spiritual associations, and in their aspiration towards authenticity and transcendence. They are at their most inextricable in the Third Symphony, where the portrayal of a lived landscape, reoriented religious ideas, and stylistic agendas are worked together in a public statement of personal experience. The contemporary reception of the symphony certainly embraced the first of these strands, revelling in the programme of a nocturnal voyage, but the others seem to have gone unrecognized or at least unacknowledged. It is through the study of Rangström's *romanser*, particularly those with his own texts, that this chapter has been able to shed some light on the personal symbolism that underpins the Third Symphony, and identify the archipelago landscape as the site of relocation for Rangström's religious ideas. 'Music and the desire for music is born of the same necessity as the world's religions,' he said in 1927. 'Music's innermost essence is *longing*.'⁸¹ Rangström's sea and star texts demonstrate that this almost inexplicable sense of longing – for purity, eternity, a lost dream, a past youth – was a key component of his experience of Östergötland's seascapes.

Rangström's landscape creed finds its most concise expression towards the end of his poem 'Avsked till båten' ('Farewell to the boat'). This tribute to the boat in which he had sailed the archipelago for 35 years runs to more than seven typewritten pages and features the same odd mixture of matter-of-fact detail and poignant imagery as the 'Havets sommar' texts. Rangström wrote the text in September 1941, after his recovery from his first episode of cancer, and the final verse of the poem is heavy with nostalgia:

⁸⁰ Tomi Mäkelä, *Jean Sibelius*, transl. Steven Lindberg (Woodbridge: Boydell and Brewer, 2011), xxiii.

⁸¹ Rangström, 'Musikens bildningsvärde', *Stockholms Dagblad*, 6 October 1927. 'Musiken och viljan till musik är född av samma nödvändighet som världens religioner. Musikens innersta väsen heter *längtan*...'

We sail home before the wind, therefore; you dance on the green waves,
 my boat, like a spouting seal in the evening sky's fire;
 we put youth behind us: a world we have sailed past,
 a dream we have lost; another lies hidden in the twilight's tone,
 a dizzying journey and a saga in short nautical miles,
 for life and the sea and the dream never believe distances for evermore,
 and we cannot be separated forever, my green Indian Summer sea;
 I was born as a part of your everything: please, graciously accept me again!
 So Törnsholmen's harbour beckons, a harbour I want to tempt to the night,
 may I clap your breast in farewell, my most faithful friend!⁸²

The associations of the sea with youth and dreams are as strong here as in the sea songs that he wrote three decades earlier, and in the antepenultimate line Rangström summarizes several of the feelings and beliefs that this chapter has dealt with. 'I was born as a part of your everything', he writes, capturing the profound and innate feeling of belonging that made Östergötland a *hembygd* for him, as well as the sense of the transcendent that he found there. His final plea ('please, graciously accept me again!') reflects the pseudo-spiritual aspects of his sea symbolism, and the particular image that surfaced again and again in his own texts: the archipelago waters as a source of merciful forgiveness.

⁸² Rangström, 'Avsked till båten'. 'Vi slörade hemåt, alltså, du dansar på grönskande vågor, / min båt, som en sprutande säl i aftonskyarnas brand, / vi lägga en ungdom bakom oss, en värld ha vi seglat förbi, / en dröm ha vi mist, en ny ligger gömd i kvälldagerns ton, / en svindlande färd och en saga i korta distansminuter, / ty livet och havet och drömmen tro aldrig distanser för evigt, / och för evigt skiljas vi ej, mitt grönskande Brittsommarhav, / jag är född som en del av ditt allt, tag nådigt emot mig igen! / Så vinkar Törnsholmens hamn, en hamn vill jag fresta till natten, / får jag klappa din bringa till avsked, båt, min trognaste vän!'

Figure 12. Rangström in Stockholm and Östergötland



Figure 12.1



Figure 12.2



Figure 12.3

Figure 12.1-3

1919(?)

Rangström in Stockholm, on the balcony at his home (until 1925): 30 Bastugatan, Södermalm. The first two photos look north-east, towards Stockholm's Gamla Stan (Old Town) and the distinctive cast iron spire of Riddarholmen Church, the burial place of Swedish monarchs since Gustav Vasa. The third photo looks north across Riddarfjärden towards Stockholm's Stadshus (City Hall).



Figure 12.4, above

Figure 12.5



Figure 12.6, below



Figure 12.4-6

c. 1935-1945

Rangström in Östergötland, on the island of Törnsholmen in the Gryt archipelago. Figure 12.4 shows Rangström's small boat in which he sailed around the archipelago. In Figure 12.5 Rangström is apparently surprised in the act of brushing his teeth with seawater; in the background is the cottage built in 1935, a year after the island of Törnsholmen was gifted to Rangström on his fiftieth birthday.

Figure 13. 30 Bastugatan in its landscape



Figure 13.1
2009

Photo credit: Holger Ellgaard

This panoramic view was taken from Monteliusvägen, a public walkway that was opened in 1998. It runs parallel to Bastugatan, along the bottom of Rangström's garden.



Figure 13.2
Bastugatan as seen from the north. Rangström's house is among the trees to the right of the picture.
Ivar Lo-Johansson, 'Bastugatan', *Vi-Tidningen* No. 31-32 (1959), illustration by Svenelov Ehrén.



Figure 13.3
Rangström's house, with the Old Town in the background. The distinctive saltire crosses on the veranda can just be seen.
Ivar Lo-Johansson, 'Bastugatan', *Vi-Tidningen* No. 31-32 (1959), illustration by Svenelov Ehrén.

Figure 14. Contemporary understandings of Rangström's music in relation to landscape

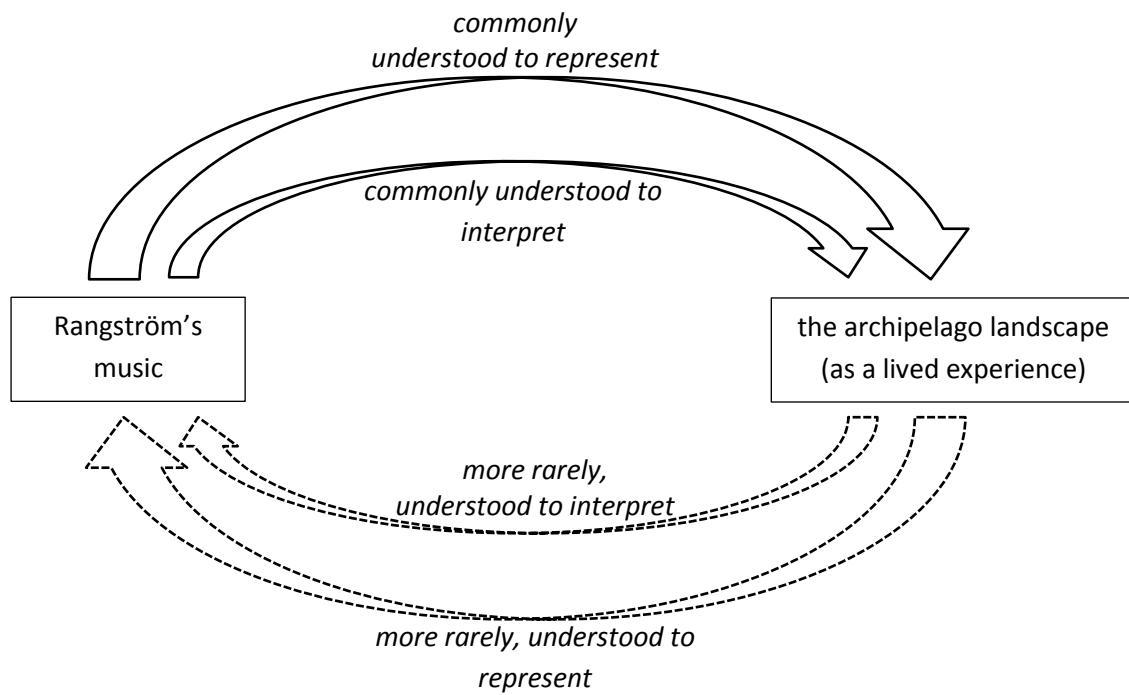


Figure 15. Rangström's night songs categorized by theme

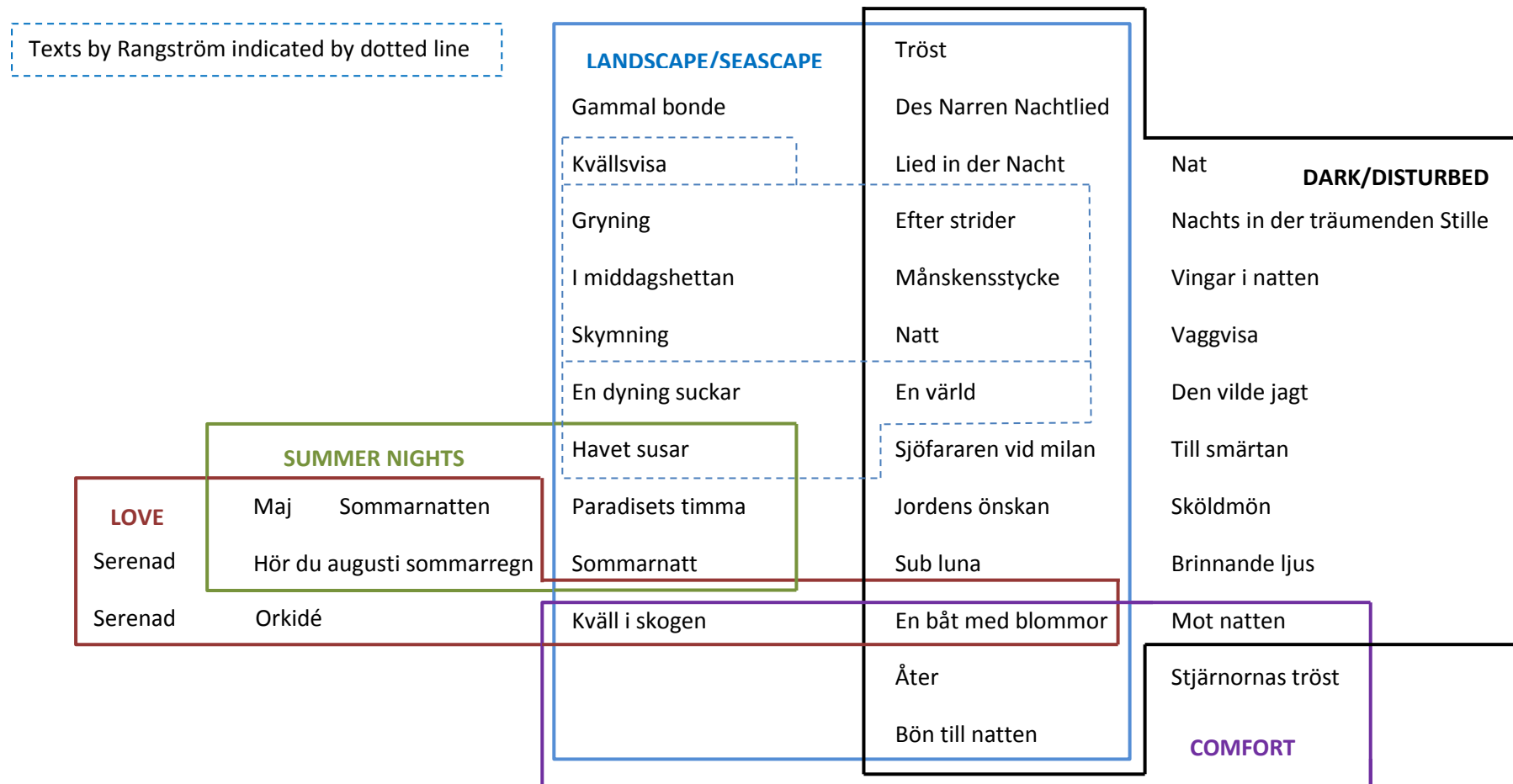


Figure 16. The night songs excluding Rangström's texts

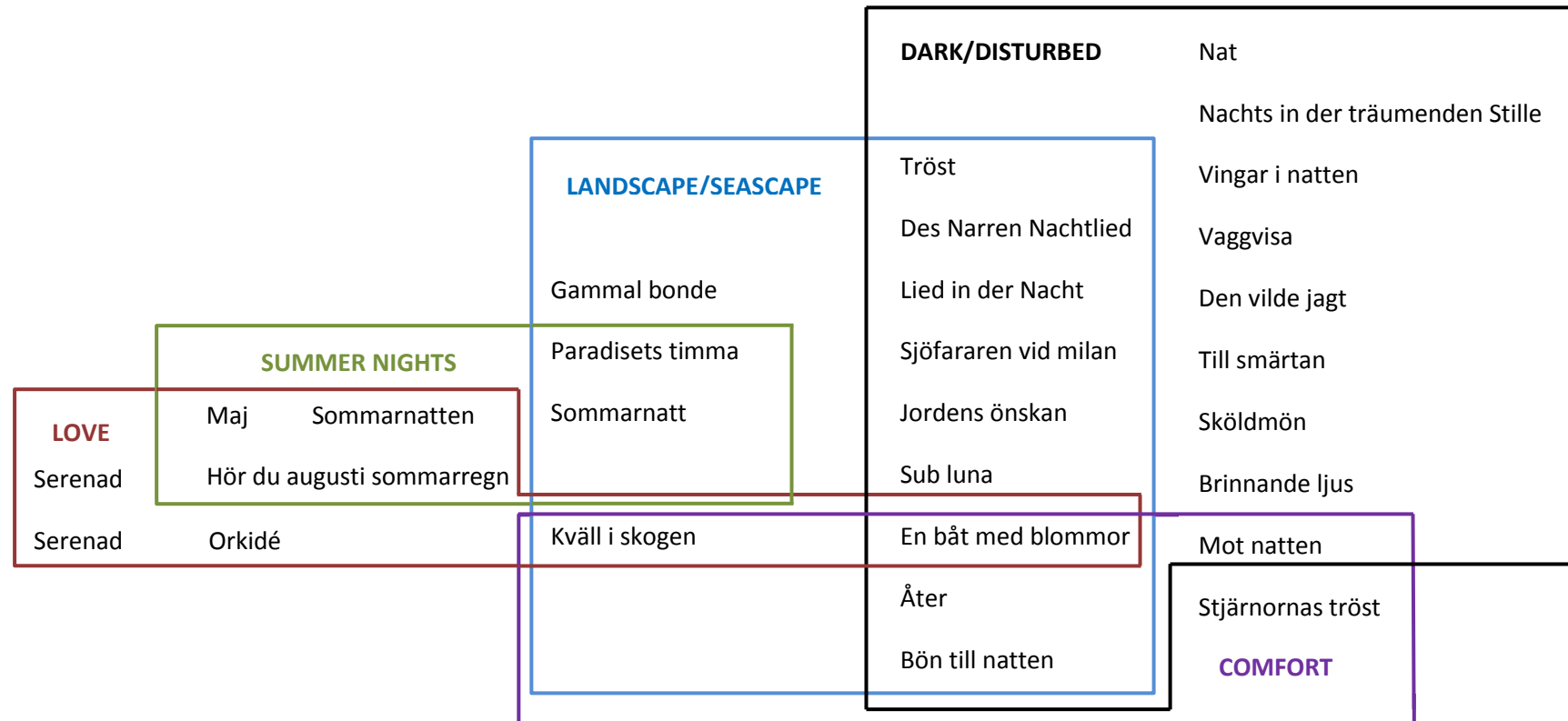


Figure 17: The compositional chronology of Rangström's sea songs

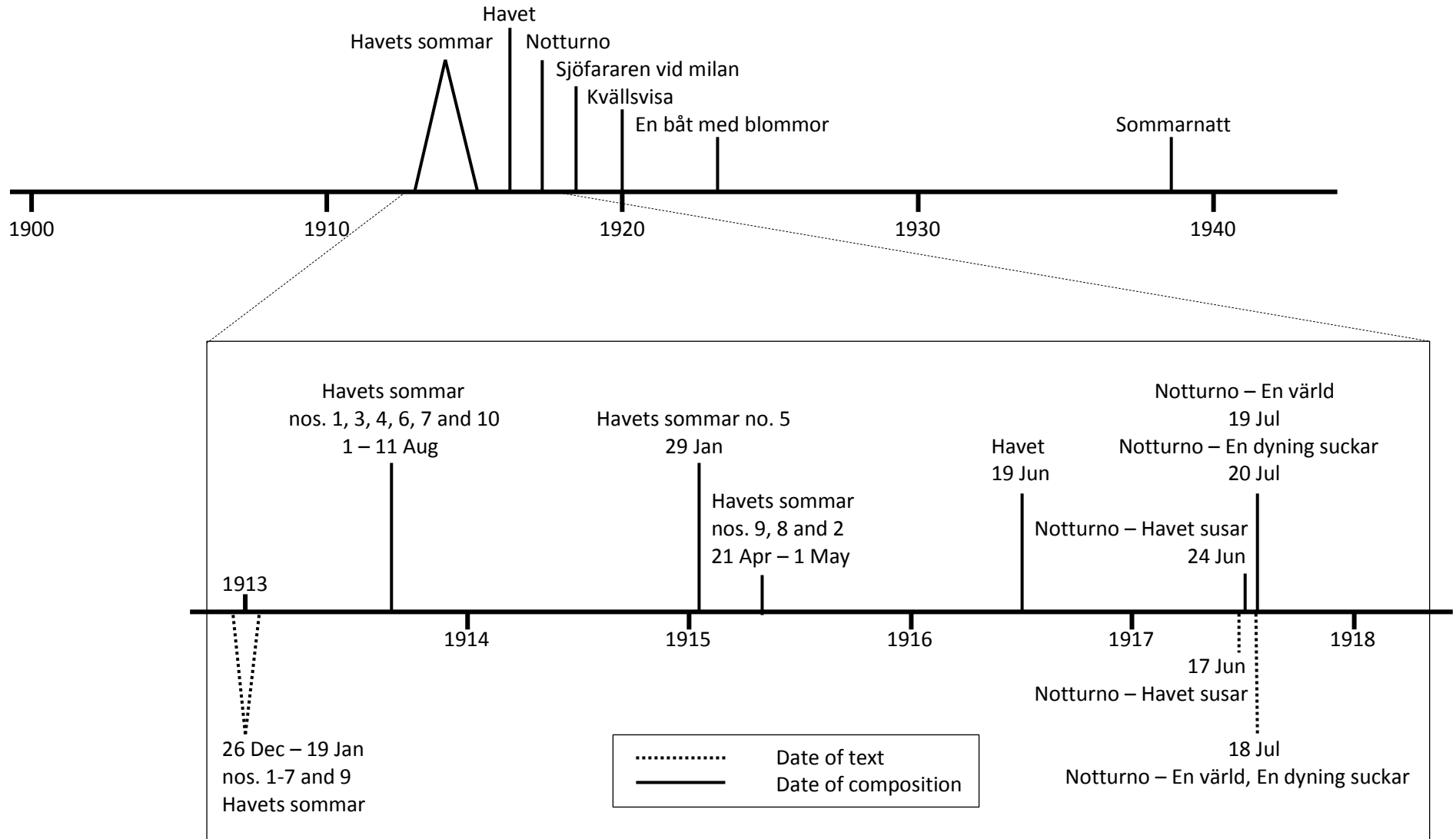
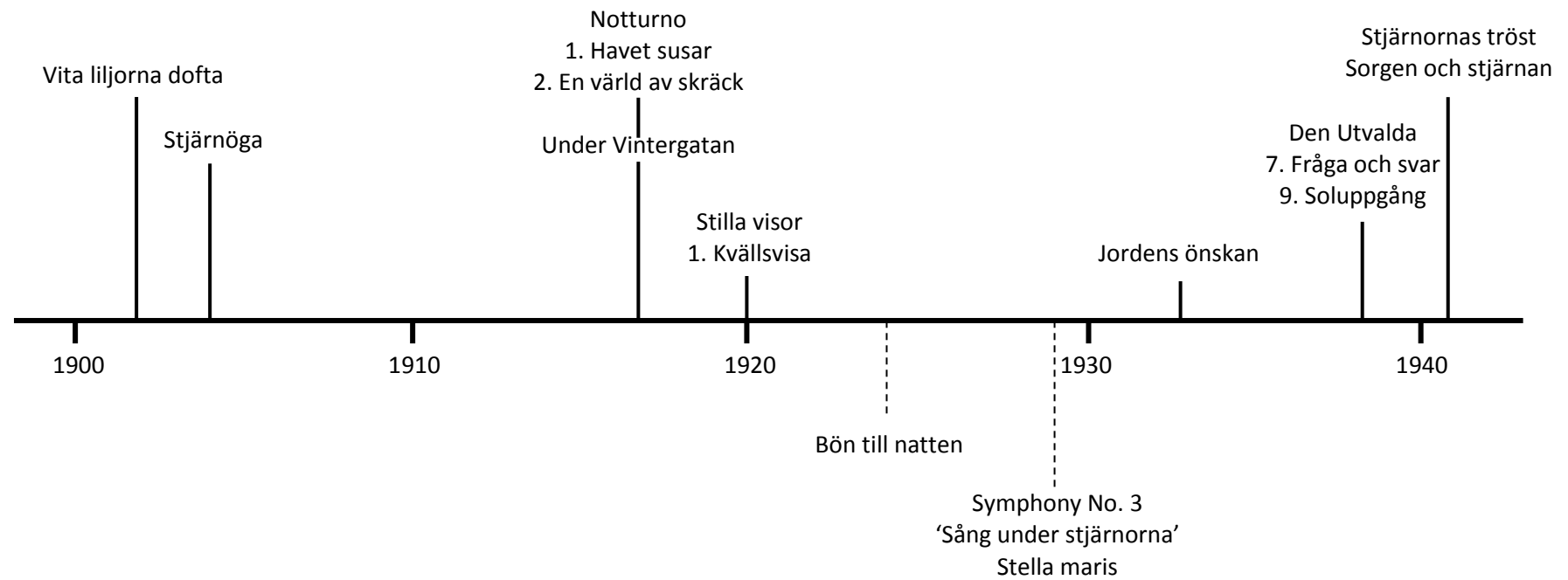


Figure 18. The compositional chronology of Rangström's star songs



CHAPTER FOUR
FACING THE INEXORABLE

But Winter blows the horn
at Autumn's goodbye feast.
Up, my spirit, and dance away
like the storms' guest!
Hear them raging. Glorious is the dance,
and the storm is in major.¹
- Bo Bergman

In October 1936, almost two years after the birthday gift of Törnsholmen and the beginning of his divorce from Omon, Rangström returned to Stockholm from his summer on the island with ten songs, a handful of orchestral works, and his final symphony. It had been his most productive summer since 1924 and, in interview, he was quick to give the credit for his production to his surroundings and his gratitude to the friends who had brought about the presentation of Törnsholmen:

Out here on this lovely stretch of coast, free from all the disturbances of daily life, enlivened by fresh winds, by the sun, trees sighing and waves murmuring, I have truly had an excellent summer of work. So it is with pleasure that I state that the trust [my friends] have shown me through their magnificent gift has not come to naught.²

The dark atmosphere of his fourth symphony stands in stark contrast to this peaceful and positive description of the circumstances of its composition. Its title, *Invocatio*, was explained by Rangström as an 'invocation to life's harsh powers' or 'the barbarians' invocation of the unknown god';³ Moses Pergament's review, however, observed that 'despite the name, this music actually gives more a sensation of melancholy inner battle'.⁴ What both interpretations have in common is a sense of the self being under threat, whether in the face of a vast and incomprehensible universe with its impression of transcendence and power, or from inner conflicts. Such anxieties and tensions were endemic in the literature of Rangström's day, and he felt them keenly. This chapter will explore the ways in which Rangström viewed, shaped, and expressed his sense of self, taking as its starting point

¹ 'Men vintern blåser lur / på höstens avskedsfest. / Upp, min ande, och dansa / i väg som stormarnas gäst! / Hör de rasande. Härlig / är dansen, och storm går i / dur.' This is the final verse of a tribute poem written by Bergman for Rangström's 60th birthday and published in 'En skald och hans tonsättare', *Musikvärlden* (June 1945) 12-16.

² -nx, 'Ture Rangström hem från sin halvsekelö med 1 symfoni och 10 sånger – samt en svit orkestersaker', *Stockholm Tidningen*, 5 October 1936. '... här ute i detta härliga kustband, fri från alla störande vardagligheter, livad av friska vindar, av sol, trädslur och vågsorl har jag verkligen haft en ypperlig arbetssomar. Det är alltså med glädje jag fastslår att det förtroende de visat mig genom sin storslagna gåva inte kommit på skam.'

³ Cited in Helmer, *Ture Rangström*, 338-339. 'åkallan till livets stränga makter'; 'barbarens åkallan till den okände guden'.

⁴ Cited in Helmer, *Ture Rangström*, 346. 'trots namnet ("Invocatio") ger denna musik faktiskt mer en förnimmelse av vemodsfull inre kamp.'

his unpublished prose text *Dömd* (*Condemned*, 1917). This highly imaginative and intensely private work sets the agenda for much of what follows: whereas the previous chapters have dealt extensively with Rangström's reception and his public personas, here we will focus on the rather more private matter of Rangström's internal perceptions of himself and his circumstances. The latter were radically and irreversibly altered at the close of 1940 by a diagnosis of cancer in his throat. Radiotherapy was successful, but was followed by months of painful recuperation, and Rangström's voice never fully recovered. Given his refusal to forego cigars, the treatment seems only to have delayed the inevitable. In December 1946 he was diagnosed with an untreatable tumour and, after six months of drastic decline, he died on 11 May 1947, aged 62.

