

## 10. Schlager and early rock

In chapter 9 we saw how the musical world in which Abba and their Swedish audience grew up differed from the popular music culture experienced by their contemporaries in the anglophone world. As a young anglophone moving to Sweden in 1966, I had to familiarise myself not only with previously alien genres like *gammaldans* but also with how broader categories, particularly SCHLAGER and ROCK, were understood. My rockologist contemporaries in Sweden often conceptualised those two categories as antagonistic opponents with, in one corner of the ‘boxing ring’, schlager — the old, safe, melodic, sentimental or cheery, European popular-music title holder — and, in the other corner, rock — the (then) new/young, exciting, rhythmic, somatic, Anglo-American contender.<sup>1</sup> Of course, that’s a very crude binary but it did have *partial* validity, at least in terms of old versus new,<sup>2</sup> and of difference between continental European and Anglo-American popular music traditions.<sup>3</sup> One aim of this chapter is therefore to explain those differences so that both Abba songs like *Fernando* and the music of the Swedish Alternative Movement (*progg*), discussed in Chapter 12, can be better understood.

Before going any further, let me clarify that the ROCK in this chapter is not so much ROCK<sup>♣</sup> or ROCK AND ROLL<sup>♣</sup> in general as ROCK ‘N’ ROLL<sup>♣</sup> or ‘early rock’ or ‘proto-rock’ in particular, i.e. the Country-<sup>♣</sup> and R&B<sup>♣</sup>-influenced music made in the late 1950s and early 1960s by artists like Chuck Berry, Little Richard and Elvis Presley.<sup>4</sup> The term SCHLAGER needs more explanation because, despite its centrality in postwar popular music from Northern Europe, it seems to be a less familiar concept to many anglophones.

1. The melody/rhythm binary is reflected in the notion of *melodiradion* (Swedish popular music radio channel in the 1960s) and of *rytmisk musik* (Danish blanket term covering anything including drums/drumkit, strummed guitar, riffs, etc.). The antagonistic aspect of the opposition was often found in *Musikens Makt*,<sup>♣</sup> the Swedish *progg*<sup>♣</sup> movement’s monthly magazine, not least in its mission statement from 1973: see Fig. 86 p. 386.
2. See sections ‘Waterloo excursion’ and ‘Beatles ‘Granny music’’, pp. 330–337.
3. See ‘Germany and ‘joke rock’’, p. 338 ff.
4. See ROCK<sup>♣</sup>, ROCK ‘N’ ROLL<sup>♣</sup>, R&B<sup>♣</sup> and COUNTRY<sup>♣</sup> in Glossary.

## Schlager

In 1960s Sweden, *SCHLAGER* was a well-established and commercially successful popular music genre. With a history dating back to the early twentieth century, female stars of Swedish schlager included Brita Borg, Zarah Leander, Ulla Billqvist, Alice Babs, Lill-Babs, Anne-Louise Hanson, Anita Lindblom, Siw Malmkvist and Anna-Lena Löfgren.<sup>5</sup> It was a tradition to which Abba's Agnetha and Frida also belonged as young performers before becoming part of Abba in 1973.<sup>6</sup> Moreover, it's worth noting that several of these Swedish schlager artistes sought fame and fortune, with varying degrees of success, in Germany, Europe's biggest schlager market (fig. 71).<sup>7</sup> We'll return to 'Europe' and 'Germany' because they are concepts essential to the cultural understanding of schlager and, by extension, of Abba and the semiotics of *Fernando*.

### What is schlager?

The etymology of *SCHLAGER* is simple enough: *schlagen* is German for 'to hit' and a schlager is something that hits, like a hit song. Defining the term is a not so easy (p. 323 ff.).

5. See RefAppx for relevant recordings. Borg first recorded schlager in 1926, Billqvist in 1929, Leander in 1931, Alice Babs [Sjöblom] in 1938, Malmkvist 1955, Monica Zetterlund 1958, etc. Sweden also had famed male schlager artists (e.g. Harry Brandelius (1930s-1950s), Lasse Dahlquist (1930s-1960s), Lasse Lönndahl (1950s-1970s), Gunnar Wiklund and Östen Warnerbring (1960s-1970s). Focus here is on the schlager legacy in Abba's œuvre and its channelling through the band's female lead singers.
6. See, for example, Agnetha's *Den jag väntat på* (Fäلتskog (1968); ex. 90, p. 141) and *Om tårar vore guld* (1970), as well as Frida's *En ledig dag* (Lyngstad, 1967) and *Peter Pan* (1969).
7. [a] The postwar success in Germany of Sweden's female schlager singers provoked Stockholm-based cabaret artist Povel Ramel (1922-2007) to pen a 1962 parody for vocalist Brita Borg: 'Auf den deutsche Marknad eingeställt ist die Borg... machen Cha-Cha-Cha mit meine Häck' (☒ sv Brita Borg [170707]; HÄCK, Swedish slang for *buttocks*, is not a German word). Some successful *Schwedische Schlagersängerinnen* were Anita Lindblom (German hits 1962-68, incl. *Laß die Liebe aus dem Spiel* and *Danke schön* (☒ Kämpfert)), Lill-Babs (e.g. *Sonne, Pizza, Amore* (1964)), Nina Lizell (e.g. 1967, 1971: *Tanzparty mit Nina Lizell*), Anna-Lena Löfgren (e.g. 1964, 1967, 1968, 1969) and Siw Malmkvist (e.g. 1962, 1964, 1966, 1967 1968, 1969). Abba's Agnetha was less successful in Germany (Fäلتskog: *Die deutsche Singels 1968-1972* (2014)). On the other hand, Lill Lindfors appeared on German TV shows in the 1970s and Sylvia Vrethammar, of *Viva España* fame (1973; ex. 146, p. 182), had a successful career in Germany after that hit. See also pp. 338-339. [b] Sweden's Zarah Leander was a schlager and film star in Germany during World War II. On Leander's relation to Nazi Germany and Swedish fascism, see G Andersson & U Geisler (2007: *passim*).

Fig. 71. Swedish schlager artistes in Germany (1962-72): Siw Malmkvist, Anna-Lena Löfgren, Nina Lizell, Agnetha Fältskog<sup>7</sup>



SCHLAGER originally designated popular tunes from operettas, *Singspiele* and cabaret shows staged typically in Vienna or Berlin between around 1870 and the mid 1930s.<sup>8</sup> With the subsequent spread of radio and 78 rpm discs, schlagers, like jazz-era hits ('standards') in the USA, no longer needed to be linked to any stage production in which they might have first appeared. In germanophone Europe, a schlager came to be understood as any commercially successful tune sung by a solo vocalist with instrumental accompaniment. As *live* performance, schlagers were a staple in variety shows (*variétés*, *vaudeville*), their performance sandwiched between dancers, comedians, magicians, acrobats, etc. From the 1930s onwards, the schlager's most common site of diffusion was radio.

France's *chanson de variétés*, Italy's *canzonetta* and, to some extent, Russia's *estradnaya muzyka*<sup>9</sup> can be understood as labels corresponding in various ways to *schlager*, but it's hard to find an adequate English equivalent to the term. Sure, music-hall numbers like *After The Ball* (Harris, 1892) and *If You Were The*

8. For example, the songs 'Täubchen, das entflattert ist' and 'Glücklich ist, wer vergisst' from *Die Fledermaus* (J Strauss II, Vienna, 1874); 'Ich bin von Kopf bis Fuss in Liebe eingestellt' from *Der blaue Engel* (Hollaender, Marlene Dietrich, Berlin, 1930). 1933 is the year of the Nazi *Machtübernahme*. For authoritative and engaging accounts of popular song during the Third Reich see Wicke (1984, 1985).
9. One distinctive trait of *estradnaya muzyka* (эстрадная музыка; lit. = 'stage music') is that songs in minor keys are more common than in the ionian-dominant world of schlager. For example, in a recent YouTube compilation of 56 hits recorded by Soviet/Russian megastar Alla Pugachova between 1980 and 2016, 52 (93%) were unequivocally in the minor key (Alla Pugacheva and Alla Pugacheva 2017!!! [170418]). Those minor-key hits include *Миллион Роз* (1983); *Так же как все, Годы мои, Без меня, Сны О Любви, Ленинград* (1996 compilation); *Монолог* (1999); *Живи Спокойно Страна, Я Пою* (2003); and *Война* (2015). NB [1] Pugachova has to date sold around 250 million records. NB [2] Пугачёва (correct) is often written 'Пугачева' and transliterated 'Pugacheva' (incorrect).

*Only Girl* (Ayer, 1916) sound quite like German schlagers of their day but native English speakers are unlikely to categorise those tunes as 'schlager'. Later, with the increasing popularity of the foxtrot and of jazz standards, and especially after World War II, with the spread of rock/pop and the globalisation (Anglo-Americanisation) of popular music, the genre labels for English-language pop songs most closely resembling 'schlager' became 'easy listening', 'adult contemporary' and 'middle-of-the road' ('MoR').<sup>10</sup>

Middle of the Road was also the name of the Glasgow act that performed *Chirpy Chirpy Cheep Cheep* at the national competition for a song to represent the UK in the 1971 Eurovision final in Dublin — *A Song for Europe*, as the BBC's annual national qualifying event was then known.<sup>11</sup> Middle of the Road didn't win and didn't represent the UK at the *Eurovisionsschlagerfinal* but their *Chirpy Chirpy Cheep Cheep* was definitely 'a song for Europe', not so much because it featured in a TV broadcast named accordingly as because of its chart success in twelve Eurovision countries.<sup>12</sup> Equally qualifiable by anglophones as MoR pop and as schlager by Northern Europeans were UK and Irish entries like *Puppet On A String* (Shaw, 1967), *Boom Bang-A-Bang* (Lulu, 1969)<sup>13</sup> and *What's Another Year?* (Logan, 1980).<sup>14</sup> Those English-language Eurovision successes would have all qualified as *schlager* in Sweden, not just because they won what Swedes call the Eurovision *schlagerfestival* but also because they shared traits in common with Swedish schlager whose

10. From a Transatlantic perspective you could say that '[S]chlager [is] a northern European take on American easy listening that remains popular and defiantly unfashionable in equal measure [in Germany] today' (Khan, 2016).
11. It was called 'A Song for Europe' from 1961 to 1995 and from 2000 to 2003. For other names of the show in other years, see [W] *UK national selection for the Eurovision Song Contest*. Since 2016 it has been called 'Eurovision: You Decide'.
12. It sold 10 million copies (Frith, 2000) and was #1 in the UK, Ireland, Switzerland, Norway, Denmark, Belgium and Sweden; #2 in the Netherlands, Germany, Austria, Spain and Australia ([W] *Chirpy Chirpy Cheep Cheep*; [W] *sv Lista över ettor på Kvällstoppen*) [170419]. Another point of interest is that Middle of the Road's lead singer, Sally Carr, prefigured Agnetha Fältskog's on-stage appearances in Abba (1974 ff.) by sporting long, straight blonde hair while wearing hot pants and over-the-knee boots. Even Carr's clear and rather piercing vocal timbre was not totally unlike Agnetha's unmistakable soprano sound.
13. Was *Boom Bang-A-Bang* (Lulu, 1969) the inspiration for *Bang-A-Boomerang* (Abba, 1973)?
14. *All Kinds Of Everything* (Dana, 1970) and *Save Your Kisses For Me* (Brotherhood of Man, 1976) were two other anglophone winners of the Eurovision Song Contest (see [W] *United Kingdom in the Eurovision Song Contest* [170422] for more information).

artists in their turn recorded Swedish-language covers of MoR Nashville hits like *I Love You Because* (Reeves, 1963), *The Green Green Grass Of Home* (Jones, 1967) and *Stand By Your Man* (Wynette, 1968).<sup>15</sup> What are those traits?

### *Schlager traits*

CAVEAT. Defining SCHLAGER is a hopeless task because it means different things at different times in different places.<sup>16</sup> That's why this section of the chapter should be understood as no more than an attempt to *describe* some common structural traits of the schlagers referred to in this book.<sup>17</sup>

### *Schlager lyrics*

Schlager lyrics can be sorted into six rough categories: [1] LOVE between two heterosexual individuals. Those love lyrics fall into four subcategories: [1a] ROMANTIC declarations; [1b] CHEERY, upbeat love; [1c] SAD separation, loss of love; [1d] CHILDLIKE longing, nostalgic love; [2] LOVE IN GENERAL, incl. peace, utopia, friends, hope, happiness and music; [3] NATURE, summer, natural beauty; [4] NOSTALGIA, regret, resignation, retrospection, fate, sadness; [5] HOME, domestic issues, the everyday; [6] FUN & NOVELTY, including holiday, humour, exotic peoples and places.

