

that the symphony's 'concise form and precise mode of expression will, I believe, simultaneously astonish and entice people here, and I am certain that such a piece will only do some good and open people's ears and eyes to all that German sauce and fat that one finds among Wagner's followers' (Torben Schousboe, ed. *Carl Nielsen. Dagbøger og Brevveksling med Anne Marie Carl-Nielsen* (Copenhagen: Gyldendal, 1983), p. 128, my translation). To silence the Scandinavian voice inadvertently, in this way, is to risk reinforcing the patterns of centre and periphery that many recent scholarly studies have sought to deconstruct, and it means that there is little genuine sense of dialogue underpinning the otherwise admirably dialectical framework of Leiska's project. Any discussion of music reception, my own included, would benefit from a greater sense of international cultural engagement and exchange, and the history of Scandinavian music in Germany is surely a two-way process.

That is not to end on a negative note. Leiska's study is consistently sophisticated, thought-provoking, and refined, and sets an impressively high standard for critical-documentary study of the German reception of Scandinavian music at a crucial phase in its development. By building further on Leiska's foundations, we can be confident that the Scandinavian symphony will attain the scholarly status it richly deserves.

Daniel M. Grimley



Ulrik Volgsten

*Musiken, medierna och lagarna. Musikverkets idéhistoria och etablerandet av en idealistisk upphovsrätt*

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'(Copy-)rights have become a commodity to be bought and sold' (p. 11). This statement can be found in the first chapter of Ulrik Volgsten's book on the relations between music, media, and the laws in contemporary Western societies. The problematic everyday confusion of *copyrights*<sup>1</sup> with *property rights* implied in the statement is one of the main focal points of the book. Another one is: how does copyright legislation affect our understanding of music?

Volgsten's main thesis is that the *idealistic* view on music, which (in his argumentation) is informing modern copyright legislation, a) emerged as late as the 20th century, while it b) builds on concepts from antique philosophy. The catalyst to bring a) and b) together is the reification of the musical work made possible by the phonogram and encouraged by legislation.

Who owns music? Can sound be owned at all in a world where everything can be copied digitally? And what and where is the *work* really in modern musical production?

Those are not new questions, but Volgsten seeks to actualize them by rolling out the full history behind their presence in our time. This is evident in the fact that the progression of the book is more or less chronological, starting with Plato and ending with the MP3-player, so to speak. The author presents his interpretation of the evolving Western view(s) on the musical work, covering the Antique, the Medieval, Renaissance, Baroque, etc., in chapters 2 through 11, ending with the breakthrough of digitally distributed music.

1 The English word *copyright* does not entirely cover the Swedish *upphovsrätt*, which literally means 'rights of the begetter' or, more vernacularly, 'rights of the father'. The word *upphovsrätt* is a widely used legal term in Nordic countries, notwithstanding its patriarchal connotations.

In each chapter you find a discussion of how the respective periods' philosophical, juridical, and (increasingly) economical concepts of intellectual rights and ownership have interacted with 'the musical work'.

An example is the late medieval/early renaissance change in compositional method from improvisational contrapuntal 'horizontal' scoring to concurrently written 'vertical' voicing. Volgsten uses this transformation to demonstrate (via Johannes Tinctoris and modern theorists) how the results of concrete compositional work gradually became *res facta, opus*, and, consequently, a work that survives its maker (the score in this case). This was but one step in the process towards aesthetical objectification of the musical work as such.

The invention of printing technology was of course another, and accordingly the impact of printing is debated thoroughly in the book, the point being that piracy and plagiarism for centuries were frauds that could be committed only against a *publisher*, not a composer. The work was the *score*, the print was the product, and the composer's musical *ideans* were not acknowledged, let alone protected, in any modern sense until the Enlightenment, at the earliest. Metaphors suggesting genetic relations between composer and work came even later, according to Volgsten.

He continues through the classical era, romanticism and so on, constantly juxtaposing philosophy, law and musicology, constantly pursuing the idealistic view on the musical work; which he does not find, not even with German idealists like Schelling and Fichte.

It was only when *absolute* music, which Volgsten understands as something that demands an active *listener* in order to exist, became the compositional paradigm, that the reified immaterial musical work, the independent offspring of the solitary (male!) creator, came into being.

The *genetic function* and the notion of the musical work as an organism, which can be found in the writings of Hanslick, is seen as yet another precondition for the idealistic work and its ensuing property rights. But formalists like Zimmerman did not connect the work and the creator genetically, and so, Volgsten argues, by mid-19th century consensus regarding the ontological status of the musical work was still not to be found. This was ever more problematic, with the lack of an idealistic copyright '... becoming increasingly bothersome to the lawmaking' (p. 140).