This chapter is structured around three texts that reflect Rangström's situation in these last years of his life: each is, at least ostensibly, a monologue in the face of death. The self-analytical conclusion of *Dömd* is that, in a life lacking true heroism, Rangström lived vicariously in the symbolic (and often deceptive) world of his songs, and this charge provides an important interpretive tool for the case study that follows. Rangström's 1935 setting of Bo Bergman's 'Tristans död' ('Tristan's death') is one of the most ambiguous manifestations of his long-term interest in the relational dynamics of a love triangle, interactions that he repeatedly explored in his compositions but also personally enacted in his affair with Omon Håkanson. Like 'Tristans död', Karin Boye's poem 'Sköldmön' ('The shield-maiden') features an heroic character on the point of death. However, although Rangström's 1941 setting of it is stylistically similar to 'Tristans död', the persona it portrays is not equally persuasive. This chapter will argue that the disparity springs from Rangström's compositional process: by aiming to recreate in music his own experience of poetic texts, their meaning was inevitably mediated by his personal circumstances. The stream-of-consciousness style of *Dömd* invites a psychoanalytical approach, as well as comparison with the ideas about music and the unconscious that Schoenberg had explored in Vienna during the previous decade.⁵ However, such a comparison is complicated by Rangström's reaction to Schoenberg's music, which was one of unequivocal disapproval: he labelled atonal music in general 'ultraviolet', and Schoenberg's *Kammersymphonie* in particular he described as 'a monster of sterile and miserable musical imagination'.⁶ This chapter will demonstrate that although Rangström was undoubtedly intrigued by

⁵ Alexander Carpenter identifies 1908-1913 as Schoenberg's psychoanalytic period, itself contained within his atonal period. 'Schoenberg's Vienna, Freud's Vienna: Re-Examining the Connections between the Monodrama *Erwartung* and the Early History of Psychoanalysis', *The Musical Quarterly*, Vol. 93, No. 1 (Spring 2010), 145.

⁶ Cited in Helmer, *Ture Rangström*, 300. 'ultravioletta'; 'ett monster av steril och jämmerlig musikalisk fantasi'. This review, of a concert in April 1929, refers to Schoenberg's first Chamber Symphony; his second was not completed until 1939. Rangström's 'ultraviolet' label is interesting, given his occasional associations of particular keys with specific colours. It suggests that atonality was as incomprehensible to him as ultraviolet is invisible to the human eye.

modernist ideas, his interest remained couched in essentially Romantic language, both in his theoretical writings, and in his music.

Rangström's self-analysis: *Dömd*

The title page of the *Dömd* manuscript indicates how personal and private the text was for Rangström: it sports a triply underlined N.B. declaring that 'unauthorized have no access'.⁷ The phrase seems to belong more to a teenager's journal than the writing of a man in his thirties, but it is in keeping with Rangström's tendency, observed by Stenhammar and others, to put up a guard around his deepest feelings and to be incredibly sensitive to criticism of his creative output. The title of the text translates as 'condemned' or 'doomed', and Rangström used the same root word to describe his experience of composing on at least two occasions. Both were during periods of enraptured work. First, in Munich in 1907, the student Rangström wrote, 'I am "doomed". That is my word; others say "called".'⁸ Then, during the song-drenched summer of 1924: 'when the destructive fire burned in me, I looked forward to quickly and recklessly charring, like the deliverance of the damned [fördömdes]. I thrived no more in the world, and therefore spurred on [the] days, in work, [the] nights, in wildness, fast, fast, fast!'⁹ In both cases, Rangström associates the word with a compulsive creativity, which, despite the negative connotation of *dömd*, he seems to have embraced as an authentically artistic experience.

The whole text of *Dömd* is laden with the key symbols and themes that had already appeared in Rangström's work during the 1910s and that continued to feature in his output for the next thirty years: dreams, light and darkness, stars, the sea (and its connection to song), eternity, adapted Christian ideas, defiance and anxiety, and life and death. Helmer has helpfully summarised the 'basic movement in Rangström's poems' as a series of dualisms ('darkness/earth/night/defeat to light/sea/morning/victory'),¹⁰ and this same trend is evident in much of *Dömd*. Helmer has also speculated about the influence of psychoanalysis on its composition, suggesting that Rangström had come across a psychologist named Poul Bjerre who was active in Stockholm from 1907.¹¹ The text is certainly framed as a patient's thoughts verbalized to a listener: it comprises a series of fragments,

⁷ 'Obs! Obehöriga äga ej tillträde'.

⁸ Cited in Helmer, *Ture Rangström*, 51. 'Jag är "dömd". Det är mitt ord, andra säga "kallalse".' (Letter to Lisa Hollender and Ellen Rooswal, 2 January 1907.)

⁹ *ibid.*, 272. 'Då brann den fördärfliga elden i mig, jag vaktade som den fördömdes befrielse på att snabbt och hänsynslöst förkolna. Jag trufdes icke mer i världen och därför hetsades dagar, i arbete, nätter, i vildhet, fort, fort, fort!' (Letter from Rangström to Omon, 17 June 1924.)

¹⁰ Helmer, *Ture Rangström*, 454. '... grundrörelsen i Rangströms dikter'; 'mörker/jord/natt/nederlag till ljus/hav/morgon/seger.'

¹¹ *ibid.*, 146-147.

and the strange mixture of childhood memories, sexually-charged fantasy and confused questions could well correspond with Rangström's perception of a psychoanalytic session. However, there is an underlying arch form to the work that belies the impression it gives of being loosely connected thoughts. The text begins and ends with the haunting image of a silent figure waiting at the head of the speaker's bed, and at the centre of the arch stands a dark and myth-like account of the world's creation and fall. This is preceded by two brief sea pictures and followed by two lengthier accounts of childhood memories, thus rendering the arch form rather lopsided and placing weight on the final vignette (an instance of childhood disobedience and defiance) as the most significant section. It is there that the theme of sunlight, which threads its way through most of the fragments, reaches its most detailed description, at last coming fully into focus as a slanting beam across the courtyard. It is in this continuous thread of sunlight that Helmer's psychoanalysis interpretation is strongest: it is as though the speaker has traced the idea of sunlight deeper and deeper into his subconscious, until it finds its source in a previously forgotten childhood memory.

The question of identity underpins the entire text of *Dömd* (see Appendix E for the full text and its translation). It is raised in the very first line, in a context of angst and confusion, by the mention of the unknown 'someone' waiting by the bed-head. The speaker seems to be lost in a vision of anguished ghosts and writhing shadows, perhaps in a feverish hallucination. Questions stream after each other, initially about the shadow figures ('Why do they fight, why do they suffer...?') but then about the speaker's place in the scenario ('Was I also amongst the shadows and in among them in the fight, the anguish, the night?'). The beam of light that cuts through the night seems to represent life, set against the darkness of an eternal night, but the reaction of the speaker is equivocal: he seems unable to comprehend the vision, which ends as it began, in an icy stupor with that 'someone' waiting by the bed-head. Now, though, the figure is given a title: the Inexorable. The context of sickness, ghosts, life and eternal night suggests that the Inexorable is a personification of Death, waiting for the speaker, and temporarily visible to him as he lies on the border between life and death.

The next section could hardly be a greater contrast: a short paragraph about the sunny days of the speaker's youth which were pregnant with possibility, joy and optimism. Rangström's key words 'dream' and 'will' appear, set against a vibrant seascape, and the vignette culminates in the outburst, 'Songs, Songs!' The life, hope and youth in this picture are countered by the ominous nature of the second: the rot and stench of the deserted beach and the corpse of a wounded seal. In fact, these two sea pictures directly correspond with the dual symbolism of potential and death that was discussed in Chapter Three's survey of Rangström's sea songs. (The consistency of the language and imagery is notable, but not surprising: *Dömd* was written soon after 'Havets sommar' and the

same year as 'Notturmo'.) The dichotomy of sun and shadow created by the two sea pictures carries through into the dark creation myth that forms the central section. In fact, darkness is given agency here, and takes the place of God in a frank imitation of Genesis 1:1-2.¹² The biblical allusions continue as Earth's sons receive a sign on their foreheads: the preceding description of the 'wretched, lost star steer[ing] his fateful path' provides a strong connection to the mark placed on Cain when he is condemned to 'be a restless wanderer on the earth'.¹³ These images aside, the imagery is more pagan: a brimming bowl, a drop of bitter wine, and the sexualized, paradoxical 'fall' of a personified Earth. The whole account is given in the third person, but bookended by first person musings about the balance of sun and shadow. In the concluding sentences, the speaker makes a conscious decision to focus on sunlight rather than darkness, and it is sunlight that provides the connection into and between his childhood memories.

The first memory 'begins as a glimpse' and builds up with the same bold colour palette that Rangström used in his 'Havets sommar' texts: snow-white apple blossom, blue water, green pastures. It is not quite clear whether this section is meant (by Rangström, the author of *Dömd*) to be a regularly accessed memory (of Rangström, the speaker within *Dömd*), or one that is being freshly uncovered. Either way, it stands as an image of idealised happiness: a rather vague rhapsody about the fairy-tale beauties of spring and family life, which can never again be realised and yet bestow comfort and strength in later life. The second memory, however, is definitely narrated as if it is simultaneously being recalled. The account is interspersed with statements and rhetorical questions about memory and remembering; sometimes the speaker seems to be straining to recall details ('Let's see, let's see – I cannot notice it, and remember!') and by the end he is determined to hold onto them ('I know, however, that I shall remember, remember!'). The child's temptation and triumphant disobedience gives an underlying connection back to the central section, but here the cosmic grandeur of the mythical fall is replaced with everyday objects like the green water barrel, which is overturned over the flowerbed's red onions. The speaker declares, with pride only partially tempered by self-deprecation, that this act of childhood defiance was his greatest moment of heroism.

The closing paragraph returns us, abruptly, to the opening scenario, and the Inexorable's scornful laughter at the anecdote. Everything in between is enclosed by these structural bookends and should therefore be read as a monologue within the sickbed scene. But here at the end, within the space of a few sentences, the identities of the speaker and the Inexorable become confused:

¹² 'I begynnelsen var mörkret. Och Mörkrets ande sväfvade i rymden...' ('In the beginning was darkness. And the spirit of Darkness hovered in space...'); 'In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters' (Genesis 1:1-2, New International Version).

¹³ Genesis 4:12-15.

'you' begins as one and ends as the other. Thus the figure that in the opening section could best be understood as a personification of inevitable death unexpectedly fuses with the speaker's identity, twisting the whole meaning of the text in a new direction. It suggests that the speaker has been presenting his thoughts and memories not to an external persona – not to death personified, or to a divine judge, or even to a psychoanalyst – but to himself, albeit with an awareness of his mortality. Rangström (as the speaker within *Dömd*) has presented himself for self-judgement, and, if we take a step backwards from the text, it is clear that Rangström (as the author of *Dömd*) has done exactly the same. *Dömd* is a detailed self-analysis written for no other audience but the author himself. Rangström concludes with two charges: firstly, that he has lived in symbols, through the deceptive medium of song and poetry, and secondly, that the supposedly uncovered memory of his three-year-old self overturning the water barrel was his only true act of heroism.

The two case studies in this chapter will be considered in the light of these charges and of the psychoanalytic elements of the *Dömd* text. The first charge problematizes any attempt to investigate Rangström's identity purely through his songs and texts. Although they offer a clear connection to his aspirations and ideas, they require the corrective context of Rangström's life and circumstances in order to avoid presenting as the whole truth what is in fact only a 'half-truth' – or indeed, a 'total lie'. However, Rangström scathingly self-assigns these labels within another form of text, and so they need not necessarily be prioritised over any other fictionalised or poeticized statement of Rangström's. *Dömd*'s apparently private and obviously self-critical nature does demand that the 'half-truth/total lie' description be taken seriously as an indication of the constructed nature of the identity that Rangström presents in his works, but it remains on the same level as the very creative outputs that it purports to condemn. That is to say, it is itself one of the many partial truths which, if considered together, with healthy scepticism and contextualization, can contribute to a clearer understanding of Rangström's character.

The psychoanalytic aspect of *Dömd* did not carry over into Rangström's song-writing style in obvious ways. The common symbolic language of the prose text and the sea songs of the 1910s is an exception, and, compared to Schoenberg's detailed musical portrayal of psychoanalytic patients' symptoms, a superficial one.¹⁴ Consequently, Rangström's *romanser* do not justify analytical stunts like Dai Griffiths' inventive interpretation of a Webern song as a psychoanalytic session with 'Voice'

¹⁴ Alexander Carpenter has identified multiple correspondences between the text and music of *Erwartung* (1909) and specific case studies published by Freud. See 'Schoenberg's Vienna, Freud's Vienna: Re-Examining the Connections between the Monodrama *Erwartung* and the Early History of Psychoanalysis', *The Musical Quarterly*, Vol. 93, No. 1 (2010), 144-181.

as the patient and ‘Piano’ as the analyst.¹⁵ The case studies in this chapter will take a broader approach, considering each song in the context of performance with the audience taking the analyst’s role. They will bear in mind one of the key principles of psychoanalysis: overdeterminism, which holds that there are multiple factors behind (and therefore multiple meanings of) any psychic phenomenon. The psychiatrist Stuart Feder has argued that this can be applied directly to the creative process of composition, which should therefore ‘be viewed as an [sic] multifaceted psychic compromise which inevitably includes unconscious as well as conscious elements.’¹⁶ This principle precludes definitive interpretations, as the psychologist Roy Schafer hammers home:

The fact that one has discerned *further* meaning, *weightier* meaning, *more disturbing* meaning, *more archaic* meaning, or *more carefully disguised* meaning than that which first met the eye or the ear does not justify the claim that one has discovered the ultimate truth that lies behind the world of appearances...¹⁷

The case studies in this chapter are presented in this spirit: as possible readings of songs in which multiple factors, conscious and unconscious, are in play.

Rangström’s self-identification: the *Vaux-hall* suite and the role of Tristan

The previous chapter dealt with the ways in which Rangström expressed himself in symbols through his *romanser*, but the charge of *living* in symbols is a different matter altogether. It finds its clearest expression in Rangström’s use of literary or mythical figures as shorthand for his position or desires, for example, his portrayal of himself as Cassio in the sonnets written to the Håkansons before his affair with Omon. Such parallels were drawn with a good deal of self-awareness: Rangström himself called it his ‘well-known weakness for poetic short-circuits’.¹⁸ His language seems to acknowledge the destructive potential of such a strategy, as does Helmer’s description of the personal consequences (aptly enough, with a literary allusion of its own) as ‘an Icarus-flight of the imagination’.¹⁹ But despite the risks inherent in blurring the line between fact and fantasy,

¹⁵ Dai Griffiths, ‘So who are you? Webern’s Op. 3, No. 1’ in *Analytical strategies and musical interpretation: essays on nineteenth- and twentieth-century music*, eds. Craig Ayrey and Mark Everist (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 310-314.

¹⁶ Stuart Feder, ‘“Promissory Notes”: Method in Music and Applied Psychoanalysis’ in *Psychoanalytic Explorations in Music: Second Series*, eds. Stuart Feder, Richard L. Karmel, George H. Pollock (Madison: International Universities Press, 1993), 14. Feder offers two further principles for non-clinical applications of psychoanalytic theory: infinite displaceability and infinite representation. However, he acknowledges that these are drawn from his own work and, unlike overdeterminism, are not explicit in early psychoanalytic history (p. 12). These ideas allow infinite interpretative freedom (essentially, anything can represent anything else, or, indeed, many things) and are therefore too unwieldy for the present study.

¹⁷ Roy Schafer, *The Analytic Attitude* (London: Karnac, 1993), 8.

¹⁸ Cited in Helmer, *Ture Rangström*, 272. ‘allbekanta svaghet för lyrisk kortslutning’. (Letter from Rangström to Omon, 17 September 1924.)

¹⁹ Helmer, *Ture Rangström*, 272. ‘en fantasins Ikarosflykt.’

Rangström's use of symbols continued for the rest of his life, with perhaps its most frank appearance in his orchestral suite *Vaux-hall*, completed in 1937. He described his intention as follows:

I wanted, in a kind of marionette form, to capture a little picture of life, with its tumult (Mars, the god of war), its sentimentality (Diana, the moon goddess; the moon [Månen] was actually the name of my then newly lost second wife = Omon, the full moon), Pan (me myself in leisurely drunkenness), Venus (a satire of eroticism), Charon – Death, Apollo – my old, worn lyre.²⁰

As a brief summary of the major themes in his life, *Vaux-hall* performs admirably. That Mars stands for the two World Wars that provided the background to Rangström's early adult life and middle age is unlikely. For one thing, although the Second World War was well under way by the time Rangström wrote the above explanation in 1943, it had not begun at the time of composition. For another, the overall tone of the work is light-hearted and humorous. The strongest reason, though, is Rangström's lack of direct engagement with either war, at least compared to the fervency with which he traded blows with other critic-composers in the press. His apparent disengagement from the Second World War is itself symbolised by a sketch of Rangström drawn in 1940 on a page of the newspaper *Nya Dagligt Allehanda*.²¹ The paper is packed with updates about the war: the Stancliffe, a British merchant ship, torpedoed north of Shetland; 150 Norwegian soldiers driven across the Swedish border having not slept for six days; foreign planes flying over Gothenburg; heavy bombardment audible from the Bohuslän archipelago. Scribbled over the top of these reports, at 90 degrees to the direction of the text, is a charcoal portrait of Rangström. The news about the war thus literally becomes the background for artistic creation. This all suggests that, in *Vaux-hall*, Mars represents a lower level of conflict: in all likelihood, the everyday battles and betrayals that Rangström seemed to feel far more keenly than the relative abstraction of devastating war beyond his country's borders.

The other gods and goddesses in the *Vaux-hall* suite are less ambiguous. By identifying himself with Pan, Rangström confirmed the well-established connection between his music and nature, but he was surely also acknowledging Pan's erotic side. His pun on Omon's name was an old

²⁰ Cited in Helmer, *Ture Rangström*, 352. 'Jag ville, i en sorts marionettform, fånga en liten bild af lifvet, med dess tumult (krigsguden Mars), dess sentimentalitet (Diana, mångudinnan; Månen var egentligen min då nyss förlorade andra hustrus namn = Omon, fullmånen), Pan (jag själf i säfflig dryckenskap), Venus (en satir på erotiken), Charon – Döden, Apollo – min gamla slitna lyra.' (Letter from Rangström to Inga Westberg, 11 August 1943.)

²¹ The sketch is simply signed 'Jon-And'. In the absence of any further information, we should consider the possibility that the artist might have been Rangström himself. He was a competent doodler and would have been capable of this rather basic drawing. Moreover, Rangström habitually presented himself in profile; the less flattering, full-face angle of the sketch is very uncommon, but consistent with the scenario of a self-portrait drawn from a single mirror. As for the signature, Rangström often used abbreviations or pseudonyms in his newspaper work, even mimicking Strindberg by using, in some anecdotes about his childhood, his first two names: Anders Johan. Suggesting that he might abbreviate and reverse them to identify himself in a new role as artist is pure conjecture, but it is not unreasonable.

joke between them, but taking the two together suggests a reference to the myth of Pan's seduction of the moon goddess.²² The final three gods all represent important aspects of Rangström's final years. In Apollo's realm, the mid-1930s saw Rangström's return to the *romans* after an almost songless decade; Charon, on the other hand (the ferryman of the underworld) did not pose a personal threat until the end of 1940. As for Venus, it is telling that, in the wake of his second divorce, Rangström kept some ironic distance from the subject of love, presenting its section as 'a satire of eroticism' rather than setting out to communicate anything personal or sincere. At the time of *Vaux-hall's* composition, he was already in a relationship with Elsa Nodermann (1911-1996). This seems to have begun in 1936, when divorce proceedings against Omon were underway and when Elsa was less than half Rangström's age. Helmer highlights their cohabitation as unusual for the society of the time, and the couple were correspondingly discreet, to the point that Elsa would habitually absent herself when Rangström was entertaining.²³

Vaux-hall certainly demonstrates Rangström's readiness to use mythical figures as a symbolic short-hand, but the literary character with perhaps the greatest significance for his own life does not belong in the parodic pantheon of the suite: it is that of a man, not a god. It is the figure of Tristan, whose tragic tale had engaged Rangström's imagination so thoroughly in his 1909 article ahead of the Swedish premiere of Wagner's *Tristan und Isolde*. During Rangström's relationship with Omon, the legend became more personal: a literary role-play with Rangström as the protagonist and the wronged husband a man to whom he owed some allegiance. In the face of scandal and disapproving friends, Rangström portrayed himself as helplessly borne along by irresistible fate. That he was betraying a friend, as Tristan betrayed King Marke, he could 'curse, but not regret'.²⁴ He wrote to Omon:

I can regret nothing, even for your sake, of what has happened. Not that love became passion, because the beautiful love still lives just as pure... My fate became stronger than me. So I will bear it and persevere, because I know that I am not base or wretched, as my actions are interpreted. Love and fate overtake. And then they give suffering.²⁵

Just as, in Tristan's tale, the magic potion absolves the lovers of responsibility for their affair, and so allows them to retain a sense of honour, Rangström's narrative invokes a sense of overwhelming fate in order to excuse his actions, and even to justify them as pure and right, despite the social and personal cost.

²² Virgil, *Georgics* 3, lines 391-393.

²³ Helmer, *Ture Rangström*, 333.

²⁴ Cited in Helmer, *Ture Rangström*, 293. 'förbanna det, men icke ångra.'

²⁵ *ibid.*, 293-294. 'Jag kan intet ångra, ens för din skull, af hvad som skedt. Icke att kärleken blef lidelse, ty den vackra kärleken lefver ännu lika ren... Mitt öde blef starkare än jag. Så vill jag bära det och framhärda, ty jag vet, att jag icke är låg eller usel, hur mina handlingar än tydas. Kärleken och ödet öfverrumpla. Och sedan ge de lidandet.' (Letter from Rangström to Omon, 1 September 1925.)

As a composer, Rangström was repeatedly drawn towards the dynamics of a love triangle, particularly in the medium of opera. In *Medeltida (The Middle Ages, 1921)*, the knights Sir Peder and Sir Preben are drinking and playing dice when a group of minstrels arrive and hint, through their songs, that Peder has been having an affair with Preben's wife Metta. She sleepwalks in, is woken by her drunken husband, and drops dead. The knights fight; Death appears and summons Peder, who sings about true love's redemptive power before killing himself.²⁶ The telling point here is Rangström's portrayal of Peder's carnal love for Metta being vindicated, in the end, by a kind of spiritual strength that transcends social convention. As he put it in the programme notes for the premiere:

... the fervent desire that, in proud contempt of all bourgeois tradition and sensibilities, drove Metta and Sir Peder together, becomes a consuming whirlwind that devastates song and life. It is the earthly love's 'wild hunt'. Only when the senses' vain incense has blazed out – in death or resignation – does the heavenly song of pure, atoning love arise.²⁷

It is this defiance of bourgeois expectations and insistence on some higher sense of rightness, that Rangström lived out in his relationship with Omon just a few years later (not to mention the 'devastation' of his song production during their marriage). While the pair were married, Omon translated Yeats' 1907 play *Deirdre* into Swedish; it also revolves around a love triangle, albeit one where betrayal occurs at a different point (the king traps the lovers with false assurances of goodwill). Omon's translation was quite possibly intended as a libretto for Rangström, but no opera materialized. Instead, long after the couple's divorce, details from Yeats' play crop up in other love-triangle texts, including our first case study, 'Tristans död'.

The half-truths of 'Tristans död'

Given Rangström's predilection for love-triangle narratives, it is highly significant that 'Tristans död' was the first song that he composed after he began divorce proceedings against Omon. The song is the fourth of the Bergman collection 'Trots allt' ('Despite everything'), but it stands chronologically isolated from the rest of the set and, indeed, from any other *romanser*: seven songless months stretch either side of its completion date of 17 February 1935. It was dedicated to Brita (née Hertzberg) and Einar Beyron, in memory of their 1933 performances as Tristan and Isolde at the

²⁶ Helmer, *Ture Rangström*, 204.

²⁷ Cited in Helmer, *Ture Rangström*, 207. '... den heta åtrå, som i stolt förakt för all borgerlig häfd och besinning drifvit fru Metta och Hr Peder samman, blir till en förtärande stormvind som ödelägger sång och lif. Det är den jordiska kärlekens "vilda jakt". Först när sinnenas fåfängliga offereld har flammats ut – i döden eller resignationen – stiger den rena, försonande kärlekens himmelska sång.' (From the premiere programme notes.)

Stockholm Opera.²⁸ The song itself is monumental; its scope and style push beyond the definition of *romanser* and into the operatic sound-world of its dedicatees. The Beyrons' fellow star Set Svanholm gave the radio premiere with Rangström at the piano, but the song soon acquired an orchestration that one critic described as 'colourful, juicy, but also to some degree bombastic'²⁹ and that settled the piece firmly into the genre of concert aria.