Some categories are mutually exclusive, others not. Schlager lyrics sometimes have a religious slant but they almost never deal with *explicitly* political issues.<sup>18</sup> Schlager lyrics are usually INDIVIDUALIST because, although perceived in similar ways by a vast COLLECTIVE of listeners, *one single individual normally addresses another single individual*, usually a close friend or inti-

15. *Coalminer's Daughter* (Lynn, 1970) is another MoR Nashville hit which Hootenanny Singers covered in Swedish: see p.305 incl. fnnt 17. Gunnar Wiklund was the schlager artist to specialise in Swedish versions of Jim Reeves songs.
16. Schlagers by Johann Strauss II obviously sound different to those that became popular during the Weimar Republic, which in their turn differ from schlagers produced in the 1960s and 1970s. Similarly, several different types of schlager can exist at the same time. Those differences often relate to language and song topic (see under 'Lyrics', next).
17. The reference material includes: [1] the schlagers cited in examples 102-105 (p. 148 ff.) and 131-132 (p. 170 ff.); [2] Anglophone Eurovision winners 1967-1980; [3] German-language schlagers by Lill-Babs (1961, 1964) and Siw Malmquist (1964); [4] Swedish versions of Nashville hits (Hootenanny Singers, 1967-69 (p.305); [6] pre-Abba schlagers by Agnetha Fältskog: *Jag var så kär*, *Utan dej går livet vidare*, *Tack Sverige*, *Den jag väntat på*, *Señor Gonzales* (all 1968); *Dröm är dröm och saga saga* (1969); *Om tårar vore guld* (1970); *Komm' doch zu mir*, *Tausend Wunder* (1972); *En sång om sorg och glädje* (1973). *Una paloma blanca* (George BAKER Selection, 1972; ex. 107, p. 150) was also included in the reference material.

mate partner, or else him/herself, in a monologue. *Fernando's* English and Spanish lyrics belong mainly to category [4] (nostalgia) with a hint of [6] (exotic), and the song's second-person addressee, Fernando, is a 'close friend'.<sup>19</sup>

### *Schlager's compositional paradigm*

Schlagers are usually sung by a SOLO ARTIST, male or female, with instrumental ACCOMPANIMENT.<sup>20</sup> Although the lead vocalist is often joined in the refrain by other voices, typically in tertial\* parallels to produce a richer melodic texture and a singalong effect,<sup>21</sup> schlager's overriding COMPOSITIONAL PARADIGM is the MELODY-ACCOMPANIMENT DUALISM (Tagg, 2013: 425-446). The contrast between a single audio figure (melody) and a more general ground (backing) is quite stark. Riffs are rarer than in rock music, and schlager accompaniment tends to be more chordal, less motivic and less contrapuntal. Lead vocals, on the other hand, have a strong melodic profile and are mixed centre front so that they stand out in uncontested audio relief against the backing tracks.<sup>22</sup> Vocal delivery is usually legato and tends to be more syllabic than melismatic. Male vocal timbre is often quite mellow, female timbre often less so, sometimes bordering on the brassy ('belting').<sup>23</sup>

### *Schlager instrumentation*

1. String pads and simple piano or acoustic guitar arpeggios are common in slower numbers, brass instruments less so.
2. Although full drumkit is the exception rather than the rule and although bass guitar often has quite a strong presence, some tunes are given a

18. The most common pronouns in schlager lyrics are the first and second persons singular. i.e. I/me/my/mine and you/your/yours, including 'you' in the sense of 'one', the gender-neutral third person singular, e.g. *on* (Fr.), *man* (Ger., Sw.), *a gente* (Port.).

19. See pp.170, ff; 221, 226, 263, ff. The Swedish lyrics address a lover rather than a 'close friend'.

20. Professional schlager performances traditionally featured orchestral accompaniment.

21. The additional voice parts can also be dubbed by the lead singer in the recording studio.

22. Monocentricity of the melody-accompaniment dualism — see Tagg (2013: 425-433). Based on experience as an anglophone musician living in non-anglophone cultures for 32 years (1966-91, 2002-09), I maintain that lead vocals were mixed more up-front in non-anglophone pop (incl. schlager) than in English-language rock and pop-rock recordings.

23. Examples of 'brassy' female vocal timbre in the reference material: *Tango mit Fernando* (K Bach, 1994), *Das Leben kann schön sein* (Gröhnloh, 1963), *Liebeskummer lohnt sich nicht* (Malmquist, 1964), *Sonne, Pizza, Amore* (Lill-Babs, 1964). It's even discernible in early Fältskog, e.g. *Jag var så kär* (1968), *Om tårar vore guld* (1970), an unsurprising observation given that Connie Francis (e.g. 1957) was teenage Agnetha's vocal idol (IV)SV Agnetha Fältskog).

‘big-beat’ orchestral pop song backing.<sup>24</sup> Use of amplified instruments and full drumkit increases between 1960 and 1980.

3. Accompanying grooves include: [1] slow or medium-paced  $\frac{4}{4}$  ballad; [2] oompap[pa] quintal bass shuttle lines as part of [2a] a medium-paced or fast waltz, [2b] quasi-pasa doble, [2d] a happy march or polka; [3] uptempo  $\frac{1}{2}$  boogie shuffle ( $\frac{4}{4} \times \text{♩}^3$ ); [4] a novelty ‘funfair’ or ‘mechanical toy’ groove.<sup>25</sup>
4. Unusual instruments are sometimes included to lend anaphonic, ethnic or otherwise connotative ‘colour’ to the song.<sup>25</sup>

#### *Temporal parameters in schlager*

1. VERSE↔REFRAIN is the most common form of diataxis (narrative form).<sup>26</sup>
2. Including its eventual subdivision into  $4 \times \text{♩}^3$  ( $\frac{1}{2}$  shuffle),  $\frac{4}{4}$  is the most common time signature. The proportion of tunes in  $\frac{3}{4}$  decreases over the period 1960–1980. Syncopation as anticipated downbeats occurs less frequently than in rock. There is no cross-rhythm even if asymmetric division into subbeat patterns like 3+3+2 ( $\frac{4}{4} \text{ ♩ ♩ ♩ ♩ ♩ }$ ) is not uncommon.
3. Periodicity is generally regular and quaternary: 4-, 8- and 16-bar episodes dominate. 12-bar blues matrices are not used.
4. Tempo in the reference material ranges from  $\text{♩}=66$  to  $\text{♩}=180$  (average  $\text{♩}=103$ ): most songs run at a moderate pace between 94 and 128 bpm.<sup>27</sup>
5. Schlager surface rates are rarely faster than 2–3 times the song’s tempo.

The recordings have an average duration of 3–4 minutes.

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24. i.e. like the backing to *I Only Want To Be With You* (Springfield, 1963), *It’s Over* (Orbison, 1964), *That Girl Belongs To Yesterday* (Pitney, 1964), *It’s Not Unusual* (Tom Jones, 1965).
  25. For example, there’s mandolin and a medium waltz groove for *Sonne, Pizza, Amore* (Lill-Babs, 1964), bassoon and glockenspiel (‘mechanical toy’) for *Puppet On A String* (Shaw, 1967), ‘sensual’ alto sax (‘sexaphone’) and ‘cute flutes’ in thirds for *What’s Another Year?* (Logan, 1980), not to mention ‘Andean’ flutes and ‘charango’ in *Fernando* (p. 76 ff.). *Tango mit Fernando* (K Bach, 1994) exemplifies the ‘German tango’ (see also [X] EN *Finnish Tango*).
  26. For explanations of diataxis, see *Music’s Meanings* (Tagg, 2013: 383–416).
  27. Those metronome markings are unreliable indicators of the songs’ sense of speed, partly because surface rates are not considered (Tagg, 2015: 288–291). For example, *Utan dej går mitt liv vidare* (Fältskog, 1970) runs at only  $\text{♩}=66$  in  $\frac{4}{4}$  but has a surface rate of 196 npm (notes per minute, ongoing  $\text{♩} \text{♩} \text{♩} \text{♩} \text{♩}$  feel) whereas *Boom Bang-A-Bang’s*  $\text{♩}=180$  in  $\frac{3}{4}$  (Lulu, 1969) might just as well be heard as  $\text{♩}=90$  in  $\frac{3}{8}$  or as  $\text{♩}=60$  in  $\frac{3}{4}$  or  $\frac{9}{8}$ . For discussion of tempo, surface rate and impressions of speed in music, see Tagg & Clarida (2003: 483–487).

### *Schlager tonality*

1. The TONAL IDIOM of schlager is overwhelmingly DOMINANTAL<sup>†</sup> and EURO-CLASSICAL,<sup>†</sup> i.e. it is TERTIAL<sup>†</sup> and IONIAN<sup>†</sup>.<sup>28</sup> Schlagers have an UNAMBIGUOUS TONIC and final harmonic cadences are 'perfect' (V→I).
2. TERTIAL PARALLELS<sup>†</sup> are a common feature of schlager melody (ex. 102-117, p. 147 ff; ex. 196, p. 327; §4).
3. MODULATION to distant keys is rare but a TRUCKER'S GEAR CHANGE<sup>†</sup> can occur towards the end of a schlager performance.<sup>29</sup>
4. CHROMATICISM tends to be more DECORATIVE — MINICHROMATICISM<sup>†</sup> — than modulatory, for example: [1] *minor Amen chords*,<sup>†</sup> [2] *cadential chromatics* (ex. 195) and [3] *parlour parallels* ('Adeline slides',<sup>†</sup> ex. 196; §2).<sup>30</sup>
5. MINICHROMATICISM is more common in sentimental ballads (lyrics categories [1] and [4] (p. 323)) than in other types of schlager.
6. Melodic motifs highlighting a TRITONE interval, unusual in other types of popular song, are not uncommon in schlager-related styles (ex. 197).

Ex. 195. Cadential chromatics:  
VI-II-V-I in *Fernando*



28. Two kinds of exception: [1] IONIANISED<sup>†</sup> minor-key verses leading to major-key refrains, e.g. *Viva España* (Vrethammar, 1973), *Mama* (Heintje, 1967), *Tango mit Fernando* (K Bach, 1994); [2] occasional use of bVII or V<sup>11</sup> chords in the anglophone songs: *All Kinds Of Everything* (Dana, 1970: bVII at 'dew', 'or two'); *Chirpy Chirpy Cheep Cheep* (bVII-IV at 'Far, far, away' (Middle of the Road, 1971)); *What's Another Year?* (Logan, 1980: e.g. 11<sup>th</sup> chords in intro).
29. e.g. *Lolita* (1961) Grönnloh (1963), Dana (1970), Fältskog (1973), George Baker (1975).
30. [a] The MINOR AMEN CHORD is the most usual minichromatic device and the commonest non-key-specific scale degrees are b7 and b6, the latter typically inside a subdominant chord like iv, iv<sup>5</sup> or ii7b5, occasionally bVI. [b] CADENTIAL MINICHROMATICS occur in conjunction with anticlockwise movement round the circle of fifths, typically VI7-II7-V7-I (ex. 192). In A major (*Fernando*) the progression includes two non-key-specific tones (a#, d#) and produces two minichromatic slides: a#-a#-g# and e-d#-d#-c# in F#7→B7→E7→A. [c] MINICHROMATIC PARLOUR PARALLELS, a.k.a. 'Adeline slides' (see p. 445), are illustrated in example 196. They seem to be particularly common in German schlager and have been described as 'sentimental', as typifying the 'strawberry jam of music' (Van der Merwe, 1989: 243). For more on MINICHROMATICISM (see p. 461) — what Van der Merwe (1989: 249) calls 'parlour chromaticism' —, including ADELINE SLIDES (p. 445), MINOR AMEN CHORDS and CRISIS CHORDS (p. 450), see Tagg & Clarida (2003: 209-214).



Ex. 196. Minichromatic parallel thirds: (a) Lolita: *Rosen werden blüh'n* (1961); (b) Anneke Grönnloh: *Das Leben kann schön sein* (1963); (c) Agnetha Fältskog: *En sång om sorg och glädje* (1973); (d) Beethoven: Minuet #2 in G Major (c. 1800).

Ex. 197. Schlager-style melodic tritone motifs between  $\Delta\hat{7}$  and  $\hat{4}$  over  $V\hat{7}$ .<sup>31</sup>

(a) Fernando m8  
(b) Axel öman  
(c) Utan dig går mitt liv...  
(d) Gustav Lindström  
(e) Dalarapsodi (Alfvén)  
(f) Lilla vackra Anna  
(g) Näckrosen blommar  
(h) Bunch of Coconuts  
(i) O sole mio  
(j) Euridice (Gluck)  
(k) Quizás  
(l) Viva España

### Schlager, 'europop' and the 'other stuff'

With the partial exception of 'archaic' *folkmusik* (p. 290 ff.), the genres described so far in chapters 9 and 10 are all intrinsic to the musical culture in which Abba's members grew up. Björn Ulvaeus put it this way in a BBC interview from 2013.<sup>32</sup>

'There was German schlager... on the radio in Sweden; French and Italian ballads too, all of it mixed with Swedish folk music. So, we were exposed to all of that growing up. I think you can hear it in our writing. That kind of made us strange in the seventies in comparison with other stuff.'

31. Source references for ex. 197: (a) *Fernando*, m8; (b) Njurling (1924); (c) Fältskog (1968a); (d) Adolphson (1966); (e) Alfvén (1903), (f) Prøysen (1955); (g) Sandström (1928); (h) Heather-ton (1944); (i) Presley (1959a); (j) Gluck (1762); (k) Farrés (1947); (l) Vrethammar (1973). Ex. 197(b)-197(l) are all snippets of IOCM for m8 (ex. 137-146 and ex. 152; pp. 176-187).

Since Ulvaeus is here explaining the band's background not to Swedes but to anglophones, the 'other stuff' he mentions is most likely 1970s anglophone pop and rock music. Similarly, his 'Swedish folk music' label is probably a catch-all phrase covering what, for a largely monolingual anglophone audience, must have been unfamiliar phenomena with funny foreign names, i.e. not just *folkmusik* but also *gammaldans*, *spelmanslagsmusik*, *visa*, etc., which are all mutually distinguishable in a *Swedish* context (pp. 283-307). Whatever the case, it's clear that in the early 1970s Abba's musical background differed from that of their contemporaries in the English-speaking world of rock and related styles — the 'other stuff'. It's hardly surprising, then, given the transnational domination of anglophone popular music during the second half of the twentieth century, that 'EUROPOP' was, along with 'pop' and 'disco', the most common genre label attached to Abba in the anglophone media.<sup>33</sup>

EUROPOP is, however, a problematic term when referring to European pop music in the period relevant to *Fernando* because it ('europop') covers such a heterogeneous body of music, including *Black Is Black* (Los Bravos, 1966), *Venus* (Shocking Blue, 1970) and *Autobahn* (Kraftwerk, 1974), as well as Moroder's Munich disco production *I Feel Love* (Summer, 1977). The problem is that while early Abba recordings were as catchy and as well produced as *Black Is Black* or *Venus* (or *Chirpy Chirpy Cheep Cheep*), they bore limited sonic resemblance to *I Feel Love* and none to early Kraftwerk. EUROPOP is in that context a genre label less indicative of how the music sounded than of where its artists came from. The idea seems to have been that since Los Bravos were partly Spanish, Shocking Blue partly Dutch, Kraftwerk totally German, Abba Swedish and Moroder a germanophone Italian,<sup>34</sup> anglophones could qualify music by those artists as *EUROPOP*. On the other hand, similarly sounding output from The Carpenters (e.g. 1973), Neil Diamond (1970, 1978), Tom Jones (1967) and other contemporary exponents of anglophone MoR pop

32. Björn Ulvaeus at 0:12:56 in the BBC TV documentary *The Joy of Abba* (2013). It's unlikely that SCHMALTZ, a derogatory term meaning distastefully sentimental in US English, is used here as a negative value judgement by Ulvaeus who, correctly registering a lack of English equivalent to the Swedish meaning of *schlager* (p. 321), understandably chose another English (in fact Yiddish) word starting with SCH that refers to one possible ingredient of *schlager* — its 'strawberry jam' aspect (ex. 196 and footnote 30[c]).

