

TON & NATION

MUSIKINSTRUMENT SOM NATIONALSYMBOLER

-tone & Nation

Musical Instruments as National Symbols

Tone & Nation is about how musical instruments are used as national symbols. The nyckelharpa's (keyed fiddle) position as Sweden's national instrument has been the object of debate for quite some time.

Vad är en nation?

What makes a nation?

That people have a common history?

A common language?

Shared customs?

Many countries do not meet all these conditions, but are still regarded as a nation.

A nation is a concept –

created when a lot of people agree that the nation exists.

During the 19th century the idea was promoted that a nation was united by reasons of deeper significance – the people shared common beliefs and a common lifestyle.

Finland and Norway fought for their own identity within larger states.

Rulers like Napoleon, Hitler and Stalin attempted to forge a national identity based upon their reigns.

Kurds have yet to succeed in their quest for an own nation state.

A strong feeling of patriotism today unites the multi-cultural USA.

The struggle over nations and national identity goes on!

Varför skapas nationalsymboler?

Why are national symbols created?

The nyckelharpa is promoted today as a symbol of Sweden.

National symbols like flags, national anthems and national costumes are found in all countries.

Symbols are created to strengthen the national unity – they become social and political tools.

Not everyone is convinced about the significance of a nation.

By creating national symbols the emotional attachment to the nation is strengthened. The symbols become evidence of a nation's existence.

When we observe the national day, raise the flag and sing the national anthem, the national unity is strengthened.

Therefore, the symbols continue to be widely used today, in Serbia, in Sweden, in the USA, in Iraq...

Nationsbygge

Building a Nation

A nation is a structure with many different building blocks – customs, morals, history, language, religion, symbols...

Most nations appear to be cast from the same form in the western world. Nationalism is quite simply one of our most international phenomena.

Which building blocks do *you* believe are the most important?

Build your own nation!

Musikinstrument som national-symboler i världen

Musical Instruments as National Symbols around the World

Many musical instruments around the world are recognized as national symbols – officially and unofficially.

These instruments are closely tied to their respective countries – in some cases designated as the national instrument by the country's government.

Hold down the white button to listen with the headphone!

- Argentina – Bandoneón
- Australia – Didgeridoo /Yidaki
- Southern India – Vina
- Northern India – Sitâr
- Ireland – Irish Harp/Cláirseach
- Japan – Koto
- Switzerland – Alp Horn
- Scotland – Highland Bagpipe/Piob Mhór
- Trinidad & Tobago – Steelpan
- Turkey – Baglama -Saz
- Venezuela – Cuatro
- Zimbabwe – Mbira
- Finland – Kantele
- Iceland – Langspil
- Norway – Hardingfela / Hardangerfela (*Hardanger Fiddle*)
- Sweden –Nyckelharpa (*Keyed Fiddle*)

Särprägel

A Distinctive Character

The Nyckelharpa and Hardingfela were originally played within small regions in Sweden and Norway respectively.

However, the Kantele was played even outside of Finland.

But all three are regarded as national instruments. Why?

What do these instruments have in common?

The key is that they have a distinctive character.

The Nyckelharpa and Hardingfela are found *only* in Sweden and Norway respectively.

They are unique and distinctive.

The Kantele has strong ties with the Finish epic "*Kalevala*".

This is its distinctiveness.

National instruments must stand out if they are to function as symbols of national identity.

Instruments that are truly widespread and played throughout Sweden

– like the fiddle, accordion or guitar – are far too common in other countries.

These are therefore not sufficiently distinctive or seen as typically Swedish.

Compare! What do we mean when we refer to Swedish food – the food we eat often like potatoes, pasta and pizza?

Or is Swedish food "food not found anywhere else", like pickled herring (*surströmming*) and pork stuffed potato dumplings (*pitepalt*).

Symbols are not just limited to nations; even regions want to have their own unifying symbols.

The Organ has been championed as the uniquely European instrument within the European Union.

The displayed instruments in this section are:

- Nyckelharpa (*Keyed Fiddle*) – Sweden
- Hardingfela (*Hardanger Fiddle*) – Norway
- Kantele – Finland
- The Organ and Europe – A European Identity?