Bergman's rhyme scheme and scansion are characteristically disciplined: rhyming lines of nine or ten syllables alternate with non-rhyming, six-syllable lines. However, Tristan's questions and exclamations, as well as the placement of the crucial words 'svart' and 'vitt' (black and white), break up these patterns somewhat, and once Rangström's setting lengthens and exaggerates them, little sense of rhythmic or rhymed speech remains. The question of white or black sails appears in some versions of the Tristan legend, in which the wounded Tristan waits for Isolde to be brought to him by a ship that will carry white sails if she is aboard and black if she is not; it is at the false report of black sails that Tristan despairs and dies. Bergman's text conveys the dramatic tension of the scene by using Tristan's questions about the colour of the sails to set up a potential rhyme and then going against the listener's expectation by giving the non-rhyming colour as the answer. In the third verse, Bergman's language echoes the swelling waves and perfumed air in the text of Wagner's *Liebestod*; in Rangström's setting, the 'exhalation line' of descending stepwise crotchets makes an appearance with the words 'soliga ångars djupa must'. In the final verse, the dying Tristan's thoughts become poignantly disjointed, and Rangström breaks the vocal line with commas, double commas, pauses, tempo alterations, and dramatic changes in dynamic and range.

'Tristans död'

Har ödets skepp från min kärleks jord
vitt segel eller svart?
Isolde den ljuva, är hon ombord?
Svart segel eller vitt?
Jag fryser, jag brinner. Säg ett ord.
Är seglet vitt? Nej svart.

Så flyg då ut ur din bräckta bur,
du själens stolta örn.
Det svarta seglet, o min amur,
det skuggar för min syn,
det växer och växer, jag vet ej hur,
men himlen själv blir svart.

Isolde, guldharpa, hjärtats lust,
min längtans höga dam,

'Tristan's death'

Has fate's ship from my love's land
white sails or black?
Sweet Isolde, is she on board?
Black sails or white?
I freeze, I burn. Say the word.
Is the sail white? No, black.

So fly then, out of your brackish cage,
you, my soul's proud eagle.
The black sail, O my love,
it shadows my sight,
it grows and grows, I know not how,
but heaven itself becomes black.

Isolde, gold harp, my heart's desire,
high lady of my longing,

²⁸ Elizabeth Forbes, 'A Season in Stockholm', *Opera* 23/2 (February 1972), 110.

²⁹ ERG, 'Två moderna svenskar', *Nya Dagligt Allehanda*, 12 April 1937. 'färgrikt, mustigt, men också i non mån bombastiskt.'

jag hör som ett svall från Cornwalls kust
och känner som en doft
från soliga ångars djupa must
och skumma skogars ro.

I hear like a surge from Cornwall's coast
and sense like a perfume
from sunny meadows' deep mould
and shady forests' peace.

O, vore jag där! Men allt är slut.
Nu klämta klockor snart.
En kämpa mot ödet har kämpat ut.
Var seglet svart? Nej vitt.
Nyss sade man svart. Hör stormens tjut.
Min örn i molnen står.³⁰

O, I would be there! But all is finished.
The bells toll soon now.
A fighter against fate has fought himself out.
Was the sail black? No, white.
[He] just said black. Hear the storm's howl.
My eagle stands in the clouds.

Tristan's double reference to his soul as an eagle bears a startling resemblance to the words of Yeats' hero, Naisi, as he proudly faces death: 'O, my eagle! / Why do you beat vain wings upon the rock / When hollow night's above?'³¹ Whether or not Bergman was aware of this precedent is hard to say; he and Yeats may well have drawn independently on the association of eagles with an apotheosis which dates back to the funeral rites of Roman emperors.³² Rangström, however, was definitely familiar with both texts, and the triumphant conclusion of his setting certainly indulges such imagery. As Helmer points out, Rangström's setting shifts between B minor and B major to highlight the importance of the black/white sails.³³ The overall tonality is B minor, but moments of major symbolise Isolde's presence, either as represented by the white sails or in Tristan's memory. Thus the fourth line of the first verse ends with resonant B major arpeggios on the word 'vitt', D#s abound in the third verse as Tristan reminisces about his love, and when the tragic truth is finally revealed in the antepenultimate line, it is to another explosion of B major. Ultimately, the D#s overcome the key signature: the tenor's bravura ending (two bars of top A#) is surrounded by a blaze of D# major, and the final gesture in the accompaniment (a parallel of the opening two bars) ends, this time, in B major (notably, the key of resolution at the end of Wagner's *Tristan*). By ending in the major, Rangström equates Tristan's death with Isolde's presence, thus also following the Wagnerian precedent of death as the final consummation of love.

Rangström's motivation for setting 'Tristans död' during the break up of his second marriage is rather obscure. Helmer observes only that 'his poetic focus [was] on the relationship to women and marriage as an essentially tragic connection'.³⁴ This reading feels inadequate, given the Tristan legend's emphasis on the lovers' ultimate – even triumphant – unity in death. Moreover, in a copy of

³⁰ Bo Bergman, *Trots allt* (Stockholm: Albert Bonnier, 1931).

³¹ W. B. Yeats, *Deirdre* (London: A. H. Bullen, 1907), 38-39.

³² Aleš Chalupa, 'How did Roman Emperors become gods? Various concepts of Imperial apotheosis' in *Anodos: Studies of the Ancient World* (2006-2007), 201-207. <http://www.academia.edu/2577051/How_Did_Roman_Emperors_Become_Gods_Various_Concepts_of_Imperial_Apotheosis> (accessed 7 April 2016).

³³ Helmer, *Ture Rangström*, 356-357.

³⁴ *ibid.*, 355. '... hans poetiska focus för förhållandet till kvinnan och äktenskapet som en i grunden tragisk förbindelse.'

the score kept in the Elsa Nodermann collection, the dedication to the Beyrons has been scribbled over and a flamboyant message added in red pencil: 'E. N. in memory of the holidays T. R.' (see Figure 19, p. 192). This cheerful rededication of the piece, to the woman who would be Rangström's companion for the rest of his life, throws doubt on Helmer's interpretation of the work as a pessimistic take on love. It suggests that for the composer himself, the song's meaning was either remarkably flexible, or was more divorced from the circumstances of its composition than its subject matter suggests. Interpreting 'Tristans död' as an allegory for the end of Rangström's relationship with Omon undermines the portrayal – in the text and its setting – of love that is faithful even beyond death. On the other hand, understanding Rangström's rededication of the piece as an indication of a transfer of affection – one that identifies Elsa as his new Isolde – belies its sense of tragedy. This lack of a satisfactory conclusion about how 'Tristans död' maps onto Rangström's own relationship experience is completely in line with the charge he made against himself at the end of the *Dömd* text, of living 'a half-truth and a total lie'. There are partial correspondences between his own life and the fictional roles with which he identified, but they are only half-truths, which ultimately proved untenable for Rangström.

We must consider the possibility that, by the time he composed 'Tristans död', Rangström had abandoned any sense of personal identification with its protagonist, perhaps disillusioned by the way his own Tristan tale had turned out. In November 1936 – the same month that he and Set Svanholm gave the premiere of 'Tristans död' – he admitted in interview that, 'it is clear that the illusion – which is so important in [the artist's] life – can also take him on wrong paths when it comes to ordering his private life.'³⁵ However, despite this remarkable admission, Rangström's fascination with Tristan and love-triangle narratives continued: in 1937 he composed a piece for female choir entitled 'Vid slutet av sagan om Tristan och Isolde' ('At the end of the tale of Tristan and Isolde') and in the spring of 1941 he wrote a love-triangle libretto that was never set, though elements of it reappeared in the opera *Gilgamesj*. Its title, *Hägring*, is best translated as *Mirage*, but it can also mean *Illusion* – a significant connection to the quote above as well as to the 'Despite everything' statement from the *Gilgamesj* programme that we came across in Chapter One. ('The saga is an illusion. The will is an illusion; life and death is illusion. The only thing that remains human is the mighty word Despite Everything!') Rangström's key words and themes thus bring us in a tight circle, back to the title of the Bergman set to which 'Tristans död' belongs.

Hägring borrows details from Yeats' *Deirdre* and prefigures aspects of *Gilgamesj*, but it is most notable for its departure from the typical love-triangle pattern. Here, the tension of the love triangle is resolved when the wife is reconciled with her husband, and the dismissed lover goes away

³⁵ *ibid.*, 296. '... det är klart, att illusionen – som är så viktig i hans [=konstnärens] liv – kan föra honom på fel väg också när det gäller att ordna privatlivet.'

to the sea. Helmer suggests that the wrathful monologue of King Morir, the cuckolded husband, might well be a tardy and indirect acknowledgement that Knut Håkanson's anger was justified. In the 1936 interview, Rangström said, presumably with regard to Knut's early demise, 'I have a debt of honour to pay towards a death. It can be paid only by me.'³⁶ (His rather literary language gives the impression that, even in such a confession, he was fulfilling a role, now that of a noble penitent.) It may well be that *Hägring* was a means for Rangström to set things right symbolically, using his characters as proxies.

This concept of proxy personas enables us to overcome the ambiguities and half-truths of 'Tristans död'. Rather than try to match the Tristan-Isolde relationship with either Rangström-Omon or Rangström-Elsa, we can take the role of Tristan to be a purely aspirational one. The song can then be read as a proxy experience of faithful love: an opportunity for Rangström to portray in symbol what he had not lived out in reality. ('You lived one [life]', he told himself at the end of *Dömd*, 'and poetry another'.³⁷) Understanding Tristan as a proxy rather than a parallel provides enough interpretative flexibility to incorporate both the circumstances of the song's composition and its subsequent rededication to Elsa: in the first situation, a statement about what might have been; in the other, an optimistic expression of an ideal that might yet be.

The brief appearance of the 'exhalation line' in the third verse encourages this aspirational reading, if we consider its reoccurrence throughout Rangström's output as an expression of an unrealized desire. Stuart Feder suggests that a composer's 'tendency to repeat may be seen not only in its technical realization, but perhaps more deeply with regard to whatever unconscious [sic] wish or striving is symbolized.'³⁸ In 'Pan', the line represented ecstatic (and, implicitly, erotic) union with nature, and in 'Bön till natten' it conveyed longing for a clean conscience. It is possible, then, that when it is used in 'Tristans död' (in passing, perhaps even unconsciously), it conflates these two desires in a yearning for guilt-free, consummated love.

Rangström's re-identification of Karin Boye in his setting of 'Sköldmön'

As has already been mentioned, our second case study, Karin Boye's 'Sköldmön', is similar to 'Tristans död' in both its subject matter and its setting. Both texts are monologues in the context of death. Both purport to be the words of legendary warriors and both roles have a Wagnerian precedent. Both of Rangström's settings are showstoppers (highly dramatic, vocally demanding, and

³⁶ Cited in Helmer, *Ture Rangström*, 296. 'Jag har en hedersskuld mot en död att betala. Den kan endast gäldas av mig.'

³⁷ 'Du lefde ett – och diktande ett annat.'

³⁸ Feder, 'Promissory Notes', 14.

immediately popular) that were orchestrated soon after composition. There are also musical similarities: octave doublings of the voice by the accompaniment, unremittingly syllabic writing, rising chromatic lines, large intervals, even brief motivic gestures in the accompaniments to conclude the piece after the last bravura vocal notes. Crucially, on an extra-musical level, both songs are also connected to the idea of a proxy persona. In 'Tristans död', it was the composer who identified with the song's protagonist; in 'Sköldmön', it is the poet.

Throughout her life, Boye was drawn to the role of the warrior woman: a watercolour of a Valkyrie appears among her adolescent artwork (see Figure 20, p. 193), and references to warriors, armour, weapons, and, above all, death are scattered through her poetic output.³⁹ She regularly used her writing as a means of exploring the heroic ideals to which she aspired, and by the time of her death, the connection was well enough established that Hjalmar Gullberg entitled his poetic obituary to her 'Död Amazon' ('Dead Amazon'). Gullberg portrays Boye as a sister-in-arms with the ancient Spartan heroes who fought to the last man at Thermopylae, and with the Allied forces who stood against the German army at exactly the same pass on the very day of Boye's death.⁴⁰ Rangström's setting of 'Sköldmön' also seems to have been composed in response to Boye's suicide and with her warrior-woman role in mind: he had never previously set any of her poetry, and the title of the three-song set is 'Sköld och svärd' ('Shield and sword'). However, it is precisely in this respect that a mismatch appears between Boye's perception of her proxy role and Rangström's portrayal of it. Effective and popular as an encore piece for a full-voiced soprano, Rangström's setting calls to mind the expansive breast-plates and (historically inaccurate) helmets of Wagnerian Valkyries, not the slender, bride-like figure of Boye's imagination, with her air of solemn consecration. Rangström's heroic sound-world thus feels incongruent in 'Sköldmön' in a way that it does not in 'Tristans död'. Overdeterminism allows for several factors behind this phenomenon, and Rangström's conscious or unconscious association of the warrior-woman role with Wagnerian timbres and gestures may well have contributed to his compositional decisions. However, the following analysis argues that the strongest explanation for the discrepancy lies in Rangström's instinctive response to Boye's text. Edward Cone provides a helpful framework here, with his conception of the song's protagonist 'as moving on three levels simultaneously: the poetic, which is strictly verbal; the vocal, which conjoins the words with a melodic line; and the vocal-instrumental,

³⁹ 'Sköldmön' appears in Boye's first collection of poetry: *Moln (Clouds)*, published in 1922. Boye produced four more anthologies (in 1924, 1927, 1935, and – posthumously – in 1941) and five novels.

⁴⁰ Hjalmar Gullberg, *Fem kornbröd och två fiskar* (Stockholm: Norstedts, 1942). Gullberg describes Boye as a 'sword that fights against superior forces / [which] must break and be broken asunder'; in the final verse she 'descends to Hades, / followed by proud Hellenic men, / very dark and with great eyes, / their sister and dead friend.' ('Svärd som fäktar mot övermakten, / du skall brytas och sönderslås'; '... stiger ned till Hades, / följd av stolta hellenska män, / mycket mörk och med stora ögon / deras syster och döda vän.'

which embeds the line in the total musical texture.⁴¹ This analysis will therefore begin with the text of Boye's poem, and will then consider the different personas portrayed in Rangström's vocal line and musical setting.

On the surface, Karin Boye's text is uncomplicated: the language is plain, and the rhythm and rhyme are fairly basic. The most immediately striking feature of the poem is the repeated phrase 'Jag drömde om ... i natt', which dominates every alternate verse. There is a grim inevitability about its repeated rhythm, and 'i natt' occurs nine times altogether, with the regularity of a tolling bell.

'Sköldmön'

Jag drömde om svärd i natt.
Jag drömde om strid i natt.
Jag drömde jag stred vid din sida
rustad och stark, i natt.

Det blixtrade hart ur din hand,
och trollen föll vid din fot.
Vår skara slot sig lätt och sjöng
i tiggande mörkers hot.

Jag drömde om blod i natt.
Jag drömde om död i natt.
Jag drömde jag föll vid din sida
med banesår, i natt.

Du märkte ej alls att jag föll.
Din mun var allvarsam.
Med stadig hand du skölden höll
och gick din väg rakt fram.

Jag drömde om eld i natt.
Jag drömde om rosor i natt.
Jag drömde min död var fager och god.
Så drömde jag i natt.

'The Shieldmaiden'

I dreamt about swords last night.
I dreamt about war last night.
I dreamt I fought at your side,
armoured and strong, last night.

It flashed hard from your hand,
and trolls fell at your feet.
Our troops closed easily and sang
in the silent darkness' threat.

I dreamt about blood last night.
I dreamt about death last night.
I dreamt I fell by your side
with a mortal wound, last night.

You noticed not that I fell.
Your mouth was serious.
With steady hand you held the shield
and went your way straight ahead.

I dreamt about fire last night.
I dreamt about roses last night.
I dreamt my death was beautiful and good.
So I dreamt last night.

The overall atmosphere of the text is sombre, dark, and weighty. The repetition of 'Jag drömde', far from rendering the events insignificant or intangible, shows that the speaker is dwelling on her dream. She seems unable to shake it off and so it retains an element of reality. In each repetition of this phrase, the noun increases in intensity, until the astonishing juxtaposition in the final verse: sword – war – blood – death – fire – roses. The two syllables of 'rosor', by changing the rhythm of their line, highlight the unexpectedness of this last image. The sudden appearance of roses among the battlefield language is clarified by the rest of Boye's output, where they are used either in

⁴¹ Edward T. Cone, *The Composer's Voice* (London: University of California Press, 1974), 23.

connection with paradise or symbolizing a response to a lover.⁴² In this, roses represent two major themes in Boye's poetry: her sense of spiritual realities and struggles with her sexuality.

The regularity of the 'Sköldmön' text creates a sense of composure that contrasts with the fragmented thoughts and questions of 'Tristans död'. The texts are, essentially, in different modes of speech. 'Tristans död' is a true dramatic monologue and could as well be a speech from a play; the reader overhears the protagonist's thoughts unfolding in the present just as a theatre audience would. For Bergman's poem, then, the move from text to song is no great distance: there are performative elements already built in to the text, such as the way Tristan answers his own questions as if repeating the response of an unheard, offstage character. In 'Sköldmön', however, the speaker (let us call her the dreamer) begins by narrating her dream as a past event, as if describing it directly to the reader, and then suddenly addresses a second person *within* the dream in verses 2-4. She thus speaks over two layers of reality – as the dreamer reliving the experience, but also from the viewpoint of the dying shield-maiden within the dream. This places the reader in an odd position: addressee or eavesdropper?

These two positions can be reconciled by reading 'Sköldmön', like *Dömd*, as an imagined psychoanalytic session. Boye's interest in psychoanalysis went far beyond Rangström's: she underwent sessions herself, first in Stockholm in 1927, and later (after the break-up of her marriage to Leif Björk) in Berlin, where her analyst, Walter Schindler, is said to have predicted that she would take her own life within ten years.⁴³ Boye evidently took her dreams seriously: to her fellow-poet Harry Martinson, she described in detail one that shares several motifs with the 'Sköldmön' text, including roses, the beauty of death, and a jarring lack of recognition from another character in the dream (there, explicitly female).⁴⁴ In taking on the role of analyst, the reader incorporates the positions of both addressee *and* eavesdropper, listening not only to what is spoken directly, but also for what might be communicated subconsciously.⁴⁵ As the psychoanalyst Salman Akhtar has put it, 'attention is paid to *what* the patient is talking about but greater interest remains in *how* the patient

⁴² See, for example, 'Vårens väntan' ('Spring's expectancy', *Moln*, 1922) and 'Den okända' ('The unknown one', *Gömda land*, 1924), respectively.

⁴³ David McDuff, 'Karin Boye – A Biographical Profile', *Karin Boye: Complete Poems* (Hexham: Bloodaxe Books, 1994).

⁴⁴ *ibid.* 'She was dead and had come to paradise. Heavenly bliss was organized like a school. On the wall hung a timetable showing hours and lessons. Karin and the other blessed ones had to sit in the chalices of sweet-scented roses and God hurled the roses with their souls through the azure. A radiant, unutterable sense of happiness accompanied the rose lesson... Then an immensely large female figure appeared. She was wonderfully beautiful, but her hands were large and coarse like a charwoman's. Karin knew that this was Reality. She suddenly saw this hybrid of goddess and charwoman sitting on a throne, and seized by reverence she bowed down and kissed her foot. And then Reality asked: "Why are you kissing my foot? After all, you do not know me."'

⁴⁵ Salman Akhtar, *Psychoanalytic Listening: Methods, Limits, and Innovations* (London: Karnac, 2013), 4. This way of listening is the first of four approaches presented by Akhtar. They are, in order of increasing complexity, objective, subjective, empathetic and intersubjective.

is talking'.⁴⁶ In listening to the dreamer, we therefore note the battlefield context, consider the symbolism of roses and fire, and observe her slip into speaking to a character within the dream – but we also absorb the measured, steady tone in which she speaks. Adding the extra-textual interpretative layer of Boye's identification with the shield-maiden persona does not significantly alter the reader-analyst's impression of the text. If 'the process is accorded more value than the content',⁴⁷ then, just as the dreamer's measured tone belies the trauma of her dream, Boye's carefully crafted poem trumps the potentially disturbing portrayal of her dreamt death as 'beautiful and good'.

Reading Boye, the dreamer, and the shield-maiden as one persona split across three levels of reality gives the text of 'Sköldmön' a very different character to that of 'Tristans död', despite their ostensible similarities in subject matter. Whereas Boye's self-identification with the shield-maiden was widely accepted, there is no hint of Bergman associating himself with Tristan. On the contrary, he treats the saga as a common cultural artefact rather than as a vehicle of personal expression: by breaking in at its finale, he assumes the audience's knowledge of the tale. And while 'Tristans död' feels performative even as text on the page, like a death scene extracted from a drama, the 'I's and 'you's in Boye's text create a more intimate space: the privacy of a personal account. Transplanting 'Sköldmön' from the implied context (and confidentiality) of a psychoanalysis session to the concert stage is thus far more complicated than setting Bergman's theatrical poem to music. In Akhtar's terms, *what* is said remains constant in both transitions from text to song, but *how* it is said changes far more in 'Sköldmön' than in 'Tristans död'. Thus, in a performance of Rangström's 'Sköldmön', the audience (as listener-analysts) receive very different messages from the reader-analyst who engages only with Boye's poem.

There are three obvious ways in which Rangström creates these differences: in his evocation of turbulent emotions rather than sombre reflection; in the irregularity of his tempo; and in the unpredictability of his melodic writing. The song bursts into being with a soprano entry doubled by high unison octaves in the piano. There is no introduction to set the scene, no clear sense of key, no strict sense of rhythm, and the abruptness of the entry has immediate implications for performance. If the first chords are to sound completely as one, the initial crotchet rest must be clearly marked by a united breath from the singer and the pianist. The piece begins not on the word 'Jag' but with an in-drawn breath, and the connotation of a sleeper awaking from a nightmare with a gasp is, given the subject matter, hard to avoid.⁴⁸ There is thus a sense of urgency and immediacy in Rangström's

⁴⁶ *ibid.*

⁴⁷ *ibid.*

⁴⁸ This is not to say that the in-breath will be audible to the audience, nor indeed that it is an unusual way to begin a piece. It is, of course, always a necessity for the singer, and a natural gesture for the accompanist.

setting that is at odds with the measured pace of the original text. While the poem might be a sober consideration of last night's dream, with a few hours' distance from it, the song seems to be still caught up in its panic. The power of the poem lies in its sense of inevitability; the song's impact comes from the raw immediacy of its emotion.

Rangström's tempo markings, performance directions and piano accompaniment all contribute to an almost recitativo setting of the first verse. For the first two lines of text, this stop-start accompaniment is exaggerated by a double comma inserted between the phrases. Melodically, the piece is similarly unpredictable. As in the poem, 'Jag drömde om ... i natt' is the unifying feature, and its initial rhythmic motif crops up throughout the piece, but never with the same pitches. The wide leaps in the vocal line are often dissonant and the piece is liberally sprinkled with accidentals and tri-tones. The listener is not allowed to settle anywhere and this sense of instability contrasts starkly with the steadiness of Boye's text.

Despite the discrepancies between the mood of Boye's poem and Rangström's setting, there is evidence that Rangström was sensitive to the text. In the final verse, the tension is raised to fever pitch: the music is marked *ff*, accent, crescendo, and *ben rit.*, and the soprano stretches up to A flat. But then, on the word 'rosor', in one of Rangström's characteristically abrupt chord changes, the accompaniment melts into a soft B major arpeggio while the voice soars upwards on the unexpected second syllable. On every other appearance of the 'Jag drömde om ... i natt' motif, the melodic line drops downwards, but here, highlighting Boye's association of roses with paradise and the soul, it drifts heavenwards and hangs there for a moment before following suit. It is a masterful moment of delicacy in an otherwise tumultuous setting, demonstrating Rangström's sensitivity to Boye's use of the surprising image, as well as to its symbolism in the rest of her output. The listener is granted two whole bars of B major (enharmonically, the flattened submediant, often an indicator of a dream state in the Lieder tradition) before a chromatic progression leads towards the final flourish in the tonic, E flat.⁴⁹

If we consider the song 'Sköldmön' with the same analyst's approach as we did the text (that is, attending to the manner of delivery as well as, or more than, the words) we are led to very different conclusions about the dreamer's state of mind. For the reader-analyst, it is easy to identify the author, the dreamer, and the shield-maiden as one persona represented on different levels of reality. The listener-analyst, on the other hand, cannot be convinced that the sung voice of the dreamer, plunging over massive intervals and creeping up chromatic lines, matches the steady

Here, however, the rhythmic ambiguity of the opening phrase demands a mutual awareness of the opening rest's length that should be as strongly felt by the performers as any of the subsequent, sounding notes.

⁴⁹ That Rangström should find his way to B major at this crucial point is noteworthy. In 'Tristans död' it represented unity with a lover in death; perhaps here, too, it stands for a state of sublime consummation.

resolve of the shield-maiden. Rangström's setting has driven the shield-maiden's qualities from the text and re-characterised the dreamer as an unbalanced narrator.

Rangström's *romanser* as re-expressed experience of the text

The disparity between Boye's text and Rangström's setting requires us to engage with the perennial question of the relationship between text and music in art-song. On 20 January 1921, *Svenska Dagbladet* published an article by Hilma Henningsson, who taught elocution at the conservatoire in Stockholm. Henningsson claims that, in a completed art-song, 'usually, the *skald* or the composer has won in single combat: they are seldom totally equally strong'.⁵⁰ Henningsson would doubtless have heard 'Sköldmön' as a song where the composer has triumphed over the poet – where the overblown drama of Rangström's music defeats the steadiness of Boye's original text. However, Rangström's own understanding of a song's compositional process allows for a more nuanced interpretation. He set out his views several times during his career, but they remained extremely consistent, and so this section will draw concurrently from three articles, despite the gaps between their dates of publication. The first is Rangström's characteristically verbose response to Henningsson in 1921; the second is a 1936 article that expresses many of the same ideas, not least an analogy of the Lieder genre as a kind of musical New World, a 'new continent of notes' discovered by Schubert and cultivated by Schumann; the last article is titled 'En skald och hans tonsättare' ('A skald and his composer', 1945) and it focuses on Rangström's relationship to Bo Bergman and his poetry. These extracts outline Rangström's unusual position in the broad narrative of the art-song genre: despite his palpable interest in modernist ideas about the role of the unconscious in the compositional process, he tended to express himself in the kind of language (both theoretical and musical) that had marked nineteenth-century discourse about the Lied.

