## SCANDINAVIAN BALLAD RESEARCH SINCE 1800

By

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## English Summary

Scandinavian Ballad Research since 1800

### PART I. TIL INDLEDNING [INTRODUCTION]

Chapter 1 (13–19). Opgaven [The treatise and its subject]. The present book is based on two unprinted theses, written in 1949 and 1952 and awarded the gold medal of the Danish universities of Copenhagen and Arhus respectively. They are here published by Universitets-Jubilæets danske Samfund at the expense of Statens almindelige Videnskabsfond [The Danish State Research Foundation], but also other institutions and individuals have displayed an interest in the work. The summary has been translated by Else Fausbøll, Ph. D.

The year 1800, as given in the title of the book, is to be taken loosely only, the beginning of the 19th century with two fundamental editions one Danish, the other Swedish - being the starting-point of the treatise. The most important year in the later history of ballad research is 1853, which saw, among other contributions, the beginning of the greatest edition of ballads in Scandinavia, Danmarks gamle Folkeviser [The Old Popular Ballads of Denmark] by Svend Grundtvig. The most important treatment of the subject is Sigurd Bernhard Hustvedt's excellent Ballad Books and Ballad Men, 1930. In the present book generally only Scandinavian contributions to the study of Scandinavian ballads are treated, and by Scandinavia we understand Denmark, including the Faroe islands, Sweden, including the Swedish districts of Finland, Norway, and Iceland, the welldefined domain of the North Germanic group of languages. The ballad is fairly narrowly defined, viz. as the anonymous, as a rule epic song of few and simple metres, practically always with an omkvæd [a refrain at the end of the stanza; a burden] and sometimes also a mellemkvæd [an internal refrain, alternating with the lines of the text], which arose in the Middle Ages but is known only through the records of the nobility from about 1550 and later on through the singing of the peasants. Folklorist, literary, and musical researches into these ballads are treated in a historicogeographical section (II) and in a discussion of the problems, systematically arranged (III).

Chapter 2 (21-40). Bibliografi [Bibliography]. The arrangement of the bibliography is chronological; a good many other contributions are mentioned in the text. References generally appear in the following form: author

+ date (+ page), and the work may then be identified by means of the bibliography. A list of abbreviations proper precedes the bibliography.

#### PART II. FORSKNINGENS HISTORIE [THE HISTORY OF BALLAD RESEARCH]

Chapter 3 (43-65). Fra Nyerup til Weyse [From Nyerup to Weysel. The 18th century revival of the interest in ballads is described by S.B. Hustvedt in Ballad Criticism in Scandinavia and Great Britain during the XVIIIth Century, 1916. It is a well-known fact that editors like Percy and Ritson. Jamieson, Motherwell, and Scott, in Germany especially Herder and Wilhelm Grimm, were responsible for an increase of respect for and interest in old popular poetry. Such an interest is evidenced also in Scandinavia. especially by two small volumes, Levninger af Middel-Alderens Digtekunst [Relics of Mediaeval Poetry], 1780-84 (by B. C. Sandvig and R. Nyerup). Of particular importance was, however, Grimm's Altdänische Heldenlieder, 1811, a translation of ballads from Vedel's and Syv's editions. 1591 ff. and 1695 ff., in view of the fact that Nyerup assisted Grimm and in return was considerably stimulated in his work on Udvalgte Danske Viser . . . [Selected Danish Ballads] I-V, 1812-14 (by Abrahamson, Nyerup, and Rahbek). The texts of that edition were drawn from manuscript and printed sources, whereas oral tradition is the authority on which was based its large collection of music, which is of great and lasting value, and concerning which an interesting collection of letters and preparatory work is still extant. In the course of the next decades harmonized selections of tunes appeared, while other selections remained unprinted. Also other ballad books were published, with texts selected and adapted by prominent poets. It is also known that various people took initial steps towards ballad research, although without any great results. A leading composer like C. E. F. Weyse harmonized a hundred tunes (1840-42), among which a good many Faroese and Danish tunes, up till then unprinted. The Rev. August Winding wrote for the second part of Weyse's book a preface previously supposed to have been lost but now discovered in private possession and reproduced in facsimile after Chapter 3, cf. the account given by the owner, Mr. Ejnar Boesen, in Danske Studier 1956. Meanwhile the ballad had become an important source of inspiration of Danish literary romanticism, the »golden age«.

Chapter 4 (66-73). Svend Grundtvig. The second son of the great Danish churchman, historian, and poet N.F.S. Grundtvig, Svend Grundtvig (1824-83), already in 1839 took an interest in the ballad and as early as New Year 1844 appealed to the public to collect ballads, at the same time publishing a criticism of Nyerup's edition. His aim was a large edition of ballads, in which the original texts were to be printed with introductions and

criticisms, but without any alterations or redaction from aesthetic-literary points of view. In 1847 raged the »Battle of the Ballads«, highly esteemed men of letters considering such a philological publication of sources unreadable and superfluous. Grundtvig wanted to publish »all that there is — all as it is«, whereas Christian Molbech, his chief opponent, thought such a plan »without criticism and beneath criticism«. Various controversial pamphlets and preparatory studies, however, ensured young Grundtvig's victory, and in 1853 he was able to publish the beginning of his edition of Danmarks gamle Folkeviser (DgF). The criticism of his work ebbed away with the publication of more parts, contributors grew more numerous, and from abroad came increasing recognition and interest in cooperation, culminating when shortly before his death Grundtvig was recognized by F. J. Child not only as a helper, but as having provided a model for The English and Scottish Popular Ballads.

If in his work on his edition of ballads Grundtvig did not get as far as he had hoped to, it is partly because the contributions collected from among the peasants resulted in a considerable growth of material and partly because of the fact that Grundtvig had other things to attend to, viz. his work on Icelandic and Faroese ballad collections, the help he rendered scholars of other countries doing ballad research, the supervision of the collecting of local traditions of all kinds – besides from 1863 a professor's full duties as lecturer and writer. At his comparatively early death barely five volumes of DgF had been published, and no more than Child had he had time to sum up his opinions in one place, but he had come into contact with two scholars in the field of ballad research belonging to the next generation, namely Olrik and Recke.