33. For example, the genres listed in Wikipedia [170522] as associated with Abba are 'Europop, disco, pop, rock, schlager' (🇸🇵 SV), *pop, europop, disco, pop-rock* (🇬🇧 EN), *pop, europop, euro disco* (🇫🇷 FR), *disco, europop, pop rock* (🇬🇷 IT), *pop, dance, disco, pop rock, glam rock* (🇪🇸 ES).

(‘schlager’ from a Swedish hearpoint) was never called *ANGLOPOP* because, as anglophones making music for other anglophones, they were anglocentrically regarded by yet more anglophones as pop by default. Now, the anglophone *EUROPOP* label does become stylistically a little less ambiguous when applied to pop and disco of the *post-Fernando* period but that important chapter in international pop history – including tracks by Moroder (1983–1988), key songs by The Pet Shop Boys (1985–1987) and Madonna (1986, 1989), as well as several Stock-Aitken-Waterman productions<sup>35</sup> – is beyond the scope of this book about *Fernando* (1975).<sup>36</sup> Nevertheless, even though the genre category *EUROPOP* isn’t much help in identifying *musical* traits and their connotations in Abba’s œuvre, it’s still important to investigate what Mikael Wiehe<sup>37</sup> might have meant by ‘European’ in his characterisation of Abba songs as ‘great European pop’, and to understand attitudes to Abba’s music in early-to-mid 1970s Sweden. To do that we’ll need to discuss details of *sonic materiality* and parameters of *musical* expression.<sup>37</sup> The case of *Waterloo* (Abba, 1974) as a piece of post-Beatles pop shines a helpful light on the matter (next).

34. Moroder hails from Urtijëi [u:rtiˈʒai] (It. Ortisei, Ger. St Ulrich; pop. ±5,000) in the province of Alto Adige/Südtirol in the Italian Dolomites, where, in addition to German and Italian, the Rhaeto-Romanic language Ladin (*sic*) is also spoken. Adele and Alex Moroder can both be heard talking Ladin on line ([W] *Ladin language* [170526]). Incidentally, Kastelruth (Castelrotto), 11 km west of Urtijëi, is home to the folk-schlager band Kastelruther Spatzen ([W] DE) whose 1985 album *Ich sag’s dir mit Musik* simultaneously topped the German, Austrian and Swiss German (*schwizerdütsch*) charts.
35. e.g. Band Aid (1984); Bananarama (1986), Rick Astley (1987).
36. Observations about post-*Fernando* europop are based on descriptions of the genre given in [W] *Europop* [190822] and by Paphides (2016). Suffice it here to say that: [a] MORODER’s tuneful synth-disco sounds, first popularised in Donna Summer’s *I Feel Love* (1977) and *Hot Stuff* (1979), continued in his music for *Flashdance*, *Scarface* (1983), *Metropolis*, *Electric Dreams* (1984) and *Top Gun* (1986), for the LA and Seoul Olympics (1984, 1988) and in *Can’t Get You Out of My Head* (Minogue 2001); see also *Giorgio* by Moroder (Daft Punk, 2013); [b] KRAFTWERK’s substantial influence on pop during the last few decades of the 20th century is well documented (e.g. *The Rap Attack* (Toop, 1984)) and the ‘Influence and legacy’ section in [W] *Kraftwerk* [190823]; [c] ABBA’s most clearly europop numbers are all *post-Fernando*. They include *Dancing Queen* (1976) and the band’s only ♩ ♪ ♪ ♪ ♪ ♪ disco numbers (*alla marcia* four-to-the-floor), namely *Summer Night City* (1978), *Gimme! Gimme!* and *Voulez-vous* (both 1979), *Lay All Your Love* and *On And On* (both 1980).
37. [a] Mikael Wiehe\* ([W] EN, SV; [170525]), interviewed in *The Joy of Abba* (BBC, 2013 at 0:57:55). It’s significant that, as a non-anglo, he talks of ‘European pop’, not ‘europop’. [b] *Parameters of musical expression*: see chapters 8–14 in *Everyday Tonality* (Tagg, 2015).

### *Waterloo excursion*

In terms of tempo (♩≈144), surface rate (♩≈288), metre (♩ ♩ = ♩<sup>3</sup> ♩ : 12/8 'feel'), periodicity (quaternary), groove (rapid rock/pop shuffle), dynamics (*sempre f*), compositional paradigm (melody/accompaniment), episodic form (verse/refrain), melodic motifs (e.g. ♯6-♯5 ♩<sup>3</sup> ♩ ♩ hook) etc. there is little to radically distinguish *Waterloo* from an amalgam of brisk anglophone pop-rock shuffle tunes like *Baby Love* (Supremes, 1964) or *Build Me Up Buttercup* (Foundations, 1968).<sup>38</sup> *Waterloo* belongs to that sort of Anglo-American pop-rock sound world not only because of the features just enumerated; it was also up-to-date thanks to sound production values on a par with those used by The Beach Boys (1966) or The Beatles (1967). From this perspective it's easy to see how Björn Ulvaeus could have thought in 1974 that *Waterloo* was 'completely not Eurovision Song Contest stuff'.<sup>39</sup> Indeed, it was distinguishable from a normal Eurovision schlager because: [1] it was an energetic uptempo pop song with a rock groove; [2] it featured electric guitar, bass guitar, drumkit and rock-style sax fills; [3] it had high studio production values; [4] it was performed by a pop group boosted by studio musicians, not by a solo singer with orchestral accompaniment. And yet several of my pop-rock-playing peers here in the UK, though acknowledging *Waterloo*'s novelty value in a Eurovision context, did not think very highly of the song or of its presentation. Indeed, speaking retrospectively, one musician told me he thought it was 'naff' while I had to admit to thinking there was something decidedly old hat' about it at the time.<sup>40</sup> One reason for these views was that replacing conventional Eurovision evening dress (Fig. 72a) with carnivalesque glam (72c) rather than with more everyday clothing (e.g. Fig. 72b) merely involved the substitution of one sartorial fantasy (evening dress) with another

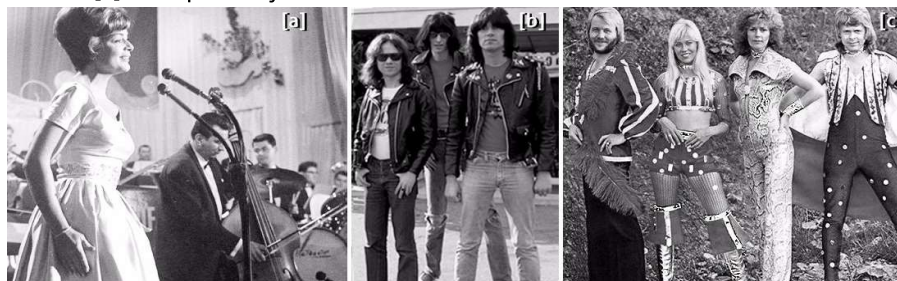
38. Other 1970s pop-rock shuffle tracks: *Hot Love* (T-Rex, 1971), *The Jean Genie* (Bowie, 1972), *Rubber Bullets* (10cc, 1973), *School's Out* (Alice Cooper, 1974), *Devil Gate Drive* (Quatro, 1974), *Whatever You Want* (Status Quo, 1979). The uptempo ♩<sup>3</sup> ♩ shuffle was hugely popular with 1970s *dansbands* in Sweden as the ideal groove for doing the *bugg*\* (≈ jitterbug).

39. At 19:00 in *The Joy of Abba* (BBC documentary, 2013) Ulvaeus says '[W]e had this song, *Waterloo*, which was completely not Eurovision Song Contest stuff. But we thought this is how we want to present ourselves... We might end up 9 or 14 but people would remember us because we're different'...

40. NAFF: *Brit. colloq.* 'lacking taste or style'. Two of the peers were Liverpool residents Colin Hall (musician, songwriter, producer) and Richard Meegan (pop quiz virtuoso and retired Professor of Geography ■ [bris.ac.uk/sps/esrcunevenimpact/meettheteam/](http://bris.ac.uk/sps/esrcunevenimpact/meettheteam/)).

(glitzy glam): it was, so to speak, no more than a superficial adjustment of the Eurovision Final's fairy-tale SPECIAL NIGHT OUT convention of entertainment.

Fig. 72. [a] Lys Assia at first Eurovision final in 1956; [b] The Ramones, c. 1980; [c] Abba publicity shot, 1974.<sup>41</sup>



Another reason for questioning Ulvaeus's 'not Eurovision Contest stuff' view concerned *Waterloo's* lyrics. Not only were they entirely of the YOU-ME-AND-LOVE schlager type (pp.323-324); they also followed a pattern of Eurovision hook line titles consisting of internationally reproducible phrases like *Merci chérie*, *Ring-dinge-ding*, *La la la* and *Boom Bang-a-Bang*.<sup>42</sup> Still, *Waterloo's* 'NOVELTY V. NAFF' contradiction wasn't just about paramusical issues like clothing and lyrics: it was also about the song's sound, its music.

In fact, *Waterloo's* tonal idiom, in particular its harmony, contradicts the song's description as 'not Eurovision Song Contest stuff'. True, the verse starts with a very euroclassical chord sequence (in D) —  $\frac{4}{4}$  D | E/d | A/c# | G/b | A — but the song's other progressions — |Bm |Bm |E7 |A7 ||D | and  $\frac{3}{4}$ :D |D |G |G| A |A |D |A or D:| — constitute bog-standard harmonic practice in Eurovision songs and schlager.<sup>43</sup> Moreover, every root-position A (V) chord in *Waterloo* contains the ionian mode's leading note ( $\Delta\hat{7}=c\#$ ) and is on each occasion followed by the tonic triad (D) in root position, producing V→I perfect cadences. These harmonic traits distinguish *Waterloo* not from the Eurovision

41. Lys Assia singing winning Swiss entry *Refrain* at the 1956 Song Contest in Lugano. She is better known for her hit recording of *O mein Papa* (1956). NB [1] Even the musicians are wearing evening dress in fig. 72a. [2] Only  $\frac{3}{4}$  of the Ramones are visible in Fig. 72b.

42. Song-title details (with artist name, year and nation code): *Merci chérie* (Udo Jürgens, 1966: DE); *Ring-dinge-ding* (Thérèse Steinmetz, 1967: NL); *La la la* (Massiel, 1968: ES); *Boom Bang-a-Bang* (Lulu, 1969: UK); *Marlène* (Dominique Dussault, 1970: MC); *Musik* (Marianne Mendt, 1971: AT); *Baby Baby* (Nicole & Hugo, 1973: BE); *Ding-a-Dong* (Teach-In, 1975: NL), etc. Similar titles include *Catherine*, *Maman Maman* and *Bonjour Bonjour* (all 1969).

song tradition — they actually help define it — but from all the ‘other stuff’ in the Anglo-American pop-rock tradition of the late 1960s and early 1970s in which flat-seven modes ( $b\hat{7}$ ) are more common than the dominant tonality ( $\Delta\hat{7}$ ) of Abba songs like *Ring Ring* (1973), *Hasta mañana*, *Honey Honey*, *Waterloo* (all 1974) and *Fernando* (1975–6): just compare those Abba tunes with famous tracks by the anglophone world’s biggest rock bands of the day, e.g. *Whole Lotta Love* by Led Zeppelin (ex. 216 p.484), or, by The Rolling Stones, *Jumping Jack Flash* and *Brown Sugar* (ex. 214–215 p.483).<sup>44</sup> In such rock numbers there can be *plagal* cadences (IV→I) and *clockwise* progressions round the circle of fifths (e.g.  $bVII-IV-I$ ) but you’ll be hard pushed to find anticlockwise — *dominant* — progressions (e.g.  $II-V-I$ ) or final ‘perfect’ cadences ( $V\rightarrow I$ ).<sup>45</sup>

Now, the rock harmonies just mentioned are based on *non-ianian modes* (no  $\Delta\hat{7}$ ).<sup>46</sup> They are non-dominant and can in one way be understood as archaic in that they derive from the musical practices of isolated rural communities in the US South that were for almost two centuries largely untouched by urbanisation.<sup>47</sup> However, while European urban popular music had since the eighteenth century relied on ionian tertiality as its default tonal idiom and on its concomitant technologies,<sup>48</sup> popular music in mid-1950s North America was directly available as *sound*, mass-diffused over the radio or on disc.<sup>49</sup>

43.  $I-II_7-V_3-IV_3-V$  at ‘My, my, at Waterloo Napoleon did surrender’, isn’t an uncommon departure in euroclassical music (see Mozart’s *Ave verum corpus* (1791); see also Tagg (2015: 268–9, esp. ex. 186)).  $Bm\ E7\ A\ D$  ( $vi-II-V-I$  at ‘the history book on the shelf...’) is a standard four-chord progression anticlockwise round the circle of fifths.  $D\ G\ A\ D$  (=  $I-IV-V-I$ ) are the chords of *Waterloo*’s refrain. See also EUROCLASSICAL in Glossary (pp. 452–454).