Towards the end of the book Volgsten outlines the history of 19th-century Swedish copyright legislation in order to demonstrate how the slippery concept of 'ideal' objects (as opposed to material ones) made lawmaking difficult in a specific context. Again, he searches in vain for a clear-cut idealistic view on musical work outside the realms of legislation. In this case he finds that national romanticism with its idea of the 'soul of the people' was delaying the dissemination of immaterial musical copyrights in Sweden until the 20th century. And, importantly, he finds that the driving force behind the process was law, *not* aesthetics.

Finally, the turn from printing to phonogram is presented as a *sine qua non* of modern copyright legislation – and its business potentials. It is not only that the phonogram offers 'solidity' (p. 186) to the transitory phenomenon of music, and thus makes it easier to turn it into a commodity. More significant, says Volgsten, are the multiple slides from the composer as a provider of an immaterial service (music as activity), to the reification of this service (the phonogram), to the idea that a third party (media industries) have the right to prosper from the intellectual rights of the original creator based on an idea of the work as an *idealistic entity*.

Taken as a general history of the musical work in Western thinking, the book works very well. The author is evidently well informed on the subject, and the comprehensive walk-through of 2000 years of thinking does not seem unnecessary long. One can always criticize musicological periodization, I guess. And, indeed, Volgsten's rather consequent use of this device might seem a little heavy-handed. But in this case periods serve merely practical purposes, and they work well as orientation marks.

Given the title of the book, which features the word ‘media’ in a prominent place, I was a little disappointed with the fact that only the last pages of the book are dedicated to the latest media technologies and their impact on the ontology of ‘the musical work’. While the emergence of printing technology is given firm attention in the middle sections, I do believe that many readers will feel that this relatively well-known story might have been shortened a bit to make space for a more thorough account of new digital media, something Ulrik Volgsten undoubtedly would be capable of.

Johannes Frandsen Skjelbo



Michael Fjeldsøe  
*Kulturradikalismens musik*  
 Copenhagen: Museum Tusculanum Press, 2013  
 Danish Humanist Texts and Studies, 45  
 829 pp., illus., music exx.  
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Michael Fjeldsøe’s dissertation, which was successfully defended for the philosophical doctorate (habilitation) at the University of Copenhagen on 17 May 2013, is an excellent effort in musicological scholarship.<sup>1</sup> It collects and discusses music and musical matters that have hitherto been scattered; from now on we can refer to KULTURRADIKALISMENS MUSIK (excellently transposed to graphics on the front cover, cf. above) as a well-defined phenomenon. The music of cultural radicalism as a whole can be considered a descriptively well-illuminated and well-exemplified concept. Cultural radicalism, in music specifically as well as in other spheres of art and, more generally, in society, is not and cannot be defined in a strictly theoretical sense. However, as regards musical genres, style(s), specific works and performances – both in institutions of age and tradition (mainly the Royal Danish Theatre) and in newly established, experimental institutions (for example Forsøgsscenen) – and aesthetic, pedagogic and sociological thinking and debate, students, readers and scholars from the humanities have in Fjeldsøe’s book acquired an exhaustive, thorough and well-written standard volume on these issues.

The term ‘kulturradikalisme’ is not easily translatable into English. ‘Radicalism’ implies extremism, as in the following standard English definition, where radicalism is defined as ‘the opinions and behavior of people who favor extreme changes especially in government: radical political ideas and behavior.’<sup>2</sup> The Danish concept of culture radicalism is briefly characterized by Fjeldsøe as ‘a liberal left-wing cultural movement’ (p. 663, my translation). He suggests that the Danish movement is ‘similar to German Neue Sachlichkeit’ (loc. cit., my translation), and he stresses that conceptual considerations of Danish culture radicalism have been made ‘after the fact’: The cultural radicalism of the 1920s and 1930s was a practical effort rather than

1 Official opponents were Professor Magnar Breivik, Norwegian University of Science and Technology, Trondheim and Associate Professor, dr.phil. Peter Woetmann Christoffersen, University of Copenhagen. Opponent ex auditorio and third member of the evaluation committee was Professor Emeritus, dr.phil. Hans Hertel, University of Copenhagen. The review is a revised version of a review in Danish in the online journal *seismograf*, see <http://seismograf.org/anmeldelse/fremragende-forskning-i-kulturradikalismens-musik>.

2 <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/radicalism>.