In Rangström's 1921 reaction to Hilma Henningsson, he begins by making the long-established distinction between the composer of 'pure' (i.e. absolute) music, who regards the poetic quality of the text as subordinate to its potential as a 'pretext for a ringing "*romans*"', and the 'romantic' composer, who is concerned above all with mood and imagination. Rangström concedes that the first category, 'were it not in a state of dying out', could benefit from Henningsson's advice about diction in music, and then plunges into a rhapsody on the theme of the 'romantic' compositional process.⁵¹ He dismisses the 'misconception' (held, not least, by Goethe) that the

⁵⁰ Hilma Henningsson, 'Dikten och musiken', *Svenska Dagbladet*, 20 January 1921. '... har vanligtvis skalden eller kompositören segrat i envigget: fullt jämstarka äro de sällan.'

⁵¹ Rangström, 'Dikten och musiken än en gång', *Svenska Dagbladet*, 26 January 1921. '... förevändning för en klingande "*romans*"; '... vore den icke stadd i utdöende'.

composer merely provides some musical embroidery to enhance the poem's pattern, or that he seeks to somehow complete it; 'rather, paradoxically enough, one should be able to say that it is the poem which in a happy moment completes the composer.'⁵² For Rangström, this statement was not merely a neat play on words, but a regular part of his compositional process:

An experience, hidden in the silence, a dream, a mood, which can never be spoken, all that is secret and barely conscious, suddenly, through the poetic word, receives life and compelling musical immediacy. The musician, the composer, himself becomes 'the poet' – in his language – in the same moment as the poet of the words gives him the key to the sounding secrets. In the result – the completed 'song' – consonance between the poem and the notes can be inadequate, perhaps inaccurate; an over- or under-shot can occur on the musical page. However, the ideal after which every composer consciously or unconsciously strives, is, nevertheless, the insoluble compound of words and notes in a new artwork, a new revelation, just as necessary in its way as the poem alone once was, before the notes were found. It is a romantic ideal – Schubert has reached it, and his Goethe songs (or Schumann's Wilhelm Meisterlieder!) still cast no detracting shadow on the poems' original literary form; the poem consists of itself – the song, the new artwork, consists of itself, and both have [their] place in the world.⁵³

Fragments of Rangström's rhetoric here echo the ideas about creative instinct and the unconscious that Schoenberg had been propagating in Vienna about ten years previously, but most of it is rooted further back in the history of art-song. His statement is thus most easily situated with reference to the models of text-music relationships expounded by Kofi Agawu in his seminal paper 'Theory and Practice in the Analysis of the Nineteenth-Century "Lied"'. Of the four models presented by Agawu, the 'assimilation model' based on Suzanne Langer's work is by far the closest match for Rangström's approach. Indeed, his use of speech-melody can be considered part of the process by which, in Agawu's terms, 'non-musical elements are transformed into musical ones'.⁵⁴ Like Langer, Rangström does not consider song to be 'a compromise between poetry and music', but rather an autonomous creation.⁵⁵ However, he would by no means assent to her assertion that 'when a composer puts a

⁵² *ibid.* '... man snarare, paradoxalt nog, skulle kunna säga, att det är dikten som i en lycklig stund kompletterar tonsättaren.'

⁵³ *ibid.* 'En upplevelse, gömd i det tysta, en dröm, en stämning, som aldrig fått tala, allt det fördolda och knappast medvetna, får plötsligt genom diktarordet liv och betvingande musikalisk aktualitet. Musikern, tonsättaren, blir själv "diktare" – i sitt språk – i samma ögonblick som ordetsdiktare givit honom nyckeln till de tonande hemligheterna. Samklangens mellan dikt och ton kan i resultatet, den färdiga "sången", bli bristfällig, kanske oriktig, ett över- eller underskott kan uppstå på den musikaliska sidan; men idealet, som varje tonsättare medvetet eller omedvetet strävar efter, är ändå den olösliga föreningen av ordet och tonen i ett nytt konstverk, en ny uppenbarelse, lika nödvändig i sin art som en gång dikten ensam var det, innan tonen fanns. Det är ett romantiskt ideal – Schubert har nått det, och hans Goethe-sånger (eller Schumanns Wilhelm Meisterlieder!) kasta ändå ingen förringande skugga på dikternas litterära ursprungsform; dikten består för sig – sången, det nya konstverket, består för sig, och båda ha plats i världen.'

⁵⁴ Kofi Agawu, 'Theory and Practice in the Analysis of the Nineteenth-Century "Lied"', *Music Analysis* 11/1 (March 1992), 5.

⁵⁵ Suzanne K. Langer, *Feeling and Form: A Theory of Art* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1953), 152.

poem to music, he annihilates the poem and makes a song.⁵⁶ We could say, rather, that when Rangström composes a song, he *experiences* the poem and puts *that experience* to music. We can say of him what Cone has said of Schubert: ‘What he deals with is not the poem but his reading of it. He appropriates that reading and makes it a component in another work, entirely his own.’⁵⁷

Rangström’s approach to *romans* composition can be broken down into three stages: reading, re-expression, and result. Firstly, his reading of a poetic text resonates with him – not for its musical potential, as it might with a ‘pure’ composer, but for the feelings it evokes in him. Secondly, he re-expresses his reading of the text in his own language, i.e. in musical notes, with the same level of authority as the poet who originally expressed his feelings in words. Thirdly, the resulting song may vary in its consonance with the text, but it is in any case a new and independent expression of feeling. Rangström’s emphasis on this recreation of experience is, if anything, even greater in his expanded account of his compositional process that he gave in 1945. In fact, there is a psychoanalytic angle to much of his description, which invokes forgotten memory, includes the key word ‘hägring’, and holds on to the assurance that the process of expression will at last produce an answer.

So, I open a poetry book, new or old, [and] it may happen that a verse suddenly illuminates my consciousness. It is as if the door to the secret garden of ideas is thrown open wide: please, sir, do come in! But only for a moment... There flowers my new *visa*, there plays my new song, in this short moment I become its serving master! Yes, so it can happen in the bewitched moment of inspiration – it sounds romantic enough. Later all that remains is to write up the new *visa* – but it can take either hours or days. New *visor* like to contain difficult notes.

Another time, the poem hits me in another way. It can awaken a memory of a past, forgotten experience – all poetry is really a memory – or it forms itself in a mirage [*hägring*] of something forthcoming, that completely subconsciously forces itself into notes. These notes I cannot make out at first: I must fish them up out of the depths, with hook or net; I must work my way up to them; sometimes I go astray in innumerable fogs – and yet I have the inner certainty that all will become clear one day, if only I don’t yield. But why should I yield? I have received the poem’s orders. And they are relentless.

In both cases it is thus the poem and the contact with the poem’s experience that ignites the music in my blood.⁵⁸

⁵⁶ *ibid.*, 153.

⁵⁷ Cone, *The Composer’s Voice*, 20.

⁵⁸ Rangström, ‘En skald och hans tonsättare’, *Musikvärlden* (June 1945). ‘Öppnar jag så en diktbok, ny eller gammal, kan det hända att en strof plötsligt lyser till för mitt medvetande. Det är som om porten till aningarnas hemliga trädgård slogs upp på vid gavel: var så god, min herre, stig in! Men ett ögonblick bara... Där blommar min nya visa, är leker min nya sång, i detta korta ögonblick blir jag dess tjänande herre! Ja, så kan det gå till i ingivelsens förhäxade stund, det låter ju romantiskt nog. Sen återstår blott att teckna upp den nya visan – men det kan ta både timmar och dagar. Nya visor innehåller gärna svåra noter. En annan gång slår mig dikten på ett annat sätt. Den kan väcka minnet av en förfluten, förgäten upplevelse – all dikt är egentligen ett minne – eller den formar sig till en hägring av något kommande som helt undermedvetet tvingar sig till ton. Denna ton kan jag först inte urskilja, jag måste fiska upp den ur djupen, med krok eller håv, jag måste arbeta mig fram till

Rangström's emphasis here on obedience to the subconscious warrants a direct comparison with a statement from Schoenberg's *Theory of Harmony*, first published in 1911:

The artist's creative activity is instinctive. Consciousness has little influence on it. He feels as if what he does were dictated to him. As if he did it only according to the will of some power or other within him, of instinct, of his unconscious. Whether it is good or bad, beautiful or ugly, he does not know. He feels only the instinctual compulsion, which he must obey.⁵⁹

Rangström's rhetoric has thus moved noticeably closer to Schoenberg's, but his underlying position remains the same as in 1921: having been gripped by the poem's essence, he then aims to restate it in his own medium of song. Whether this comes in a complete and convincing moment of inspiration, or through the subtlety of subconscious impression, the compositional process is governed by the words of the poem and *Rangström's experience of them*. Rangström describes this transmission of mood or thought, from the imagination of the poet to that of the composer, as 'the noblest human interaction, born of the dream, the experience and the art's driving force, which only secondarily has anything to do with getting "the diction", the declamation, the melody or the prosody'.⁶⁰ He is quite frankly less interested in the technical details of text-setting than he is in following the poem 'that [lies] behind the words': 'How the composer then reproduces in his form the experience that the literary poem's worth triggered in him, whether melodically or [in] recitative, is largely inessential.'⁶¹ It is the experiential component of Rangström's compositional process that helps to account for the dissonance between the words of 'Sköldmön' and its notes. The foregoing analysis concluded that the text conveys an air of solemnity and discipline whereas the song creates the impression of instability, and the circumstances of its composition give ample cause for Rangström to have experienced the text in this unexpected way.

It is all but certain that Rangström composed 'Sköldmön' and its companion pieces as a response to Boye's death. In fact, there is a subtle musical connection to her suicide within the setting itself. It occurs at the turning point of the poem – the death wound at the end of verse 3. Up until this point, the accompaniment has done nothing but follow and cushion the voice. In other words, the piano part has thus far belonged to the singer's narration, rather than possessing an independent identity. In Cone's terms, the song's protagonist on the vocal-instrumental level has

den, stundom går jag vilse i otaliga töcken – och likväl har jag den inre vissheten att allt skall klarna en dag, blott jag inte ger mig. Men varför skulle jag ge mig? Jag har ju fått diktens order. Och den är obeveklig. I båda fallen är det alltså dikten och kontakten med diktens upplevelse som tänder musiken i mitt blod.'

⁵⁹ Arnold Schoenberg, *Theory of Harmony*, trans. Roy E. Carter (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983), 416.

⁶⁰ Rangström, 'Dikten och musiken än en gång'. '... en form av noblaste mänskliga samverkan, född av drömmen, upplevelsen och konstens drivkraft, som endast i andra hand har något med "diktationen", deklamationen, melodien eller prosodien att skaffa.'

⁶¹ *ibid.* 'Huruledes tonsättaren sedan i sin form återger den upplevelse, som den litterära diktens värden utlöst hos honom, om melodiskt eller reciterande, är i stort sett oväsentligt...'

been indistinguishable from that on the vocal level. In the last line of verse 3, the piano and voice enter together, as usual, with an accented *forte* chord. Then, on the word ‘banesår’ (‘death-wound’), the piano abandons its support of the voice, and instead stabs its dissonant chords into the heart of the singer’s dotted rhythms. These, surely, are the death-blows – and they come not from an external enemy, as the text suggests, but from within a persona that had previously been united. At ‘banesår’, the song turns on itself, splitting into attacker and attacked: an identity in sudden and unsustainable conflict with itself. It is a portrayal of *själv mord* – self-murder – a musical suicide.

Boye’s suicide seems to have been precipitated by difficult relational circumstances.⁶² In the final years of her life, she moved across the country, from Stockholm to Alingsås, near Gothenburg, to tend to Anita Nathorst, an old friend who was dying of cancer. Boye seems to have been torn between an unrequited (or at least unconsummated) love for Anita and her long-standing but troubled relationship with Margot Hanel. She wrote bitterly to a friend that:

... when one finally attains something that has lain in one for twenty years, the person concerned is dying of cancer and sufficiently exposed to radium not to have a spark of sex left. We agreed that life is macabre in a way that no reforms can ever remove, macabre to its innermost kernel.⁶³

Boye took leave of her macabre life just within the ten-year deadline set by her psychoanalyst, and by moderately gentle means, as Swedish poets go.⁶⁴ On 23 April 1941 she took a bottle of sleeping tablets and walked into the countryside. She was found several days later on a hillside overlooking the town, beside a boulder that has now been inscribed with her name. Tellingly, this resting place had been prefigured in one of her poems from almost twenty years earlier:

‘Vägen hem’

Jag vet en väg som leder hem.
Den vägen är tung att gå.
Var vandrare där blir en fattig man
och liten och ful och grå.

Jag vet en väg som leder hem.
Den vägen är kal och ren.
Den är so matt luta sin Varma kind
mot obarmhärtig sten.

Men den som känt den stenen

‘The Way Home’

I know a way that leads home.
That way is hard to go.
Each traveller there becomes a poor man
and little and ugly and grey.

I know a way that leads home.
That way is bare and pure.
It is like leaning your warm cheek
against a merciless stone.

But the one who has known this stone

⁶² The well-meant obfuscations of some early biographical accounts are unhelpful here. Alrik Gustafson is not alone in skirting around the issue of Boye’s homosexuality with phrases such as ‘inner crises’, ‘tragic inner struggle’, and ‘hopelessly tangled erotic relationships’ (Gustafson, 467-469).

⁶³ McDuff, ‘Karin Boye – A Biographical Profile’.

⁶⁴ Mental instability and suicide were not uncommon in the Swedish literary circles of the time, and some of Boye’s colleagues chose rather more gruesome ends. Victoria Benedictsson slashed her carotid artery with a razor not once but four times. Harry Martinson, to whom Boye’s rose-and-goddess dream was described, was hospitalized on mental grounds, but managed to get his hands on a pair of scissors and committed hari-kiri.

mot kindens isade blod,
 skall märka, hur mild dess hårdhet är,
 hur trogen och fast och god.

against his cheek's iced blood,
 shall notice how gentle its hardness is,
 how faithful and firm and good.

Och han skall tacka stenen
 och hålla det hårda kärt
 och prisa det enda kämpaspel
 som var sin seger värt.⁶⁵

And he will thank the stone
 and hold its hardness dear
 and praise the one tournament
 that was worth its victory.

Given that Boye ended her life by enacting her own poetry, it is hardly surprising that Rangström, a few months later, read 'Sköldmön', too, as prefiguring the author's suicide. 'Vägen hem' suggests that suicidal thoughts were occupying Boye's mind and permeating her poetry even in the 1920s, and so the portrayal of death in 'Sköldmön' as something 'beautiful and good' is more than the idealized belief of an heroic warrior. It becomes personally and, with the benefit of hindsight, tragically significant.

Within a month of Boye's suicide, her partner Margot Hanel (a German Jew who had fled her homeland during Hitler's rise to power) gassed herself. Anita Nathorst died of cancer in August, the month in which Rangström composed the 'Sköld och svärd' set. It is easy to see how, for Rangström, Boye's portrayal of death as 'beautiful and good', and the resolute voice of the dreamer, could be undermined by such a set of events, especially since they had unfolded during his own convalescence from cancer treatment. The 'Sköld och svärd' songs were among the first *romanser* that he wrote after his recovery; a proof copy of the set even has cheerful notes to his doctor scribbled on its title pages. (The 'Sköldmön' page begs 'Dr Gunhild Rassander [to] receive a B-vitamin in return, from the grateful ... patient', and promises a better copy of the song once it is printed.⁶⁶) By all accounts, Rangström faced his illness with stoicism and good humour; his life-affirming motto 'Despite everything' provides a definite contrast with the gravitational pull towards death that is felt in Boye's measured lines. His attitude can be traced right back to the heart of the *Dömd* text, where 'in the darkness [Earth's sons] saw their death, their eternity...' and Rangström's response was a determined concentration on light rather than darkness: 'let me think about the sun.'⁶⁷ The setting of 'Sköldmön', then, brought two opposing attitudes to death into contact with each other, one from the poet and the other from the composer. In 1936, Rangström had acknowledged that this kind of dualism could occur in the *process* of composition, if not (as Henningsson would have it) in the product (for he follows it immediately with a reassertion of the completed song's autonomy):

What is a poet's workshop, really? A bit of will, a bit of imagination, a hand, a pen –
 and a tad of sense!

⁶⁵ Karin Boye, *Gömda land* (Stockholm: Albert Bonnier, 1924).

⁶⁶ 'Dr Gunhild Rassander, behagor mottaga en B-vitamin i gengäld från tacksamme [unclear] – patienten och tillgifare, Ture Rangström' (The Rangström Collection, 1941 Skisser).

⁶⁷ '... i mörkret såga de sin död, sin evighet'; '... låt mig tänka öfver solen.'

The *romans* composer's workshop is not much more tangible. But here two wills, two hearts, two personalities are involved; it is the poet and the musician who confront each other, the poetry as engine in the notes' powerhouse.

As the musician I am, I know in art nothing more beautiful than the meeting between poetry and music. Two art-forms which together create a new and independent [one]...⁶⁸

In the setting of 'Sköldmön', a composer who was determined to cling to life confronted a poet who had at last gone seeking death. If we read Rangström's *romans* as an instinctive response to Boye's text, it suggests that he was unable to reconcile the dreamer's account of a good death with either Boye's suicide or his own recent reminder of his mortality. Rangström concluded his 1921 response to Hilma Henningsson with the statement that:

... no poem or poet excited and captured the music that I have cause to call mine, without the poet's own countenance shining behind the poem. If the music then also speaks something of the poet's language, the composer has no right to openly judge...⁶⁹

The image of Boye that Rangström saw behind her 'Sköldmön' text was clearly not the resolute shield-maiden whom Gullberg eulogised, but rather that of a disturbed patient on a psychoanalyst's couch. He re-expressed the poem that he felt 'behind the words', and though the singer still uses Boye's lines, it is Rangström's experience of them that she conveys. The persona she embodies is not the one with which Boye self-identified, but the one with which Rangström re-identified her.

While opposing attitudes towards death confronted each other in the setting of 'Sköldmön', 'Tristans död' stands as an example of the consonance between poem and music that, in 1921, Rangström held up as his ideal. Bergman certainly seemed to think so, when, for the 1945 *Musikvärlden* article, he was asked if any particular songs by Rangström captured the mood of his text better than others.

Some particular composition's precedence in this case I cannot state. I can only say that such settings as 'Vingar i natten' and 'Tristans död' belong, for me, to the unforgettable. The music has not, perhaps, shed any completely new light on the poem's contents, but rather [it presents] an elevation and condensation of the content.⁷⁰

⁶⁸ Rangström, 'I romanskomponistens verkstad', *Radiotjänst* No. 47 (1936). 'Vad är egentligen en lyrikers verkstad? Ett stycke vilja, ett stycke fantasi, en hand, en penna – och en smula förnuft! Romanskomponistens verkstad är inte stort mera påtaglig. Men här rör det sig om tvenne viljor, två hjärtan, två personligheter, det är ju diktaren och musikern, som konfronteras, poesien som motor i tonens kraftverk. Som den musikanter jag är, vet jag i konsten intet skönare än mötet mellan dikten och musiken. Två konstformer som tillsammans skapa en ny och oavhängig...'

⁶⁹ Rangström, 'Dikten och musiken är en gång'. '... ingen dikt eller diktare uppväckt och fångat den musik, som jag har anledning att kalla min, utan att diktarens eget anlete lyst bakom dikten. Om sedan musiken även talat något av diktarens språk, har tonsättaren ingen rätt att offentligt bedöma...'

⁷⁰ Bo Bergman, interviewed by Gösta Österberg in 'En skald och hans tonsättare', *Musikvärlden* (June 1945). 'Några särskilda kompositioners företrädare i det fallet kan jag inte ange. Jag kan bara säga, att sådana tonsättningar som till "Vingar i natten" och "Tristans död" hör till det oförglömliga för mig. Något direkt nytt

For all Bergman's characteristic reticence, his language of intensification echoes that of Rangström's response to Henningsson, in which he described song as a 'heightened, musically more potent, ... stylized expression of the poem's and the musician's emotional life'.⁷¹ Note that it is not the *poet's* emotional life that is held up alongside the musician's, but the poem's – a surprising mismatch, perhaps, given Rangström's later comments about two wills and two personalities. Nevertheless, this focus on text rather than author does not seem to have been a slip of the pen made in the rush to correct Hilma Henningsson, for Rangström returned to it in 1945. In response to questions about Bergman's poetry, and at the tail end of his composing career, he reiterated many of the assertions that he had made in 1921. Here, however, the poem and the musician's life are presented as a means of gauging a song's authenticity – a crucial extension of Rangström's argument that clarifies the contrast between 'Tristans död' and 'Sköldmön'.

I also believe [that] Bo Bergman belongs to the poets for whom music feels like a confirmation of the tone in their own work. Naturally, what is meant here is not that a musical composition in anyway should hold itself to 'complete' a poetic artwork. That is unfortunately a common, though very big, delusion. Instead it is thus: that the poem, through its magic power – yes, it is probably the right word – looses bound forces in the notes and in the composer, and through this peculiar process, compounded by experience and imagination, delivers the *new* artwork: *the song*, which, however free and audacious it may sound, always has its sole criterion of authenticity in its honesty before the origin: life and the poem.⁷²

This last sentence provides a final distinction between the two case studies that have been considered in this chapter. If a song's authenticity is to be measured by the accuracy of its reflection of life and the poetic text, then each of our case studies scores highly in one area but not the other.

Despite Rangström's personal identification with the character of Tristan, 'Tristans död' is far from an honest reflection of his complex love life. Any attempt to map the song's characters onto Rangström's relationships ends unsatisfactorily, resulting in no more than a half-truth whichever way it is read. The song's relationship to the text, however, is straightforward: the words are transferred from one performative genre into another, so smoothly that even the author commended the song's enhancing effect. In 'Sköldmön', the situation is reversed. Rangström's setting stretches Boye's firm lines into rhythmic uncertainty and melodic instability; the song is a

ljus över dikternas innehåll har kanske inte musiken gett mig, men väl en förhöjning och förtätning av innehållet.'

⁷¹ Rangström, 'Dikten och musiken än en gång'. 'stegrade, musikaliskt potentierade, ... stilerade uttrycket för diktens och musikerns känsloliv.'

⁷² Rangström, 'En skald och hans tonsättare'. 'Jag tror också Bo Bergman hör till de diktare, för vilka musiken känns som en bekräftelse av tonen i deras eget verk. Naturligtvis menas härmed inte att en musikalisk komposition på något sätt skulle kunna utge sig för att "komplettera" ett poetiskt konstverk. Det är tyvärr en vanlig, fast mycket stor villfarelse. I stället är det så, att dikten genom sin trollmakt – ja, det torde vara rätta ordet – löser bundna krafter i tonen och hos tonsättaren, och genom denna egendomliga process, sammansatt av upplevelse och fantasi, förlöses det *nya* konstverket: *sången*, som hur fri och oförvägen den än må klinga alltid har sitt enda kriterium på äkthet i sin ärlighet inför ursprunget: livet och dikten.'

distorted reflection of the poem. However, when it is considered in relation not only to Boye's life and death, but also to Rangström's, the song appears as an accurate re-expression, in music, of Rangström's experience of the text. This distinction is a helpful one, allowing 'Tristans död' and 'Sköldmön' to be effective in completely different ways despite their superficial musical similarity, but it requires a major caveat. Rangström does not describe an honest reflection of life and a true reflection of the poem as two criteria for authenticity, only one of which really needs to be met by the composer. On the contrary, he understood the song's *sole criterion* of authenticity to be the accuracy of its reflection of a single origin: life *and* the poem. That is, the text and the context of its reader's life must be reflected together in the song. Rangström's insistence on the inextricability of text from the subjective reading of it returns us, as he himself consistently returned, to the understanding that his songs represent his recreated experiences of their texts. However, we are not required to reconcile 'life and the poem' into a single point that is reflected in Rangström's music. Rather, what he portrays in his *romanser* is the tension between them, as he experienced it at the moment of inspiration, that was, for him, the origin of every song.

Facing the Inexorable

The interaction between life and poetry already preoccupied Rangström when, back in 1917, he wrote *Dömd*. Then, when he imagined himself facing a mysterious figure that seemed to represent his own mortality, he came to the conclusion that he 'lived one life and poetry another', and made the wry observation that his only truly heroic act was a long-ago incident of childhood defiance. Lacking the ability or opportunity to enact his heroic ideals, his composition became a means of proxy experience. When he finally found himself facing death for real, similar ideas were in play, but more or less in reverse. Rangström seems to have written a good deal of poetry in his later years, but burnt much of it after a close friend criticised its over-sentimentality. Helmer summarises the remnant as:

... a document of a painful time of illness, which he endured, according to the testimony of Lars Gyllensten [his nephew] and others, without complaining, with an almost heroic resignation; the agony and pain he met with ironic comments. But the poems partly speak another language: inner rebellion and protest; at the start, morose grumbling; in the end, dying away in melancholy, reconciliation and farewell.⁷³

⁷³ Helmer, *Ture Rangström*, 454. '... document från en plågsam sjukdomstid som han enligt Lars Gyllenstens och andras vittnesbörd utsod utan att klaga, med något som närmast liknar heroisk resignation; plågan och smärtorna bemötte han med ironiska kommentarer. Men dikterna talar delvis ett annat språk: inre uppror och protester, till en början vresigt knorrande, till slut förklingande i vemod, försoning och avsked.'

