THE EMERGENCE OF DANISH NATIONAL OPERA, 1779-1846

by

DAN SHORE

A dissertation submitted to the Graduate Faculty in Music in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, The City University of New York

2008

UMI Number: 3306977

Copyright 2008 by
Shore, Dan

All rights reserved.

INFORMATION TO USERS

The quality of this reproduction is dependent upon the quality of the copy submitted. Broken or indistinct print, colored or poor quality illustrations and photographs, print bleed-through, substandard margins, and improper alignment can adversely affect reproduction.

In the unlikely event that the author did not send a complete manuscript and there are missing pages, these will be noted. Also, if unauthorized copyright material had to be removed, a note will indicate the deletion.

UMI Microform 3306977
Copyright 2008 by ProQuest LLC.
All rights reserved. This microform edition is protected against unauthorized copying under Title 17, United States Code.

ProQuest LLC
789 E. Eisenhower Parkway
PO Box 1346
Ann Arbor, MI 48106-1346

© 2008

DAN SHORE

All Rights Reserved

This manuscript has been read and accepted for the
Graduate Faculty in Music in satisfaction of the
dissertation requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

Professor William Rothstein

Date — Chair of Examining Committee

Professor David Olan

Date — Executive Officer

Professor Anna Harwell Celenza

Distinguished Professor David Del Tredici

Professor John Graziano

Distinguished Professor Richard Kramer

Professor Ora Frishberg Saloman

Supervisory Committee

THE CITY UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK

Abstract

THE EMERGENCE OF DANISH NATIONAL OPERA, 1779-1846

by

Dan Shore

Advisor: Professor Ora Frishberg Saloman

In a reflection of the political turmoil of the first half of the nineteenth century, opera composers in Denmark consciously and purposely worked to develop a national dramaturgy that was anti-German. Inspired by new collections of Danish folk music published between 1812 and 1842, these composers created a new musical language by synthesizing elements that had been an intermittent part of the vocabulary of Danish theater music as far back as 1779. Among these characteristics are a simple, lyrical, and mainly syllabic vocal line; gently dotted 6/8 rhythms; a strong modal inflection of otherwise classical harmony; a reliance on ballad and folksong material; an eschewing of any sort of orchestral word-painting; and a particular type of rhythmic cadence unique to Scandinavia. Ironically, the majority of musicians working in Denmark were German themselves; they had simply moved to Copenhagen, learned the new language, and tried to accommodate the taste of their new audience. The gradual emergence of genuinely Danish opera offers a model of the ways in which a body of work designed for public consumption helped define a country's growing sense of nationalism in the Romantic era.

Acknowledgments

I would like to begin by thanking my dissertation advisor, Ora Frishberg Saloman, and all of the members of my dissertation committee: Anna Harwell Celenza, David Del Tredici, John Graziano, Richard Kramer, and William Rothstein. Their warmth, generosity, encouragement, and advice have guided me through my entire time as a doctoral student. I would also like to offer a very special thank you to the indefatigable Peg Rivers, for everything from writing library recommendation letters to baking chocolate brownies, and several hundred other favors and bright smiles in between.

The ideas in this dissertation grew out of my time as a Fulbright Scholar in Copenhagen during the 2002-2003 academic year, when I studied privately with opera composer Andy Pape. In many ways this paper is a response to our many conversations about opera, nationality, and the shared experience of being "An American in Denmark." Niels Rosing-Schow very graciously allowed me to attend his composition seminar at Det Kongelige Danske Musikkonservatorium, and he also arranged for me to travel to Berlin with his students for the annual Nordic Music Days festival as a guest of the Nordic Composers Council. Funding for the entire year was provided by the Institute of International Education Fulbright Program.

I returned to Copenhagen to continue my research in the summer of 2006 with support from the American-Scandinavian Foundation and a City University of New York Research Grant. The majority of my time was spent at Det Kongelige Bibliotek, and I would like to thank Niels Krabbe and the entire staff of the Center for Musik og Teater for their friendship, kindness, and the infinite patience with which they answered my

numerous questions. The staff has also made an astonishing facsimile collection of scores and manuscripts available online, and access to these materials proved invaluable. Thanks also to the young woman who flouted policy and issued me a children's borrower card at Københavns Bibliotek, which allowed me to take out books, scores, and recordings from all of the public libraries in Copenhagen.

Trille Petersen, Anja Athar, and Bodil Jeppesen at Studieskolen tried their best to teach me how to speak Danish, and their insights into the complexities of integrating foreigners into Danish society proved illuminating. I also benefited immensely from conversations about Danish music and culture with Brad Abrams, Steffen Gliese, Irene Krarup, Aileen Broomall Itani, Lansing McLoskey, Greg Spears, Ian Samuel Terkildsen, and Thorsten Wagner. Thank you as well to Matthias Wivel and Jens-Christian Jensen for allowing me to stay in their apartments while they were undertaking international studies of their own.