44. Other non-ianian tracks by Zeppelin include *Heartbreaker* and *Communication Breakdown* (1969), *Gallows Pole* (1970), *The Battle Of Evermore* and *Whole Lotta Love* (1971), plus *Dancing Days* and *Tangerine* (1973). Additional non-ianian tracks by the Stones include *Play With Fire* (1965), *Under My Thumb* (1966), *Street Fighting Man* (1968), *Midnight Rambler* (1970), *It’s Only Rock And Roll* (1974). There’s no room here to explain or exemplify the details of non-ianian harmony. Please see instead chapters 9–14 in *Everyday Tonality II* (Tagg, 2015).

45. For more on  $b\hat{7}$  modes, see Tagg (2015), pp. 99–101, 103–105, 276–289, 389–395, 426–432.

46. Since  $doh$ -pentatonicism ( $\hat{1}\ \hat{2}\ \hat{3}\ \hat{5}\ \Delta\hat{6}$ ) is without  $\Delta\hat{7}$ , it is also, like  $b\hat{7}$  modes, non-ianian.

47. Van der MERWE (1999: 45), assessing the role of rural communities in the US South warns that ‘the biggest danger lies in underestimating the isolation of their lives’.

48. Including technologies of storage, distribution and instrument making: Western notation developed to graphically encode the euroclassical tonality, not West African or Appalachian music. The accordion was constructed to facilitate  $I\leftrightarrow V$  switching: hence the key-clock placement of ready-made chords on the left-hand buttonboard of a fully chromatic instrument (fig. 62b, p. 285). See also comments on Bellman and Handel (pp. 299–302).

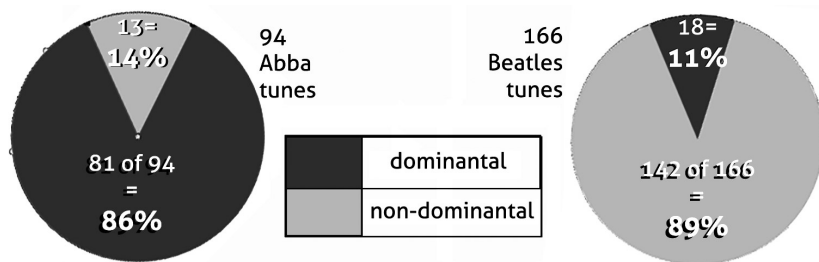
49. 45 and 33 $\frac{1}{2}$  rpm vinyl records were widely available in the mid 1950s.

Even if its tonal roots were shrouded in the mists of a rural past, such music came across as more modern to large groups of young listeners than the dominant world of ‘leading notes’ ( $\Delta\hat{7}$ ) and ‘perfect cadences’ ( $V\rightarrow I$ ). With the rise of rock’n’roll after 1955 and with the popularity of The Beatles and other youthful combos in the 1960s, that impression of pop/rock modernity took root among young people in the USA and Britain. It’s from this perspective that hearing *Waterloo* as ‘naff’ or ‘old hat’ in the mid-1970s makes historical sense. This reportedly ‘uncool’ aspect of *Waterloo*’s chords is easier to grasp if you compare Abba’s tonal idiom with that of The Beatles, another eclectic pop act whose overall output was at the time rarely branded ‘naff’ or ‘old hat’ by (then) young musicians in the pop-rock field.

### Beatles ‘Granny music’

To test the ‘old hat hypothesis’, I first listed 166 Lennon-McCartney songs recorded between 1962 and 1970 in one spreadsheet and 94 Abba songs by Andersson-Ulvaeus (1973-1982) in another.<sup>50</sup> After checking through the 260 tunes and making rough notes about them, I focused on songs in which the ionian mode, or an ionianised minor mode, and  $I\rightarrow V$  movement, especially the  $V\rightarrow I$  ‘perfect’ cadence, were used consistently. Figure 73 shows that ionian/dominant/euroclassical was the tonal norm for 81 of the 94 Abba tunes (86%) and that only 14% were conceived in a different idiom.<sup>51</sup> Proportions were inverse for the 166 Beatles tunes: only 18 (11%) of them *consistently* used dominant tonality. 14 of those 18 dominant Beatles songs<sup>52</sup> are listed, together with terse comments, in Table 8 (p. 334).

Fig. 73. Abba and The Beatles: proportion of songs in dominant tonality<sup>50</sup>



50. See spreadsheets at [audio/FrnExtras/AbbaTonality.xlsx](#) and [audio/FrnExtras/BeatlesTonality.xlsx](#) [both 181018]. The figures are based on quick general impressions of harmony in the songs.

Table 8. 14 Beatles tunes in ionian  $V \leftrightarrow I$  tonal idiom, with brief comments

1. <i>Penny Lane</i> (1966)*	pseudo-classical, bygone days, colourful local characters
2. <i>All Together Now</i> (1967)*	old-style singalong, children, counting and spelling game
3. <i>All You Need Is Love</i> (1967)†	old-style singalong with old march-style brass band
4. <i>...Benefit Of Mr Kite</i> (1967)†	circus/fairground (incl. calliope), Victorian language
5. <i>Piggies</i> (1967)‡	tongue-in-cheek pseudo-nursery rhyme
6. <i>When I'm 64</i> (1967)*	inter-war small 'jazz' dance ensemble, older generation
7. <i>Yellow Submarine</i> (1967)*	old-style singalong, repetitive simple tune for children
8. <i>Your Mother Should Know</i> (1967)*	oompa, 'born a long, long time ago', VI-II-V-I
9. <i>Honey Pie</i> (1968)*	ragtime pastiche, 1920/1930s horns, stop time VI-II-V-I
10. <i>I Will</i> (1968)*	I-vi-ii-V super-simple love song
11. <i>Ob-La-Di Ob-La-Da</i> (1968)*	quasi-reggae fun, children's nonsense syllables, family
12. <i>Rocky Raccoon</i> (1968)*	Wild West, vi-II-V-I incl. harmonica, barroom piano
13. <i>Maxwell's Silver Hammer</i> (1969)*	I-VI-ii-V, trad. jazz, tuba-articulation, 'bang bang', kids
14. <i>Oh Darling!</i> (1969)*	caricature of 1950s swamp pop in $\frac{12}{8}$ à la Freddie Fender <sup>53</sup>

\* Songwriter: \*McCartney (11 songs); † Lennon (2); ‡ Harrison (1); see Myrsten (1997).

51. **[a]** The use of mixolydian  $bVII$  in progressions like  $bVII \rightarrow IV \rightarrow I$  is one reliable litmus test of tonal 'otherness' in popular music heard from a European  $V \rightarrow I$  perspective around 1970. I found  $bVII \rightarrow IV \rightarrow I$  in only 1 of  $\pm 30$  tracks released by Abba in the period 1970-1976. Even that single  $bVII$  progression was just a brief cadence marker (*Tropical Loveland*, 1975), never a mixolydian loop ( $\times$  Tagg, 2009b;  $\equiv$  2015: 426-433). *Tropical Loveland* works as cultural reference to an anglophone Caribbean 'other' from a Swedish schlager perspective. **[b]** Only four pre-1977 Abba songs include clear instances of divergence from dominant  $V \rightarrow I$  tonality: *The Man In The Middle*, *SOS The Name Of The Game* (all 1975) and *Knowing Me Knowing You* (1976). For example: [1] the aeolian cadence ( $D\flat \rightarrow E\flat \rightarrow F$  at 'When you're gone...') in *SOS*; [2] the dorian/aeolian harmonies in the first two episodes of *The Name Of The Game* (1975); [3] the recurrent  $V^{11}$  chord at 'I want to know' just before the refrain in *Name Of The Game*; [4] the initial chord sequences in *Knowing Me Knowing You* (1976:  $D\ E m^7\ B m^7\ F\sharp m$  at 'No more carefree'... and  $B m\ A\ G\ B m$  at 'Walking through'...). There is more of harmonic interest in *SOS*: [1] the aeolian  $D m \leftrightarrow B\flat/d$  shuttle is juxtaposed with the ionianised minor-key shuttle  $D m^{(add9)} \leftrightarrow A/c\sharp$  at 'Where are those happy days'...; [2] the  $F-C-Gm-Dm$  at 'whatever happened to our love'... and the  $F-C-Gm-B\flat$  ( $F-B\flat/f-F$ ) at 'But when you're near me' both suggest bimodality. **[c]** Beatles tunes in *AABA* form often end the bridge with a  $V$  to mark the recap on  $I$ . Those changes aren't included in the statistics if the rest of the tune is non-dominant (see footnote 52b).
52. **[a]** *I Want To Hold Your Hand* (IV-V-I) and *This Boy*  $\zeta$ -I-vi-ii-V $\supset$  (both 1963) are not in Table 8 because they belong to the rump of the MILKSAP<sup>era</sup>. *I'm So Tired* is absent because I'm unsure if it's truly ionian. *Her Majesty* (1969) is too short (only 24") to include. **[b]** several Beatles songs containing a 'bridge' (B section) end that section on  $V$  to lead back into the A section on  $I$ , even if the song's tonality is otherwise non-dominant (e.g. *I Saw Her Standing There* (1963); *Can't Buy Me Love*, *Eight Days A Week*, *You Can't Do That*, *A Hard Day's Night* (1964) and *Ticket To Ride* (1965)).



The contents of the right-hand column in Table 8 can be sorted into the following four types of category (relevant tune numbers in brackets):

1. style elements from ragtime, trad jazz, music-hall, circus and other old-fashioned types of entertainment (tunes 3, 4, 6, 8, 9, 12);<sup>53</sup>
2. old-style instrumentation: piccolo trumpet (1), brass band (3), horn section (6), calliope (4), tuba 'oompa' articulation on bass guitar (6, 8, 9, 11, 12, 13), harmonica and 'soured' barroom piano (12);
3. old-fashioned community singing or a sense of community (1, 2, 3, 7, 11);
4. children's song elements, nursery rhyme character (2, 5, 7, 11, 13).

The fourteen Beatles songs listed in Table 8 are all retrospective. They connect with the past, either through old-time characters in the lyrics and the popular culture (including music) of those days (tunes 1, 4, 6, 8, 9, 12), or through the medium of a childhood situated also in the past and couched in the cultural terms (including musical) of what grown-ups in those 'old days' would have understood as belonging to the world of childhood (2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 11, 13).<sup>54</sup> These are in other words types of memory and notions of olden times mediated through musical-rhetorical devices ranging from subtle allusion to quite heavy-handed caricature.<sup>55</sup> There is very little parody in the fourteen songs but plenty of pastiche involving instrumentation, articulation and tonal idiom to generate retrospective museme stacks connoting whatever it is that music hall, ragtime, trad jazz, circus music, military marches and 'music for children' are supposed to have had in common as a quaint but familiar sphere of British popular culture a generation or two earlier.<sup>56</sup>

53. *Oh Darling!* is a CARICATURE\* of slow 'tripletted' ballads in old SWAMP POP style; e.g. *Wasted Days & Wasted Nights* (Fender, 1960), *I Hear Ya Knockin'* (Domino, 1958), *Rainin' In My Heart* (Slim Harpo, 1961) and *Canyons Of Your Mind* (Bonzo Dog Doodah Band, 1968; ♪ McCartney). This throwback targets a more recent past than do the other songs in Table 8. SWAMP POP is a subgenre of New Orleans R&B (see ftnt. 64, p. 338 and m10a, p. 190 ff.).

54. Some of the 'old folks' in the lyrics are fantasy figures from easily recognised cultural situations (*Mr Kite*, *Honey Pie*, *Rocky Raccoon*, *Maxwell* [of the *Silver Hammer*] and *Desmond* [in *Ob-la-di!*]). The fireman and barber in *Penny Lane* are idealised individuals in a disappearing community. Childhood in the fourteen songs, including the childlike, regressive love of *I Will*, is typified by simple, conjunct melody, simple chord changes, silly or 'kiddie-speak' concepts (*Yellow Submarine*, *Piggies*) and onomatopoeic or nonsense syllables (*Obladi Oblada*, 'Bang-bang').

55. As musical sign types, the devices can be either STYLE INDICATORS\* or GENRE SYNECDOMES\* (cf. Tagg, 2013: 524-530). ALLUSION, CARICATURE, PARODY, PASTICHE: see Glossary. The 14 songs are pastiches except *Oh Darling!* which is more of a caricature (ftnt. 53).

Lennon's reported dismissal of such sounds as 'PAUL'S GRANNY MUSIC SHIT'<sup>57</sup> is certainly harsh but there's no denying that the fourteen songs listed in Table 8, eleven of them penned by McCartney, referenced olden times, older generations, old-fashioned habits, old technologies, quaint old things from granny's younger days, things located at a comfortable, nostalgic, historical distance — 'a long, long time ago' heard from the historical perspective of the songs' present time in the late 1960s.<sup>58</sup> This does *not* mean there's no retro-spection in any of the 142 less dominant Beatles songs — *Strawberry Fields'* childhood memories, *Eleanor Rigby's* Eleanor Rigby and *Yesterday's* 'yesterday' certainly suggest otherwise—; it's just that these three songs involve a more inward experience than the referentially blatant 'granny music' can offer.<sup>57</sup> It's a type of experience neither suited to nor in need of musical pastiche or of any other sonic 'picture-postcard' prop, not even dominant tonality, to situate it externally in easily graspable music-historical terms.

Now, *Waterloo* contains no unequivocal memes of instrumentation or articulation connoting a grandmother's bygone days but its tonal idiom is essentially that of the pre-rock era.<sup>59</sup> That connection between dominant tonality and times gone by is the most consistent structural and semiotic trait of the fourteen songs in Table 8. As a distinct subset of Beatles songs, those musical retrospectives constitute a significant minority of the band's total output ('Beatles granny music') while hardly any of the other less dominant songs use musical pastiche, not even  $\Delta^7$  tonality, to reference times gone by. Given the immense popularity of The Beatles in the 1960s, not least in Sweden (fig. 74, p.337),<sup>60</sup> it's hard to see how any musically aware young person of the

56. For a discussion of old-time brass band music and its links to circus, children and the military see *Monty Python's Flying Circus* in Tagg & Clarida (2003: 409-430).