Chapter 5 (74–79). A. P. Berggreen. Within ballad research Andreas Peter Berggreen (1801–80) deserves credit as the organizer of extensive collections, forming the basis of his edition of Folke-Sange og Melodier, fædrelandske og fremmede [Folk-Song and -Melodies, Native and Foreign], I–XI, 1860–71. The most important volumes of this edition, which comprises piano arrangements, complete texts, and useful notes, are, naturally enough, the three containing Scandinavian contributions. (The first edition of the work, 1842ff., consisted of only four small volumes; a third edition of the Danish volume appeared in 1869.) In the prefaces Berggreen stated that folk-melodies are influenced by the language and character of their respective nations, and he urged that they should be edited and sung with harmonies, not unaccompanied; he did not attach any importance to the talk of the "Greek tonality" (i. e. modes) of certain folk-tunes, although he could hear that certain notes "fall out of the scale". Consequently his own arrangements are in major-minor tonality.

Berggreen carried on a violent controversy with his contemporary, the

Norwegian collector and composer L. M. Lindeman, although partly concerning trifles. His own work, however, is valuable both as a collection of sources and as a popular book; many tunes drawn from oral tradition were first published by him, and the idea was that he should prepare an edition of tunes for DgF, the carrying out of which plan, however, was rendered impossible by the increasing proportions of the latter work.

Chapter 6 (80-88). Evald Tang Kristensen. The Jutland teacher Evald Tang Kristensen (1843-1929) was the greatest and most versatile collector of local traditions of Denmark and one of the most prominent folklorists of the world. He began his work as a collector in the 1860's and continued for many years in very poor circumstances - right up to his death, and scores of volumes appeared, containing the folk-tales, ballads, legends, etc. that he had collected. His ballads and tunes were published chiefly in Vols. I, II, X, and XI of the series of Jyske folkeminder [Jutland Traditions], 1871ff.; his later collections were, unprinted, incorporated in Dansk Folkemindesamling [the Danish Folklore Collection] as material for DgF. The unlearned beginner was supported by Svend Grundtvig, but as regards the music he unhappily clashed with the authority on the subject, Berggreen, who did not at all approve the unadorned records of the partly degenerate folk-song. This controversy reduced his interest in and hampered his editing of tunes, and much of the music he did publish had, to some extent, been redacted by a biassed music expert. Nevertheless, also his collections of tunes are of unique importance. The general and working conditions of the recorders and the peasants - especially the many contributors - were often treated of by Tang Kristensen.

Tang Kristensen's collections played an important part when in 1905 the Danish Folklore Collection (at the Royal Library of Copenhagen) was founded; and during the following years Tang Kristensen again travelled about, accompanied by younger collectors, such as H. Grüner-Nielsen or the Australian pianist Percy Grainger, and his national and international fame as a collector increased. Already in Folk-Lore 1898 his activities were commented on at some length by W. A. Craigie.

Chapter 7 (89–97). Thomas Laub. The reformation of Danish church singing is the most important and the best-known part of the life-work of Thomas Laub (1852–1927). He also, however, devoted much time to ballad music. At first (in the 1880's) he only pointed out that some of the ballad tunes were clearly composed in church modes and he did not dissociate himself from the arrangement of the tunes for the piano. In the 1890's, however, his studies of Gregorian plainsong showed him that the tunes are related to Gregorian music, as regards not only tonality, but also melody, and his restoration of tunes was in accordance with this realization. Finally

he came to the conclusion that the melodics of the ballad has always been unstable and that the free metre of the stanza has constituted a parallel with the melodic variation – the style is the constant, but the details depend on the words. To this theory corresponds his edition for one voice of reconstructed melodies (1899–1904) for Olrik's redacted texts. Laub's work is of great artistic value but may have inspired his contemporaries with too strong a belief that this is how the ballads sounded originally; that theory is based on supposition only, and later generations have taken issue with Laub's one-sided emphasizing of the influence on the ballad of mediaeval church music. Hjalmar Thuren maintained that although it has been lost the old Scandinavian folk-music must be supposed to some extent to have influenced the song, even after the introduction of Christianity in ab. A. D. 1000, and also other, among themselves very different scholars raised various objections to Laub's theory and practice.

Chapter 8 (98–115). Nyere dansk forskning [Modern Danish research]. In Svend Grundtvig's age Danish ballad research had not yet reached any great importance. The years before and after 1900, however, constituted a flourishing time for the study of folklore, dialects, and ballads. The foundation in 1905 of the Danish Folklore Collection was of great importance. The founders were the folklorists Axel Olrik, H. F. Feilberg, and E. Tang Kristensen and the chief librarian H. O. Lange. More than sixty volumes in the series of Danmarks Folkeminder [Danish Popular Traditions] have issued from there.

Most outstanding was the study of historical ballads, more comprehensive and eminent the historian Johannes Steenstrup's book of 1891, Vore Folkeviser fra Middelalderen (English translation 1914, The Medieval Popular Ballad).

Round about the turn of the century Axel Olrik, who continued DgF, did legendary research. He took the aristocratic tradition of the Renaissance to have been embroidered, as compared with the more original character of the ballad, as probably seen again in recent, concise popular tradition; in other words, he assumed that there must have been different stages in the history of the individual ballads. At the same time the poet Ernst von der Recke sought the genuine elements of each ballad in what is characteristic and valuable within the various branches of tradition, not like Olrik in common features. The philologist Sofus Larsen again pursued a different course. Researches into ballad music were carried on by Hjalmar Thuren, an ethno-musicologist abreast of the studies of his age and of great importance to the preliminary work in connexion with the music volume of DgF. After the deaths of Thuren og Olrik the work of both these folklorists was continued by Hakon Grüner-Nielsen, who finished the nine volumes of text of DgF and began a supplement of text (X) and an edition

of music (XI); it is now intended to have the great edition continued by Erik Dal and Nils Schiørring. Within the Danish research of the last generation no other scholar has had the ballad for his main subject; from among contributions to ballad research Ernst Frandsen's *Folkevisen* [The Ballad], 1935, is often mentioned later on in the book, whereas Erik Abrahamsen's dissertation of 1923 overemphasizes the dependence on Gregorian chant of ballad melodies.