I would have been unable to complete my dissertation without the vast scholarly resources available in Boston. My largest thanks go to the New England Conservatory Spaulding Library—my home away from home—and to Ricky Vallone for keeping it the best-run music library in the country. Many of the books I cite, including a surprising and excellent collection of Danish opera scores, come from the circulating and reference collections of the Boston Public Library. Thanks also to The Mugar Memorial Library at Boston University, the Iwasaki Library at Emerson College, and several libraries at Harvard University: the Loeb Music Library, the Harvard Theatre Collection at Pusey Library, and the Houghton Library. I would also like to give a special mention to Jon Wild, who first introduced me to the staff at the Loeb (while smuggling out several scores

for me to study at home). The very few items I was unable to locate in Boston were made available to me either through the Humanities and Social Sciences Library of the New York Public Library or the interlibrary loan system of the Mina Rees Library here at the Graduate Center of the City University of New York. Marci Shore brought me a suitcase full of additional volumes from The William and Gayle Cook Music Library at Indiana University, Bloomington.

An early version of Chapter 6 was written as a term paper for William Rothstein's Analysis of Nineteenth-Century Opera seminar at the Graduate Center. I am grateful to him for his insights, corrections, and his permission to pursue this slightly unconventional topic. Niels Krabbe answered several questions about *Liden Kirsten* and provided me with an advance copy of his preface to the then-unpublished critical edition of the score. Paul Robinson of Stanford University read through a revised version of the paper, and his encouragement was instrumental in the decision to continue my work. Research on German nationalism was greatly facilitated by the exhaustive bibliography Philipp Ther generously shared with me. Timothy Snyder of Yale University offered helpful suggestions as well, perhaps the most helpful being a list of titles *not* to give to this dissertation.

Special thanks to Robert and Josephine Rouse, who among numerous kindnesses have provided me with a home for so many years. My aunt and uncle, Gail and Alan Luper, gave me free use of their beautiful apartment in Manhattan for two years. I would also like to thank everyone who helped find me enough work to support myself through graduate school and the writing process: Dennis Buck, Maya Isyanova, David Olan, Andrew Tomasello, and Scott Wheeler.

The emotional stress of writing a dissertation was greatly relieved by the boundless and withering sarcasm of Nicholas Basila, Joshua Feltman, David Jacobsen, Pat Larash (also my special advisor on Roman literature), Ross Levitt, Patrick Mitten, B.J. Shore, and Andy Wassenich. Nicholas Basila has additionally provided me with all of the computer equipment anyone could ever possibly need, complete with unfailing twenty-four-hour technical support. Thanks also to the Boston Red Sox for winning the World Series two times during my doctoral research.

To say that my sister Marci Shore has been a continual source of inspiration to me would be an understatement. She persuaded me to apply for both a Fulbright and a doctoral degree, and she has coached, mentored, and cajoled me through every aspect of the academic experience. Thank you as well to my parents, who wouldn't let me stay up to watch the end of *Die Walküre* on public television, thus cleverly ensuring for me a lifelong interest in opera and Scandinavian mythology. They have stood by me throughout this entire process.

Finally, Clyde P. has been literally by my side every step of the way, traveling back and forth between New York and Boston and even spending nine months in Copenhagen eating Danish cat food. And of course thank you to Meredeth Rouse for shouldering well over half the burden of this project. She has painstakingly edited and proofread not only each draft, but also all of my written correspondence over the past several years. It would take another two hundred pages to list all of the help and support she has given to me, and another two hundred pages even to begin to express my love, admiration, and gratitude…but I'm pretty sure she doesn't want to see me write a second dissertation.

Table of Contents

List of Musical Examples x

List of Tables xii

Introduction 1

Chapter 1: The First Danish *Syngespil* 6
J.E. Hartmann, *Balders Død* (1779, Johannes Ewald)
J.E. Hartmann, *Fiskerne* (1780, Ewald)

Chapter 2: *Holger Danske* and the German/Danish Language War 32
F.L.Æ. Kunzen, *Holger Danske* (1789, Jens Baggesen, after C. Wieland)
J.A.P. Schulz, *Høstgildet* (1790, Thomas Thaarup)

Chapter 3: Two Representative *Syngespil* 63
Edouard Dupuy, *Ungdom og Galskab* (1806, N.T. Bruun, after Bouilly)
C.E.F. Weyse, *Sovedrikken* (1809, Adam Oehlenschläger, after C.F. Bretzner)