Helmer's assessment suggests that Rangström was still living one life, and poetry another – both were still partial reflections of his experience – but that, in the end, his heroism was outwardly evident, no longer portrayed by proxy in the deceptive medium of song.

However, Rangström never broke the habit of identifying himself with characters from his compositions and of using roles and allusions as a symbolic shorthand. In the last year of his life, during work on *Gilgamesj*, the opera he would leave unfinished, he wrote a letter to the librettist, Ebbe Linde, in which he clearly identifies himself with the wild man, Engidu, who is a blood brother to Gilgamesj:

I have for a time lived in Engidu's bleak house, under the ground, under the floor, in life's cellar. However, I greet you not as Morituri [one who is about to die] but as a freshly washed youngster ... who shall soon rise up again and look on the Earth's globe.⁷⁴

This expression of Rangström's 'Despite Everything' attitude, which he was shortly to put down in words in the *Gilgamesj* programme, ties together many of the threads that had been woven through his life. The first sentence references the kind of despair that had periodically beset him; the gladiatorial allusion in the second suggests lingering aspirations to heroism. Rangström's long habit of personally identifying with fictional characters is continued in the doomed figure of Engidu, who is connected through musical motives in the score of *Gilgamesj* to the more familiar roles of Pan and to Tristan.⁷⁵ Even the imagery of being washed clean and rising again is borrowed from 'Stella Maris'.

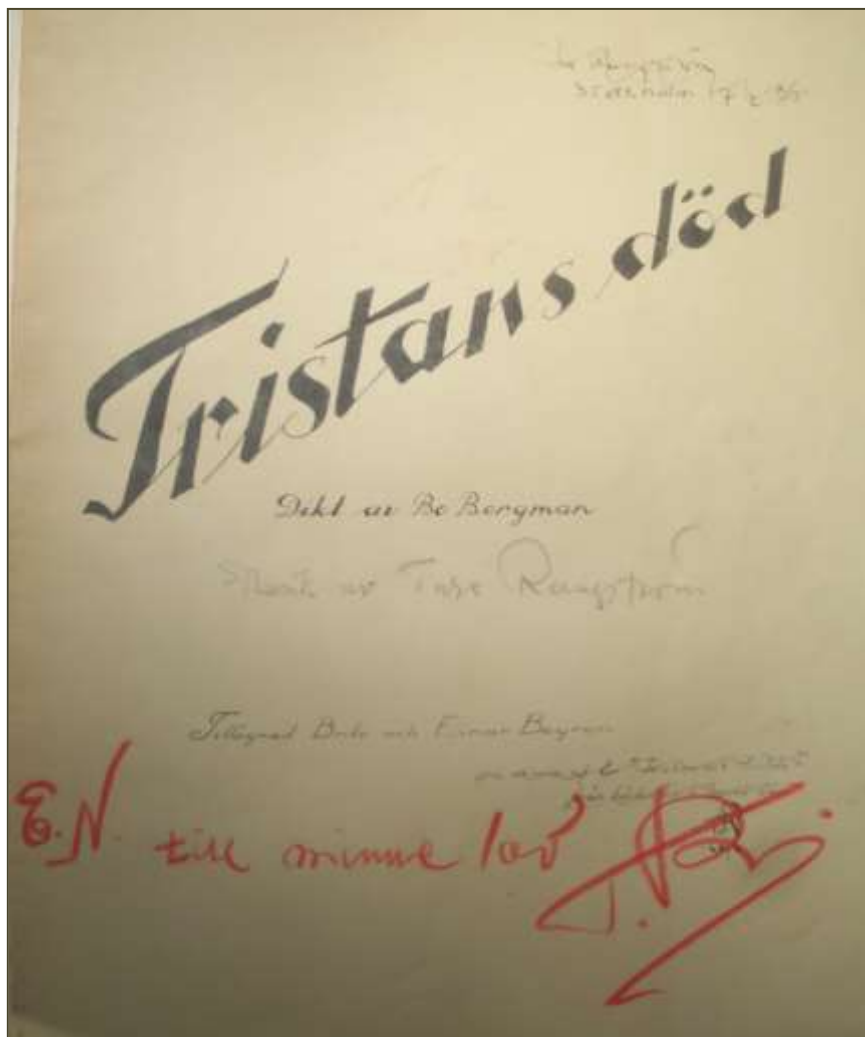
Just as Rangström's songs had been a way of exploring aspects of life that he could not experience directly, this final opera was undoubtedly an exploration of death. After the posthumous premiere, Ebbe Linde attributed the impact of the final scene to its power to recreate Rangström's own experience of facing death: 'it grips so strongly because nobody can fail to sense Rangström's ideas about his own imminent demise, and that the immense funeral-march in fact concerns himself'.⁷⁶ Rangström's oft-stated intention, to recreate in music his encounter with the text, had thus been met from beyond the grave.

⁷⁴ Cited in Helmer, *Ture Rangström*, 457. 'Jag har en tid bott i Engidus dystra hus, under marken, under golvet, i livets källarvåning. Dock hälsar jag Dig icke som Moriture, utan som en nytvättad yngling ... som snart skall stiga upp igen och tittatitt på jordklotet'. (Letter from Rangström to Ebbe Linde, 23 August 1946.)

⁷⁵ The falling crotchet phrases from 'Pan' are recycled, and the massive upward leaps (an octave and a tenth) in Engidu's final phrase echo the ending of 'Tristans död' (see Helmer, pp. 438-439).

⁷⁶ Cited in Helmer, *Ture Rangström*, 443. '... den griper så starkt förför att ingen kan underlåta att känna Rangströms aningar om sin egen snara bortgång och att den oerhörda sorgmarschen i själva verket gäller honom själv.'

Figure 19: The rededication of 'Tristans död'



Elsa Nodermanns Papper

Figure 20. Karin Boye's painting 'Valkyrian'



www.karinboye.se

CONCLUSION

The tone-poet of pain and the tragic accent, the dark, minor melody's singer and the original man is gone forever. Unsought, Dan Andersson's poetic words come to mind: 'Over black, wrathful water the night pipes up a prayer, for a musician and a dreamer is dead.'¹ – Karl Erik Svedlund

The quote above comes from a tribute to Rangström published in 1947 in the periodical *Vår Sång* (*Our Song*), and it ties up, in just a couple of sentences, several of the main threads in Rangström's reception. Like many other writers, Svedlund emphasizes the dark and minor aspects of Rangström's music. His description of the composer as 'the original man' is an echo of the *ursvensk* rhetoric that had appeared in the 1930s and lasted until after Rangström's death. Even the quote from Dan Andersson's poem 'En spelmans jordafärd' ('A musician's burial') connects to the bleak sea-symbolism of Rangström's own poetry as well as to the comforting idea of personified night as an intercessor. We saw in Chapter Two that the obituaries written for Rangström by his colleagues revealed and confirmed the direction that his subsequent reception would take, but Rangström himself has also had a final word on the matter. Given the length of his terminal illness and his life-long habit of self-presentation, he surely had a hand in the planning of his own memorial service, which took place on 19 May 1947. The programme will therefore be considered as one last, grand expression of his values and allegiances, projected from beyond the grave.

First, however, we must formalize some answers to the questions raised right at the start of this thesis. Stenhammar's 1917 letter to Nielsen portrayed the young Rangström as an amateur and a miniaturist, both of which are labels commonly applied to composers whose reputation rests primarily on their contribution to the art-song genre. Two further questions about Rangström's identity as a composer, however, are less familiar to the field of song studies, dominated as it is by nineteenth-century German repertoire; this thesis has engaged with his *romanser* as expressions of his Swedishness and as a response to modernity.

Stenhammar's 1917 assessment of Rangström as an amateur (or, more accurately, not a professional) was qualified in Chapter One by putting it in the broader context of Sweden's early twentieth-century musical culture, where there was a notable lack of expert tuition for aspiring composers. Rangström's lack of extended or formal training in composition was hardly exceptional, and Stenhammar himself falls into the category of being largely self-taught. In fact, it is Stenhammar's understanding of professional musicianship that is puzzlingly narrow, even for the

¹ Karl-Erik Svedlund, *Vår Sång*, 1 June 1947. 'Smärtans och de tragiska accenternas patetiske tonskald, den mörka mollmelodiens sångare och den originella människan är för alltid borta. Osökt kommer i tankarna Dan Anderssons diktaord: "Över svarta vreda vatten spelar natten upp till bön, ty en spelman och en drömmare är död."'

time. Although Stenhammar describes Rangström's work as that of 'a singing teacher and music critic', he categorizes him alongside an engineer and a vet rather than as a 'practical or theoretical' musician. Unlike Kurt Atterberg and Natanael Berg, Rangström managed to spend his entire life working in the field of music, in exactly the kind of portfolio career that marks many musicians today: teacher, composer, critic, occasional performer, broadcaster, and even musical administrator (for all that he seems to have taken little pride in his role at the Stockholm Opera). Rangström's partially self-taught status was therefore far from unusual at the time and his career path is immediately recognizable today as that of a professional musician.

Stenhammar's portrayal of Rangström as a miniaturist, whose songs are 'pearls' but whose larger works are marked by ignorance and incompetence, matches the wider critical consensus of the 1910s in a way that his non-professional label does not. However, Stenhammar's criticisms of Rangström's large-scale work should be offset by the very favourable reception of Rangström's symphonies and the popularity of *Kronbruden*, which is a strong contender for Sweden's national opera. (That its primary opponent is widely held to be Peterson-Berger's *Arnlfot* is an ongoing expression of the conflict that marked the composers' relationship.²) When the Strindberg symphony was conducted by Stenhammar in Copenhagen in 1919, technical deficiencies were duly noted, but dismissed as of secondary importance compared to the communicative power of Rangström's music:

... although [the music] is not technically or musically virtuosic, it speaks to one's mind with gripping force and lets one become a witness to the soul's tensions and state of mind, which lie infinitely far above the everyday. It is these artistic values that sustain Rangström's art and make him great as a man and artist, more than as a musician.³

Here, as so often, Rangström's ability to transmit experience through music appears to be the strongest suit in the hand that he had been dealt as a composer. The same skill that, for this critic, covered and compensated for technical inadequacies in the Strindberg symphony surely also contributes to the success of the songs: the intensity with which Rangström engaged with literary texts gave him a strong and specific message to convey in each *romans*.

In addition to the questions implied by Stenhammar's letter, this thesis has engaged with issues of nationality and modernity in Rangström's *romanser* – issues that have turned out to be intertwined. The Swedishness of Rangström's music has often been regarded as self-evident, but this

² Hans Åstrand, 'Har vi en nationalopera?', *Kvällsposten*, 22 January 1962.

³ J. R. [Julius Rabe?], 'Den nordiska musikfesten i Köpenhamn. Tredje konsert', *Göteborgs Handels- och Sjöfartstidning*(?), 17 June 1919. '... trots den tekniskt-musikaliskt inte är virtuos, talar den till ens sinne med gripande kraft och låter en bli vittne till själsspänningar och sinnestillstånd, som ligga oändligt högt över det vardagliga. Det är dessa konstnärliga värden som bära upp Rangströms konst och göra honom stor som människa och konstnär, större än som musiker.'

thesis has clarified and examined in detail three aspects of Swedishness in Rangström's songs: his re-expressions in music of Swedish literature, the spoken Swedish language, and Swedish landscapes.

Rangström's overwhelming preference for Swedish song-texts is not particularly noteworthy, except that it remains the single greatest barrier to dissemination of his music. More remarkable is his frequent setting of contemporary poets and the ease with which he adopted aspects of literary modernism into his *romanser* while adhering to the tonalities of late Romanticism, as in his characterization of Boye's Dreamer as an unreliable narrator in his setting of 'Sköldmön'. This particular feature of modernist literature marks not only Strindberg's works, but also Rangström's own stream-of-consciousness text from 1917: Rangström clearly followed the model of self-presentation provided by the man who has justifiably been described as the father of Swedish modernism.

The second aspect of Swedishness in Rangström's *romanser* is his use of speech-melody. Despite the German origin of the technique, Rangström's aim to follow in song the shapes of spoken Swedish was frankly nationalistic. However, his implementation of speech-melody was more often identified as idiosyncratic and modern than as distinctively Swedish. This thesis has looked for direct connections between characteristics of Rangström's vocal writing and patterns of spoken Swedish in order to justify the unverified references to 'Swedish intonation' that regularly surface in Rangström's later reception. The most pervasive feature of his songs is the insistent repetition of quavers, shown in Chapter Two to reflect the complementary quantity of spoken Swedish (where, in stressed syllables, a short vowel followed by a long consonant takes the same duration as a long vowel followed by a short consonant). However, most of the characteristics of Rangström's music that can be linked to the rhythm and intonation of spoken Swedish can be shown to have counter-examples: his implementation of speech-melody was far from consistent, and was just one factor in a compositional process that was ultimately concerned with feeling over form.

The third aspect of Swedishness in Rangström's music is his portrayal of landscape. Crucially, though, what is distinctively Swedish here is not so much the landscape described in his music (for example, the use of harsh timbres in his orchestral music to portray rocky outcrops and threatening seas) but rather the *conception* of landscape that is revealed by his reception. It is peculiar to Sweden in three ways: firstly, in its focus on the lived landscape, to which human experience and activity are integral; secondly, in its celebration of multiple regional identities as authentically national; and thirdly, in its acceptance of Östergötland as a *hembygd* for Rangström. Rangström's decision to focus on specific landscapes as a source of inspiration was both Swedish and modern in intention: it was born of a desire to see Sweden establish a strong and distinctive school of composing, and it was a deliberate break from the blandness of the existing salon tradition. There is

thus some irony in the fact that it now seems (at least on the surface, and as opposed to the innovations of the Second Viennese School) to align him with the National Romanticism associated with Central Europe and an earlier generation of composers.

Sweden's different historical experience makes such a comparison dangerous, and instead provides an alternative means of reconciling Rangström's modern outlook with his late Romantic sound-world. Assertions of Swedish national identity in Rangström's music and its reception were made in the context of past national stability and present neutrality; they lack the political or aspirational motives behind most expressions of nationalism, musical or otherwise. Sweden's neutrality resulted in an inwardly diverse nationalism that celebrated regional belonging, but it also seems partly responsible for the sluggishness of the cultural shift towards modernity through the first half of the twentieth century. It is this context that helps us to understand the gap between Rangström's modernist attitude as a composer and his compositions themselves, which remain thoroughly tonal despite an idiosyncratic approach to modulations and harmonic progressions. His harmonic language is thus primarily that of late Romanticism, and his archetype of a tonal, chorale-like Adagio stands as a reaction against the 'cacophony' of continental trends. Even here, however, Rangström should not be seen as regressive. His adherence to tonality and traditional genres is not mere resistance to progress, but rather a response to ideas of modernism other than his own. By no means does his Adagio represent a retreat; it offers an alternative path forwards.

A single idea ties together much of what has been discussed here: understanding Rangström's compositional process as the recreation of experience. We saw that despite (or, perhaps, due to) the rigour of Lindegren's tuition, Rangström avoided formal counterpoint in favour of the 'counterpoint of feeling', in which the emotional meaning of different musical elements create points of tension when set against each other. Our final case study, 'Sköldmön', provides an example of such tension in the conflicting messages of the text and its setting, but also at the turning point of the poem, when Rangström puts the accompaniment in sudden opposition to the vocal line. Rangström's response to Hilma Henningsson, in which he argues that the composer's experience of a poetic text takes precedence over the technicalities of setting it, helps to account for the inconsistencies in his implementation of speech-melody. Rangström saw speech-melody as offering possibilities, not restrictions; he was always guided primarily by his emotional reaction to the text. This priority explains why, even in his description of the speech-melody process, Rangström drew in the psychology and the meaning of the poem. It is this priority that is at work in 'En gammal dansrytm', in which Rangström has recreated the feeling of a sung folk-dance rather than a folk-dance itself, and it is this priority of recreated experience that marks, above all, his musical evocation of landscapes.

The three categories of literature, language, and landscape all provide a means of engaging with nationality and modernity in Rangström's music. It is the last of the three that is underlined most heavily by the events that took place after Rangström's death and which were undoubtedly Rangström's final say in the shaping of his legacy.

The Last Word

Invitations to Rangström's funeral service were sent out by his children, Dag and Villemo; understandably, neither of his divorced wives took on this role, from which social conventions precluded Elsa. The lengthy programme for the service consisted almost entirely of Rangström's own music (see Figure 21, p. 201). As mentioned in Chapter One, five of the eleven pieces have a connection to Strindberg: a piece from *Mälarlegender*, a piano triptych based on Strindberg's lengthy poem 'Stadsresan'; an organ piece for Strindberg's mystery-play *Advent*; the slow movement of the Strindberg Symphony; and two extracts from the incidental music to *Till Damaskus*. The Adagio and Funeral March from the unfinished opera *Gilgamesj* also makes an appearance, lending credence to the subsequent interpretation of the work as Rangström's portrayal of his own death and commemoration. Despite the dominance of Rangström's *romanser*, and perhaps due to the grand scale of proceedings, which clearly included an orchestra, only two of his songs were performed. One of these was 'Bön till natten'; twenty years later, it would be played at Bo Bergman's funeral too.⁴ The second song was a setting of Oscar Levertin's 'Åter' ('Again'), which had been composed within a month of 'Bön till natten' during Rangström's 1924 summer of song. Like Bergman's text, it begins by describing an end to 'clamour' ('larm'), the word that Rangström used of the confused and demanding noise of the modern world, which he countered with his idealized Adagio. The similarities with 'Bön till natten' are obvious: both texts refer to the night and the sea; both portray the comfort of oblivion; above all, both are expressions of Rangström's reallocation of religious imagery to the natural world. In Levertin's text, this appears most strongly in the adaptation of the Biblical phrase, 'The LORD gave, and the LORD has taken away; blessed be the name of the LORD'.⁵ The pattern of imbuing nature with agency, and of associating it with eternity and divine characteristics, was well established in Rangström's *romanser*; at his funeral it found expression even within the constraints of a nominally Christian ceremony. In fact, even the unavoidably religious elements of the service seem to have been chosen for their nature imagery: two out of the three hymns show a remarkable overlap with the ideas in the two *romanser*.

⁴ 'Inga tal vid Bo Bergmans grav' ['No speech at Bo Bergman's grave'], *Göteborg Söndagstidningen*, 26 November 1967.

⁵ Job 1:21

'Åter'

Alltså den smärtan kunde domna
trots allt sitt vilda sus och larm,
också den sorgen kunde somna,
som en gång helt fyllt upp min barm.
Den sista dyningen förrunnit,
en nattens suck i årens sand,
av våg, som brusat och försvunnit,
blott snäckskal ligga kvar på strand.

Men åter lika ljusst och blått
som förr en vår är havets vatten,
jag åter hoppas, åter sått,
jag vet det gror i juninatten.
Du hårda liv, du rika liv,
hur dina träd av frukter digna.
Jag räknar ej; tag eller giv!
Jag lika fullt vill dig välsigna.

Like the second verse of Levertin's text, the first of the hymns portrays life as a tree with the potential for renewed growth.

Sv. ps. 572: v. 1, 2

Lär mig, du skog, att vissna glad
en gång, som hostens gula blad:
en bättre vår snart blommar,
då härligt grönt mitt träd skall stå
och sina djupa rötter slå
i evighetens sommar.

Lär mig, du fåglars glada tåg,
att draga hän med fröjdfull håg
mot obekanta stränder.
När allt är vinter här och is,
jag till evigt paradiset
från köld och töcken länder.

The second hymn is more Biblical (a paraphrase of a benediction taken from Numbers 6:24-26) but the third returns to nature imagery with the simile of the soul lifting its praise to heaven like a bird soaring over the earth. The way in which Rangström looked to nature for comfort, inspiration, and a sense of the transcendent thus seems to have permeated even the conventionally religious components of the service.

Rangström's burial carried, if anything, a stronger message than his memorial service. Although the service was held at the Maria Magdalena Church in Stockholm, within a mile or so of the homes where he had spent his adult life, he was not buried there.

'Again'

Thus the pain could go numb
despite all its wild swish and clamour,
also sadness could fall asleep,
which once completely filled my breast.
The last swell has passed away,
a nocturnal sigh in the years' sand,
of the wave, which roared and disappeared,
only shells remain on the shore.

But again, as bright and blue
as is the sea's water before a spring,
I hope again, sown again,
I know it grows in the June night.
You hard life, you rich life,
how your tree sinks down with fruit.
I count not; take or give!
I want to bless you nonetheless.

Swedish Psalmbook 572: v. 1, 2

Teach me, O forest, to wither happily
one day, as autumn's yellow leaves:
a better spring blossoms soon,
then my tree shall stand delightfully green
and its deep roots strike
into eternity's summer.

Teach me, O bird's happy procession,
to pull away with joyful mind
towards unknown shores.
When all here is winter and ice,
I [go] to eternal paradise
from cold and misty lands.

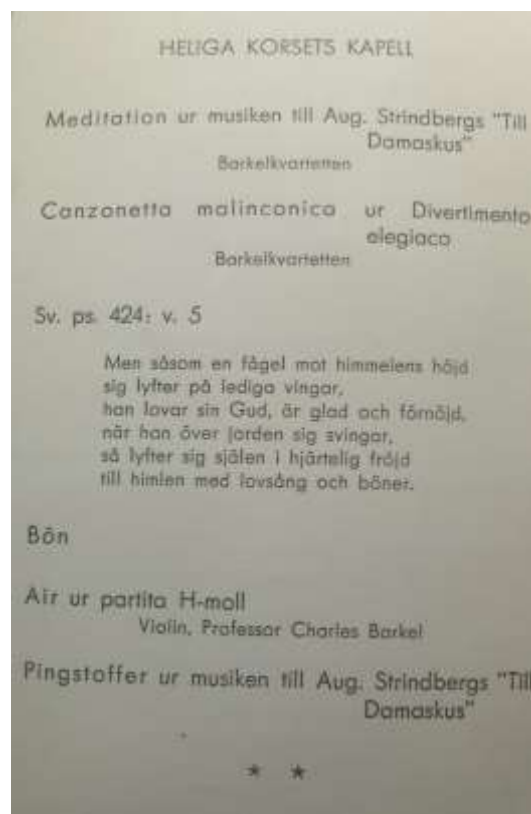
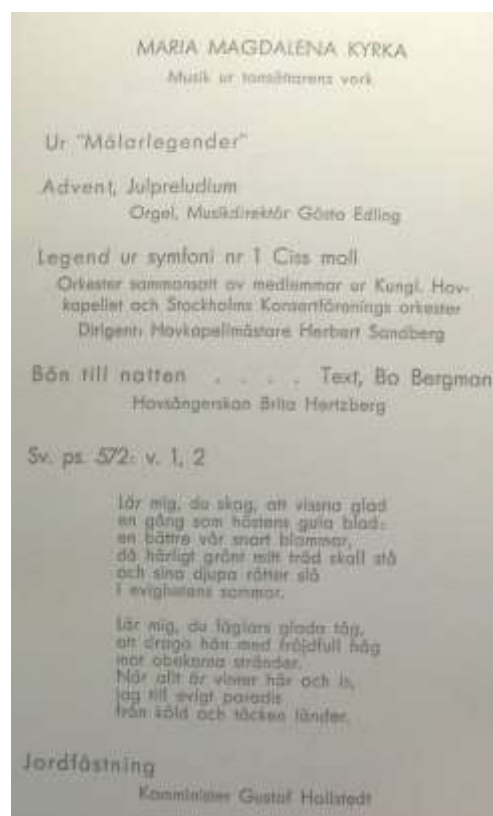
His children Dag and Villemo had made a request that the ashes might be set on Törnsholmen, but the application was rejected. The urn was buried in Gryt's churchyard. On the grave was set a stone which Rangström had brought to Törnsholmen from one of the islands in the archipelago; a lighter kind of stone in the form of a heart. Ture Rangström lies buried at the way out to the archipelago that was his true home.⁶

Rangström's burial in Gryt rather than in his home city makes a stronger statement than the proposed site of Törnsholmen would have done. It expresses a commitment not just to his own island, where he had spent so much time and composed so much music, but to the wider region. It confirms his adoption of Gryt as a *hembygd* and ensures its importance in his legacy. The question of a burial location forced an either/or decision between the city and the archipelago, and the choice of Gryt leads Helmer to describe the archipelago landscape as Rangström's 'true home'. Not 'second home' or even 'adopted home', but 'true home', implying that Rangström belonged there in a more genuine or fundamental way than he belonged to Stockholm. Thus even Helmer comes down, at last, on the archipelago's side of a fence that was only really constructed in the last decade of Rangström's life.

Rangström instructed in his will that, after his death, the boat in which he had sailed the archipelago for thirty-five years was to be burnt – a vivid allusion to the Viking heritage that had so often been cited in his reception. His choice of headstone also emphasizes his relationship to the archipelago: it was a physical part of the island landscape, one that he had personally selected, presumably with this use already in mind. Where some would place a cross, Rangström placed a piece of the landscape that he had adopted as his own. As a statement of allegiance and belonging, and as a tangible expression of his own landscape creed – 'I was born a part of your everything; please, graciously accept me again' – it could hardly be clearer.