Chapter 9 (116-132). Færøerne [The Faroes]. Up till this day, mediaeval chain-dancing to the accompaniment of ballad-singing with a leader and a chorus, but without any musical instruments, has existed in unbroken tradition in the small North Atlantic island group, although, naturally enough, not without signs of degeneration. The repertory is twofold, consisting of lays in Faroese, connected with the West Scandinavian groups of ballads, as well as ballads in Danish, especially introduced by Vedel's and Syv's ballad books. The recording of lays was begun in ab. 1780 by J. C. Svabo, the first printed edition, by H. C. Lyngbye, appearing in 1822. The main edition was prepared by Svend Grundtvig and Jørgen Bloch in a big manuscript, Corpus Carminum Færoensium, containing texts and variants; the publication of the eighteen volumes of the manuscript was begun in 1941 by Christian Matras. Besides, both philological editions of individual manuscripts and popular editions have been published. Of the melodies belonging to the lays only a small number were known up till ab. 1900; as regards the Danish ballad texts, rather more variants of melodies of Faroese origin are known from Nyerup's and Weyse's collections, but in both of these the information about provenance is, unfortunately, uncertain. In the beginning of the present century, however, Hjalmar Thuren worked as collector and investigator in his field, and his book of 1908, Folkesangen paa Farøerne [The Folk-Song of the Faroes], was of fundamental importance. Also this part of Thuren's life-work was continued by H. Grüner-Nielsen. In time Faroese variants are to be incorporated in the music volume of DgF, whereas no collected edition of melodies belonging to the lays has been contemplated. - Modern studies of the texts of the lays are especially associated with the name of the Norwegian folklorist Knut Liestøl, who is, incidentally, mentioned in Chapter 18.

Chapter 10 (133-151). Omkring A. A. Afzelius [A. A. Afzelius]. The first edition of Swedish ballads was E. G. Geijer and A. A. Afzelius, Svenska folkvisor [Swedish Ballads] I-III, 1814-16. A highly interesting correspondence concerning this work, but up till now never made use of, is still extant, although incomplete, and to be found at Stockholm. The correspondents are the two editors, one of them a poet, the other a clergyman, and both also historians, as well as their collaborator in the field of music,

the conductor Fr. Hæffner, and the German-born jurist and amateur musician Peter Grønland of Copenhagen, who harmonized melodies selected both from Nyerup's collection of music (unprinted) and from Afzelius's collection (printed in 1818). Some of Grønland's letters were written to the Danish philologist Rasmus Rask.

Afzelius's edition was a product of the national-romantic interest in folklore. Part of the material had been placed at the editor's disposal by L. F. Rääf, not a very prominent figure, but an interesting character. Geijer's main contribution was his preface, poetic and typical of its day. Some of the melodies of the music supplement had been harmonized by Hæffner, which satisfied Geijer, whereas Grønland pursued a course of his own, determined by his studies of Greek music and his adherence to the aesthetics of music of the time before the Viennese period. He carried on controversies, with Geijer especially about the nature of the refrain, with Hæffner about tonality, Grønland recognizing »Greek modes« in the notes of the ballads, Hæffner, however, finding »Old Norse« natural notes outside our normal scale. In later Scandinavian research this controversy has been continued, the wording, however, being more modern.

A revised edition of his collection had been planned in Afzelius's old age, but only a reprint of Vol. I and the music appeared. In 1880, however, was published an enlarged, amply annotated edition by R. Bergström and L. Höijer. The latter was responsible for the arrangement of the tunes (assisted by the Norwegian composer L. M. Lindeman, a fact hitherto unknown), which met with severe, not undeserved criticism.

Chapter 11 (152-169). Senere svensk forskning [Later Swedish research]. However important his edition, Afzelius was not, strictly speaking, a very competent editor, unlike A. I. Arwidsson, the editor of Svenska fornsånger [Old Swedish Songs] I-III, 1834-42. The melodies of this work had been taken from oral tradition, the texts from written sources and (like Afzelius's texts) from oral tradition. As regards both text and music, the editing was very carefully done. After Afzelius, Swedish research was represented by men like R. Dybeck, who collected, edited, and had performed many folk-songs, especially, however, shepherds' songs etc., P. A. Säve, whose vast collections from the island of Gothland have only recently been printed, and L. C. Wiede, whose large and important collections of ballads still remain in manuscript. A special group of historical and political ballads, however, appeared in 1853, edited by G. O. Hyltén-Cavallius and George Stephens, the British-born scholar, who spent most of his life in Sweden and Denmark and contributed to the national research of those countries.

Interest in folklore and folk-culture is widespread in Sweden, and a great many institutions and associations have provided important collections, also of ballads and tunes. As part of the big series Svenska landsmål [Swedish Dialects] three volumes containing 1500- og 1600-talens visböcker [Ballad Books of the 16th and 17th Centuries] have been issued. From among the pursuers of theoretical studies may be mentioned Karl Valentin, who in his Leipzig dissertation of 1885 claimed to recognize church tonality in Swedish folk-song. The music of the fiddlers is found collected in the gigantic work Svenska låtar [Swedish Melodies], and comprehensive researches in the field of music have in the present century been carried on by Tobias Norlind. Nowadays, the most prominent student of ballads is Sverker Ek, whose conclusions are, to some extent, in dispute (see, however, Chapter 18).

The general interest in folklore has, however, counteracted the centralization of ballad research, which may, it is to be hoped, be reached through the medium of the new *Svenskt visarkiv* [Swedish Archives for Folksongs], to which are attached Karl-Ivar Hildeman and other young scholars. What they are chiefly aiming at is a standard Swedish edition of ballads (see Ulf P. Olrog in *Arv* IX, 1953).

Chapter 12 (170–176). Svenskfinland [The Swedish part of Finland]. Up till 1809 Finland was under Swedish rule and from then until 1918 under Russian suzerainty. Population and language, however, are neither Scandinavian nor Slavonic, except for a Swedish-speaking minority in the coastal districts. In its work for and upholding of folk-culture this minority has consequently – like the Finnish population, incidentally – been involved in a national struggle, and the progress and the quality of the folk-culture have profited by these circumstances.

The interest in folk-poetry dates as far back as about 1800, and after the middle of the century the collecting of material began. The first great result was Ernst Lagus's edition of ballads, 1887–1900, in 1934 partly superseded by that of Otto Andersson. The latter scholar has, with unusual versatility and vitality, worked for musicology and folk-poetry as investigator as well as popularizer and organizer. Also the great results of the collecting of and researches into the Finnish folklore of Finland, however, are of importance, because of their methodical weight. Julius and Kaarle Krohn founded \*he Finnish school\*, and Finnish musicologists contributed to the question of the cataloguing of tunes discussed in Chapter 31.