57. According to Abbey Road engineer Geoff Emerick, 'John Lennon "openly ... detested" *Ob-La-Di Ob-La-Da*, "calling it Paul's GRANNY MUSIC SHIT"' (♫ OB-LA-DI, OB-LA-DA, citing Emerick and Massey (2006: 246)). In what follows I use the expression 'granny music' to denote the body of retrospective songs exemplified by the 14 tunes listed in Table 8,

58. 'A long, long time ago': see lyrics to *Your Mother Should Know* (1967; tune 8 in Table 8). *Those Were The Days* (originally *Дорогой длиною* ♫ Boris Fomin (1924) © Alexander Vertinsky (1926)) would have joined the fourteen retrospective songs (it's in an ionianised minor mode) if it had been written and recorded by The Beatles. Produced by McCartney, the definitive English-language version of this song, however, is by Mary Hopkin (1968).

59. In 1974 you could have heard *Waterloo's* rock shuffle groove as a bit retro due to the gradual replacement of triplet articulation ( $\frac{3}{8}$  ♪ ♪ /  $\frac{4}{4}$  ♪<sup>3</sup>) in older rock and pop music by straight eights (♪♪♪) — more modern: see Tamlyn (1998)).

day could have failed to register the old-time references of the Beatles’ granny music as different from the rest of the band’s output.

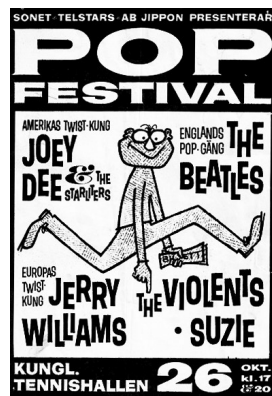
The main conclusion to draw from these *Waterloo* and ‘granny music’ excursions involves three conditions. [1] **IF** a key musical ingredient of the Beatles ‘granny’ corpus was dominant tonality (true); [2] **IF** *Waterloo* used the same basic tonal idiom only a few years after the Beatles ‘granny’ tunes were released (true); [3] **IF** young, musically interested individuals, who were in 1974 aware of the Beatles, including their ‘granny’ tunes, were to hear *Waterloo* (difficult to avoid), then it’s quite likely that the song’s old-style harmonies could be heard as contradicting its energetic audiovisual aesthetic of glitzy modernness. This interpretation does not mean that *Waterloo* was itself ‘granny music’ but that it would hardly be surprising, in its historical context after a decade of Beatles songs plus a torrent of non-ionic rock hits by other artists, if it came across as ‘old hat’ or ‘naff’ (p. 330).

Fig. 74. [a] McCartney, Harrison and Lennon with Lill-Babs on Swedish TV, 1963-10-30;<sup>61</sup> [b] Poster for live event, Stockholm Royal Tennis Hall, 1963-10-26.<sup>62</sup>

[a]

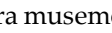


[b]



60. The Beatles’ first foreign tour was to Sweden in 1963. Apart from Gothenburg and Stockholm they also played Borås, Karlstad and Eskilstuna, returning for another Swedish tour in 1964. From 1964 to 1969 their music, including twenty number ones, was constantly in the Swedish charts (*Koällstopp*\*). Those twenty chart-toppers include: *She Loves You*, *Can’t Buy Me Love*, *A Hard Day’s Night*, *Ticket To Ride*, *Help!*, *Yesterday*, *Michelle*, *Yellow Submarine*, *Penny Lane* b/w *Strawberry Fields*, *All You Need Is Love*, *Lady Madonna* and *Hey Jude* (Kvallstoppen.se/kvtopp.nsf/showartist?readform&artist=Beatles [181022]).
61. Apologies for Ringo’s unexplained absence in this picture; © Pressens Bild (Mikael J Nordström), 1963-10-30: public domain. See ♫ SV LILL-BABS [181020], LILL-BABS in RefAppx (p.527) and in footnote 5 (p.320).

### *Pre-Abba rock, etc.*

*Fernando*, like *Waterloo*, is in the ionian-euroclassical (dominant) tonal idiom but, unlike *Waterloo*, it contains no uptempo rock elements. Even its 'HERE AND NOW' refrain (see pp. 207-212) is, from a mid-1970s perspective, quite retro with its quasi-habanera museme 10a (♩. , p. 190 ff.) harking back a generation to the accompaniment figures of pre-rock New Orleans hits like *Lawdy Miss Clawdy* (Price, 1952) and *Ain't That A Shame* (Domino, 1955).<sup>63</sup> Seeing how the harmonic idiom of that New Orleans style is more dominant than plagal,<sup>64</sup> there's no historical mismatch in *Fernando*, as there was in *Waterloo*, between tonal idiom and other parameters of musical expression. That said, for those of us who had, by the mid 1970s, imbibed large doses of Beatles, Stones and Led Zeppelin, *Fernando* belonged to another, older, tonal world: to that of major-seventh 'leading notes' ( $\Delta^7$ ) and of 'perfect cadences' ( $V \rightarrow I$ ). This juxtaposition between dominant and non-dominant tonality is one element in a larger, ideological conflict, discussed in Chapter 12, that includes the issues of global politics examined in Chapter 7. In preparation for that discussion, however, it's necessary to consider another set of pre-Abba popular music topics in Sweden.

### *Germany and 'joke rock'*

The persistence of dominant tonality in Abba's early output is indicative of the band members' *Swedish* musical background discussed earlier in this chapter and in Chapter 9. It was a tonal tradition that had been in widespread use at least since Bellman (1740-95, p. 299 ff.), maybe ever since the

62. I don't know who 'Suzie' is but Jerry Williams (1942-2018) was Sweden's foremost rock'n'roll artist and The Violents his backing band in the mid 1960s. Joey Dee was band leader at New York's Peppermint Lounge, home of the twist (Dee, 1961) and haunt of such celebs as Audrey Hepburn, Jackie Kennedy, Norman Mailer, Marilyn Monroe and Frank Sinatra.

63. [a] 'Pre-rock' in the sense of being released before Elvis's 1956 cover of *Hound Dog* (Thornton, 1952). [b] Example 154 (p. 191) shows 17 examples of IOCM for m10a.

64. [a] Even the New Orleans R&B 8-bar blues matrix is dominant:  $\sharp I | I | IV | I | V | I | I / V : \sharp$ , e.g. *Junker's Blues* (Dupree, 1940), *The Fat Man* (Domino, 1949), *Lawdy Miss Clawdy* (Price, 1952). I distinguish here between DOMINANT\* and PLAGAL\* tonality, the former characterised by  $V \rightarrow I$  and  $\Delta^7$ , the latter by  $IV \rightarrow I$  and either  $b^7$  or no  $\hat{7}$  at all (see ftnt. 46, p. 332). It's also worth remembering that unlike Chicago R&B, with its precursors in the rural deep South (esp. Mississippi), New Orleans R&B developed in an urban setting with influences from French (Louisiana) and Hispanic-Caribbean musics. [b] SECOND-LINE is the expression used by Broven (1974) to refer to those riffing arpeggio figures.

Thirty Years War (1618–48) and Sweden’s occupation of Pomerania, Mecklenburg and Saxony. The ionian tertial triads,  $\Delta\hat{7}$ s and V→I cadences of *gammaldans* and ‘hymnal hits’ were also the staple tonal diet of Sweden’s nearest neighbour to the south.<sup>65</sup> Indeed, from a mid-twentieth-century perspective, Germany had long been ‘the great music nation... for Swedish musicians and composers: [it] was their first choice as a place to study and work’.<sup>66</sup>

Musical ties between Germany and Sweden, well-established during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, continued throughout most of the twentieth century, even during the Third Reich.<sup>67</sup> Those musical ties lasted well into the postwar period when Sweden’s geopolitical orientation turned towards the anglophone west and when, starting in 1946, English started to replace German as first foreign language in Swedish schools. This political and cultural reorientation was a gradual process during which Germany remained Sweden’s most important popular music export market, as evidenced in the careers of schlager vocalists like Siw Malmkvist, Anna-Lena Löfgren and, to a much smaller extent, Abba’s Agnetha Fältskog (Fig. 71, p. 321).<sup>68</sup> Still, that musical legacy wasn’t just German or even germanophone<sup>69</sup> because dominant tonality pervaded almost all popular music throughout urban Europe into the 1960s and beyond. And it’s still the tonal foundation on which most hymns, marches, waltzes, polkas, schlagers, jazz standards, *chansons variété*, *canzonette*, *corridos*, tangos, sambas, MoR Country hits etc., not to mention the Beatles’ GRANNY MUSIC, are all built.

65. It’s only 90 km (under 4 hours) by ferry from Trelleborg (Sweden) to Saßnitz (Germany).

66. G Andersson & U Geisler (2007: 11). In 1939, Swedish composer and performing rights boss Eric Westberg, attending a Nazi event in Hanover celebrating music from Sweden, said: ‘Germany is Sweden’s musical motherland... We all learnt our art in Germany and are entirely raised on German music’ (*ibid*: 47–48).

67. Musical contact between Sweden and Germany during World War II is an often contradictory chapter too complex to discuss here. For information about Zarah Leander, Karl Gerhard, Håkan von Eichwald, Charlie Norman, Arne Hülphers and others in relation to Nazi Germany, Swedish fascism and neutrality, see Andersson & Geisler (2007: *passim*).



68. During the 1960s and early 1970s these three singers recorded material for the German-speaking market (see pp. 320–321, esp. Figure 71 and footnote 7).


69. Not just germanophones like Bach, Haydn, Mozart and Beethoven, but also Vivaldi, Rossini, Couperin, Berlioz, Chopin, Liszt, Smetana, Tchaikovsky, Grieg, Elgar, etc. Parts of Europe whose *rural/regional* music featured a tonal idiom that wasn’t predominantly euro-classical include Russia, the Nordic nations (excl. Denmark), Ireland, the Balkans, Britain, Bretagne, Corsica, Sardinia, Sicily, Calabria, Galicia, Asturias, Andalucía, etc.

Dominant tonality was also a lynchpin in most kinds of jazz, including bebop whose harmonic idiom is basically euroclassical even if its chords are subjected to radical internal alteration.<sup>70</sup> This observation is important because an inbuilt sense of II-V-I dominant direction towards a target tonic is essential in jazz, trad or bebop, if you want to improvise without losing track of yourself or of your fellow band members: you simply *have* to stick to the relevant changes, usually those of a jazz standard, which go overwhelmingly anticlockwise round the circle of fifths.<sup>71</sup> With this rudiment of dominant tonality acquired from euroclassical music and schlager, Swedish musicians could add novelties like blue-notes and chord alterations to their existing tonal toolbox and play jazz without having to master a new tonal idiom from scratch. With II-V-I on autopilot you could focus attention on timbre, articulation, phrasing and suchlike. This may be one reason why Swedish jazz was quite successful, even internationally, in the 1950s.<sup>72</sup> A more obvious and prosaic reason was that since jazz was predominantly instrumental music, being Swedish (or otherwise non-anglophone) presented no major obstacle to international musical success.<sup>73</sup>


This linguistic advantage of instrumental music certainly applied to the Spotnicks, a four-man guitar band from Gothenburg.<sup>74</sup> In 1962 they recorded an album in London, received substantial airplay on Radio Luxembourg, and toured the UK, Europe and Japan (1963–65), all without having to sing in *any* language.<sup>75</sup> With their clean guitar sound, the Spotnicks were Sweden's internationally most famous pre-Abba pop act. Their importance

70. [a] A chord progression like  $G^{+9}b5 \rightarrow C^{-9}b5 \rightarrow F^{#13}$  (bebop) may look and sound different to  $G7 \rightarrow C7 \rightarrow F6$  (trad jazz) but both are II-V-I sequences in F. An extreme bebop variant of II-V-I in C might involve tritone substitution of  $G^{+9}b5 \rightarrow C^{-9}b5 \rightarrow F^{#9}add6$  and become  $D^b13b5 \rightarrow G^b9b5 \rightarrow F13^{+11}$ . [b] Put another fifth in front of II-V-I and you have a VI-II-V-I sequence which takes two forms in *Fernando*:  $F\sharp7 \rightarrow B7 \rightarrow E7 \rightarrow A$  at the end of the refrain and the  $\parallel: F\sharp m \rightarrow Bm \rightarrow E7 \rightarrow A: \parallel$  vamp of the verses (pp. 96–101, 197–200).

71. CHANGES: jazz jargon for 'chord changes'. JAZZ STANDARDS: see  jazzstandards.com [181108], e.g. *All The Things You Are* ( Kern, 1939; in Ab) whose harmony features eight II-V-I changes — with I on Ab, C, Eb, G (twice), E(Fb) and Ab (twice again).

72. For the reputation of Swedish jazz in the USA, see Mischa van KAN (2017). See also  entries for Arne DOMNÉRUS, Lars GULLIN, Bengt HALLBERG, Yngve ÅKERBERG.

73. Swedish vocalists Alice Babs (© SWE-DANES, 1960) and Monica ZETTERLUND (1964, rec. with Bill Evans) could both deliver jazz lyrics convincingly in English.

74. After a few initial line-ups and group names in the mid-to-late 1950s The Spotnicks first formed under that name in 1961 (see ftnt. 78 and  Spotnicks EN [181114]).

can be summarised in three points. [1] They were technologically innovative and stylistically eclectic.<sup>76</sup> [2] Along with the Ventures and the Shadows, they established the ROCK QUARTET\* as default instrumental line-up for pop and rock bands in the 1960s and 1970s.<sup>77</sup> [3] Like the Astronauts, Fireballs, Tornados, etc., the Spotnicks adopted a name suggesting high energy and cutting-edge technology.<sup>78</sup> Their clear, modern-sounding electric music contrasted with the regressive MILKSAP\* in anglophone pop charts between the end of proto-rock ( $\pm 1958$ ) and the breakthrough of the Beatles ( $\pm 1963$ ).<sup>79</sup> However, despite their historical significance, the Spotnicks had less impact in their native Sweden than the Shadows did in the UK. There are several reasons for this lack of domestic success, some of which relate to differences between Britain and Sweden in the popular music landscape that sought to accommodate rock’n’roll in the mid-to-late 1950s.<sup>80</sup> True, countless teenagers in both countries received a shot in the arm on hearing the likes of Elvis, Little Richard, Chuck Berry and their musicians for the first time,<sup>81</sup> but there were also important differences between the two nations regarding the development of pop music after the arrival of rock’n’roll. These differences,

75. The Spotnicks can, along with the Ventures and Shadows, be considered leading figures in the STEEL WIRE\* chapter of pop history ( $\pm 1959-63$ ) (see Glossary, p. 471).