Chapter 4: The Danish *Folkevise* 97
Udvalgte danske Viser fra Middelalderen, ed. W.H.F. Abrahamson,
Rasmus Nyerup, and K.L. Rahbek (1812-1814)

Chapter 5: Danish Ballad as Opera Libretto 119
Friedrich Kuhlau, *Elverhøj* (1828, J.L. Heiberg)

Chapter 6: *Liden Kirsten* and the Creation of Danish Romantic Opera 159
J.P.E. Hartmann, *Liden Kirsten* (1846, H.C. Andersen)

Epilogue 191

Appendix: Cast of Characters 198

Bibliography 200

List of Musical Examples

Ex 1.1	Jean-Benjamin de Laborde, "Chansons anciennes Scandinaves," V, *Essai sur la Musique ancienne et moderne*	22
Ex. 1.2	J.E. Hartmann, "Naar Sielen ei vil vinde," *Balders Død*	23
Ex. 1.3	J.E. Hartmann, "Liden Gunver vandrer som helst i Qvel," *Fiskerne*	29
Ex. 2.1	Kunzen, *Holger Danske*, "De Spøgelser dansed' ved Midienat"	38
Ex. 2.2	Kunzen, *Holger Danske*, "Lastens feje Sønner"	41
Ex. 2.3	Schulz, *Høstgildet*, "Nys fyldte skjön Sired"	53
Ex. 2.4	Schulz, *Høstgildet*, "En Time för Middag"	55
Ex. 2.5	Schulz, *Høstgildet*, "Himmel, hvad ligner min Lykke!"	57
Ex. 3.1	Dupuy, *Ungdom og Galskab*, Opening	74
Ex. 3.2	Dupuy, *Ungdom og Galskab*, "Til Jyllands Kyst"	76
Ex. 3.3	Dupuy, *Ungdom og Galskab*, "Jeg er endnu i Livets Vaar"	77
Ex. 3.4	Dupuy, *Ungdom og Galskab*, "Jeg er endnu i Livets Vaar" (trio)	79
Ex. 3.5	Weyse, *Sovedrikken*, "Det blanke Sværd paa Væggen hang"	88
Ex. 3.6	Weyse, *Sovedrikken*, "Skjøn Jomfru, luk dit Vindue op!"	90
Ex. 3.7	Weyse, *Sovedrikken*, "De klare Bølger rulled'"	92
Ex. 3.8	Schulz, *Lieder im Volkston*, "Mailied" / Weyse, *Sovedrikken*, "Skjøn Jomfru" and "De klare Bølger"	94

Ex. 4.1a	*Udvalgte danske Viser*, "Dronning Dagmars Død"	104
Ex. 4.1b	*Udvalgte danske Viser*, "Ebbe Skammelsen"	104
Ex. 4.2	*Udvalgte danske Viser*, "Asbjørn Snares Frieri til Kongens Datter"	105
Ex. 4.3	*Udvalgte danske Viser*, "Ungen Svegdor, eller Runernes Magt"	108
Ex. 4.4	Weyse, *50 Gamle Kæmpevise Melodier*, "Ungen Svejdal"	109
Ex. 4.5a	*Udvalgte danske Viser*, "Elvehøj," version A	110
Ex. 4.5b	*Udvalgte danske Viser*, "Elvehøj," version B	110
Ex. 4.5c	*Udvalgte danske Viser*, "Elvehøj," version C	110
Ex. 4.5d	*Udvalgte danske Viser*, "Elvehøj," version D	111
Ex. 4.6	*Udvalgte danske Viser*, "Sivard Snarensvends Endeligt"	111
Ex. 4.7	*Udvalgte danske Viser*, "Jeg gik mig ud en sommerdag"	113
Ex. 4.8	*Udvalgte danske Viser*, "Dronning Dagmar spaaes af en Havfrue"	117

Ex 5.1	Kunzen, *Gyrithe*, "I Kjortelen sid, som Sneen hvid" / Kuhlau, *Røverborgen*, "Kong Ludvig drager med sin Hær"	122
Ex. 5.2	Kuhlau, *Lulu*, "Slunken Ædderkop sidder paa Tue"	127
Ex. 5.3	*Udvalgte danske Viser*, "Kjæmperne paa Dovrefjeld"	138
Ex. 5.4	Kuhlau, *Elverhøj*, "Jeg gik mig i Lunden"	140
Ex. 5.5	*Udvalgte danske Viser*, "Agnete og Havmanden," / Grønland, "Agnete og Havmanden," / Kunzen, "Agnete und der Meermann," / Kuhlau, *Elverhøj*, "Nu lider Dagen"	142
Ex. 5.6	*Alte Schwedische Volk-Melodien*, "Ridder Olle" / Kuhlau, *Elverhøj*, "Nu Lövsalen skygger"	145
Ex. 5.7	*Alte Schwedische Volk-Melodien*, "Malcolm Sinclair" / Kuhlau, *Elverhøj*, from Act V ballet music	147
Ex. 5.8	*Udvalgte danske Viser*, "Og jeg gik mig ved Trikolat"	148