Chapter 13 (177–190). Norge  $f\phi r$  1900 [Norway before 1900]. The earliest Norwegian records of tunes are contained in the Frenchman Laborde's history of music, published in 1780. Of greater importance, however, are Norwegian contributions to Nyerup's edition, but it is difficult to determine the provenance of the individual tunes. An independent Norwegian collecting of ballads and tunes gathered speed from 1840. That year saw

the publication of Jørgen Moe's small collection of folk-poetry with a music supplement by L. M. Lindeman, who, simultaneously, began the editing of independent collections of tunes, based on material gathered during extensive travels and on a theory, proper to the romantic composer rather than to the folklore of a later age. At the same time Olea Cröger took up collecting. Her material later passed to M. B. Landstad, whose Norske Folkeviser [Norwegian Ballads] of 1853 (with a music supplement by Lindeman) is one of the most important Scandinavian works, even though as regards scholarship it cannot compare with Grundtvig's DgF, begun at the same time; among other points open to objection is Landstad's use in his reproduction of texts of archaic spellings, which do not show the dialect clearly. Shortly afterwards, Sophus Bugge began to collect and carry on research. As a research-worker, however, he did not publish much on ballads but communicated his thoughts to Svend Grundtvig, to be made use of in DgF.

Ballad research is in Norway closely connected with the national movement, which has in an incessant struggle tried to establish a position for a Norwegian language, recreated on the basis of the dialects, as against a literary language, during several centuries of personal union with Denmark (up till 1814) approached to the language of that country. Jørgen Moe's co-editor of fairy-tales, P. C. Asbjørnsen, and the pioneer of the language movement, Ivar Aasen, therefore appear as minor characters in the history of ballad research. At the turn of the century Bugge and Jørgen Moe's son, Moltke Moe, were the two most prominent figures within the study of traditions.

Chapter 14 (191–204). Norge efter 1900 – melodiforskning [Norway after 1900 – musical research]. About 1900 the collecting of popular traditions gathered speed also in Norway. Mention must be made of men like Olav Sande, Rikard Berge, and Catharinus Elling. Elling collected folk-music and wrote some dozen books on the subject, besides, as a practical composer, to a large extent arranging folk-music. His attitude was that of the devotee of art music, not of the folklorist, which brought him into violent conflict with more modern-minded musicologists. Among those were Erik Eggen, whose dissertation of 1923, Skalastudier [Studies in Scales], is a monograph on the special scales of Norwegian folk-music to be found chiefly by means of the measuring of langelege (popular monochords) and by calculations based on those. In the same way Eivind Groven has studied melodic formulas technically indicated by the willow pipe. These scholars have thus advanced the idea of intervals outside the tempered ones, which has become a principal point of the discussion.

Many works have been produced by O. M. Sandvik, provider and interpreter of very considerable collections of music, deriving from various,

often isolated parts of the country or from unprinted sources. Here, without any prejudice, the importance of both church singing and the popular substratum has been appreciated. Among other services rendered by Sandvik to the musical life of Norway are his initiative in the foundation of Norsk musikksamling [the Norwegian Music Collection] and the annual Norsk musikkgranskning [Norwegian Musical Research]. In the volume for 1950 of the latter, the curator of the music collection, Øystein Gaukstad, has given a comprehensive bibliography of Norwegian folk-music (also published separately).

Chapter 15 (205-209). Norge efter 1900 - textforskning [Norway after 1900 - textual research]. Norsk folkeminnesamling [The Norwegian Folklore Collection] was founded a few years after the Danish collection, like the latter incorporating earlier, and later on also contemporary collections, printed and unprinted. Like the Norwegian Music Collection it is housed in the University Library of Oslo. Its curator from the foundation up till 1951 was Knut Liestøl, whose dissertation of 1915, Norske trollvisor og norrøne sogor [Norwegian Ballads of Trolls and Norse Sagas], is a fundamental treatment of the subject that above all was his, i. e. the relationship between the sagas and the especially West Scandinavian group of ballads about warriors and trolls. The dependence of the ballads on the ancient prose literature is clearly proved in this book. Besides, Liestøl discovered specifically Norwegian features in the style and the attitude of these ballads. He did not achieve his last aim in life, the publication of a monumental Norwegian edition; such an edition has been contemplated for nearly one hundred years, with varying groups of editors, but has always been prevented by the circumstances. The MS left behind by Liestøl, however, is far-reaching and, as might have been expected, on the highest plane.

A number of popular editions have appeared, of greatest importance Norske folkevisor [Norwegian Ballads] I–III, 1920–22 by Liestøl and Moltke Moe, by then deceased. In honour of the great folklorist, Liestøl edited Moltke Moe's Samlede Skrifter [Collected Writings] I–III, 1925–27 and wrote his biography, 1949.

The history of Norwegian ballad research presents a succession of academic as well as popular students, both groups having made contributions of great value to scholarship. It is noteworthy that it should still be possible to carry out successful collecting in a country topographically divided up into so many parts. A modern apparatus is used in the recording as well as in the study of the ballads.

Chapter 16 (210-217). Island [Iceland]. Since the Middle Ages dancing has played an important part in Iceland, but it is not as clearly bound up with the ballad as in the Faroes, other genres within the development of a

generally fairly autochthonous literature having to some extent kept out the Scandinavian ballad. The collection of Islenzk fornkvæði [Ancient Ballads of Iceland] I-II by Svend Grundtvig and Jón Sigurðsson 1854ff. contains the vast majority of the ballads, taken from records of 1665 onwards. On the other hand, this special tradition has played an important part in the discussion of the age, style, and form of the ballads, but opinions have differed considerably, some scholars having given the late Middle Ages as the time of origin of the fornkvæði, whereas both Grundtvig and nowadays Liestøl have maintained that they date partly from before 1300. Many problems are, however, as yet unsolved. Nevertheless it remains a fact that these lays have not been of any great importance to the popular song of later years, for which reason few of their tunes are extant. Bjarni Þorsteinsson's Íslenzk þjóðlög [Icelandic Folk-Tunes] 1906 -09 is a very comprehensive body of Icelandic folk-tunes (a term, however, given too wide an application by the collector and used without any scholarly criticism), but contains few tunes belonging to fornkvæði. Icelandic music, incidentally, has a character of its own, especially because of its predilection for the Lydian mode carried to excess. Famous are also the tvisöngur, diaphonic songs bearing the stamp of great antiquity.