⁶ Helmer, 458. 'Barnen Dag och Villemo hade gjort en framställning om att stoftet måtte få bisättas på Törnsholmen, men ansökan avslogs. Urnan jordades på Gryts kyrkogård. På graven lades en sten som Rangström hade hämtat till Törnsholmen från en av öarna i skärgården; en ljusare stenart i den antyder formen av ett hjärta. Ture Rangström ligger begravd vid utfarten till den skärgård som var hans egentliga hem.'

Figure 21. Programme for Rangström's memorial service



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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Catalogue of Rangström's <i>romanser</i>	214
Appendix B: Patterns and preferences in the composition of Rangström's <i>romanser</i>	215
Appendix C: Case study scores	222
'Pan'	223
'Melodi'	226
'Den enda stunden'	231
'En gammal dansrytm'	233
'Bön till natten'	236
'Tristans död'	238
'Sköldmön'	243
Appendix D: Rangström's sea texts and their translations	247
'Hafvets sommar'	247
'Notturmo'	251
'Kvällsvisa'	253
Appendix E: Rangström's <i>Dömd</i> and its translation	254

APPENDIX A
CATALOGUE OF RANGSTRÖM'S *ROMANSER*

A full catalogue of Rangström's *romanser* can be accessed at:

https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1fMXuEn7fFONKVO2tkX7AxxrhNv_5xdnwcil-hVn4UkpA/edit?usp=sharing.

This catalogue is partly based on the list of works that Helmer has included in his biography of Rangström (pp. 501-513). Helmer's catalogue is comprehensive but its helpfulness is limited by format: it is a long list from which it is difficult to make many general observations, and in which it is tricky to locate a song without already knowing its date of composition. This online catalogue, on the other hand, can be sorted according to any category or filtered, e.g. for a particular poet or year.

Helmer has created similar lists for other genres but has stopped short of a definitive overall catalogue with assigned opus numbers. Only the songs are presented in this Appendix; for a timeline placing them in the context of larger works and life events, see Appendix B, Graph 3b. I have retained Helmer's numbering system, which sensibly prioritizes complete song sets over the individual dates of composition. For the sake of space I have discarded some of the data provided by Helmer (the first lines and their translations, the vocal range, the instrumentation of orchestrated versions, and the premiere details) but have added instead the locations of any scores that I found to be available to view, either in libraries or online, courtesy of the Swedish Music Information Centre (www.mic.stim.se). This is a vast resource that lists pieces (including unpublished works) by hundreds of composers and provides free previews of some scores.

The abbreviations used for publishers and libraries are given below. Since Rangström's death, several of his publishers have been absorbed by Gehrmans (Abraham Lundquist, Carl Johnns, Abraham Hirsch, and Nordiska Musikförlaget). Elkan & Schildknecht have also merged with Emil Carelius.

Publishers:

Elkan & Schildknecht	E&S
Emil Carelius musikförlag	EC
Föreningen Svenska tonsättare	FST
Musikaliska konstföreningen	MK
Nordens Musik	NM
Wilhelm Hansen	WH
Gehrmans:	
Abraham Hirsch musikförlag	AH
Abraham Lundquist	AL
Carl Johnns	CJ
Nordiska Musikförlaget	NMS

Libraries:

Royal Academy of Music (London)	RAM
Statens Musikbibliotek (Stockholm)	SM
British Library	BL
Swedish Music Information Centre	SMIC

APPENDIX B
PATTERNS AND PREFERENCES
IN THE COMPOSITION OF RANGSTRÖM'S *ROMANSER*

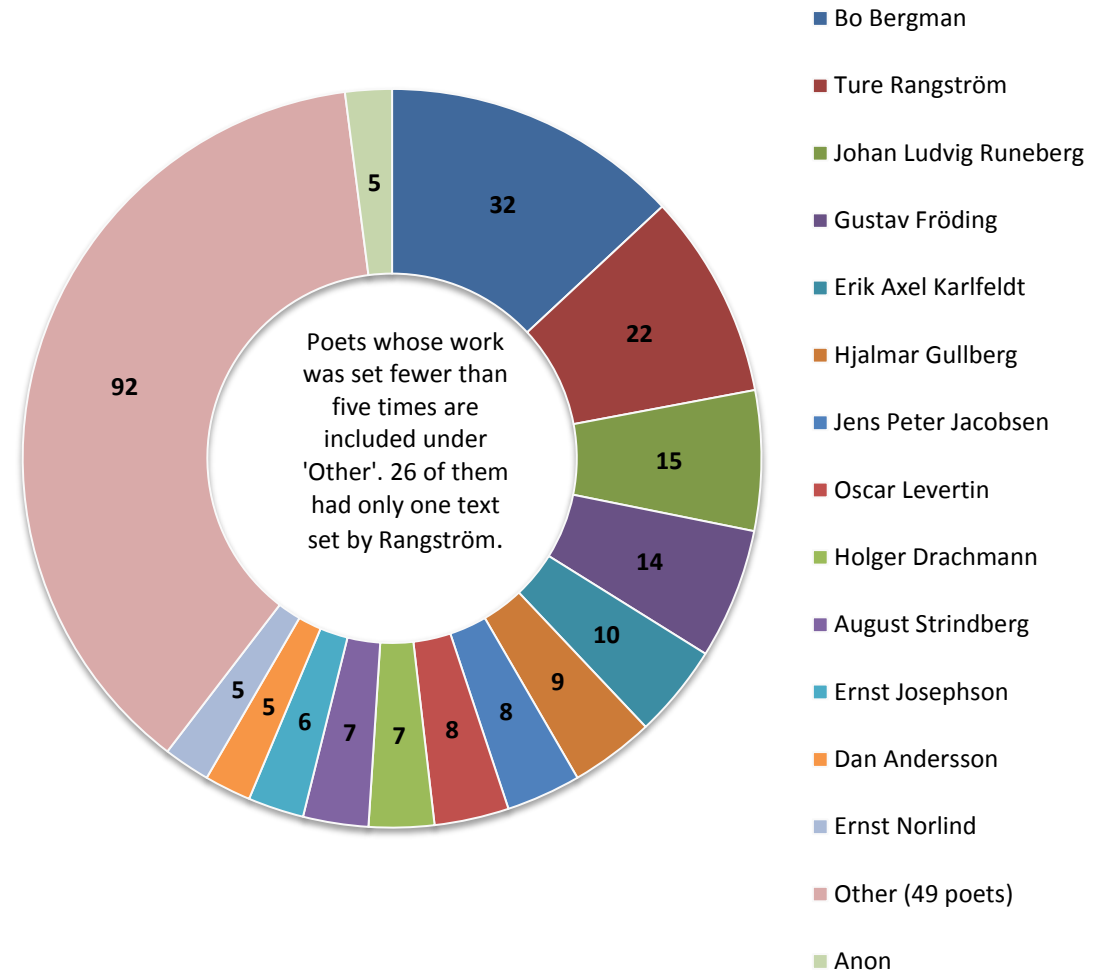
Graph 1: Rangström's choice of poets' texts	216
Graph 2a: Rangström's choice of keys, by tonic	217
Graph 2b: Rangström's choice of keys, by key signature	218
Graph 3a: Rangström's song output throughout his career	219
Graph 3b: Rangström's song output alongside his major works and relationships	220
Graph 4: Original and translation language of Rangström's <i>romanser</i>	221

Graph 1: Rangström's choice of poets' texts

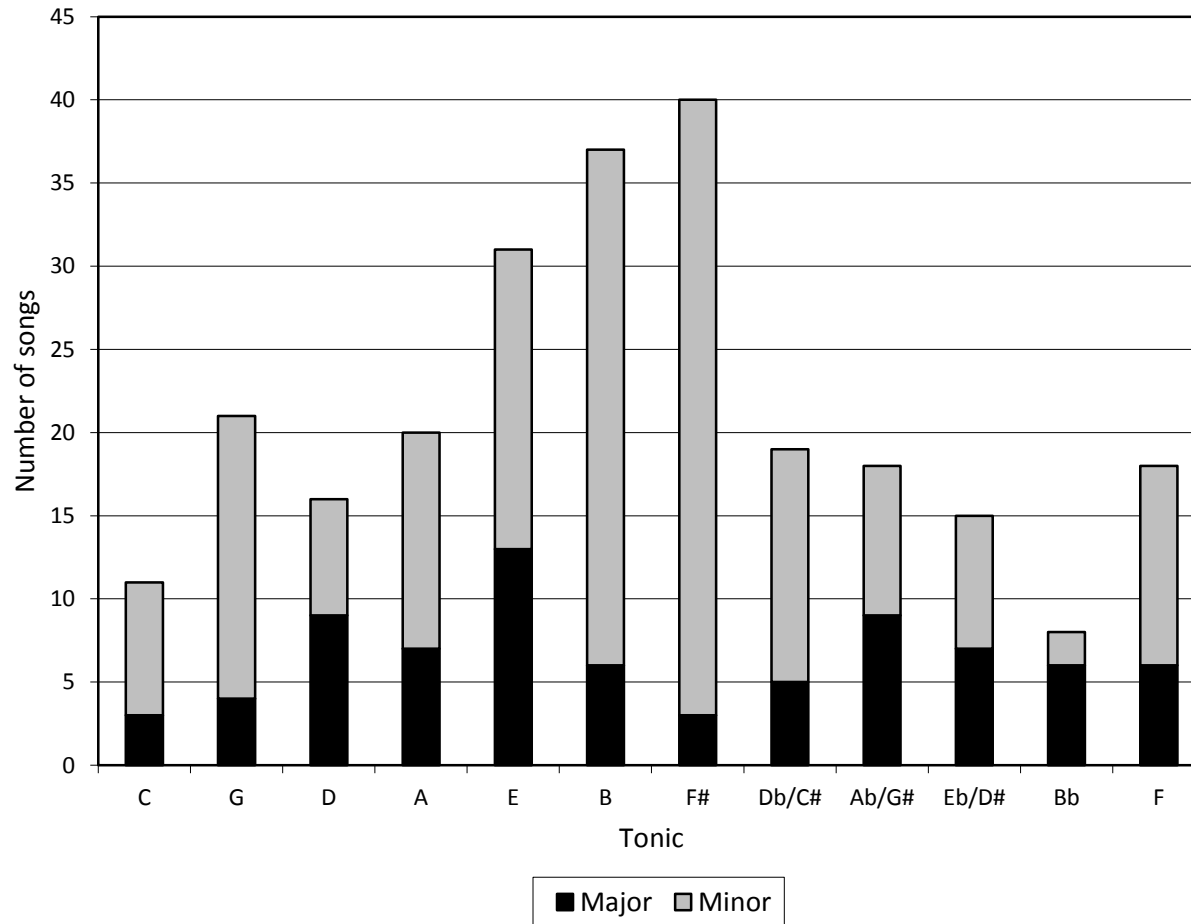
Graph 1 shows that Bo Bergman is a clear favourite in Rangström's choice of texts, with more than twice as many settings as any other poet besides Rangström himself. Rangström's position as a safe second is highly unusual among art-song composers, and chiefly rests on the 'Havets sommar' and 'Notturmo' sets from 1913-17; most of the songs from his later years were composed for friends or family and were not published.

J.L. Runeberg appears deceptively popular here: in fact, all 15 of his texts are contained in a single collection which Rangström composed in less than a month ('Idyll', 1917). Perhaps this anomaly is the reason that Helmer passes over Runeberg and assigns third place to Gustav Fröding, whose work Rangström set throughout his career. Between them, these four poets account for a third of Rangström's song texts.

Rangström set many poets only once or twice: the mode number of songs per poet is 1, and the median 2. It is only poets above the mean popularity (4) who have been itemized in Graph 1. Those with 5-10 songs apiece share just over a quarter of Rangström's song output. Some earn their place with a single collection, and the settings of most occur within a few years of each other. That is to say, there are very few poets whose work Rangström set throughout his career.



Graph 2a: Rangström's choice of keys, by tonic

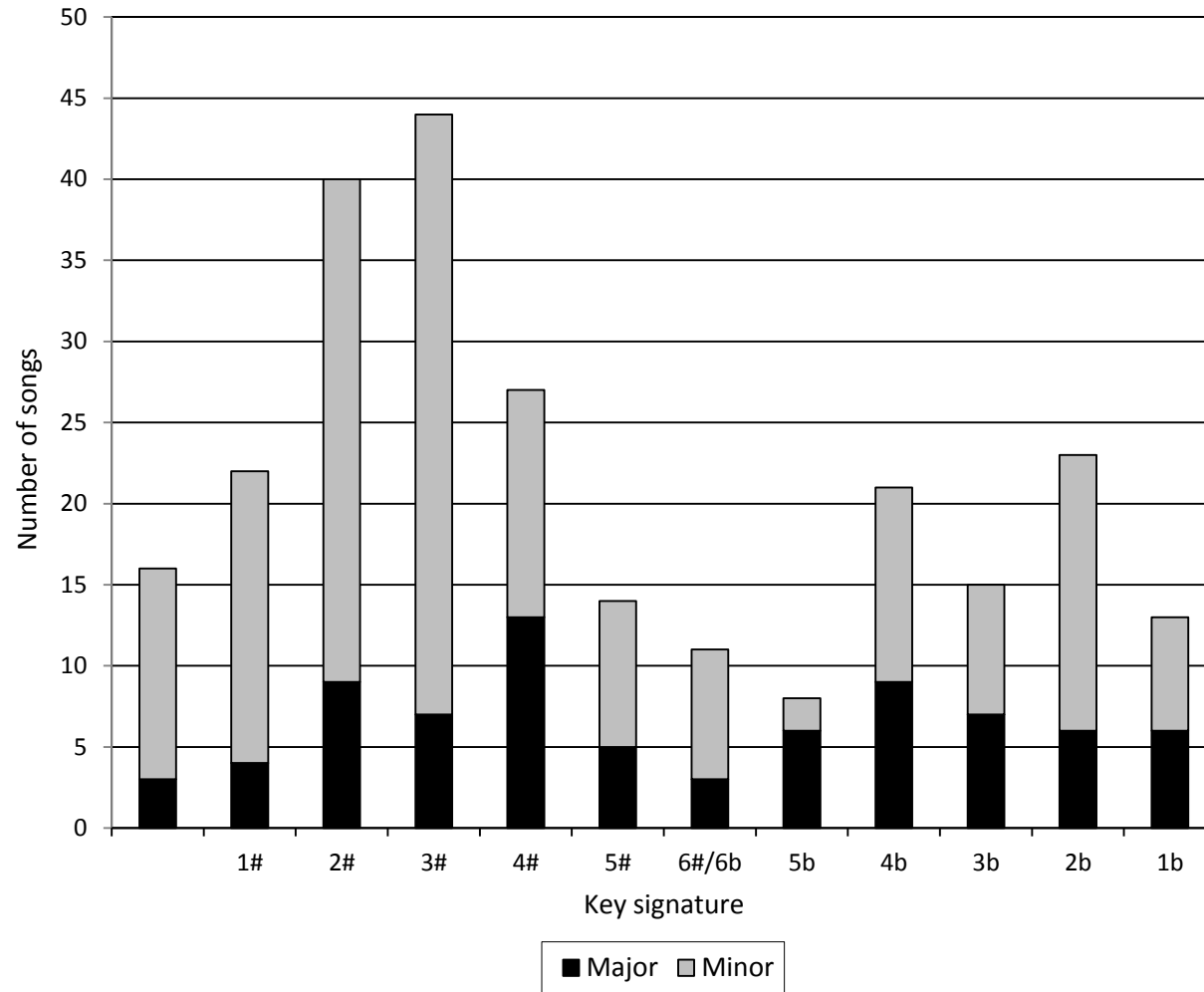


It is immediately apparent from Graph 2a that Rangström preferred minor tonalities over major: the minor songs outnumber the major ones by more than 3 to 1. He was also clearly drawn towards the 'middle' of the cycle of fifths – that is, to the keys furthest from C major – but tended to stay on the sharp side.

This supports the frequent contemporary descriptions of his music's inclination towards minor keys, and even the occasional references to F# as a particularly characteristic note or chord – it is the tonic or dominant of about 30% of the songs.

(This graph does not take into account the handful of transposed settings that Rangström produced. However, songs that modulate have been included in both their keys' categories.)

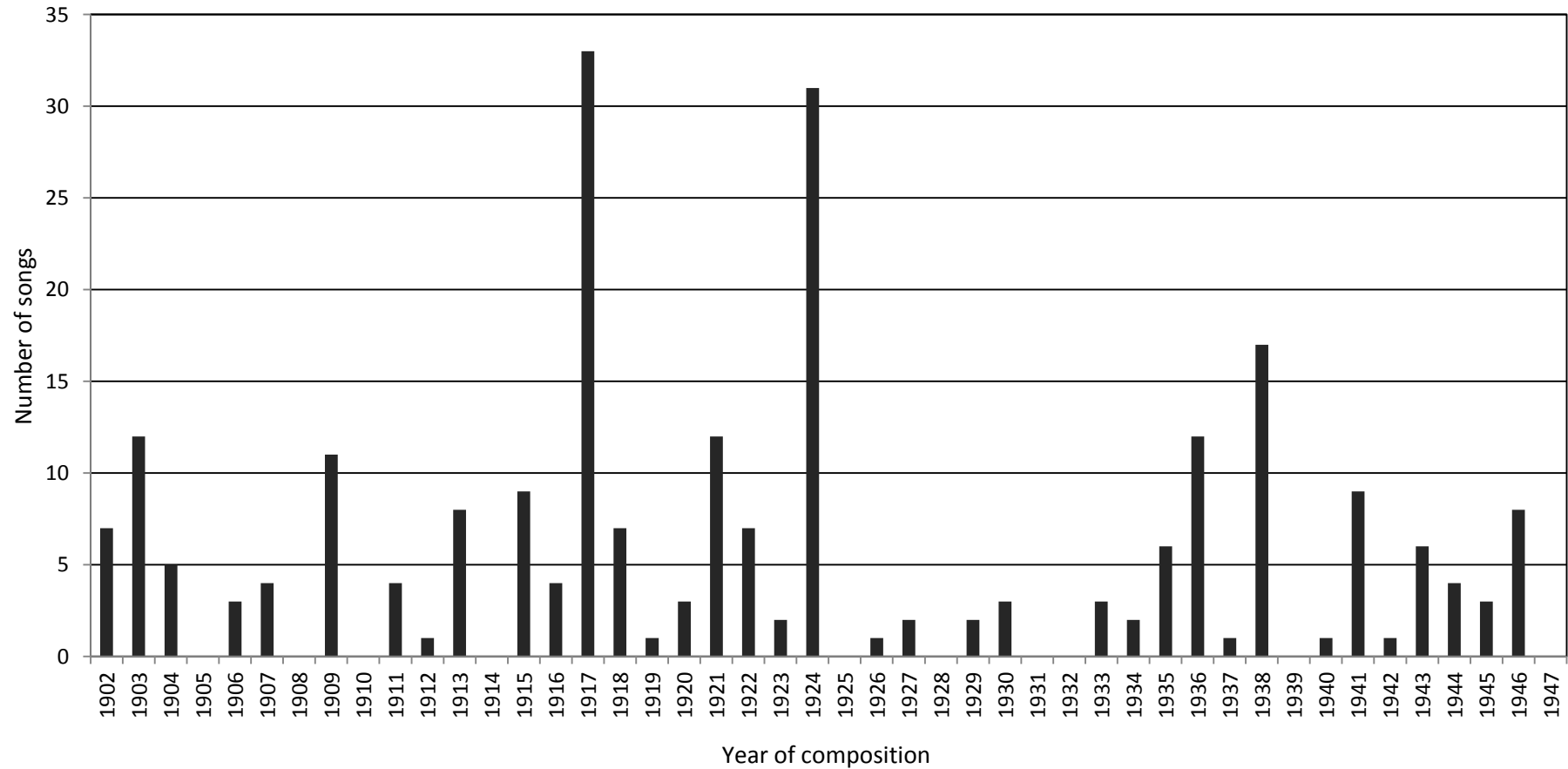
Graph 2b: Rangström's choice of keys, by key signature



Graph 2b contains the same data as Graph 2a, but rearranged according to relative majors and minors rather than tonic key. This makes it easier to see the prevalence of key signatures with 2-4 sharps or 2-4 flats, and the fact that the former far outnumber the latter.

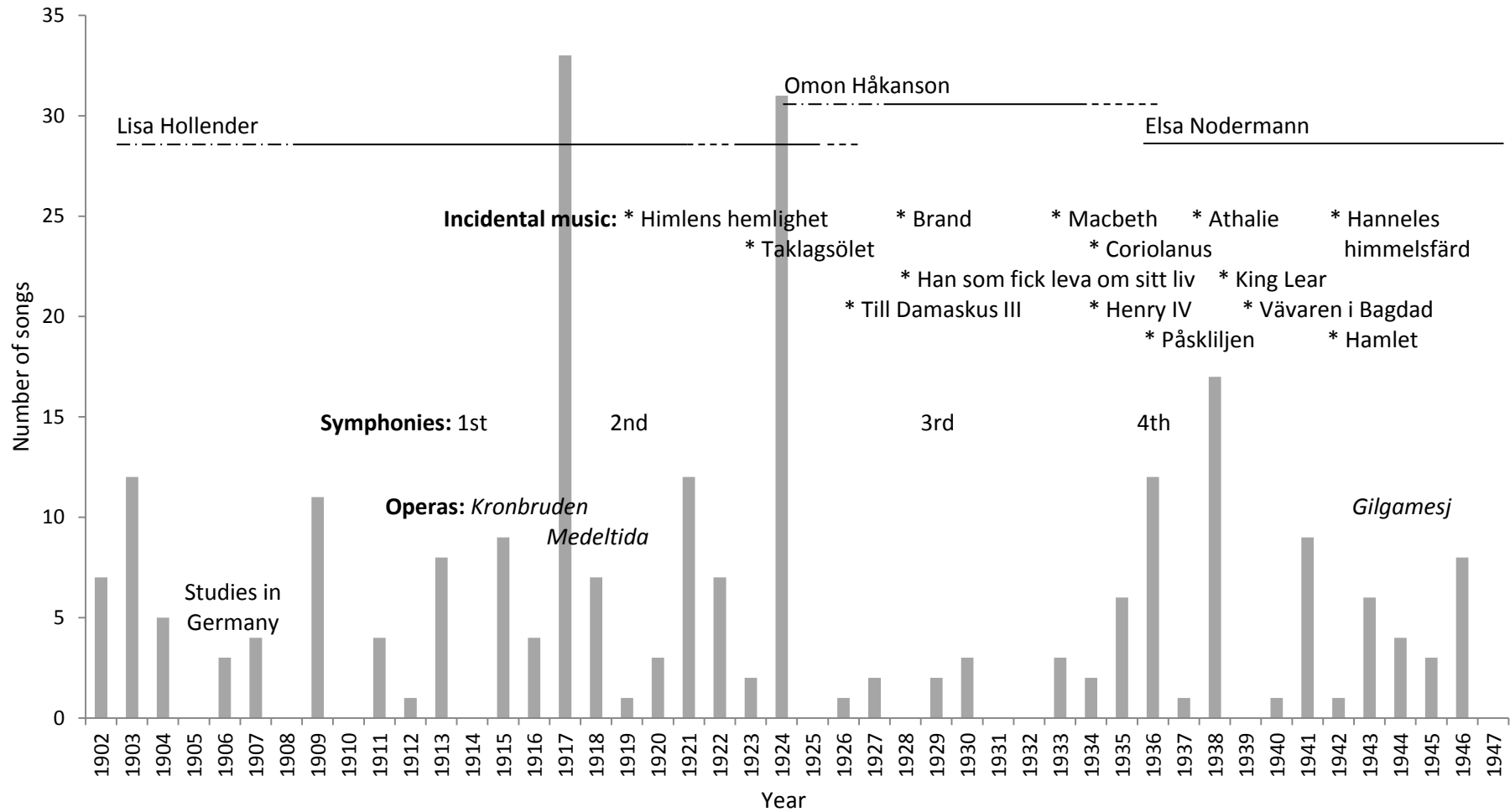
Graph 3a: Rangström's song output throughout his career

Graph 3a shows the spectacular spikes of song composition that occurred in 1917 (perhaps not coincidentally, the year that Rangström's son Dag was born) and in 1924 (the year that Rangström met his second wife, Omon). Most of Rangström's songs were composed within two particularly productive decades: 1915-1924 and 1935-1946.