Ex. 5.9	*Iduna*, "Necken," / Kuhlau, *Elverhøj*, "Dybt i Havet"	150
Ex. 5.10	Thomas, *Hamlet*, "Pâle et blonde Dort sous l'eau"	152
Ex. 5.11	Weber, *Der Freischütz*, "Jägerchor" / Kuhlau, *Elverhøj*, "Jæger-chor"	153
Ex. 5.12	Weber, *Der Freischütz*, "Jägerchor" / Kuhlau, *Elverhøj*, from Act V ballet music	154
Ex. 5.13	Kuhlau, *8 Variationen über ein dänisches Volkslied für's Piano-Forte*	156
Ex. 5.14	Kuhlau, *Les charmes de Copenhague*	156
Ex. 5.15	Kuhlau, *Elverhøj*, "Beskiærm vor Konge, store Gud!"	157
Ex. 6.1	J.P.E. Hartmann, *Liden Kirsten*, "Da seer I aldrig meer"	169
Ex. 6.2	J.P.E. Hartmann, *Ravnen*, "Uforsonlig grum og kold"	170
Ex. 6.3	J.P.E. Hartmann, *Liden Kirsten*, "I aften er her Bal og Sang"	172
Ex. 6.4a	J.P.E. Hartmann, *Liden Kirsten*, "I morgen Du vil i Kloster gaae"	173
Ex. 6.4b	J.P.E. Hartmann, *Liden Kirsten*, "I morgen Du vil i Kloster gaae"	173
Ex. 6.5	J.P.E. Hartmann, *Liden Kirsten*, "Fra Klostret to Kirken"	175
Ex. 6.6	J.P.E. Hartmann, *Liden Kirsten*, "Hr. Lave han reed sig under Ø"	176
Ex. 6.7	J.P.E. Hartmann, *Liden Kirsten*, "Langt, langt fra Hjemmets Kyst"	179
Ex. 6.8	J.P.E. Hartmann, *Liden Kirsten*, "Langt, langt fra Hjemmets Kyst"	181
Ex. 6.9	J.P.E. Hartmann, *Liden Kirsten*, "Tavlebordsduetten"	187

List of Tables

Table 6.1	Harmonic design of "Langt, langt fra Hjemmets Kyst"	185

Introduction

The idea of nationalism plays a dominant role in nineteenth-century European music. Names such as Fryderyk Chopin, Franz Liszt, and Bedřich Smetana are tied to the countries of their birth, and their music helped to define for these countries a specific sense of cultural identity. Yet it is not always so easy to identify the boundaries of musical nationality. The German-born Giacomo Meyerbeer made his reputation as a composer of French *grand opéra*; the Czech composer Antonín Dvořák, after having supported himself through the sales of his Slavonic Dances, spent three years in New York heading the National Conservatory of Music and producing such "American" works as the "New World" Symphony.

Denmark was one of many smaller European nations that struggled to assert itself culturally in the beginning of the nineteenth century. As early as the 1770s Danes began publicly to express resentment of the overwhelming German influence in Danish art and politics. At the same time that Denmark began to adopt a national constitution, tensions mounted in the German-speaking areas of the Slesvig province, climaxing in war in 1848, the so-called "Springtime of Nations." At Det kongelige Teater, the home of all opera, ballet, and spoken drama in Copenhagen, the conflict with Germany was mirrored in the development of musical and theatrical forms that would be understood by the public as truly Danish.

Ironically, the names that dominated Danish opera in this "Golden Age" of 1800-1850 were themselves German: J.E. Hartmann, F.L.Æ. Kunzen, J.A.P. Schulz, C.E.F. Weyse, and Friedrich Kuhlau. These composers simply moved to Copenhagen, learned

the new language, and composed Danish *syngespil* modeled after French *opéra comique* or German *Singspiele*. My dissertation explores this fundamental paradox of early Danish Romanticism: German-born composers were trying to create a distinctly non-German musical language to help the Danish nation assert its artistic independence from Germany.

Central to my dissertation is the concept of a Danish aesthetic. The operas discussed here typify this aesthetic and illustrate the way it developed from the earliest *syngespil* by J.E. Hartmann in 1779 through his grandson J.P.E. Hartmann's seminal *Liden Kirsten* in 1846. What separates the Danish repertory from the German is not simply a matter of language and musical style, but an entire artistic outlook, as evidenced in their differing approaches to musico-dramatic structure. Although my dissertation focuses on opera and *syngespil*, it will also take a broad view of all work performed at Det kongelige Teater. As the major librettists of the time were also playwrights, and the major opera composers also composed for the ballet, this larger perspective is critical for an understanding of the general approach Danish authors and musicians took towards the theater.

