

ABSTRACT

"Commerce and Bacchus or Handel and Bach?" Bourgeois musical life and its orchestras in the commercial city of Göteborg in the second half of the nineteenth century ("Handel och Bacchus eller Händel och Bach?" Det borgerliga musiklivet och dess orkesterbildningar i köpmannastaden Göteborg under andra hälften av 1800-talet). Dissertation in Swedish by Anders Carlsson. With a summary in English. 612 pages including appendices with musicians and the repertoires of the orchestras. Studies from Göteborg University, Department of Musicology, No 43. Göteborg 1996. ISBN 91 7029 195 0. Available from Tre Böcker Förlag AB, Humlegårdsgatan 8, S-412 74 Göteborg, Sweden.

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Göteborg is the second largest city in Sweden. Göteborgs orkesterförening was established in 1905, being the earliest professional symphony orchestra in the country. But several decades earlier important endeavours had been made in order to create a permanent orchestra.

Two foreign musicians, Joseph Czapek and Bedrich Smetana, were particularly instrumental in introducing new concert forms and repertoires. Czapek settled permanently in Göteborg in 1847 and became pre-eminently the most influential person for the development of the city's musical life in the latter half of the century. Smetana was a resident of Göteborg in the years 1856–1861 with a renewed longish stay in 1862.

Czapek's first orchestral venture dates back to 1855 when he engaged a small group of professional musicians from Germany whom he prevailed on to settle in Göteborg. He also engaged military musicians from the local regiment and a group of amateur musicians.

The inauguration of the opera-house Nya teatern in 1859 necessitated a new orchestra. An altogether professional one was established in 1862, called Göteborgs orkester, which survived until 1866, when financial difficulties and a too slender audience basis forced it to fold up. The orchestra consisted of a bare thirty members, Joseph Czapek being its conductor. For the most part it operated for the touring theatre and opera companies which rented Nya teatern for a whole season or part of one.

The next attempt to establish an orchestra was made in 1872. The new orchestra, Göteborgs musikförening, was slightly larger, over thirty musicians, led by Andreas Hallén. Contrary to the earlier one it had a good deal of independent activity. It ceased to exist in 1878 due to financial straits. After that no new attempt to establish a professional orchestra with symphonic ambitions was made until 1905.

In the present study the growth of public musical life is seen in relation to private musical activities as well as to other aspects of social developments in the city. A theoretical departure is the concept of the public sphere as defined by Jürgen Habermas.