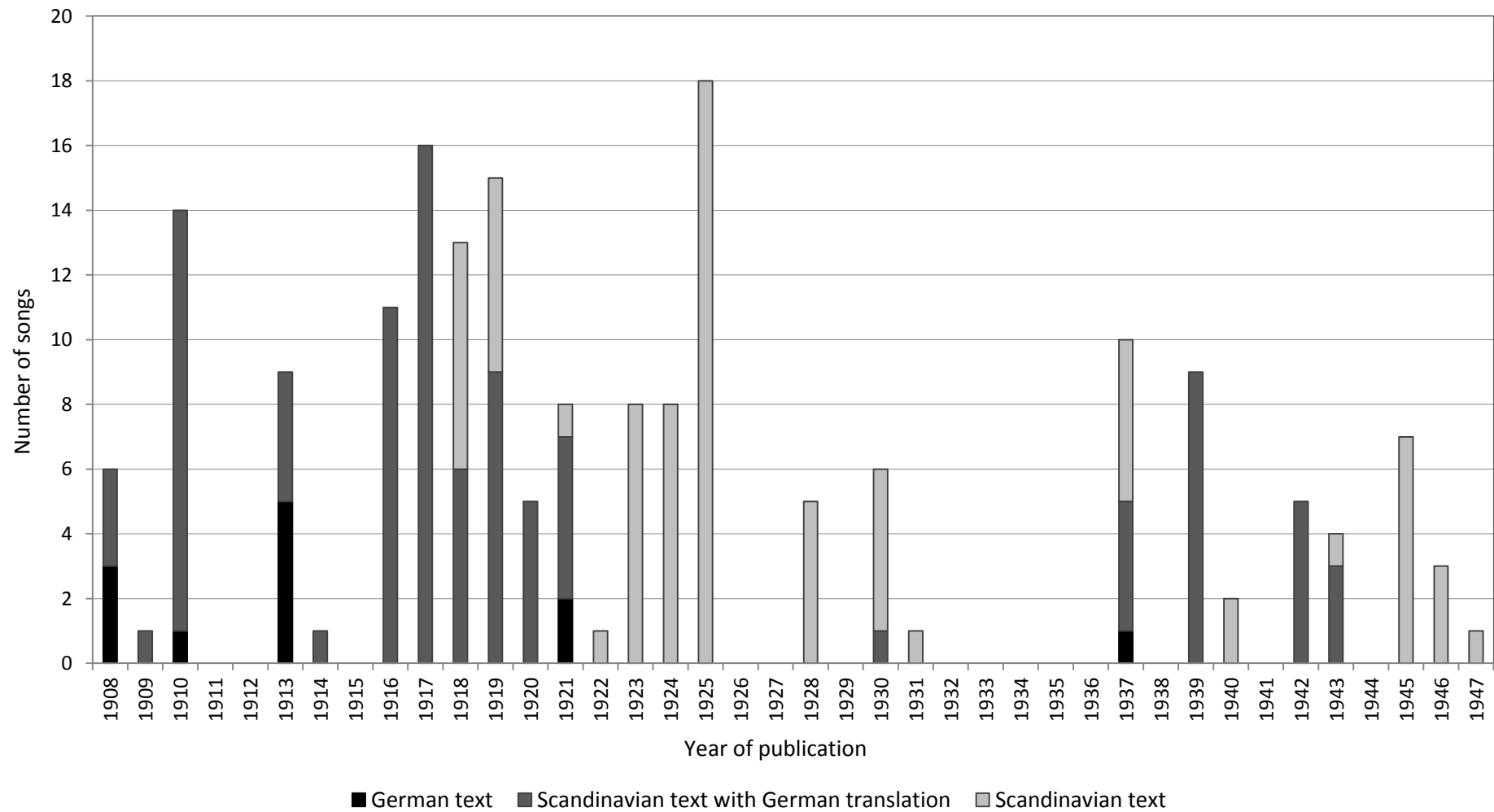
Graph 3b: Rangström’s song output alongside his major works and relationships

Graph 3b shows Rangström’s major works (the symphonies, operas, and incidental music) superimposed on the graph of his song composition. His romantic relationships are also included: courtship, marriage, and divorce proceedings are represented by - - - - , ———, and - - - - - respectively. In 1921, divorce proceedings between Rangström and Lisa resulted in a legal, though temporary, separation; the date of their eventual divorce is unclear.



Graph 4: Original and translation language of Rangström's *romanser*

The most noticeable trend here is that Rangström usually translated his song texts into German until a few years after World War One, and he renewed this habit in the years running up to the Second World War.



APPENDIX C
CASE STUDY SCORES

'Pan'	223
'Melodi'	226
'Den enda stunden'	231
'En gammal dansrytm'	233
'Bön till natten'	236
'Tristans död'	238
'Sköldmön'	243

Pan

Bo Bergman

Droits de reproduction réservés

Ture Rangström

Quietissimo

p

Mid - dags-stil - het och klöfver - ån - ga.

p

molto *red.*
(*con sordino*)

4

Lju - setflam - mar och smäl - - ter i ro öf-ver å - sar-nas

dim.

7

lån - ga kam - mar, där mol - nen bo.

rit.

pp

4

10 *pp*
misterioso Här i bac - ken sit - ter Pan
ppp

13 lat med nacken mot en gran. När han bör - jar spe - la,
con fantasia
cresc. *p* *mf* *rit.*

16 *pp dolce* spe - la trä - den, su - sar sä - den, lyss - nar he - la
poco a poco cresc. *poco f*
pp *p* *mf*

19 jor - den till hans kvä - den.
dim. *p* *mf* *rit.*

22 *p* Lif - vets sto - ra hun - ger *f* sti - ger
poco a poco molto cresc. e string.

25 stark och god, och mitt som mar - blod sjun - ger,
allarg.

28 sjun - ger, sjun - ger.
calmo dim. *f dolce* *mp* *rall.*

31 *dim.* *p* *pp* *dim.*

Melodi

Text by Bo Bergman

Ture Rangström

Allegretto dolcissimo. (freie Deklamation)

legato sempre poco rubato

rit. *p* *con Ped.* *12*

Ba - ra du går öf - ver mar - ker - na,

3 *p*

lef - ver hvar käl - la,

4

sjun - ger hvar tuf - va ditt namn.

(h)

5 *cresc.*

Sky - - ar - na brin - na och

6 *dim.*

par - ker - na su - sa och fäl - la

7 *poco rit.*

löf - vet som guld i din famn.

8 *p a tempo*

Och vid de skum - mi - ga strän - der - na

9

hör jag din stäm - - mas

poco rit.

Detailed description: This block contains the first two systems of music. The first system is for measure 9, featuring a vocal line with the lyrics 'hör jag din stäm - - mas' and a piano accompaniment. The second system is for measure 10, with lyrics 'vag - gan - de våg - sorl till tröst.' and a piano accompaniment. The tempo marking 'poco rit.' is placed above the piano part of measure 10. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 2/2.

10

vag - gan - de våg - sorl till tröst.

poco rit.

Detailed description: This block contains the second and third systems of music. The second system is for measure 10, with lyrics 'vag - gan - de våg - sorl till tröst.' and a piano accompaniment. The tempo marking 'poco rit.' is placed above the piano part of measure 10. The third system is for measure 11, with lyrics 'Räck mig de äls - ka - de hän - der - na.' and a piano accompaniment. The tempo marking 'a tempo cresc.' is placed above the piano part of measure 11. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 2/2.

11

Räck mig de äls - ka - de hän - der - na.

a tempo cresc.

Detailed description: This block contains the third and fourth systems of music. The third system is for measure 11, with lyrics 'Räck mig de äls - ka - de hän - der - na.' and a piano accompaniment. The tempo marking 'a tempo cresc.' is placed above the piano part of measure 11. The fourth system is for measure 12, with lyrics 'Mör - - kret skall skräm - - mas.' and a piano accompaniment. The tempo marking 'poco rit.' is placed above the piano part of measure 12. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 2/2.

12

Mör - - kret skall skräm - - mas.

poco rit.

Detailed description: This block contains the fourth and fifth systems of music. The fourth system is for measure 12, with lyrics 'Mör - - kret skall skräm - - mas.' and a piano accompaniment. The tempo marking 'poco rit.' is placed above the piano part of measure 12. The fifth system is for measure 13, with lyrics 'Mör - - kret skall skräm - - mas.' and a piano accompaniment. The tempo marking 'poco rit.' is placed above the piano part of measure 13. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 2/2.

13 *a tempo*

poco rit.

Kva - let skall släp - pa mitt bröst.

a tempo *poco rit.*

The musical score for measure 13 consists of a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The vocal line is in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a 4/4 time signature. The lyrics are "Kva - let skall släp - pa mitt bröst." The piano accompaniment is in grand staff (treble and bass clefs) with the same key signature and time signature. It features a flowing eighth-note accompaniment in the right hand and a more rhythmic bass line in the left hand. The tempo markings are *a tempo* and *poco rit.*

14 *pp a tempo*

Ba - ra du går öf - ver äng - ar - na,

pp

The musical score for measure 14 consists of a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The vocal line is in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a 3/4 time signature. The lyrics are "Ba - ra du går öf - ver äng - ar - na,". The piano accompaniment is in grand staff (treble and bass clefs) with the same key signature and time signature. It features a flowing eighth-note accompaniment in the right hand and a more rhythmic bass line in the left hand. The tempo marking is *pp a tempo*.

15

ba - ra jag ser dig

The musical score for measure 15 consists of a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The vocal line is in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a 3/4 time signature. The lyrics are "ba - ra jag ser dig". The piano accompaniment is in grand staff (treble and bass clefs) with the same key signature and time signature. It features a flowing eighth-note accompaniment in the right hand and a more rhythmic bass line in the left hand.

16

van - dra i fjär - ran för - bi,

8va

The musical score for measure 16 consists of a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The vocal line is in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a 4/4 time signature. The lyrics are "van - dra i fjär - ran för - bi,". The piano accompaniment is in grand staff (treble and bass clefs) with the same key signature and time signature. It features a flowing eighth-note accompaniment in the right hand and a more rhythmic bass line in the left hand. The tempo marking is *8va*.

17

cresc.

dar - ra de e - vi - ga strän - gar na.

cresc.

18

Säg mig hvem ger dig

dim.

dim.

19

rit. dolce

mak - ten som blir me - lo - di?

rit.

a tempo

a tempo

20

rit.

pp

Den enda stunden

Text by J. L. Runeberg

Ture Rangström

Andante

p legato

< poco >

Al-le-na var jag, han kom al-le-na; för -bi min ba-na hans ba - na led-de. Han

a due Ped.

5

< più >

< poco >

rit.

dröj - de ic-ke men tänk - te drö-ja, han tal - te ic-ke, men ö - gat tal-te. Du

9

lento

più rit. e dim.

p a tempo

o - be-kan-te, du väl be-kan-te! En dag för-svin-ner, ett år för-fly-ter, det

13

e - na min-net det an - dra ja-gar; den kor - ta stun-den blev hos mig e-vigt, *p*

più

17

den bitt - ra stun-den, den lju - va stun-den.

lento espressivo *più rit. e dim.*

pp

espr. *rit.* *lento* *rit.*

pp

3

Transcribed by the author
 Published by Wilhelm Hansen (1918)

En gammal dansrytm

Text by Bo Bergman

Ture Rangström

Con brio, e rubato

p e poco ritenuto, ma molto cresc. e string

poco rit.

vivo

Och vill du väl, så får du väl, så har du väl min he-la själ till träl att

p rit. *con ped*

6 *cresc.* *f* *vivo* *f*

äls ka och pi na och tram-pa i - hjäl med tramp af din häl, du

poco rit.

10 *rit. con passione* *cresc.* *p* *come sopra*

hö ga du svin-gan-de vil-da i dan-sen. Men får du min, så tar jag din, så

ff rit. *vivo* *f* *p* *con ped*

15

poco rit. *vivo* 3 3

vå ga, vinn och dan-sa in, rätt in i lå gor nas ri-ke och brinn ochbrinn med

20

vivo *f* 3 3 *vivo*

syn och med sinn. Det brin-ner en eld, han brin-ner så klar i dan-sen.

poco rit. *f* *ff rit.* *vivo* *f*

24

p *come sopra* *poco rit.* *vivo*

Och se vi gå som lå gor gå i dans och slå i hop och nå det blå och

p

30

f < *vivo* *f* <

jor-den blir as - ka un-der oss två. Vi sa - li-ga två, det är

poco rit.

34

rit. *vivo*

blå san-de eld som bär oss i dan - sen.

ff rit. *vivo* *f*

Transcribed by the author
 Published by Musikaliska Konstföreningen (1918)

BÖN TILL NATTEN

Bön till natten.
(P. Rangström)

V. Rangström

Slott adagio p legare

Skyl är dagens lustform bar- mat, mild och rost.

en portamenti

mfz

simile

Djupa natt, i di- na ar- mat, bär oss bort.

pp

Vid ditt bröst det nåde- ful- ta skyl vår skam,

pp

medan glömskans fimmarsulla smärthöst fram,
nit. port

Bön till natten, p. 1

(The Rangström Collection, Scores)

Published by Nordiska Musikförlaget (1928)

Handwritten musical score for "Bön till natten" on page 2. The score consists of six systems, each with a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The lyrics are in Swedish. The music is written in G major and 4/4 time. The score includes various musical notations such as dynamics (p, pp, rit.), articulation (accents), and performance instructions (dim. cantabile). The lyrics are: "Som en flod, där allfjärdarna, glider kall / Sjön volda brott och djupets dynda fall." and "Om om en. som dig förbar - mar / när ger om, / mil - de natt, i / di - na ar - mar, kall / matto rit." The score ends with a final chord and a fermata over the word "Var.".

Bön till natten, p. 2

TRISTANS DÖD

8

TUI BRITA och EINAR BEYRON

Tristans död
Tristans Tod
(Ho Bergman)

Patetico e rubato, quasi allegro *rit.* Ture Rangström

SÅNG

Har ö-dets skepp från min kär-leks jord vitt se - gel el - ler
Säg, hat das Schiff mei-ner Schwachert Hort, weiss das Se - gel, o - der

PIANO

rit. *a tempo* *vivo*

rit. *p*

svart? I-sol-deden ljuva, är hon ombord? Svart se - gel el - ler vitt? Jag
schwarz? I-sol-de, Geliebte, bist Du am Bord? Schwarz das Se - gel, o - der weiss? Ich

string. cresc. *f*

fry - ner, jag brin - ner. Säg ett ord. Är sog - let vitt? Nej svart. Så
frit - re, och lren - ne; sprick ein Wort! Das Se - gel weiss? Nein, schwarz! Zer -

pp

Tristans död, p. 1

(The Rangström Collection, Scores)

Published by Elkan & Schildknecht (1935)

flyg då ut ur din bräckta bur, du flyg
blick den källan för der en gen bröst!

appass.
f

ejä lens stolta örn. Det
an/ mer ner See le där! Das

svar ta seg let, o min a-mur, det
svar se Se gel, o mei ne Luad, vief

skug gar för min syn, dot
skat ten um vied ker. K

col canto *p*

Tristans död, p. 2

10

cresc. string.

våx - er och väx - er, jag vet ej hur,
 värdet, o värdet - är en, som ännu är be - vissat. men
 der

him - len själv blir svart.
 Him - mel selbat wird schwarz.

rall. molto

ff

allegro string.

dim. *p* *rit.* *fp*

con ped.

dolce poco f

calmandosi espressivo I - sol - de, guld - har - pa, hjär - tats lust, min
 I - sol - de, Gold - har - fe, hah - e Frau, Du

ped. ten.

Tristans död, p.3

Andante
dim

lång - tans hö - ga dam,
Weiss er - sehn - teu Weib! jag hör num ett uval från
Fe grünet mich der Duft son

pp

Corn - walls kust och kän - ner som en doft från
Corn - walle Gau, der Wel - ten - schlag am Strand, der

rit. dim.

tranquillo

so - li - ga lång - ars dju - pa must och skum - ma sko - gars
son - ni - gen Wie - sen Mor - gen - tau, die tie - fe Wal - des.

pp dolceiss. cantando

ro. O, vo - re jag där! Men allt är slut. Nu
rud. O, sed - re ick dort! Nun tar's rar - bei. Das

rit. pp

The image shows a page of a musical score for 'Tristans död, p. 4'. It features a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The score is written in G major and 4/4 time. The tempo is marked 'Andante' and 'tranquillo'. The dynamics range from 'pp' (pianissimo) to 'p' (piano). The lyrics are in Swedish and German. The page number '241' is in the top right corner.

12

mf Largo

f subito

käo - ta kloo - kor soart. En käm - pe möt ö - det har käm - pat ut. Ver
 To - des - lä - tes stängt. Sin Sit - ter gchluckwiegend zur litz - ten Wack! Das

sag - let svart? Nej vitt. Nysa sa - de man svart. Hör
 So - get schwarz? Nein weiss! Man sag - te doch schwarz? Hör

f *allegro*

stor - mens Qut. Min örn mol - nen
 Kampf - ge - schrei! Mein Ar durch Wol - ten

ff *molto cresc.*

ped. ten.

otår, steigt!

largo

ped.

sf *basso*

(Übersetzung von Edwin Kallstenius und Tore Hagström)

Tristans död, p. 5

SKÖLDMÖN

Sköldmön
(The Rangström Collection)

LARGAMENTE
e con moto ♩

Jag drömde om Bränd i natt. Sja Jag drömde om
 att vias
 sol utan
 samene

strid i natt. Sja Jag drömde jag strid Vid din
 att

di - da, rus. Iod och stark, i natt. Det
 nit. att

blutråde här i din hand, och Trollen föll för din
 mye. agitato

Sköldmön, p. 1

(The Rangström Collection, Scores)

Published by Nordiska Musikförlaget (1943)

A handwritten musical score for a song titled "Sköldmön, p. 2". The score is written on a single page and consists of six systems of music. Each system includes a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The key signature is B-flat major (two flats), and the time signature is 4/4. The lyrics are written in Swedish.

The lyrics are:

fot. DEN ska-na pått sig tätt en djöng i
 ti-gan-de mån-ker hot. jag
 drömde om blod i natt. jag drömde om död i
 natt. jag dröm-de jag föll vid dir

The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings (e.g., *pp.*, *more.*, *pp.*). There are also some handwritten annotations and corrections in the score.

Sköldmön, p. 2

di - da
 med brans. Dän, i natt. 7
 string.

Du märkte ej alls att jag föll. Din min var
 bära på
 er.

all. var. Nam. Med stadig trend du sköt - sen

noll
 gick din väg, när jag fram.
 allargående & sin erde.

3.

A handwritten musical score for the piece 'Sköldmön, p. 4'. The score is written on four systems of music, each consisting of a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The lyrics are in Swedish and describe a scene where a man is drinking and dreaming of a woman. The music is written in a key with three flats (B-flat major or D-flat minor) and a 2/4 time signature. The notation includes various musical symbols such as notes, rests, accidentals, and dynamic markings like 'rit.' (ritardando) and 'meno' (meno mosso). There are also some handwritten annotations and corrections throughout the score.

System 1: *ben rit.* jag drömde om en i natt. *meno* jag drömde om
 System 2: *rit.* no- den i natt. jag drömde min död var
 System 3: ta- gen för god. --- *rit.* min --- *rit.* mo- st på dröm- de
 System 4: *rit.* jag i natt. *rit.* fram-

Sköldmön, p. 4

APPENDIX D
RANGSTRÖM'S SEA TEXTS AND THEIR TRANSLATIONS

Hafvets sommar

1. Gryning

Se natten brister!
Morgon rister
vinge öfver haf.
Stick ut mot haf!
En hamn, en graf blir vår.

Hör, vingen susar!
Skumhvit brusar
dagen öfver haf!
En hamn, en graf blir vår.

Blif vår, du dröm, som slår
i glans af stänk och skum kring haf –
blir vår, du lifvets dröm,
en solröd morgon gaf!

2. Solstänk

En mås i skyn,
en tärna öfver skäret –
en sommarsyn!
En sommarton,
som klingar i tärnans lock,
hör måsens skri!
En sommarsky,
som flingar solhvit snö kring haf.

I blod från röda tången,
i eld från rostgul laf
om klippans ringar
stiger sommarsången.
Hör tärnans lock,
hör måsens skri!
Hör spofvens skrämnda rop,
som bär ett gällt:
förbi, förbi –
till allt, som klingar,
svingar öfver skäret.

The sea's summer

1. Dawn

See, the night bursts!
Morning shakes [its]
wings over [the] sea.
Put out to sea!
A harbour, a grave becomes ours.

Hear, the wing sighs!
Foam-white, the day
roars over the sea!
A harbour, a grave becomes ours.

Become ours, you dream that beats
in the shine of splash and foam around [the] sea,
become ours, you dream of life,
[that] a sun-red morning gave!

2. Sun-splash

A gull in the sky,
a tern over the skerry –
a summer view!
A summer note,
which sounds in the tern's call,
hear the gull's scream!
A summer sky,
which flings sun-white snow around [the] sea.

In blood from the red seaweed,
in fire from rust-yellow lichen
about the rocks rings,
climbs, the summer song.
Hear the tern's call,
hear the gull's scream!
Hear the curlew's frightened call,
that carries, high-pitched:
away, away –
untill everything that sounds
swings over the skerry.

3. Regnvisa

Sila, sila regnets strömmar.
 Hvila, hvila havvets drömmar.
 Hvilas drömmen i det grå –
 det drömmen skall du aldrig nå.

Sofva, sofva drömmens frågor.
 Lofva, lofva havvets vågor
 sommarsol i havvets blå –
 solen skall du aldrig nå.

4. I middagshettan

Här dröms
 – en dröm i hvitt, en dröm i grönt –
 all tjärnets tysta glömska.
 Trollporsens doft och callans brygd
 och darrögd ängsulls blom står
 skum om nattlig brädd.
 Från lummerns däfnas bädd en nattens helgedom
 i granars skygd steg upp
 med syner, trolska, drömska.
 I skärets helgedom bor stilla död.

Här dröms
 – en dröm i hvitt, en dröm i grönt –
 all skärets dolda drömmar.
 Vildfågeln rop och sol och vår
 och rymdens yra vind
 i dunkel tystnad slöts.
 Hvar sorg, hvar fröjd,
 som bröts af våg
 mot klippans kind,
 hvart skratt, hvar tår,
 sjönk djupt bland tjärnets döda drömmar.
 Ur fjärran, evigt, endast havvets vaggsång.

3. Rainsong

The rain's streams trickle, trickle.
 The sea's dreams rest, rest.
 The dream rests in the gloom –
 the dream you shall never reach.

The dream's questions sleep, sleep.
 The sea's waves promise, promise
 summer sun in the sea's blue –
 the sun you shall never reach.

4. In the midday heat

Here dreams
 – a dream in white, a dream in green –
 all the tarn's quiet forgetfulness.
 The bog-myrtle's scent and the arum lily's brew
 and the trembling cotton-grass's blooms remain
 [as] foam round the edge of night.*
 From the clubmoss's moist bed a night shrine
 in [the]firs' shelter rises
 with visions, magical, dreamy.
 In the skerry's shrine lives quiet death.

Here dreams
 – a dream in white, a dream in green –
 all the skerry's hidden dreams.
 The wild bird's call and sun and spring
 and the skies' whirling wind
 in dark silence ended.
 Each sorrow, each delight,
 that was broken by [a] wave
 against the cliff's cheek,
 each laugh, each tear,
 sank deep among the tarn's dead dreams.
 From a distance, forever, only the sea's lullaby.

* The specificity of Rangström's language here, combined with spelling variations, is particularly problematic for translation. My attempt is based on the following assumptions: pors = bog-myrtle; kalla = arum lily; darrigde = trembling.

It is also worth clarifying that although the English word 'tarn' is a cognate of the Swedish 'tjärn', the meanings are slightly different: 'tarn' means a small lake in a glaciated hollow on a mountain, whereas 'tjärn' simply means a small lake, usually dark in colour, and often surrounded in vegetation.

5. Julidagen

Solrök öfver gylne vågor!
Vällukt bäres tunn och fin,
skogens mjöd och ängens vin,
öfver vågor.

Solrök öfver gyllne vågor!
Rus och doft kring hafvets ström.
Hjärtat bär en gyllen dröm
öfver vågor.

Öfver gyllne vågor står
en fjärl i det blå.
Svinner så –
i sommarhafvets lågor.

6. Efter strider

Brustna, Brustna, hemskt i stenen
gjutna natters kval och stormars fasa,
stå i sommarvågans hvita blå
de svarta hållarna mot hafvet.

Sargade hållars bryn
resas i drömtyngd syn –
dröm af eld som brann och lif som brunnit,
dröm om lif som svunnit...
Sargade hållars bryn i hafvet.

Efter tusen år af vinterfrusen död och natt
steg dagars rikedom
för svarta hållarna i hafvet.
Nu bär skäret vilda rosor, sommarblom...

7. Solnedgång

Så sjunker trollglans öfver hafvets värld
och syner flockas emot natten.
Se ut! Nu fälles solens gyllne svärd,
en strimma blott af eld,
ett skimmer öfver tysta vatten.

Sin bro af guld och blod, af drömmars ljus,
mot hafvets drömvärld hjärtat fäster.
Du träder ut! Känn kvällens vemodssus
och hör den sista fågelstämman,
klagande i väster.

5. The July day

Sun-smoke over golden waves!
Fragrance carried thin and fine,
the forest's mead and the meadow's wine,
over waves.

Sun-smoke over golden waves!
Intoxication and perfume around the sea's current.
The heart carries a golden dream
over waves.

Over golden waves stands
a butterfly in the blue.
It disappears so –
in the blaze of the summer sea.

6. After battles

Broken, broken, terribly cast in stone
[is] nights' anguish and storms' horror,
in the summer wave's white-blue stand
the black outcrops against the sea.

Lacerated outcrop's brow
raised in dream-heavy vision –
dream of fire that burned and life that burned,
dream about life that disappeared...
Lacerated outcrop's brow in the sea.

After a thousand years of winter-frozen death and
night
days' kingdom steps
towards the black outcrops in the sea.
Now the skerry bears wild roses, summer flowers...

7. Sunset

So [a] magical-sheen drops over the sea's world
and visions flock towards the night.
Look! Now falls the sun's golden sword,
a glimmer only of fire,
a shimmer over the quiet water.