In emphasizing what I consider to be a unifying aesthetic, I take a very selective overview of the repertory from 1779 to 1846. I do not describe every work, nor even any particular work, in comprehensive detail. Rather I concentrate on those particular aspects of each opera that best represent a departure from prevailing German, French, and Italian norms. With the earlier pieces in the repertory, this departure frequently manifests itself in a single aria or excerpt such as "De Spøgelser dansed' ved Midienat" from F.L.Æ. Kunzen's *Holger Danske* (1789). In some of the later works such as Friedrich Kuhlau's

Elverhøj (1828) and J.P.E. Hartmann's *Liden Kirsten*, it is the entire dramatic structure itself that is of interest. My focus throughout, then, is neither strictly analytical nor explicitly musicological; it is an exploration of just what makes Danish opera so Danish.

Many of the composers I discuss have already been treated extensively by musicologists: J.E. Hartmann by Johannes Mulvad, F.L.Æ. Kunzen by Heinrich Schwab, Friedrich Kuhlau by Gorm Busk, and J.P.E. Hartmann by Inger Sørensen. There are also two excellent general surveys available in Danish: K.A. Bruun's *Dansk Musiks Historie: Fra Holberg-tiden til Carl Nielsen*, and Nils Schiørring's *Musikkens historie i Danmark.* Niels Martin Jensen has also done much to elucidate specific musical devices that are endemic to Danish Romantic music.

My dissertation has benefited enormously from these publications, and anyone familiar with this body of work will quickly discover that I have made no attempt to supersede this scholarship. For the Danish-speaking audience I merely hope to offer an outsider's perspective of what I consider to be a unified national repertoire.

For the English-speaking audience I hope to provide an introduction to Danish opera, since there is practically no other literature available, and what little can be found is often inaccurate or misleading. Leon Plantinga, for example, writes in his *Romantic Music*, "Nineteenth-century composers in Denmark never developed a very distinct profile, and 'nationalist' music scarcely existed there."[1] This statement will be shown to be utterly untrue.

Because of its unique aesthetic and the small and quantifiable number of works premiered in Copenhagen, the range of Danish operas can be examined almost in its

---

[1] Leon Plantinga, *Romantic Music: A History of Musical Style in Nineteenth-Century Europe* (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 1984).

entirety. Although a study of this music is long overdue for its own sake, it is my belief that it will hold wider appeal for scholars of nineteenth-century music as a model of the ways in which a body of work designed for public consumption helped define a country's growing sense of nationalism in the Romantic era. Additionally, there is perhaps a more substantial rationale for this research. Although it would be unrealistic to expect that the works of C.E.F. Weyse, Friedrich Kuhlau, and J.P.E. Hartmann will one day join the international repertory, their contributions should be considered and evaluated for at the very least offering a contrasting model to the development of German opera. The teleological view draws an evolutionary line directly from Weber to Wagner; however, the advent of the music drama demonstrates only one of various paths opera was to take. A study of Danish Romanticism illustrates another.

* * *

Spelling was inconsistent throughout the nineteenth century. *Elverhøj*, by Kuhlau and J.L. Heiberg, often shows up in print as *Elverhøi* or *Elverhöi*, and the ballad from which it takes its name appears occasionally as "Elvehøj." In the text I have regularized all Danish spelling in accordance with modern usage. When quoting a primary source, however, I have chosen to retain the original spelling. Orthography in the musical examples has been lightly edited in a few places.

Danish titles in the nineteenth century capitalize only nouns, and I have observed this rule in the text. When referring to the present day, however, I have followed modern standards of capitalization: Bournonville's *Et Folkesagn* premiered at Det kongelige

Teater, but today it is in the repertory of Det Kongelige Ballet. When quoting texts and librettos from modern editions, I have followed the capitalization used by those editions.

Written Danish only began to develop in the eighteenth century, and during the nineteenth century authors were still experimenting with the expressive possibilities of the language. I have tried to document the range of linguistic styles in the selection of quotations. My own translations therefore are as literal as possible, occasionally at the expense of clarity, and often at the expense of elegance.

Chapter 1
The First Danish *Syngespil*

J.E. Hartmann, *Balders Død* (1779, Johannes Ewald)
J.E. Hartmann, *Fiskerne* (1780, Johannes Ewald)

But here, where good fortune and peace of mind are met,
Here the heart forgets where it was born,
And chooses Denmark for its home.