# PART III. VISERNES PROBLEMER [THE PROBLEMS PRESENTED BY THE BALLADS] III A. Særlige visegrupper [Special Groups of Ballads].

Chapter 17 (221-226). Ridderviser og andre viser [Ballads of chivalry and other ballads]. Most of the Danish ballads are ridderviser [ballads of chivalry]. Traditionally, however, three minor groups are separated from the rest (then termed ridderviser), namely kæmpeviser [heroic ballads], trylleviser [ballads of magic], and historiske viser [historical ballads], the subject matter of which three groups may be roughly divided up, according to whether it derives from old, especially Germanic cycles of legends, popular superstitions, or Danish history. A fifth group has, on the model of DgF, as a rule been excluded from the editions, viz. skæmteviser [comic ballads], most of which do not derive from the circles of the gentry. The Danish skæmteviser have been edited by H. Grüner-Nielsen on the basis of written sources and by E. Tang Kristensen from oral tradition. Finally, the ballad metre has survived in the poetry, not much studied, called efterklangsviser [ballads echoes], a study of the music of which forms part of Nils Schiørring's comprehensive dissertation, Det 16. og 17. århundredes verdslige danske visesang [The Secular Danish Song of the 16th and 17th Centuries] I-II, 1950. The popular broadside ballads began to appear in the 16th century, surviving until the beginning of the 20th. Sweden (Svenskt visarkiv) is probably the country that knows most about the great number of songs within that mixed repertory, which is outside the scope of the present treatise, as are the skæmteviser and the efterklangsviser.

Chapter 18 (227–240). Kæmpeviser [Heroic ballads]. Explanations of the fact that this ballad group has much subject matter in common with other ancient literatures (the Eddas, the Nibelungenlied, etc.) have varied greatly through the ages. Grundtvig assumed that the Old Norse and the Old German poems were directly recast into ballads, possibly at the time when the same poems were given the form of sagas etc., i. e. shortly after the year 1000, and already in 1855 Sophus Bugge showed that the ballad about Svejdal (DgF 20) proves the original connexion between two obscure and evidently defective poems of the Elder Edda. Against this assumption the Norwegian historian Gustav Storm maintained that the ballads taken by Grundtvig to derive from German poems through the recasting of the latter into Scandinavian ballads and Scandinavian prose, date from the 15th century, being literary products based on the tradition of the sagas and the chronicles. A special subject of discussion has been DgF 7, the Scandinavian ballad about Dietrich of Bern (Theoderic of Verona).

Wider perspectives opened for ballad research when the hypothesis of the international wanderings of the traditions was introduced into Scandinavian research (which was, however, spared the mythological stragglers of that movement). Sophus Bugge's study of these subjects bore the stamp of genius. According to him the Scandinavian traditions derive from three sources, viz. the influence of (1) Christianity and (2) Antiquity as received through (3) the Celts. At the turn of the century, however, the interest of the research-workers took a different direction, becoming centred on the study of the distribution of the ballads within the Scandinavian countries. In Danske Studier 1907 Ernst v.d. Recke showed that a number of kampeviser belong to West Scandinavia, especially the Faroes, in the abovementioned dissertation by Knut Liestøl similar facts were established on the basis of fuller argumentation, and, finally, it was shown by Sverker Ek in 1921 that the kæmpeviser of Denmark and Sweden have entered those countries from the west, whereas the two East Scandinavian countries, especially Denmark, have a prior claim to ridderviser, trylleviser, and historical ballads. This is evidenced by composition and style as well as subject matter. Knut Liestøl and others have later on done further research on the basis of these results and have shown that the character of the kæmpeviser is rooted in Norwegian historical conditions and national characteristics.

Chapter 19 (241–256). Trylleviser [Ballads of magic]. The elements of Nature myth and other forms of supernaturalism in these ballads were really recognized only by romanticism. The rare traces of Christianity are obviously secondary, and it is only natural that these ballads should have been condemned by orthodoxy and not understood by rationalism. Grundtvig compared a very large material of ballads of other countries in order

to show the relationship between the themes of the trylleviser and those of international folklore, the most famous instance being DgF 47, Elveskud (Clerk Colvill, Renaud), which ballad has especially been discussed. Bugge contributed to the study of this group in the way mentioned above. Axel Olrik reacted against Bugge, following Grundtvig's more cautious method when trying to show the adaptation and specific character of the themes within each nation. He also pointed out that the attitude to Nature changed in the course of the Middle Ages, from dependence on Nature and terror of her monsters to greater freedom and sympathy with bewitched or transformed beings. Swedish works by T. Norlind and S. Ek have taken up the subject of the trylleviser, and in 1935, in Folkevisen, Ernst Frandsen gave an account of the stages of the mediaeval attitude mentioned by Olrik, on the basis of which theory he chronologized some ballads, taking into account also style and composition: from fear of Nature to confidence, from the archaic to the picturesque, from resignation to optimism.

Legendeviser [legendary ballads] do not constitute a productive genre in Scandinavia, apart from the Swedish group of Stephan ballads and traditions, and the quality of these ballads, discussed especially by S. Ek, is fairly poor, at any rate as far as Denmark is concerned. Some of the legendary ballads tell us about the other world, thus being offshoots of European vision literature. A monument of the latter exists, however, in the Norwegian ballad of the Draumkvæde, which has, and rightly so, given rise to a special group of studies, latest Knut Liestøl's Draumkvæde, 1946, written in English.

Chapter 20 (257-274). Historiske viser [Historical ballads]. This genre is most productive in Denmark. The oldest evidence of ballads is often the mention by historians of such songs, and it was early realized that the value as sources of those ballads is problematic. Grundtvig was very optimistic in his estimation of their contemporaneity with the events and their reliability, on the basis of which assumption he dated other groups of ballads, such as those of Iceland, the historical ballads of which country comprise only the Danish ballads oldest in theme. Criticism of this romantic opinion began to appear already in Grundtvig's own time, centered on certain characteristic ballads. The first objections were raised by the historian A. D. Jørgensen, who maintained that the historical ballad »attains perfection only in freedom« - i. e. that the poet has rightly altered and idealized facts, and the criticism of Grundtvig's theory reached its climax with Johs. Steenstrup's book of 1891 and the Swedish literary historian H. Schück's treatise of the same year, both of which refer to the general rule that the oldest source of a text must determine its age, unless there are reasons in favour of a different conclusion. A few ballads, especially Niels Ebbesen

(DgF 140), are, however, considered reliable by most scholars. Several very comprehensive and much criticized monographs have been written by Sofus Larsen, shorter studies by Hans Brix, among others, the whole world of the ballad being, moreover, described in all surveys of culture-history.