Makten bakom instrumentet
– national-instrumentets resa

The Power Behind the Instrument – the evolution of a national Instrument

The evolution of a national instrument can take many different paths, but there is always a power propelling the instrument on its journey – popular opinion, a dictator, the government, the cultural elite ...
The instruments sometimes become officially recognized as national instruments, sometimes they become unofficial national instruments recognized by popular opinion.
Sometimes the evolution ends in failure.

The power from above:

The Saz Baglama's evolution: Low Status → Official → National

In the Ottoman Empire all things "Turkish" were regarded as being of low status and inferior.

When the Ottoman Empire collapsed after World War I

and Kemal Atatürk came to power, Turkish culture became the foundation for the national identity of Turkey.

The Saz Baglama was Turkish, sufficiently exotic and old enough to fulfill the unifying function of a national instrument.

The Lur's (Nordic Bronze Age Trumpet) evolution:

Prehistoric → Cultural → Not National

In 1797 a Danish farmer found a Lur in a bog.

At the end of the 1800s the Danish cultural elite promoted the Lur as a national symbol.

It was unique, representative and had an impressive sound.

It united the present with a proud past.

The Lur never succeeded, though, in receiving acceptance as a national instrument. It was difficult to play and had limited musical possibilities.

The power from below:

The Steelpan's evolution: Criminal → Rebel → National

The Steelpan was born around 1940 on Trinidad and took the place of the drums that the British colonial government had prohibited in the carnival parades.

The Steelpan evolved in the slums and was associated with violence.

With the passage of time the Steelpan became more accepted as a musical instrument via the influence of several groups including the Black Power movement.

In 1992 the parliament of Trinidad and Tobago proclaimed the Steelpan as the national instrument.

Now the national anthem is primarily played on the Steelpan.

The despised instrument from the slum has become a national symbol.

The Bouzouki's evolution: Criminal → Rebel → National

The Bouzouki has not always been a respected instrument. It was played in places like taverns and whorehouses. Even into the 1930s it was associated with crime, drugs and sex.

During the junta regime from 1967 to 1974 the composer Mikis Theodorakis used the Bouzouki in his artistic protest against the junta – a symbol in the struggle against oppression. When the junta fell from power the instrument of the rebellion became a symbol of national unity for the citizens of Greece.

Varför just folkmusik-instrument?

Why Folk Music Instruments?

Most National Instruments are folk music instruments.

It was during the 1800s that the idea was developed that a nation's traditions and culture were best preserved in the rural countryside.

It was in the countryside that the genuine past could be found.

The music and instruments of the rural country folk were therefore an expression of patriotic pride.

Do we still feel this way? If we want to have a Swedish national instrument we have many worthy candidates to choose from.

Listen! And vote for your choice as the Swedish national instrument in the booth →→

1. Synt (*Synthesizer*)
2. Mungiga (*Jews Harp*)
3. Luta (*Lute*)
4. Fiol (*Fiddle*)
5. Levingitarr (*Guitar*)
6. Nyckelharpa (*Keyed Fiddle*)
7. Dragspel (*Accordion*)
8. Kohorn (*Cow Horn*)
9. Klavikord (*Clavichord*)

**Från stuga
till salong
– att göra
instrumenten
representativa**

From Cottage to Parlor

– making the instruments representable

What happens with the instrument that become a national symbol?

It has to be, of course, a worthy elevation!

**The instrument must be beautiful and have the ability
to allow a more "sophisticated" repertoire to be played on it.**

In short – be representable.

If this is not the case one can help out a bit.

Turismen

Tourism

National symbols are a vital part of a country's marketing and promotion.

The travel and tourism industry is one

of the fastest growing commercial segments in the world.

What determines the image of a country?

The distinctively unique like handicrafts, nature, culture...?

The history behind the Dalecarlian Horse

**The Dalecarlian Horse – an old tradition of craftsmanship
that grew into an industry.**

At the 1939 New York World's Fair

the Dalecarlian Horse became world famous.

A gigantic horse was placed outside of the Swedish pavilion. A hit!

The world's press indulged itself with photos and articles about the horse.

The following year some 20 000 Dalecarlian Horses were produced

and shipped to New York. The Dalecarlian Horse's journey

to becoming a symbol of Sweden was started.