76. Apart from home-made valve amps and their tape echo unit, the band’s instruments contained transmitters, made by lead guitarist Bo Winberg, so that they could play wirelessly and walk around the stage freely thirty years before Britney Spears could. Spotnicks hits were all covers representing a wide range of styles, including: [1] non-ionian cowboy ballads (e.g. *Ghost Riders*); [2] Hispanic schlager (e.g. *Amapola*); [3] bimodal Russian ‘folk’ tunes (e.g. *Rocket Man/Полюшко-поле*); [4] major-key breakneck bluegrass (e.g. *Orange Blossom Special*); [5] Klezmer-style Hijaz\* (e.g. *Hava Nagila*); see Spotnicks, 1961-63 in RefAppx).

77. ROCK QUARTET\* refers to the standard four-member line-up of an electrically amplified rock/pop ensemble consisting of lead guitar, rhythm guitar, bass guitar and drumkit.

78. Johnny & The Hurricanes (e.g. 1959a,b) was another contemporary combo with a high-octane name but, featuring saxes and a Hammond chord organ, they weren’t a ‘steel wire’ band. The Spotnicks, in keeping with their band name, recorded a series of tracks with futuristic titles, including *Moonshot*, *Rocket Man*, *Space Party*, *Cape Kennedy* and *Space Walk* (Spotnicks, 1962-65). They even wore space suits on stage until 1966. See also: *Surfin’ USA*, *Misirlou*, *Pipeline*, *Batman* (Astronauts, 1963); *Gunshot* (Fireballs, 1961), *Telstar* (Tornados, 1962); *Surf Buggy*, *Hot Rod Racer* and *Night Rider* (Dick DALE, 1963).

79. John Lennon once quipped: ‘before Cliff [Richard] and the Shadows, there had been nothing worth listening to in British music’ ( $\rightarrow$  ftnt 114, p. 349). For more on tonal developments in pop/rock 1955-64, including the ‘milksap’ regression, see Tagg (2015: 412-419).

80. Despite 50 albums, 700 recorded tracks and an impressive skill set, the Spotnicks never really made it in Sweden after the arrival of the Beatles, possibly because, unlike the ‘fab four’, they didn’t write their own material and because they rarely included vocals.

important to the understanding of Abba and *Fernando*, are linguistic, musical, sociocultural and political.

*'Joke rock'*

The LANGUAGE of Sweden is Swedish, not English. Although the two languages share a lot of syntax and vocabulary, they are phonologically quite distinct and very different in terms of PROSODY.<sup>82</sup> In 1950s Sweden, twenty years before the spread of audiocassette technology and fifty years before YouTube, you couldn't hear much English on a daily basis,<sup>83</sup> while in the UK it was the only official language and, as *American* English, also spoken by the 1½ million US servicemen stationed in the country between 1942 and 1963 (Craig, 2008: 3). There was no such US presence in Sweden. Moreover, in 1942 the American Forces Network (AFN radio) established its headquarters first in London, then in Frankfurt where powerful transmitters provided excellent night-time reception to the 15% of AFN Europe's audience who lived in the UK.<sup>84</sup> In 1950s Sweden, on the other hand, listening to AFN seems to have been more an activity for radio enthusiasts in rural areas.<sup>85</sup> Further-

81. Aged twelve and at school in Cambridge (UK), I was bowled over on hearing a 78 rpm recording of Elvis's *Hound Dog* (1956) for the first time. Benny Andersson recalls his rock'n'roll epiphany, aged eleven and living in Stockholm, in similar terms. 'I bought my first record in 1957 — *Jailhouse Rock* with Elvis Presley, with a great B-side: *Treat Me Nice*. From there on I didn't really turn back' (acceptance speech at induction into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame, New York, 2010). The radical effects of rock'n'roll on young Swedes in the late 1950s are vividly narrated in *Populärmusiken från Vittula* (Niemi, 2000).
82. Spoken Swedish is a syllable-timed language ( $\pm$  equal time between syllables) while English is stress-timed ( $\pm$  equal time between *stressed* syllables) with vowel values in intervening syllables reduced to /ə/ or /ɪ/. Phonologically, the two languages exhibit a fair number of mutually exclusive phonemes (see pp.477-480).
83. Audiocassettes weren't widespread until the 1970s. YouTube started in February 2005. In 1966-68 I was a language assistant (*engelsk språkassistent*) in Sweden. My job was to confront pupils with the *sounds* of English. [wɒtʃ] (watch) and [kləʊðz] (clothes) were two words that pupils found weird. English prosody was the hardest nut for them to crack.
84. From 1951 the AFN at Frankfurt Höchst transmitted on 872 kHz at 150 kW, more than twice the power authorised for any AM station in the USA (Craig, 2008: 4). AFN's music programming could not implement the segregated format radio system dominating the US airwaves: AFN programming had to suit a socially and ethnically heterogeneous audience. Consequently, Hank Williams and Louie Jordan could both be heard on the same wavelength as Bing Crosby, Count Basie and Beethoven.
85. [a] Norberg (1995), Svanberg (nd). An exception: Ola Stockfelt told me [181218] that his father, a dedicated jazz fan, had to rig up specialist gear on his third-floor balcony outside Uppsala to hear any jazz from AFN. [b] Charlie Norman's *AFN-Boogie* ( $\pm$ 1947) more likely derives from gigs he played for GIs in Germany than from being in an amateur radio club.



more, even if assimilating the US-American vernacular of rock and R&B lyrics was not without problems for British vocalists –how ‘American’ should we try to sound?<sup>86</sup>– it was much harder for a Swedish singer to put across the everyday ‘down-home’ vernacular of the USA’s deep South, or of its urban ghettos, to a Swedish audience. Put bluntly, in 1960 you couldn’t expect Swedish vocalists to deliver the meaning and spirit of lines like ‘*You ain nuthin budda houn dawg*’ (Presley, 1956) or ‘*Mama’s cookin’ chicken fried in bacon grease*’ (Berry, 1960) to the folks in Västerås or Våxjö who’d been raised on *gammaldans* and *schlager* (Fig. 75).

Fig. 75. Late 1950s: ‘The folks in (a) Västerås and (b) Våxjö’<sup>87</sup>



There seem to have been two basic approaches to the problem: EMULATION and SWEDIFICATION (*försvenskning*). Emulation meant trying to master the sounds and mannerisms of Elvis, Little Richard, Chuck Berry, etc. Swedification involved concocting Swedish lyrics and creating Swedish adaptations of the US rock’n’roll sound, culture and aesthetics.

86. In UK pop-rock circles around 1960 there were three different linguistic strategies towards American English: [1] Cliff Richard and London pop DJs (e.g. Alan Freeman and, later, Tony Blackburn) adopted a variant of *MID-ATLANTIC* ([W]) that voiced /t/ between vowels (e.g. [ə'lɒdɐ] for ‘a lot of’) or used an intrusive /r/ (e.g. [ə'lɒrɐ]); [2] Mick Jagger exploited the drawled vowels of Southern US speech in his renditions of R&B lyrics, for example ['pɛːnɪnma 'hɑːrɪd 'waʊnlɛm'biː] for ‘Pain in my heart won’t let me be’ (Rolling Stones, 1965b); [3] the Beatles used their own Liverpool variant of British English.

87. [a] ‘The Karlsson family at Kafé Gnistan’, Västerås 📍 [kvicksound.se/AnnaCarlsson.htm](http://kvicksound.se/AnnaCarlsson.htm) [181213]. Note the two full-size button accordions (see Fig. 62, p. 285). [b] Runes trio (accordion, bass, guitar) at Klaveström FOLKETS HUS, c 30 km northeast of Våxjö 📍 [smalandsmusik-arkiv.nu/\\_tusen-och-en-natt/1001-10.html](http://smalandsmusik-arkiv.nu/_tusen-och-en-natt/1001-10.html) [181215]. [c] Västerås ([vɛstɛ'rɔːs] pop. 122,000) and Våxjö ([vɛkʃjɔ] 65,000) were in 2015 Sweden’s 6th and 19th largest cities. I chose them to represent ‘middle Sweden’ partly because: [1] their names alliterate; [2] Å, Ä and Ö make the names look unmistakably Swedish (Danish and Norwegian use Æ Ø instead of Å Ö).

The first approach was convincingly pursued by Little Gerhard (e.g. *Rip It Up*, 1959) and Jerry Williams (e.g. *Teddy Bear*, *All Shook Up*, *Sweet Little Sixteen*, 1957-8).<sup>88</sup> Many other artists seem to have struggled in their efforts. Indeed, it was common practice to imitate the prosody and general phonology of US rock'n'roll singers without much idea of what the words meant.<sup>89</sup> This lexical lacuna didn't matter when listeners were as 'un-anglophone' as the vocalist.<sup>90</sup> As long as it *sounded* right, the vocals could function paralinguistically and connote the consumerist enticements of postwar 'America', its youth, chewing-gum, fast food, sugary soft drinks and the chromium-trimmed tail fins of its gas-guzzling cars.<sup>91</sup> Of course, delivering lexical gibberish with the sort of energetic commitment appropriate to any decent rock performance (the *Awopbopalobopalopbamboom* effect) is in one sense incongruous, but it's also liberating because it lets the music's somatic and kinetic aspects come to the fore.<sup>92</sup> Such incongruity has greater entertainment value if it's also humorous.<sup>93</sup>

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88. [a] LITTLE GERHARD (Karl-Gerhard Lundkvist): *Rip It Up* ® Little Richard (1956); Jerry WILLIAMS ([Sven] Erik Fernström): *All Shook Up* and *Teddy Bear* ® Presley (1957), *Sweet Little Sixteen* ® Berry (1958). [b] Little Gerhard became Lille Gerhard in 1961 and forsook rock for Swedish-language MoR pop. [c] Jerry Williams (1942-2018; fig. 74b, p. 337) was a consummate rock artist. His pronunciation of US-English was convincing, his bluenote intonation spot on, and his vocal delivery full of nervous energy, including his own Elvis-like grunts and gulps. His take on the songs he covered, including *All Shook Up* ('de-shuffled', slower) and *Teddy Bear* (breakneck tempo) often differed from the originals. His passionate 1984 rendition of *Working Class Hero* (Lennon, 1971) is one of the most powerful rock performances I ever heard. [d] Rock Olga (Birgit Magnusson) was another artist whose rock lyrics were delivered in convincing southern US English, as with the 'loving' ['lœ:vɪn] and 'kisses' ['ki:əsɪz] in her 1960 version of *What You've Done To Me* (Anka, 1958). She could also produce convincing growls à la Big Mama Thornton (1952).

89. 'Our archives contain several interviews with Växjö's rock and pop pioneers. They tell us they didn't know any English at all and that they just imitated the sounds as best they could without any idea of what they were singing about' (email from Mathias Boström, *Smålands Musikarkiv*, 181217). Among the less convincing but better known practitioners of the first strategy were, in my opinion, Rock Ragge (1958-60), with his gulps and hiccups à la Gene Vincent (1956) or Eddie Cochran (1959), and Rock Boris (1957) with his Swedish Js ('yust' [jʌst] instead of 'just' [dʒʌst]).

90. Reminder: English didn't become first foreign language in Swedish schools until 1946.

91. cf. Sweden's RAGGARE (Ⅳ EN, SV) subculture with its roots in the mid-to-late 1950s and its devotion to large US cars like the 1960s Pontiac Bonneville. Elvis and Jerry Williams, as well as rockabilly artists like Ronnie Hawkins (e.g. 1959) are still revered by old *raggare*.

92. cf. 'Awopbopalobopalopbamboom' and 'Tutti frutti aw rooty' (Little Richard, 1956b).

Swedification, the second strategy for delivering rock’n’roll to ‘the folks in Västerås or Växjö’ often involved humour. However, instead of the dynamic between lexical gibberish and vocal commitment, this strategy relied for comic effect on the juxtaposition of a US rock’n’roll musical idiom, on the one hand, and, on the other, three singularly Swedish phenomena: [1] the artist’s Swedish name and identity; [2] the theme and cultural universe of the Swedish lyrics; [3] the Swedish language itself. None of these phenomena had previously been linked to rock’n’roll. These three incongruities were put to good use in *Varm korv boogie* (‘Hot Dog Boogie’) from 1959. [1: *artist*] It was written and performed by Owe Thörnqvist [‘u:və tɔrnkvist], a pretty normal name for a Swedish male in the 1950s but about as ‘non-rock’n’roll’ as his golf shirt and tweed Trilby (fig. 76a).<sup>94</sup> [2: *lyrics*] Instead of Chuck Berry’s flying Cadillac Deville and hamburgers sizzling at drive-ins on the New Jersey Turnpike,<sup>95</sup> Thörnqvist treats his audience to witty lyrics about an ambulatory hot dog vendor in Uppsala who, obliged by health and safety regulations to abandon his trade, fixes guitar strings under his hot dog box and becomes an overnight rock sensation.<sup>96</sup> It’s an amusing anecdote but without the commitment of Berry’s paeans to the pernicious postwar paradise of US consumerism – ‘anything you want, they got it right here in the USA’ (Berry, 1959).<sup>95</sup> [3: *language*]

93. For the intentionally comic effects of US-American lyrics as gibberish in non-anglophone cultures, see Italian Adriano Celestano’s *Prisencólinensinánciusol* (1972), or Danish duo Sussi & Leo’s *Kirsten Klatvask fra Vejle* with its phonetic resemblance to ‘Creedence Clearwater Revival’ (Björnberg & Stockfelt, 1996). A different type of linguistic incongruity was used by German band EM:ZEH (['ɛmtse:], i.e. ‘MC’). They performed tracks like *Beklopp* and *Wie spät et ess* (1993) as contemporary hip-hop with lyrics rapped in broad Kölsch, the local Cologne dialect that had no previous connection with sounds coming *Straight Outta Compton* (NWA, 1988) or The Bronx. Thanks to Markus Heuger (Cologne) for taking me to hear this excellent band in the mid 1990s.