—Johannes Ewald, *Fiskerne*[1]

It is perhaps with the execution of J.F. Struensee that Danish national opera truly begins. On the morning of January 18, 1772, Struensee, the most powerful man in Denmark, was arrested. Originally hired in 1768 as personal physician to the young, mad king Christian VII, the German-born Struensee had quickly become active in politics, and by the end of 1770 he was appointed *maître de requêtes*, through whom all proposed legislation by the Council of Conferences would pass—or not pass—to the king for his approval. In July 1771 he was made *Gehejmkabinettsminister*, with the authority to sign royal orders without the consent of the king. Although as an enlightened reformer he gained some popularity with the lower and merchant classes, he also made many powerful enemies in the aristocracy, court, and even the royal family itself. Because his usurpation of power had not necessarily been against the wishes of the apathetic king, Struensee was officially charged with having an affair with Christian's young British wife, Queen Caroline Mathilde. The adulterous couple admitted their guilt. For this violation of the Danish *lèse majesté* code, Struensee was condemned to death, along with his friend Enevold Brandt, the king's *maître de plaisir*. On April 28, 1772, Struensee's

[1] "Men her, hvor Held og Tryghed mødtes, / Her glemmer Hiertet, hvor det fødtes, / Og vælger Danmark til sit Hiem." Johannes Ewald, *Samlede Skrifter* (Copenhagen: Gyldendal, 1969), vol. 3, 197.

right hand was cut off, then his head. His body was drawn and quartered, and left on display in Copenhagen until it was stolen by British sailors three years later.[2]

While the sickly Christian VII nominally remained the king of Denmark, Caroline Mathilde was banished, and actual power was transferred to the Dowager Queen Juliane Marie and the eventual prime minister Ove Høeg-Guldberg, who helped solidify her position by encouraging anti-German sentiment and heavily promoting Danish culture. Guldberg passed the naturalization law denying state employment to anyone not born under Danish rule, which at the time included Danes, Norwegians, and the residents of the Holstein province.[3] Danish replaced German as the official language of the army, and it became a subject of instruction in grammar schools for the first time, aided by the publication of Ove Mallings's *Store og gode Handlinger af Danske, Norske og Holstenere* [Great Acts of Danes, Norwegians, and Holsteiners] in 1777.[4] Even the court painter, the Swedish Carl Gustav Pilo, was replaced with the Danish Vigilius Eriksen, recalled from the court of Catherine the Great in Russia.[5]

This was also a period of great change for the theater. After King Frederik IV had dismissed the French acting troupe run by Etienne Capion and René Montaigu from the court theater (in favor of a German opera company), Montaigu petitioned him, "Je luy demande très humblement la permission de pouvoir établir ici une Comédie in langue Danoise [I ask the king very humbly for permission to establish here a comic theater in

---

[2] Palle Lauring, *A History of the Kingdom of Denmark*, tr. David Hohnen (Copenhagen: Høst & Søn, 1960), 180-84; H. Arnold Barton, *Scandinavia in the Revolutionary Era, 1760-1815* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1986), 67-72; Hester W. Chapman, *Caroline Matilda: Queen of Denmark* (New York: Coward, McCann & Geoghegan, 1972), 65-169. Barton incorrectly gives the date of Struensee's execution as February 28.

[3] J.H.S. Birch, *Denmark in History* (London: John Murray, 1938), 293.

[4] Johannes Mulvad, introduction to Johann Ernst Hartmann, *Fiskerne*, et syngespil i tre handlinger, tekst af Johannes Ewald, musik af Johann Ernst Hartmann (den endelige version fra 1792), udgivet af Johannes Mulvad. Dania Sonans 6 (Copenhagen: Edition Egtved, 1993), 13, n. 5.

[5] Ibid.

the Danish language]."[6] The result was the opening in 1722 of the aptly named La Comédie Danoise, a playhouse that the two Frenchmen operated on Lille Grønnegade.[7] As there were at this time virtually no playscripts available in Danish, the impresarios commissioned several translations of contemporary French works, and asked the satirist Ludvig Holberg to provide them with a series of comedies.[8] The choice was fortuitous. Ridiculing the tastes and mores of Danish society, especially its predilection for foreign culture, Holberg almost single-handedly created a national literature, and today his plays still form the core of the Danish repertory.[9] Financial problems caused the theater to close in 1727. Although Grønnegadeteatret reopened in 1728, it was only a few months before it shut down again in the wake of the great Copenhagen fire, and during the reign of the pious King Christian VI from 1730 to 1746, all theatrical ventures were first discouraged, then actually forbidden.[10]

With the permission of King Frederik V, a permanent Danish company was founded as Den danske Skueplads in 1747 by C.A. Thielo and moved the following year to a new theater building, designed by the court architect Nicolai Eigtved, on Kongens Nytorv. Struggling with debt, the theater was given to the city of Copenhagen by Frederik V in 1750, but regained royal sponsorship in 1770 (under the reign of Christian VII), changing its name to Det kongelige Teater. In 1773 the renovated and expanded