Its bridge of gold and blood, of dreams' light,
the heart fastens to the sea's dream-world.
You step out! Feel the evening's melancholy sigh
and hear the last birdcall,
lamenting in the west.

8. Skymning

Hafsskummets svanor glida med rullande dyning
hän öfver vikarnas tång.

Hafsskummets svanor glida hvita,
tysta med strömmen.

Somna, drömma i nattens fång.
I vikarnas klyftor de bida morgon och gryning.
Brista och svinna som drömmen.

8. Dusk

The sea-foam's swans glide with rolling swell
over the bay's seaweed.

The sea-foam's swans glide white,
silent with the current.

To fall asleep, to dream in the night's embrace.
In the bays' clefts bide morning and dawn.
To burst and to disappear like the dream.

9. Månskensstycke

Svarta skogar sofva öfver stranden.
Tungt i fjärran hafvet bryter.
Sälen ryter.

Spöklikt drömma skyarna och landen.
Långt hän mumla vilda röster.
Djupt i öster stiger genom nattens död
ur hafvet månen hemsk och röd.

9. Moonlight piece

Black forests sleep above the shore.
Heavily, in the distance, the sea breaks.
Seals bellow.

Ghostly dream the skies and the land.
Far away murmur wild voices.
Deep in the east rises, through the night's dead,
out of the sea, the moon, terrible and red.

10. Natt

Öfver djupens evigtgröna skogar styra vi.
I hafvets skogar sofva de, de döde.

Mot djupens evigtgröna skogar styra vi.
Där – en gång – sofva vi.

10. Night

Over the deep's evergreen forests we steer.
In the sea's forest they sleep, the dead.

Towards the deep's evergreen forests we steer.
There – sometime – we sleep.

Title	Date of text	Date of song
1. Gryning	26 December 1912	1 August 1913
2. Solstänk	11 January 1913	1 May 1915
3. Regnvisa	6 January 1913	2 August 1913
4. I middagshettan	31 December 1912	11 August 1913
5. Julidagen	4 January 1913	29 April 1915
6. Efter strider	19 January 1913	4 August 1913
7. Solnedgång	27 December 1912	7 August 1913
8. Skymning	21 June 1911	26 April 1915
9. Månskenstycke	1 January 1913	21 April 1915
10. Natt	21 June 1911	6 August 1913

Notturmo

1.

Hafvet susar, skogen skälfver,
juninatten trånar blek.
Silfvervattrad dyning hvälfver,
halft i dröm och halft i lek,
en ensam stjärnas spegling.

Ljusa nattens vida tystnad
hur den talar, blid och öm
hur den sonar kval och lystnad,
brott och klagan, dåd och dröm
i vemodsren förklaring.

Klingar det en ton i natten,
bär den nattens hemlighet,
stigande från stilla vatten,
lif och död och evighet,
oändlighetens aning.

Hörde du när tonen föddes,
såg på nytt din stjärna blid,
hjärtat ljuft däraf föröddes,
skalf i glädje, brast därvid –
o, ljusa sommarnatts försoning!

2.

En värld af skräck och döda drömmar,
sagolik, omätlig, urtidsboren,
hvilas hafvet i den dofva,
sena stunden.
Rolöst, hemlöst över djupens strömmar,
ärr vid ärr och brand i såren,
vagga skären tyst mot blunden.
Svarta djupen sova.

Med spöklikt slocknat sken än dröjer
dagens dröm i nattens skumma timmar –
brister över döda vatten.
Stilla skrider, –
evig sorg, som ingen klagan höjer,
kval, där ingen stjärna glimmar –
natten hän mot mörkrets tider.
Evigst stum är natten.

Nocturne

1.

The sea sighs, the forest trembles,
the pale June night yearns.
[The] silver freckled swell arches,
half in dream and half in play,
a solitary star's reflection.

Bright night's wide silence
how it speaks, gentle and tender
how it atones for anguish and lust,
crime and lament, deed and dream
in declaring melancholy's purity.

It sounds a note in the night,
it carries the night's secret,
rising from still waters,
life and death and eternity,
infinity's idea.

Did you hear when the note was born,
saw afresh your gentle star,
the heart sweetly devastated by it,
trembled in joy, burst with it -
o, bright summer night's atonement!

2.

A world of fear and dead dreams,
fabulous, immense, prehistoric Boreas,
the sea rests in the dull,
late hour.
Restless, homeless over the deep's currents,
scar on scar and canker in wounds,
skerries quietly rock towards closed eyes.
The black deeps sleep.

With ghostly, dying shine the day's dream
lingers in the night's murky hours –
bursts over the dead water.
Silently, the night –
eternal sorrow, that no lament lifts,
anguish, where no star gleams –
glides away towards the hours of darkness.
The night is forever mute.

O, natt, då alla drömmar brista,
 skall min farkost tyst på våg du hvälfva,
 tyst förbi, mot mörkret äfven!
 Från de döda
 hör jag evigheten skälfva.
 Dock mitt bloss, det stolta röda,
 lyser än i stäfven!

3.

En dyning suckar långt ifrån
 och allt är skumt och blekt i färgen.
 I daggen rissla blad och strån
 och dimman sveper sommarbergen.

Och det är natt och sommarnatt,
 det är en natt i töcknens villa.
 Och skuggan leker trolskt tafatt,
 men dröm och längtan susa stilla.

Och tankarna gå tyst i ring
 och gäckas av ett skratt i snåren,
 men hjärtat minnes ingenting,
 och drömmarna ha tappat spåren.

Du själv i dunklet sjunker hän,
 och kådad havsdoft drar i skogen,
 och stilla mumla gråa trä
 och vagga dig som en förtrogen.

Då skalf en ton från brantens fall,
 då steg en klang från haf och dyning.
 Med ett brast töcknets täta svall
 och det var dag och gryning.

Och väckt af morgonbris och solens trolska staf,
 du ser, du ser, hvad alla drömmar tråna:
 Din ungdoms sommarhaf,
 i solig fjärrglans blåna!

O night, when all dreams burst,
 my craft shall go quietly on your arching wave,
 quietly past, yet towards the darkness!
 From the dead
 I hear eternity tremble.
 But my torch, the proud red,
 shines yet in the bow!

3.

A swell sighs from far away
 and all is dim and pale in colour.
 Leaves and straw [rustle?] in the dew
 and mist sweeps the summer mountains.

And it is night and summer night,
 it is night in the fog's illusion.
 And the shadow plays tag bewitchingly,
 but dream and desire sigh silently.

And thoughts go quietly in a circle
 and are eluded by laughter in the thicket,
 but the heart remembers nothing,
 and the dreams have lost the track.

You yourself sing away in the darkness,
 and resined sea-air draws in the wood,
 and grey trees silently murmur
 and cradle you like a trusted one.

Then a note trembled from the scarp's drop,
 then a sound rose from sea and swell.
 With it the fog's dense surge burst
 and it was day and dawn.

And awakened by morning breeze and the sun's
 magic wand,
 you see, you see, what all dreams yearn [for]:
 Your youth's summer-sea,
 in sunny, distant-shine [turns] blue!

1. 17 June 1917; 24 June 1917

2. 18 July 1917; 19 July 1917

3. 18 July 1917; 20 July 1917

Kvällsvisa

Stundar nattens blida fall,
går en dyings drömska svall
trött i sorl mot stranden.
Står en stjärna öfver våg,
bärs en dröm i drömmars tåg
stilla öfver landen.

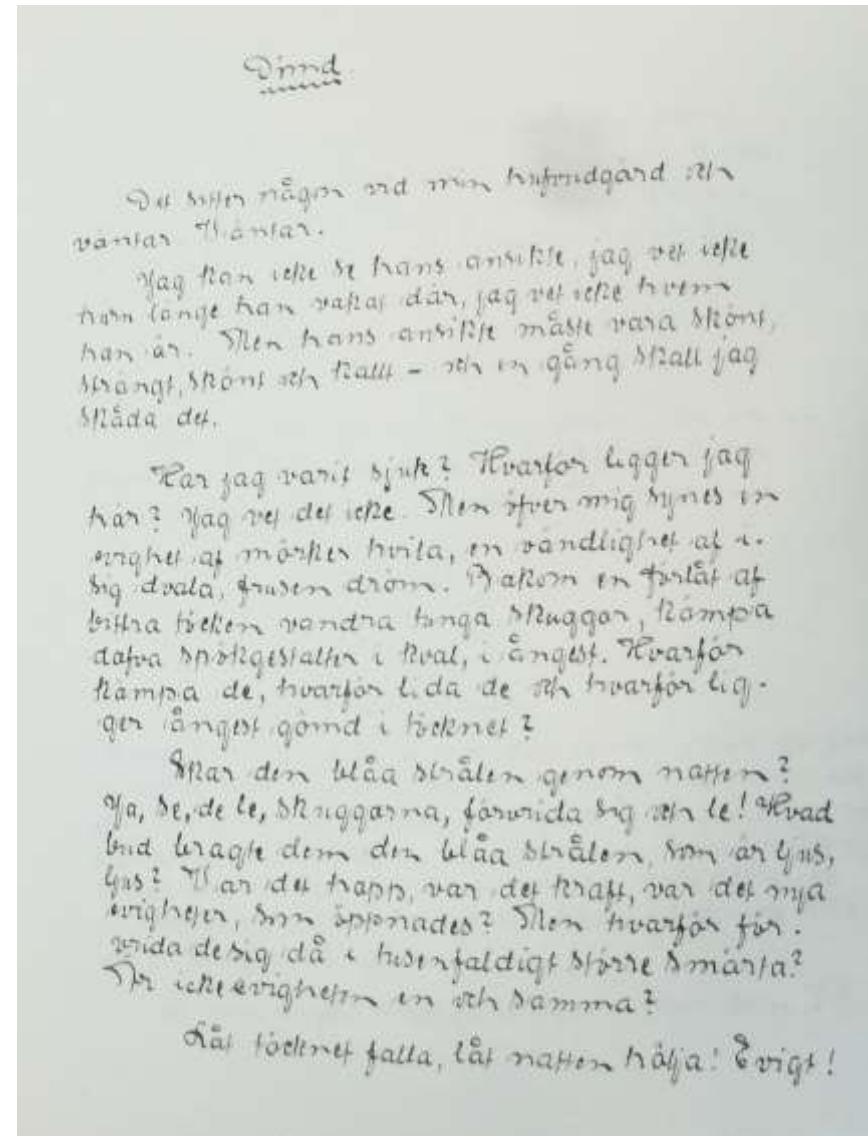
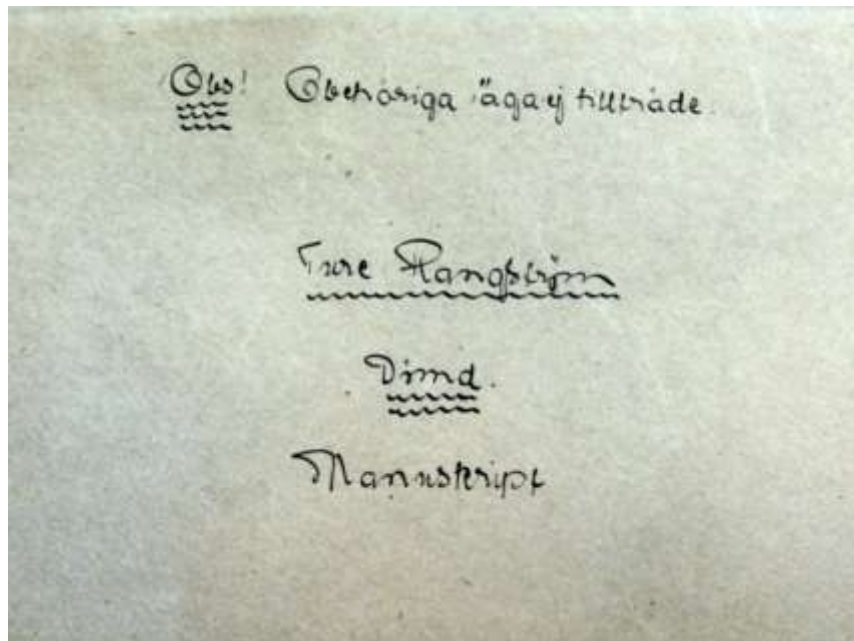
Stjärnan darrar blek och klar,
allt som sårat allt som skar
sjönk i djupens strömmar.
öfver haf och öfver land
spinner minnets tysta hand
ljusa barndomsdrömmar.

The evening's song

The night's gentle fall draws near,
a swell's dreamy surge moves,
tired of rippling against the shore.
A star stands over the wave,
carries a dream in dream's train
quietly over the land.

The star trembles pale and clear,
everything that hurt everything that will
sank in the deep currents.
Over sea and over land
memory's silent hand spins
bright childhood dreams.

APPENDIX E
RANGSTRÖMS *DÖMD* AND ITS TRANSLATION



dig: Var du lif jag dåg?

Var också jag ägt lif? Var också jag bland
sluggarna eller en bland dem i kampen kvälet,
natten? Kom äfven till mig den blåa strålen,
som är lys? Äg jag också de förmodna lö-
fene?

Äj! Vack! Äj!

Jag var du icke. Du icke!

Men nu är all en fästen dröm eller en i-
sig dröja. Och vid min hufvudgård sitter
den Örnhörige eller väntar. Väntar.

© min ungdoms heliga dagar!

Ät haf så morgonblås som endast tonnen var det förr,
en dröm som stödde sig bland hvila fräs eller unga böl-
lor, kamplösten, draktig af viga eller nya dåd, eller en
blut eller rednande äfven då drömmen vänder äfven,
lyngad eller måttad af dagens varma middagsdöl, af
all hafvets vida, batta hymna eller lifvets glödande ritie.
den. Hänger, hänger!

© min ungdoms heliga hänger - hvar ären?

Jag ser en rde strand, där själva stenen
tonar gula lakren ruktas, eller det står en stark
af is mot land. Öfver skansen raggande dymning
glider det kvällda laket af stadshjuten bäl. De
gråa talltopparna vinstas svagt för den kväl-
liga aftrubben.

Det märknar. Kaptet svekar.

+ +

Äj, ser jag rätt, då var det icke då mitt lif har
borjat! Där var föga bol, min mera slugga,
och sluggan full all tälare eller lyngre. ---

Öf begynnelsen var märket. Och Nörk-
res ande skäpade i rymden eller evigheten var
för knapp, för häng eller tyngna allt det mörka.
En droppe skäpde på rändlighetens rand. Den
stora bägaren var fulla eller ville flöda öfver.
Den Nörkres ande tänkte: Se, min skäl är
bräddad, här är bittert märket eller bittert starkt,
här lynder nattens viga bölja i rändlighetens
hänga stäl. Se, en droppe darrar där ne-
dan eller snart skall märket flöda öfver. Skall
den förfaras, bli till evigt intet? Äj, låt mig
gryta den i Jordens gitiga sköte, se, hur
den elända visna skärman suckar efter evig-

hittas allt och mer än allt!

Och fjorden såg det bittra, mörka, svartå
ömet - som gift och möring, som död och hälsia
smög det genom hennes bärande kropp, och hon
och lemman slöt sig i teramp, i kväl och väl-
lust. Och ensam, dubbel ensam och sändligt
kolsatt förtvånad, styrde den elända, vilna djär-
nan sin ödesväg bland bristna tynder. Men
hennes biter bara framgent mörkrets tecken
på sin panna - och i mörkret såga de sin
död, sin sorgret. - - -

(skikt) Sjög du var inte bara sol. Du var natt
även. Men låt mig tänka öfver bolen.
Har jag skadat bolen? Ja! Jag har!

* *
^

De böyas som en glim, en liten ostyldigt lekande skåle
öfver lys och ensälgig barnavår. Spoutblommor knöa
hvit, hvit, och de är blåa vatten, gröna kagor, dag i
dina kvällen. Som en dag, ja, en dag var det, till att
br på, till att bygga ett lit på, till att förhufva, när den
vackra drömmen brast. Och den bar dock genom husen
skamma vanskäglighet och ditt minne kommer mig
än att bära af en stilla, tacksam glädje. Barnavår...
Säg, du blomare tyn, lyöd dig lifet en renare bit af

lyckan du aldrig kan nå, än denna: Fader, Moder,
Barnet - lifets unga, rika hemmar och världens första
knapp? Dess mogna, släktande blytka, dess igyendetän-
igifna aning! Säg, du det och minns det, då är ditt min-
ne tukt, och en gång skall du, när hösten kommer och igu-
la löfren passla öfver dina färas mull, en kväll, när da-
gen varit högehärd och igrå och tung, väter tråra din
moders ljusa sommarstämna öfver fjorden: Där tröst,
min pilt, i morgon kommer far från staden! Och dina
färas stala stillas - i drömmen skall du möta lyckan
från lifets vaxprungs dagar och mot dig skall en helg-
idagponing le med blida, trogna modersögon. Panna-
vår, barnvår...

Sjög det icke det? Sol nog!

* *
x

Den gröna vattenkullan, ja, sist minns jag den!
Men barnens hyalldad! Där buff de gamla i syrentræ-
tens slaggga och solen stod bredt öfver gårdsplanen. Där
den lilla af tre års barn. Då visste jag icke, nu vet jag,
att de gamla drömde äldrens vemodsskua öfverdröm.
Deras tunga, daggiga bläckor fattade jag icke, men jag
förnam ett ord och ordet slog mig: Hur godt har
barnet, det anar allt och minnes intet - men en
gång skall det rekta glömma din medrötta lyckas
dag! Och kvar blir endast minnet af en aning...

"Kvad var minnas, hvad var "glömma" - och
 twarför skulle jag glömma denna dag? Låt se,
 låt se - tion jag ej märkla den, och minnas!
 I hörnet står den stora gröna tumman, där är
 vatten, vatten, som har fallit ner från stens blåa
 fall, men då var det icke lätt, då var det svart,
 bara svart, och "barnen" skulle vara inne! Där
 är det skönt, förlyndet skönt att placera... Träsk,
 on - och tänk, hvad jag skall minnas!

Och medan de gamla drömmas sjunka
 med tolen och leterna - hårdt ett dånande, ett
 frustande, ett plaskande, ett tummande, och öfver
 i gångarnas skrattade band och blomlandens hö-
 da lökar störtas den lösta, förhärjande ström-
 men! Tumman, gröna tumman är fallen - och
 våt och tygt, men regertalt och utan färar, tar
 barnet bannan, hot och lugg, och i hängen, hjälletä-
 det, knäbba, stilla ändalyft, vet jag dref, att jag
 skall minnas, minnas!

Den gröna vattentumman, ja! Stågra
 bygga tempel till din äras minne, och några
 bränna dem - låt templen brinna, min lef-
 mads hjälletminne blef den gröna vattentumman!

*
*

Du skattar, du Ömhörige, du Stågra vid

min trufundgård! Eller är det jag själf som skattar?
 Ja, ett fattigt minne tyndes det, men min lefnad var
 icke rikt på handlinger och stora dåd. Du kallar väl
 icke drömmen och diktens dåd? Nähända! Du lefde
 ju i symboler. Ditt lif var dyn och bång, var färg
 och ton, ditt och aring. Du lefde ett - och diktade ett
 annat. En half danning och en hel lågn! Den enda
 "handling" i ditt lif, du ej har ängnat och ej begått
 med feg och skamben treflan - var din barndoms
 "hjälletdåd"! Prisa ditt öde och din lycka!

*
*

APPENDIX E
TRANSLATION OF RANGSTRÖM'S *DÓMD*

NB! Unauthorized have no access

Ture Rangström

Condemned

There is someone sitting by my bed-head and waiting. Waiting. I cannot see his face, I don't know how long he has watched there, I don't know who he is. But his face must be beautiful, severe, beautiful and cold – and one day I shall behold it.

Have I been sick? Why do I lie here? I don't know. But over me seems [to be] an eternity of white darkness, an infinity of icy stupor, frozen dream. Behind a veil of bitter fog, heavy shadows wander, [?] ghost-figures fight in anguish, in anxiety.¹ Why do they fight, why do they suffer and why does anxiety lie hidden in the thick darkness?

Does the blue beam cut through the night? Yes, see, they smile, the shadows, writhe and smile! What message did the blue beam bring to them, which is light, light? Was it hope, was it power, was it new ages that opened? But why do they contort themselves in a thousand-fold greater pain? Is not the eternal one and the same?

Let the thick fog fall, let the night cover! Forever!

Life? Was it life I saw?

Have I also possessed life? Was I also amongst the shadows and in among them in the fight, the anguish, the night? Did the blue beam come even to me, which is light? Did I also smile the twisted ridicule?

Life! Night! Light!

I don't know. Don't know!

But now all is in a frozen dream and an icy stupor. And by my bed-head sits the Inexorable and waits. Waits.

O, my youth's sunny days!

A sea so morning-blue that only the thought was there before, a dream that steers out among white, hissing, and young billows, itching for battle, pregnant with will and new deeds, and a pale and flushed evening when the dream turns back, heavy and

¹ Rangström's adjective here appears to be written as 'dafva', a word for which I have been unable to find a definition or translation.

saturated with the day's warm midday sun, with all the sea's wide, salty space and life's joyful wealth. Songs, Songs!

O, my youth's sunny songs – where [have the] the years [gone]?

I see a deserted beach, where the very stone languishes, yellow lichen rots, and there is a stench of carrion towards the land. Over the ashamed, rocking swell drifts the swollen corpse of a shot seal. The grey pine-tops stir weakly before the stifling evening breeze.

It darkens. The sea sighs.

No, do I see right? – that cannot be how my life began! There was little sun, but more shadow, and the shadow fell ever denser and heavier...

In the beginning was the darkness. And the Darkness' spirit hovered in space and eternity was too short, too tight to hold all the darkness. A drop trembled at infinity's brink. The great cup was filled and wanted to flow over. But the Darkness' spirit thought: Behold, my bowl is brimming, here is bitterly dark and bitterly strong, here seethes the night's eternal wave in infinity's tight vessel. Behold, a drop trembles there ever since, and soon the darkness shall overflow. Shall it perish, become eternally nothing? No, let me pour it in the Earth's greedy womb; behold, how the wretched, lost star sighs after eternity's everything and more than everything!

And the Earth bade the bitter, dark, strong wine [in] – as poison and nourishment, as death and health it crept through her shaking body, and her limbs closed in spasm, in anguish and lust. And alone, doubly alone and endlessly bewitched, the wretched, lost star steered his fateful path among ruptured spaces. But her sons bore henceforth the darkness' sign on their forehead – and in the darkness they saw their death, their eternity...

No, there was not only sun. There was night, too. But let me think about the sun.

Have I beheld the sun? Yes! I have!

It begins as a glimpse, a little, innocently playing beam over [a] light and inexpressible childhood spring. The apple blossom snows white, white, and there is blue water, green pastures, day in the late evening. Like a fairy tale, yes, a fairy tale it was, to believe in, to build a life on, to despair, when the beautiful dream burst. And it carries on, nevertheless, through a thousand murky hazards, and its memory comes to me yet, to be shaken by a quiet, grateful joy. Childhood spring... Have you seen a more beautiful sight, offered your life a later picture of happiness you can never reach, than this: Father, Mother, Child – life's young, rich summer and spring's first bud? Its mature, bestowing strength, its budding devoted idea! Did you see it and remember it? – then your memory is rich, and once more you will, when autumn comes and

yellow leaves rustle over your loved ones' graves, one evening, when the day has been sorrowful and grey and heavy, bring up again from seed your mother's bright, summer voice from of old: Be comforted, my lad, tomorrow your father comes from the city! And your tears shall be stilled – in the dream you shall meet the happiness from life's early days and the idea of a holiday shall smile towards you with the gentle, faithful eyes of a mother. Childhood spring, childhood wound...

Is it not sunny? Sunny enough!

The green water butt, yes, of course I remember it! My childhood's heroic deed! There sat the ancients, in the shade of the lilac hedge, and the sun was slanting over the courtyard. In the sand a three year old child was playing. I don't know if I knew then that the ancients dreamed age's melancholic, calm evening dream. Their heavy, dewy looks did not include me, but I perceived a word and the word struck me: How the child has it good – it perceives everything and remembers nothing – but once again it shall also forget its unconsciously successful day! And what remains is only the memory of an idea...

What was "to remember", what was "to forget" – and why should I forget this day? Let's see, let's see – I cannot notice it, and remember! In the corner stands the great green barrel, where there is water, water, which has fallen from the sun's blue roof, but then it was not blue, then it was black, just black, and "the child" would be inside! There it is nice, forbidden nice to splash... Think about it – and think, what I shall remember!

And while the ancients' dreams sink with the sun and fade – a thundering is heard, a snorting, a splashing, a running, and over the yard's raked sand and the flowerbed's red onions bursts the loosed, devastating flood! The barrel, the green barrel is fallen – and wet and quiet, but triumphant and without tears, the child takes the scolding, threats and nap, and in the bed, the heroic deed's swift, still ending[?], I know, however, that I shall remember, remember!

The green water butt, yes! Some build temples to their honoured memory, and some burn them – let temples burn, my life's heroic memory was the green water butt!

You laugh, you Inexorable, you Someone at my bedhead! Or is it me myself who laughs? Yes, a poor memory it seems, but my life was not rich in events and great deeds. Well you do not cite the dream and the poem: deeds? Perhaps! You lived in symbols. Your life was vision and song, was colour and tone, poem and idea. You lived one – and poetry another. A half-truth and a total lie! The only "action" in your life, you have not repented and not committed with cowardly and shameful doubt – was your childhood's "heroic deed"! Praise your fate and your fortune!