94. Thörnqvist’s name is about as inappropriate for a rock star as is ‘Joe Green’ for a 19th-century Italian opera composer (‘Joseph Green’ is a literal translation of ‘Giuseppe Verdi’).

95. [a] Lyrics from *Back In The USA* (Berry, 1959): ‘I feel so good today... / Jet propelled back home, from overseas to the USA... / Looking hard for a drive-in, searching for a corner cafe / Where hamburgers sizzle on an open grill night and day / And a jukebox jumping with records like in the USA / I’m so glad I’m livin’ in the USA / Anything you want, they got it right here in the USA’. [b] Lyrics from *You Can’t Catch Me* (Berry, 1956b): ‘I bought a brand new airmobile / It was a custom made... Flight DeVille / With a powerful motor / ... New Jersey Turnpike in the wee wee hours’, etc.

96. Key lines in song: ‘Det stod en varm-korv-gubbe nere på Fyris torg’ (square in central Uppsala) / ‘Han hade läda på magen, Det gillas inte av lagen... Han spände strängar på lådan både härs och tvärs... Det blev en fin affär, nu är han millionär’ (Thörnqvist, 1959).

It would be another decade before Swedish artists started regularly making rock music with Swedish lyrics *without* comic intentions.<sup>97</sup>

Fig. 76. (a) Owe Thörnqvist: *Varm korv boogie*; (b) *Den rockande samen*, Sven Gösta Jonsson, by the Arctic tree line in Swedish Lappland (both 1959)



‘The Rocking Sáme’ [‘sɑ:mɛ] (Fig. 76b) adds another layer of comic incongruity to the mix in that he wasn’t just another non-anglophone: he wasn’t even ethnically Swedish but a son of the Sámi nation. The Sámi (‘Lapps’)<sup>98</sup> were the only sizeable indigenous ethnic minority in 1950s Sweden and it’s likely that their way of life was viewed from the perspective of Sweden’s white majority culture in terms of ‘native otherness’, possibly even ‘primitive’ enough<sup>99</sup> to be cast as a Swedish parallel to the visible ethnic minority most closely associated with rock’n’ roll and R&B in the eyes and ears of white mainstream USA in the late 1950s. Whatever the case, there’s no mistaking the excessive Sámi stereotypes in the lyrics to *Jokkmokk rock* (Jonsson, 1959):<sup>100</sup> they include hordes of rowdy ‘Lapps’ riding reindeer, bears or river logs into town where they *yoik* like howling wolves, dance the ‘Jokkmokk rock’ and kick up a ruckus you can hear ‘all the way to Vladivostok’.<sup>101</sup>

Like *Varm korv boogie* and *Jokkmokk rock*, the lyrics of Thörnqvist’s *Rotmos rock* (1956)<sup>102</sup> and *Auktions rock* (1957), as well as Rock Olga’s *Barnvaksboogie*

97. *Ja, då ä då* (Rogefält, 1969) is generally considered to be Sweden’s first rock album with lyrics entirely in Swedish.

98. In Norway and Sweden ‘Lapp’, ‘Lappish’, ‘Lappland’ etc. are pejorative designations, less so, it seems, in Finland (*Lapin maakunta*) and on Russia’s Kola peninsula (*Лапландия*).

99. See ‘*Racism mot och diskriminering av samer*’ (nd): link in RefAppx (p. 540).

100. Jokkmokk ([‘jɔkmɔk], pop. 3,000), on the Arctic Circle in Swedish Lappland, has a 500-year-old February market (*Jokkmokksmarknaden*) and is centre for several Sámi cultural institutions.

101. ‘De rider på renar och björnar i flock / Och kommer på älven på en timmerstock / Att dansa på markna’n en Jokkmokkrock / Och ylande vargar kommer i flock / Och lapparna (sic) joikar... (YOIK: see [W] EN *joik*, [W] sv *jojk*) / Så det hörs bort till Vladivostok’ (note the six [ɔk] rhymes); complete lyrics with English translation: [W] xrefs/JokkmokkRock.htm [181224]).

(1961), are peppered with humorous references to mundanities like baby-sitting (*barnvakt*), coffee, *Folkets Park*,<sup>102</sup> a grocery store (*speceriaffär*), hot dogs (*varm korv*), mashed swede (*rotmos*), a moonshine still (*destilleringsapparat*) and the state liquor store (*Systembolaget*). Localities mentioned in the lyrics tend to be equally unglamorous and vocalists often use a generic regional backwoods accent to both enhance self-deprecation and to celebrate being lower-class.<sup>103</sup> These aspects of ‘joke rock’ owe much to *BONDKOMIK* [bu:n kɔ̌mi:k],<sup>104</sup> a type of rustic comedy with roots in nineteenth-century rural Sweden and which remained popular until the 1940s. Indeed, *bondkomik* strongly influenced later types of mainstream urban entertainment in Sweden, either more directly, as in the songs of Thore Skogman (e.g. 1962, 1965, etc.),<sup>105</sup> or via the *REVY*<sup>106</sup> tradition ([reˈvy:] ≈ revue) that arose in the mid nineteenth century and remained popular throughout the twentieth century.<sup>106</sup> *Revy* lyrics were usually in cleverly crafted vernacular Swedish, and the genre’s default tonal idiom was dominant, resembling *gammaldans* (p. 283 ff.), or Taube-style *visor* (p. 306 ff.), or schlager, jazz standards, tunes from

102. *Rotmosrock* ([ˈru:tmu:srɔk], 1956) has fast rhythmic flow, uses enjambements, irregular phrase lengths and irregular rhyme schemes similar to those favoured by seasoned rappers (Adams, 2009). *Rotmos* means mashed root vegetables, including swedes (*kålrotter*), carrots (*morötter*) and parsnips (*palslernackor*) but not potatoes; it often accompanies *korv* (≈sausage). The English pun Swede/swede (*svensk/kålrot*) is most likely intentional.

103. Thick L-s and ‘peasant’ vowels (e.g. /e/→/ɛ/, /ɔ/→/ø/ or /œ/, often transcribed as ‘ô’) are used in the generic rustification of Swedish lyrics, e.g. *Auktions rock* [aukˈɦu:nsrɔk] (Thörnqvist, 1957). For more ‘hick Swedish’ (*bondsvenska* [ˈbu:nsvenska]) linked to rock’n’roll, see Martin LJUNG’s ‘Rock Fnykis’ stand-up routine (1958). See also Gösta ‘Snoddas’ NORDGREN’s (non-rock) *Flottarkärllek* (‘Log Driver Love’, 1958). NB. The Swedish noun *bonde* ([ˈbu:nde] = lit. ‘farmer’, ‘peasant’) has pejorative connotations in compounds like *bondlurk* (≈ hick, yokel, redneck, bumpkin, woollyback), *bondvischan* (≈ backwoods, the sticks, boondocks) and *bondpermis* (French leave, AWOL), while *bondförför* and *bondförstånd* (≈ simple common sense) are positive concepts.

104. *BONDKOMIK* (≈ ‘peasant comedy’; see also footnote 103) is similar to *buskis* (𐀀sv ≈ ‘bush burlesque’). A possible cultural relative in Britain might be the urban, burlesque, music-hall style of George Formby Jr (e.g. 1936, 1937) who, in numerous films and armed only with naïvety, honesty, common sense, cheery humour, double entendres, a Lancashire accent and a ukelele, always outsmarts the sleazy, conniving posh guy and wins the leading (posh) lady’s heart (and money).

105. See, for example, the following Skogman songs: *Dalatwist* (‘Dalarna Twist’, 1962) and (all from 1965) *Pop opp i topp* (≈ Pop Up On Top), *Twist till menuett* (‘Twist To Minuet’), *Dra ända in i Hålsingland* (≈ Go To Hellsingland) and *Surströmmingspolka* (‘Rotten Herring Polka’). Note the intentionally incongruous, humorous aspect of these song titles.

operettas and musicals, etc. This doesn't mean that other musical idioms were excluded from the *revy* tradition, merely that they tended to be treated as pastiches of the idioms they represented. Pastiche was regularly used when the *revy* song's lyrics dealt with a topical issue involving what, relative to the default *revy* idiom of the time, appeared to be a *musical* novelty, such as the 'jazz' in *Jazzgossen* (Karl Gerhard, 1922), or the 'swing' in *Swing it magistern!* (Sjöblom, 1940), or the 'boogie' in *Johanssons boogie-woogie vals* (Ramel, 1944), or the 'blues' in *Gräsänklingsblues* (Ramel, 1954), or the 'calypso' in *Naturbarn* (Ramel, 1957), or the 'rock' in *Rotmos rock* (Thörnqvist, 1956).<sup>107</sup>

Restricting this account to rock'n'roll as a cultural novelty in late 1950s Sweden and polarising the issue somewhat, swedified rock'n'roll numbers can in general be understood as *displaying* rock'n'roll more than actually *being* it: they became a sort of 'metarock' because they drew attention to rock as a phenomenon rather than providing immersion in it.<sup>108</sup> This 'meta' aspect is indicated by insistence on the word 'rock' (or 'boogie') in swedified rock'n'roll song titles, compared to the word's relative absence in titles recorded by the US doyens of 'classic' rock'n'roll. Put bluntly, titles of rock songs recorded by Chuck Berry, Little Richard and Elvis Presley didn't seem to need so much verbal branding *as* rock because they *were* rock 'n' roll.<sup>109</sup>

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106.[a] Important *revy* figures include: [1] Ernst Rolf (e.g. *Bättre och bättre dag för dag* (1924), *Happy Days Are Here Again* (1930)); [2] Karl Gerhard (e.g. *Jazzgossen* (1922), *Den ökända hästen från Troja* (1940); see RefAppx for more detail); [3] Povel RAMEL (e.g. *Johanssons boogie woogie vals* (1944), *Naturbarn* (1957)) and [4] Hasseåtage (Hans Alfredsson and Tage Danielsson, fl. 1960-1985). [b] Several prominent *revy* artists (e.g. Thörnqvist, Ramel, Alfredsson, Danielsson) had a background in Swedish student revues (*STUDENTSPLEX* [W](#) sv). Such revues, with origins in the nineteenth century, remained a standard, studentesque feature of university life throughout the twentieth century and fed into the *revy* tradition. Their reliance on satire and topicality to produce comic effect may well have contributed to the 'metarock' distancing aspect of swedified rock'n'roll (see page 348).

107. *Jazzgossen* ≈ The Jazz Lad; *magistern* = 'Sir' (male teacher); *Gräsänkling* = grass widower. *Johansson's Boogie-Boogie Waltz* is mainly in  $\frac{3}{4}$  (waltz boogie) instead of  $\frac{4}{4}$  (normal boogie). Note Ramel's incongruous pairing of *gräsänkling* (middle-class white Swedish male) with 'blues' and of 'Johansson' plus 'waltz' with 'boogie-woogie'. Here are six non-rock but similarly studentesque Ramel titles (see ftn 106b): *Falukorven*, *Sprutt sprudelja*, *Birth of the gammaldans*, *Knackelibang på dörren*, *The sukiyaki syndrome* (racist), *Naturbarn* (less racist), *Det glada fjuttitalet* and *Far, jag kan inte få upp min kokosnöt* (ex. 143, p. 179).

108. The background to this mini-*Verfremdungseffekt* is mentioned in footnote 106b.

That said, there were between 1955 and 1962 several rock-labelled hits in the USA. Some coupled rock with unlikely style partners, while others celebrated it as a novelty or topical fad,<sup>110</sup> or linked it anachronistically to the Stone Age, like cars and washing machines in *The Flintstones*.<sup>111</sup> Rock novelty numbers were also produced in Britain, most famously *Rock With The Caveman* (Steele, 1956) which was variously dismissed as ‘a bland, formulaic effort at rock and roll’ and as ‘pseudo rock’.<sup>112</sup> It belongs to the same basic JOKE ROCK subgenre as *Varm korv boogie* and *Jokkmokk rock*, more precisely to the ‘caveman joke rock’ sub-subgenre.<sup>111</sup> On the other hand, *Move It* (Cliff Richard and the Shadows, 1958)<sup>113</sup> is widely credited as Britain’s first proper rock recording.<sup>114</sup> It’s also one of the thirty-odd R&B and early rock originals covered by the Beatles between 1960 and 1965.<sup>115</sup> That’s a sizeable proportion of the band’s total repertoire at the time and it’s where musical differences in postwar pop history between Sweden and Britain become most apparent.