---

[6] Frederick J. Marker and Lise-Lone Marker, *A History of Scandinavian Theatre* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 44-52; qtd. 51.
[7] Ibid.
[8] Ibid., 51-54. The lone exception to the lack of Danish plays is *Grevens og Friherrens Komedie* [The Comedy of the Count and the Baron], written by Mogens Skeel in 1678. See Oscar James Campbell, Jr., *The Comedies of Holberg* (New York: Benjamin Blom, 1914), 86. For more on Holberg, see Campbell, and also Gerald S. Argetsinger, *Ludvig Holberg's Comedies* (Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press, 1983).
[9] Holberg's first published satire was an attack on a textbook on Danish history that had been written in German. See Campbell, *The Comedies of Holberg*, 21-22.
[10] Marker and Marker, *A History of Scandinavian Theatre*, 61-62.

theater took over the ballet, and now had use of Det kongelige Kapel, the orchestra of the Royal Chapel, which thus divided its musical duties between Kongens Nytorv and the king's personal theater at Christiansborg Palace (Theatret paa Slottet).[11] Further, the King's French court troupe was disbanded, and all subsequent performances of the *opéra comique* repertory were to be in the Danish language. A theater school was created to train performers in the singing and acting styles required by *syngespil*, and the Dowager Queen established a prize fund to encourage the creation of Danish *syngespil* librettos.[12]

These reforms were facilitated by the arrest and execution of Enevold Brandt, who had been in charge of all court and theater entertainments. His death was also the indirect cause of one of the most significant changes, the resignation of Giuseppi Sarti as director and conductor of the opera company at Det kongelige Teater. A close associate of Brandt's, the Italian Sarti now found himself in a precarious position and tried to secure the earliest possible release from his contracts and obligations.

Sarti had been an important musical figure in Copenhagen since his arrival in 1753 as part of Pietro Mingotti's Italian opera troupe, and during most of the next twenty years he served alternately as music director either at Christiansborg or at Kongens Nytorv, composing well over twenty operas in Italian.[13] When the writer N.K. Bredal had first tried to introduce opera sung in Danish with his *Gram og Signe* (1756) it was to

---

[11] Ibid., 13-14; Nils Schiørring, *Musikkens historie i Danmark* (København: Politiken, 1978), vol. 1, 7-33; Marker and Marker, *A History of Scandinavian Theatre*, 64-70. Depending on the source, Det kongelige Teater in this period is alternately referred to as Den danske Skueplads, Det kongelige danske Teater, "Eigtved's theater," or simply the "theater on Kongens Nytorv." Den danske Skueplads is used to describe either Det kongelige Teater before 1770, or occasionally the entire theatrical establishment, including the theater at Christiansborg.

[12] Mulvad, introduction to Johann Ernst Hartmann, *Fiskerne*, 13-14. The term in Danish for *opéra comique* is in fact *fransk* [French] *syngespil*.

[13] For Sarti, see Schiørring, *Musikkens historie*, vol. 1, 21-34. See also Carl Thrane, "Sarti in Kopenhagen," *Sammelbände der Internationalen Musikgesellschaft* 3 (1901-02): 528-38.

Sarti that he turned for music.[14] Despite his not understanding a word of Danish, Sarti produced a number of *syngespil* in Danish, beginning with the popular *Soliman den Anden* (1770; libretto by C.D. Biehl, after a play by Charles-Simon Favart), whose story of a French slave whose disagreeableness arouses the love of the Turkish Soliman predates Mozart's *Die Entführung aus dem Serail* by twelve years. Following the success of *Soliman den Anden*, Sarti went on to compose *Tronfølgen i Sidon* [The Succession to the Throne in Sidon] (1771; N.K. Bredal, after Pietro Metastasio) and *Deucalion og Pyrrha* (1772; C.A. Theilo and N.K. Bredal, after Germain-François Poullain de Saint Foix) for Det kongelige Teater.

These pieces, although sung in Danish, were musically no different from Sarti's Italian operas. The only concession to the *syngespil* form was the use of spoken dialogue instead of recitative. According to historian Kai Aage Bruun, although the public had initially rejoiced loudly enough over these Danish works, the artistic climate in Copenhagen was not really conducive to the cultivation of Sarti's showy, coloratura Italian style.[15] It may be that Sarti's decision to leave Copenhagen was at least in part due to his perception of a gradual dissatisfaction with his music. The most tangible evidence of this changing taste was perhaps the premiere of Paolo Scalabrini's *Kiærlighed uden Strømper* in 1773.