Norway has hardly any historical ballads, whereas Sweden possesses a good many, closely connected, however, with the Danish ballads. A special group is constituted by the Swedish ballads of bride-stealing, which group has been the subject of a discussion based on S. Ek's extreme views. A most valuable and up-to-date dissertation on *Politiska visor från Sveriges senmedeltid* [Swedish Political Ballads of the Late Middle Ages] was written in 1950 by Karl-Ivar Hildeman, who has with methodical care examined a number of such ballads, proving that several of them formed part of the demagogy and propaganda of the Swedo-Danish wars of the time of the Union.

#### III B. Visernes herkomst og vandring [Origin and migration].

Chapter 21 (275-288). Metriske former [Metrical forms]. The Scandinavian ballad stanza does not show a great variety of metrical form. The number of weakly stressed syllables is fairly variable and the tendency is iambic (not trochaic, as has sometimes been maintained). The forms are (1) a rhyming couplet with four, more seldom three stresses to the line, (2) four lines rhyming xaya with four + three + four + three stresses (more seldom three stresses to the line), and (3) four lines of four + two + four + two stresses (the Stolt-Elin strophe). The last-mentioned stanza is scarcely known outside Denmark and Iceland, being practically unparalleled in the balladry of other countries, with the exception of France, and its relationship to the other types is a moot point, although it is evident that the short lines have sometimes been altered by tradition so as to contain three stresses, which gives us the normal quatrain. An expansion of type 1 gives type (4), the Liden-Karin strophe, which has many weak stresses and tends to split into type 2. These types of stanza have almost invariably an endrefrain, No. 1 having sometimes also an internal refrain. Finally, (5), the last part of the stanza (1/2 or 1 line or 11/2 lines) may be repeated before the next stanza (but after the refrain). It is uncertain whether this is to be interpreted as an indication of the way in which these ballads were sung, with two leaders besides the chorus, as maintained already by P. Grønland, but it is a probable explanation. This type of ballad must at any rate be connected with customs attached to dancing and singing, and it seems to have belonged to the Renaissance. The discussion of these ballads have recently been renewed on the initiative of Otto Andersson.

Chapter 22 (289-308). Lyrisk dansevers og episk dansevise [Lyric dance stanza and epic dance ballad]. The Middle Ages danced. The Scandinavian

countries probably learnt it especially from France, and great interest has been taken in the end-rhymed couplets and quatrains to be found in contemporary Scandinavian sources. The most famous stanza is not Scandinavian but it is extant in both Swedish and English translation, i. e. the widely discussed Latin stanza connected with the dance at Kölbigk in 1021, Equitabat Bovo . . . These sporadic fragments were interpreted in his dissertation Enstrofig nordisk folklyrik [Single-Stanza'd Scandinavian Folk-Lyrics], 1898 by Richard Steffen, who sought lyrics of one stanza in later tradition, especially as an accompaniment of dancing. Sometimes they link up to form longer poems, sometimes they become part of originally epic ballads. The singing of these ballads has been accompanied by dancing, and it is also certain that the singing of a ballad began with the intonation of the refrain, as is still the case in the Faroes. In written sources and in folk-song without dancing the refrain is hardly ever found preserved in this position, occasionally, however, a whole lyric stanza, from the wording of which the refrain has sometimes evolved, so to speak. This preliminary stanza, the stevstamme [burden-stem], has always aroused the interest of students, it is often of a high lyrical quality, and it forms the basis of M. Moe and R. Steffen's theory of the stevstamme to the effect that such stanzas have once been part and parcel of the ballads and that the ballad and its refrain arose as a result of the meeting of the older lyric poetry and an imported, purely epic ballad. This attractive theory found a following in scholars like Olrik, Grüner-Nielsen, and Liestøl but was opposed by Steenstrup and Ernst Frandsen, who took the lyric stanzas to be generally young, their connexion with the ballad thus being secondary, as was the lyricizing of the ballad in other respects.

Outside Scandinavia, the French scholar Paul Verrier has in *Le vers français* I–III, 1931–32 given an exhaustive treatment of the history of the French metres on Germanic soil; according to this broad and highly interesting, though one-sided account, dancing, as well as stanza, *stevstamme*, and ballad, has spread from France to both Great Britain and Scandinavia.

Chapter 23 (309–315). Lidt om udenlandske viser [Ballads of other countries]. In the form of an excursus the balladry of the three principal countries must be briefly mentioned. The metrical forms of the English and Scottish ballads are like the most important Danish types, but the refrain and the practice of dancing are not as constantly attached to the ballad as in the Scandinavian countries. The English carol, however, was from the very beginning a dance-genre (R. Greene, 1935). The Shetlands have preserved vestiges of ballads in the Norn language, and a tune for King Orfeo (Child 19) was first recorded here in 1947. – The German Volkslied is a very inclusive term, which, however, also comprehends a good many ballads, now being published in Deutsche Volkslieder mit ihren Melodien,

1935 ff. A refrain in the Anglo-Scandinavian sense is scarcely found, except in a few ballads imported from Scandinavia, and German influence is in Scandinavia mostly seen in the lyric poetry of the time subsequent to the golden age of the ballad, even though Ernst Frandsen maintained that influence on style is seen already in the ballad. – The folk-song in French and Breton of mediaeval France has undoubtedly influenced the Scandinavian ballad, both matter and especially form offering many points of resemblance, discussed by Verrier above all others.

Chapter 24 (316–326). Veje til Norden [Ways leading to Scandinavia]. By which route did we receive the epic dancing ballad with a lyric refrain, which is the most important poetical genre of mediaeval Scandinavia? Parallelisms between Scandinavian and British ballads were apparent already to pre-romanticism. The connexion with the metres of Old Norse poetry was discussed for generations, especially by the Danish literary historian C. Rosenberg. Scholars like Recke and Steenstrup have, however, established that the ballad and Old Norse poetry differ so widely in style and form that any considerable heritage of form is out of the question.