109. [a] Out of hundreds of rock’n’roll tracks by those four artists I found only a few unequivocal exceptions, four by Berry — *Rock & Roll Music* (1957), *Reelin’ And Rocking* (1958), *Sweet Little Rock & Roller* (1959), *Let It Rock* (1960) — and one by Elvis — *Jailhouse Rock* (1957). *Rock-A-Hula Baby* (Presley, 1961; from 🍷 *Blue Hawaii*) is really a curiosity item and I found no rock-labelled titles by either Jerry Lee Lewis or Little Richard. [b] *Rockin’ Robin* (Bobby DAY, 1958), *Twenty-Flight Rock* (Cochran, 1959) are two other US joke rock numbers.
110. [a] ROCK-CELEBRATORY US HITS: *Rock Around The Clock* (Haley, 1955), *Rock & Roll Is Here To Stay* (Danny & the Juniors, 1957), *That Is Rock & Roll* (Coasters, 1959). *Red River Rock* and *Reveille Rock* (Johnny & the Hurricanes, 1959) were both instrumentals. [b] BIZARRE STYLE PAIRINGS WITH ROCK: *Rock & Roll Waltz* (Starr, 1956); *Limbo Rock* (Checker, 1962); *Piltdown Rides Again/William Tell Overture* (Piltdown Men, 1960b); *Nut Rocker/March* from Tchaikovsky’s *Nutcracker Suite* (1892) (B Bumble and the Stingers, 1962); *Hoots Mon / A Hundred Pipers* (Scot. trad.) (Lord Rockingham’s XI, 1958).
111. The caveman joke-rock sub-subgenre also includes *Brontosaurus Stomp* (Piltdown Men, 1960a) and *Alley Oop* (Hollywood Argyles, 1960). *The Flintstones* (Ⓜ): see RefAppx.
112. [a] ‘Listening to it today,’ *Rock With The Caveman* ‘seems a curiously bland, formulaic effort at rock & roll, its use of the word “rock” in the lyrics more than the style identifying it.’ (*Apple Music Preview* 📱 [itunes.apple.com/us/artist/tommy-steele/272152](https://itunes.apple.com/us/artist/tommy-steele/272152) [190109]). Said Cliff Richard: ‘Tommy Steele was making records then but his were pseudo rock’ (📱 [songfacts.com/facts/tommy-steele/rock-with-the-caveman](https://songfacts.com/facts/tommy-steele/rock-with-the-caveman) [190118]). [b] The joke rock subgenre includes explicitly comic offerings like *Bloodnok’s Rock And Roll Call* (Goons, 1956) and the four perspicacious rock parodies on *A Child’s Garden of Stan Freburg* (Freburg, 1957).
113. Before 1959 the Shadows were called the Drifters. Ian ‘Sammy’ Samwell (1937-2003), who wrote *Move It*, was one of the Drifters at the time.
114. For 63 opinions of *Move It* see 📄 [xrefs/MoveltOpinions.htm](#) [190109]. John Lennon (1940-1980) is reported as saying, ‘I think the first English record that was anywhere near anything was *Move It*’ (Baisden, 2007), and ‘[B]efore Cliff and the Shadows there had been nothing worth listening to in British music’ (cited in 📄 *Tony Meehan* [181118]).

*Flat sevens v. Swedishness*

Almost all the thirty-odd Beatles covers just alluded to follow a 12-bar blues formula. *Move It* is one such cover, as is the tune into which it segues: *Good Rockin' Tonight* (W Harris 1948).<sup>116</sup> Moreover, almost everything released by the Stones before *Out of our Heads* (1965), plus most hits by the Animals (1964-5) and other British bands of the time, follow a 12-bar blues scheme<sup>117</sup> that was stock-in-trade among musicians I met in the UK before I left for Sweden in 1966.<sup>118</sup> But in 1971, when I started teaching aural keyboard skills in Gothenburg, I noticed that several students were strangers to the 12-bar-blues matrix.<sup>119</sup> Some were also reluctant to include 'flat seven' (b $\bar{7}$ ) in tonic chords as default sonority (I7) on which to start (ex. 198, p. 351), continue (ex. 199) and end (ex. 200) songs in a blues-related style.<sup>120</sup> That apparent

115. Other R&B and 'classic' rock numbers covered by the Beatles, either [1] in Hamburg, or [2] at Liverpool's Cavern Club, or [3] recorded at the BBC or [4] on regular Beatles albums or singles were: *All Right Mama* (Crudup, 1946; Presley, 1954), *Blue Suede Shoes* (Perkins, 1956); *All Shook Up* (Presley, 1957); *Rip It Up*, *Long Tall Sally*, *Lucille* and *Kansas City* (Little Richard: 1956a/b, 1957, 1959); *Short Fat Fannie* and *Dizzy Miss Lizzy* (L Williams: 1957, 1958); *Hippy Hippy Shake* (Romero, 1959), *What'd I Say* and *I Got A Woman* (Charles: 1959, 1960); *Whole Lotta Shakin'* (Lewis, 1957); *Money* (Gordy, 1959); *A Shot of Rhythm And Blues* (Alexander, 1960), *Twist & Shout* (Isley Bros., 1962); and, all by Chuck Berry, *Thirty Days* (1955), *Roll Over Beethoven*, *Too Much Monkey Business* (1956); *School Days*, *Around & Around*, *Johnny B Goode*, *Rock & Roll Music*, *Memphis Tennessee* (1957); *Sweet Little Sixteen* and *Carol* (1958); *Almost Grown* and *Little Queenie* (1959). SOURCES (see RefAppx): [1] ☉ Beatles (1963, 1964, 1965, 1966, 1994a/1969, 1994b/1965); [2] ☐ Fitzgerald (2017); [3] ☐ Beatles Star Club SET LIST\* from 1962 ☐ xrefs/HH-SetList.htm [190115].

116. *Move It* and *Good Rockin' Tonight* are in the same outtake track on ☉ Beatles (1994a/1969).

117. For example, *Route 66*, *Carol*, *Can I Get A Witness*, *Walking The Dog*, *Little By Little*, *Little Red Rooster*, *Off The Hook*, *Around And Around*, *Grown Up All Wrong*, *I Can't Be Satisfied* (Rolling Stones, 1964-1966); and, by the Animals, *Boom Boom*, *Take It Easy*, *For Miss Caulker*, *I'm Crying*, *Goin' Down Slow* (1964-1966); see also RefAppx for R&B track listings on the albums *Kinks* (1964) and *The Five Faces of Manfred Mann* (1964).

118. For example, I think it was my ability to provide suitable piano sounds for *Smokestack Lightning* (Howlin' Wolf, 1956) and *Hi-Heel Sneakers* (Tucker, 1963) that helped persuade Mike Finesilver and Pete Kerr in Manchester to let me join their R&B band in 1965.

119. Franco Fabbri (© 190121) attested to similar unfamiliarity with the 12-bar blues as structuring principle among Italian musicians in the 1960s.

120. Bernt Andersson\* (190121) reported similar aversion to I7 among musicians playing *gam-maldans*, *visa* and *schlager*. 'It sounded wrong' [to them], he recalls. 'V7 was OK but not flat seven on the tonic!' Owe Thörnqvist concurs: when recording *Auktions rock* in 1957 he had to tell seasoned session (jazz) pianist Rolf Larsson to play seventh chords 'all the way through' ('lira septimor rakt igenom'); Larsson got up from the piano in protest and told Thörnqvist to do the piano backing himself (04:07 in *LIVET ÄR EN FEST* #60, ♫ 2013).



aversion to I<sup>7</sup> struck me as odd because of the chord's ubiquity not just in many popular 12-bar-blues pieces but also in numerous Beatles tracks that weren't strictly R&B, e.g. *I Saw Her Standing There* (1963); *Can't Buy Me Love*, *She's A Woman*, *I Feel Fine* (1964); *The Word*, *Drive My Car* (1965); and *Taxman* (1966, ex.198), as well as in widely heard recordings by other artists.<sup>121</sup> In short: [1] despite the presence of the twelve-bar blues matrix in around thirty and of I<sup>7</sup> in around fifty Beatles recordings; [2] despite the international popularity of the Beatles in the 1960s and early 1970s; [3] despite the ubiquity of R&B sounds made by other internationally known bands of the 1960s; and [4] despite a growing interest for blues-related music in late-1960s Sweden;<sup>122</sup> *not a single Abba track uses a twelve-bar blues or a tertial flat seventh chord on the tonic* (I<sup>7</sup>).<sup>123</sup>

Ex. 198. D<sup>7</sup> as opening and ongoing tonic chord (I<sup>7</sup>) in *Taxman* (Beatles, 1966)

Ex. 199. B<sup>b</sup>7 as ongoing tonic chord (I<sup>7</sup>) in *Nadine* (Berry, 1964)

121. I<sup>7</sup> also occurs in the backing to the following Beatles tunes: *When I Get Home*, *You Can't Do That* (1964); *If I Needed Someone*, *Think For Yourself* (1965); *Dr Robert* (1966); *Savoy Truffle* (1968); *One After 909*, *For Your Blue* (1970) and, with b<sup>7</sup> in the vocal, harmonica or lead guitar part, in *Love Me Do* (1962), *Little Child* (1963), *Run For Your Life* (1965:12), and *Back In The USSR* (1968). For non-Beatles uses of I<sup>7</sup> see examples 257-266 in Chapter 11 of Tagg (2015: 362-364), esp. *Ode To Billie Joe* (Gentry, 1967), *Watermelon Man* (Hancock, 1963), *Mercy Mercy* (Covay, 1966), *Living For The City* (Wonder, 1973) and *Green Onions* (Booker T, 1962).
122. The Stones first played Sweden in 1965, Cream in 1966-67, John Mayall and Spencer Davis in 1967, Fleetwood Mac and Peter Green in 1967-68. In 1968-69 Sonny Boy Williamson, John Lee Hooker, Muddy Waters and others played the American Folk Blues Festival in Sweden (©Bernt Andersson, 181108). See also Peps PERSSON's first album (1968). Moreover, at least two 12-bar numbers — Persson's *Falsk matematik* (1974) and Ola Magnell's *Min häst har blivit sjuk* (1975) — had chart success in Sweden before *Fernando* was released.
123. Just one possible exception — 'On And On And On' — from *Super Trouper* (Abba, 1980).

Ex. 200. G7 as final tonic chord (I7) at end of generic slow piano blues



Of course, there's no reason why Abba or anyone else *should* use 12-bar blues patterns or  $b\hat{7}$ s in their music but 'why not?' is an equally fair question, except that it could be interpreted as assuming that a foreign musical culture (here anglophone rock/pop) can be assimilated wholesale into a pre-existing cultural environment (here the *visa* and *schlager* world of Abba in the early 1970s) without overwriting the host culture. That's why it's better to identify *which* traits of a foreign music culture *are* assimilated into a 'home' tradition and *which aren't*. It's a matter of perceived compatibility.<sup>124</sup>

As we saw in the case of *Waterloo* (p. 330 ff.), anglophone pop/rock traits of groove, timbre, tempo, metre, instrumentation and sound production seem to have been perceived as compatible with the Swedish popular music tradition to which Abba's members belonged. *Tonal* parameters, on the other hand, did *not* follow suit. Much of Sweden's mainstream tradition, including Abba, hung on to its dominant sound — to  $\Delta^7$  and  $V \rightarrow I$  — and shunned I7 and  $bVII \rightarrow IV \rightarrow I$ .<sup>125</sup> The apparent reluctance to accommodate I7 aligns with comparisons already drawn between Abba's sense of tonality in the early 1970s and most rock music of the day (pp.327-331), as well as with differences between the melodic modes of Swedish and of British/North American folk music (p.316). It's almost as if dominant tonality resonated with a particular sense of Swedish cultural identity.<sup>126</sup> That distinctiveness was, as

124. Incompatibility can be physical and/or technological (e.g. instruments unable to produce certain sounds, venues acoustically unsuited to certain musics) but is more likely to be cultural, i.e. [re-]producible but culturally alien.

125. While  $II \rightarrow V \rightarrow I$  takes two dominantal, ionian steps anticlockwise,  $bVII \rightarrow V \rightarrow I$  takes two plagal, mixolydian steps clockwise round the key clock to reach the tonic (Tagg, 2015: 430).

126. In *Music's Meanings* (Tagg, 2013: 306, 332-3, 525-6) I argue that both instrumental timbre and mode are commonly used parameters of expression for geo-ethnic connotation. In *Fernando* musemes 1a and 1b ('quena' and 'charango'; see pp. 75-79, 84-87) are ethnic genre synecdoches defined by instrumental timbre. The dominantal tonality of *Fernando* and the schlager/visa tradition to which it belongs is a 'non-negotiable' style indicator, a constant of the piece and style to which it belongs.

we have seen, rooted in a well-established and flourishing set of popular music traditions (*gammaldans*, *visa*, ‘hymnal hits’, *schlager*, *revy*, etc.) which in their turn were linked to aesthetic values, social formations and identities, as well as to national institutions, very few of which were at that time equatable with those of the anglophone world. Among such ‘unequatable’ music-related identities were: [1] differences between youth subcultures in Sweden and the UK during the 1950s;<sup>127</sup> [2] variations in the status and social habitat of jazz in the two countries;<sup>128</sup> [3] the dominance of the Social-Democrat labour movement in Swedish mainstream politics between 1932 and 1976.<sup>129</sup> The last of these is of particular relevance to the issue of popular music and ideology in twentieth-century Sweden, including Abba and the ‘alternative music movement’: *progg* (p.373 ff.).

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127. An example: while British Teddy Boys/Girls and Swedish *raggare* (aka *sunar/dorisar*) were both 1950s working-class ‘tribes’ with a taste for rockabilly and xenophobia, their more ostentatious expressions of group identity were different: *raggare* splurged out on gas-guzzling ‘American’ cars, the Teds on flamboyant clothing resembling that of an Edwardian dandy. Teddy-Boy garb also resembled that of Sweden’s more middle-class *swingpjättar* (VSV 190501) whose sartorial tastes were influenced by the ‘zoot suits’ favoured by swinging African-American and Latino males in 1940s New York (not very xenophobic).

128. In early 1970s Gothenburg, jazz seemed to me to have become an established middle-class alternative to both the euroclassical tradition and to Swedish popular music of the day (*gammaldans*, *schlager*, etc.). Hoola Bandoola’s\* band members expressed similar views (Svedberg 2009: 19). Some types of jazz (e.g. trad., swing) reached quite large audiences, while others had a more avantgarde appeal (e.g. bebop), being adopted into music college programmes and broadcast on Sweden’s ‘art music’ radio channel (SRP2).

129. The Social-Democrats governed Sweden continuously, either with an absolute majority or as biggest coalition partner, from 1932 to 1976; see also V Social Corporatism, V Swedish Social Democratic Party [190505], and footnotes 2, 6, 7. For orthographic distinction between *Social Democrat*, *Social-Democrat*, *social democrat*, etc., see Glossary, p. 470 ff.