In recent years the connexion with Great Britain has often been studied, but it is unknown which country was the chief borrower. It is, however, certain that the nearest, often striking parallels of the Scandinavian ballads are to be sought across the North Sea, at any rate as far as form is concerned. It is therefore assumed that Great Britain has to no small extent been instrumental in bringing about the borrowing from France that is gradually seen to have taken place. Not many scholars believe Germany to have served as the mediator, but some assume direct borrowing, as did Steenstrup. Comparatively recently, in 1935, Ernst Frandsen, however, again argued in favour of Germany as the connecting link between France and Scandinavia.

It is only natural that the discussion should be long and protracted, partly because of the fact that the subject is in itself an intricate one, and partly because of the lack of sources, indeed whole *genres*, not really dispensable in the argumentation, which must therefore largely build upon the scanty evidence mentioned in Chapter 22.

III C. Visernes tilblivelse og overlevering [Creation and transmission].

Chapter 25 (327–344). Teorier om visernes tilblivelse [Theories of the creation of the ballad]. This question cannot be discussed on a purely Scandinavian basis, in view of the fact that the most important theories have been advanced chiefly by German and American scholars. Especial distinction must be made between (1) the theory of production, according to which folk-poetry and folk-music were created collectively, (2) the theory of reception, to the effect that the folk-song is only a distorted version of what

was originally created, used, and discarded by a higher stratum of society, (3) the communal theory, in many respects a revival of the theory of production of romanticism, and (4) the modern reaction partly against the communalists, who are attacked on points of chronology and sociology, partly against the theory of reception, the arguments adduced being the peculiar style and the creative power (in producing positive variants) of folk-art and, against the search of the adherents to that theory after primitive and original forms, the independent life and characteristics of the variants as the proper subject of ballad research. Child's successor, the communalist G. L. Kittredge, has rightly remarked: »There are texts, but there is no text.«

Scandinavian contributions to these discussions of theories do not form a completely coherent pattern, but the various stages are clearly seen. Geijer, Grundtvig, and J.L. Heiberg were romanticists, although Grundtvig abandoned the assumption that the ballad was created by the people, realizing that the creative power must have belonged to a minority of people of more advanced social strata. The theory of reception was shared by the folklorists and the historians among the students of ballads round about the turn of the century – in various aspects and with widely different, artistically sometimes fine results – while a more truly folklorist appreciation of the importance of the study of variants has been shown by H. Grüner-Nielsen and other modern scholars.

Chapter 26 (345-352). Adelstraditionen [The aristocratic tradition]. The oldest ballad traditions are to be found in manuscripts of the nobility, after ab. 1550, embodying the results of collecting or in the nature of autograph albums. A number of palaeographic and philological studies of individual manuscripts exist, and the Swedish books of songs have been published book by book, whereas the Danish manuscripts have been broken up and rearranged in the various editions so as no longer to represent a mixture of ballads, later lyrics, poems of other countries, etc. As early as in 1591 Anders Sørensen Vedel's Hundredvisebog [Book of a Hundred Ballads] appeared in print, re-issued several times and in 1695 superseded by Peder Syv's edition, twice as large, the last reprint of which appeared in 1787. The comparatively great age of these traditions made Grundtvig estimate them highly. At a later date Axel Olrik sought the true nature of the ballad by comparing the mental attitude of Old Norse with that of modern peasant traditions, the narrowness of both of which made the ballad books of the aristocracy seem to him to represent a branch of the tradition a little too flourishing. Both Sofus Larsen and E.v.d. Recke saw reasons to distrust the ballad books, although Recke built upon them and their style to no small extent. Finally, Ernst Frandsen based his researches

into chronology and style on those books. None of the three last-mentioned scholars were folklorists.

Chapter 27 (352-363). Almuetraditionen [The popular tradition]. When the ballad and ballad-dancing went out of fashion with the nobility (ab. 1600), the ballad came to belong to the lower classes. Collecting did not, however, become common in those circles till ab. 1800, but records of an older Swedish popular tradition are extant, and in the 1640's the Dane Corvinus (Hans Mikkelsen Ravn) sought the ballads where available and was delighted with them. But the collecting of ballads presented many problems: The recorder met with many personal and practical difficulties, and political and religious revivals, in which the 19th century abounded, had a restrictive influence on popular tradition. Since the earliest days of recording, before 1800, it has therefore been customary for recorders to maintain that theirs are among the last recordings possible. Academic research-workers, especially from the time of the theory of reception, have been inclined to reject the ballad variants of the peasants as being inferior, nor are those the songs found in anthologies, although at their best they are of high quality, also when clearly being the products of a later age.

Chapter 28 (364-376). Restitutionsforsøg [Reconstructive attempts]. On the basis of various theories several scholars have tried to reproduce ballads in what may be presumed to have been their first (or optimum) form. These attempts have been most frequent in Denmark, owing to the fact that most collections have been stored up for use in DgF, so that practically only Tang Kristensen has published ballads of the character of source material. Svend Grundtvig's restoration of ballads was on broad lines, all parallel traditions appearing to him important and genuine. Olrik was narrow in his editing, seeking the epic core common to several versions. Also Recke's editing was of a narrow character, but unlike Olrik he sought what was characteristic and of aesthetic value in the various records. Sofus Larsen tried the methods of classical philology. In Norway Liestøl and Moe more or less followed Olrik's principles. More recent popular editions (Grüner-Nielsen, Frandsen, the Swedish Blomberg & Ek) have taken up an attitude of resignation towards the editorial possibilities, preferring the best actually preserved version with a minimum of redaction. In actual practice it is Olrik's forms that have been most widely read in Denmark, partly supported by Laub's congenial melody redactions.

#### III D. Fra musikforskningen [Musical research].

Chapter 29 (377-383). De ældste optegnelser [The earliest recordings]. Very few of the Scandinavian ballad tunes were recorded before the late 18th century, none of the ballad students of the Renaissance giving the tunes for the texts collected by them out of antiquarian interests. Musical style

in the golden age of the ballad, to say nothing of the origin and oldest characteristics of Scandinavian folk-music, is thus a question to be approached with hesitation only. Werner Danckert's Das europäische Volkslied, 1939 and article of the same year (in Zeitschrift für Volkskunde) Die ältesten Spuren germanischer Volksmusik may be consulted with a certain amount of caution.

The oldest Danish instances of recorded music are (1) the runic stanza from ab. 1300, consisting of four lines with words only for the first two, (2) what is undoubtedly a ballad tune for DgF 329, in Vedel's handwriting from ab. 1590, and (3) the tune for DgF 60, printed by Corvinus in 1646. Other tunes of the 16th and 17th centuries may to some extent with great certainty be regarded as ballad tunes, although recorded as belonging to other texts. The oldest Swedish records of melodies were treated by Tobias Norlind in Svenska landsmål 1906, but several of those do not belong to proper ballads. These few sources, however, admit of a good many conclusions, among other things they seem to throw the prosody of Faroese song – in which the seven stresses of a couplet are reflected in seven shortmeasures (of two or three beats only), not symmetrically in eight – into a historical perspective.

Chapter 30 (384-388). Nyere optegnelser [Modern recordings]. The recording of music is even more difficult than the recording of text, and the personal prejudices of the recorders play a far greater part. Therefore most recordings of music have been influenced by the classical-romantic style, and it has been very difficult for modern students of music folklore to make their views prevail, and even more difficult to find support for those views in older, amended records. The invention of technical methods of recording has therefore been of paramount importance, and such methods are still used in Norway and Sweden under the auspices of the State Radios. Danish and Faroese tunes have since the first decade of the present century been recorded by means of the phonograph, and in technically more advanced times there has not been much tradition left to be recorded, which is why Denmark is not holding her own in the present-day exchange and production of grammophone- and tape-recordings. Of importance is the use of the most modern phono-photographic methods of recording and reading, as described by the Norwegian Olav Gurvin in Norveg III, 1953 [1955]. - As has been justly said by Walter Wiora, »Der Fortschritt in der Aufzeichnung hängt wesentlich am Fortschritt der zugrundeliegenden Theorie.«

Chapter 31 (389–398). Katalogisering [Cataloguing]. The wish to be able to catalogue the tunes regardless of their texts became a fervent one in ab. 1900, with the steady growth of material. In each individual case the material probably requires its own method, but it must be possible to establish,

borrow, and adapt certain rules and principles. Besides an old, unprinted music catalogue by Johannes Werlin (1646, Münchener Staatsbibliothek MS Cgm 3641), mention must be made of works, mostly written in one of the universal languages, by the Germans Johannes Zahn and Oswald Koller, the Finns Ilmari Krohn and Armas Launis, the Hungarian Béla Bartók, the Austrian Raimund Zoder, the Germans Wilhelm Heinitz and Hans Mersmann, the Finn A. O. Väisänen, the Dane H. Grüner-Nielsen, and the American Bertrand H. Bronson. Furthermore there exist unprinted works by the Dane Carl Mortensen, the Norwegian Øystein Gaukstad, and the Swede Sören Eriksson. Most important among those works is, in a way, that of Gaukstad, not only because he has been able to profit by the work of his predecessors, but also because it forms the basis of great cataloguings in the Norwegian Music Collection at Oslo and now also of a duplicated catalogue of C. Elling's printed and unprinted collections of melodies.

#### PART IV. TIL AFSLUTNING [CONCLUSION]

Chapter 32 (401–409). Spredte slutbemærkninger [Concluding desultory remarks]. The two main parts of the present book have dealt with Scandinavian ballad research, the first part from the point of view of time and country, the second from that of subject matter and problems. A third treatment of the subject would have been possible, based on certain methods and trends of study to be found throughout the history of ballad research. Apparently there are four such methods of approach, viz. those of the philologist, the literary historian, the historian, and the folklorist; and as the critical search after original forms of the first three is vain, it seems as if the folklorist approach may be the most profitable of the four.

If ballad research has lately been on the wane, it is because the material has grown to immense proportions and also because, from a methodical point of view, the possibility of obtaining any more results on the basis of this material has been doubted. Students may perhaps be inspired with ideas of new angles from which to classify the ballads, by Wolfgang Schmidt's dissertation on the ballads of Child (Die Entwicklung der englisch-schottischen Volksballaden, Anglia LVII, Halle 1933). In that dissertation are given a number of possible groupings of ballads well worth considering, although some of them are, from a Scandinavian point of view, irrelevant, well known, or scarcely interesting.

In Schmidt's opinion it will not be possible to reach a complete ballad theory on the basis of individual researches, which may only serve to confirm such a theory. Also Hustvedt (Ballad Books and Ballad Men, 1930, Preface) has outlined a number of working plans but has thought it proper to begin with the study of detail. Within musical research it should be possible to receive impulses from Hans Mersmann (Grundlagen einer musikalischen Volksliedforschung, 1922 and later), Werner Danckert (Das europäische Volkslied, 1939), and Walter Wiora's works.

Within Scandinavian research, which is, incidentally, not well off as regards finances and personnel, the first tasks to be undertaken are the cataloguing and the editing of ballads. Especially the activities of the Svenskt visarkiv of Stockholm may be looked forward to with interest. — A survey of the national collected editions of the ballads and ballad tunes of each individual country presents a picture not altogether cheerful; the material is far from being reasonably accessible:

Denmark. Texts: published, except for a comparatively small number now in preparation. Argumentative commentaries: have constantly accompanied the editorial work. Tunes: partly already published, partly in preparation, which applies also to Faroese tunes for various types of Danish ballads. Argumentative commentaries: limited.

The Faroes. Texts: half published, half in preparation. Argumentative commentaries: contemplated, but apparently given up in practice. Tunes: no collected edition contemplated.

Sweden. Collected edition being planned.

The Swedish part of Finland. Texts and tunes: published. Argumentative commentaries: not included in the plan.

Norway. Texts with argumentative commentaries: collected edition planned, in part ready for press, in part doubtful. Tunes: no collected edition contemplated.

Iceland. Texts: published, the edition, however, not quite complete. Argumentative commentaries: scanty. Tunes: no edition, the material very scanty.

The editing and cataloguing of ballads will and must of necessity always alternate with free research. Hustvedt, however, regarded not only the 18th, but also the 19th and 20th centuries »mainly as a collectors' era. Child and Grundtvig both counted themselves collectors more than anything else.« Thus the tasks imposed by the increasing material and the increasing specialist literature are considerable, and Hustvedt was right in saying: »The hesitant investigator may take heart in the conviction that though the sheaves have been pretty carefully gleaned from the fields, the threshing is only well begun.«

Chapter 33 (410-430). English summary.

Chapter 34 (431-448). Register [Index], i. e. a list of all proper names and selected subjects.