Kiærlighed uden Strømper [Love Without Stockings] began as a play by the Norwegian author J.H. Wessel in 1772, and was a response to an initiative of Bredal's.

---

[14] See Torben Krogh, "Det første forsøg paa at skabe en opera i det danske sprog," *Aarbog for Musik* 1 (1922): 123-58. Uncertainty remains as to how much input Sarti himself had in the setting of *Gram og Signe*. Dates in parentheses, here and following, indicate the date of an opera's premiere.

[15] "Publikum jublede nok til at begynde med over Sartis danske syngestykker, men den koloraturprangede italienske operastil havde alligevel ingen rigtige vækstbetingelser under vore himmelstrøg." Kai Aage Bruun, *Dansk Musiks Historie: Fra Holberg-tiden til Carl Nielsen* (Copenhagen: J. Vintens, 1969), vol. 1, 51.

Now in charge of the theater, Bredal sponsored a prize for a new Danish tragedy. The prize was awarded to J.N. Brun's *Zarine*, a tragedy in the French classical style, but written in the Danish language. Wessel's play was not precisely a parody of *Zarine*, but rather a parody of Bredal's taste for French literature. *Kiærlighed uden Strømper* conformed rigorously to all of the rules and conventions of French classical tragedy, including the use of alexandrines and the unities of time and place.[16] The absurd plot, which illustrates both the nature of the prevailing taste and the ridiculous quality of Wessel's satire, is as follows:

> Grete, who is in love with Johan von Ehrenpreis, a tailor-apprentice, has, in a dream, received warning that she will never be married unless the wedding takes place on that very day. But Johan cannot lead her to the altar on this day because he has no stockings. Grete, however, is intent on the wedding, and so her friend, Mette, suggests that Johan steal a pair of stockings from his rival, Mads. After a severe inward struggle between love and virtue, Johan becomes a thief. Grete has evil forbodings, but her lover refuses to countenance them, and everything promises well, when Mads and his friend Jesper discover the theft and charge Johan with it in the presence of his bride. Johan cannot outlive the disgrace and stabs himself; Grete follows his example; then Mads kills himself from grief at the loss of his beloved, and Jesper, likewise, takes his life. Finally Mette commits suicide, simply because she does not care to be the only survivor, and thus the ending of the play is sufficiently tragic.[17]

With the addition of Scalabrini's music, however, Wessel's parody took on an added dimension. By imitating the style of Sarti, Scalabrini seemed to make a mockery of the former's attempts to compose a "Danish" opera, although it is possible that this was

---

[16] P.M. Mitchell, *A History of Danish Literature* (New York: The American-Scandinavian Foundation, 1958), 97.

[17] Alfred Bates, editor-in-chief, *Scandinavian Drama*. The Drama: Its History, Literature, and Influence on Civilization, vol. 17 (London: The Athenian Society, 1903), 31-33.

unintentional, given Scalabrini's own limited ability to speak and read Danish.[18] As Bruun described it two hundred years later,

> There could be no better and more painful parody of this phony, stilted style than the melodies of Scalabrini's arias for *Love Without Stockings*. The mania for all things Italian was put to rest, perhaps even inadvertently, beaten at its own game—how Holberg would have been delighted![19]

Feeling pressure as a result of both Wessel's and Scalabrini's success and the various court intrigues that came in the wake of Struensee's execution, Sarti literally fled the country, never to return. The era of Italian opera in Denmark had ended.

Balders Død

It was this cultural climate that yielded what is considered to be the first Danish *syngespil*, *Balders Død* [Balder's Death]. Originally intended to be a tragedy without music, the poet Johannes Ewald modified his plan in a response to the Dowager Queen's efforts to encourage *syngespil* texts. The libretto was completed in 1773 and submitted to Selskabet for de skiønne og nyttige Videnskaber [The Society for the Fine and Useful Arts] with the hope that it would be published.[20]

---

[18] Bruun, *Dansk Musiks Historie*, vol. 1, 52.
[19] "Bedre og mere smertende kunne parodien på det forlorent opstyltede ikke fuldbyrdes musikalsk end i Scalabrinis ariemelodier til *Kiærlighed uden Strømper*. Italienermanien er her udleveret og, måske endda ubevidst, fældet med sine egne våben—hvor ville Holberg have frydet sig!" Ibid., 53. This rather free translation is my own, as are all others to follow, unless otherwise specified.
[20] Mulvad, Introduction to *Balders Død*, 9-10.

Ewald's previous work, *Rolf Krage*, had been rejected by Selskabet in 1770.[21] Although *Rolf Krage* was one of the first Danish dramas to treat a Scandinavian legend, its literary style may have concerned some of the members of the publication committee who were more intent on fostering Danish—as opposed to German— art. In particular, it showed a marked indebtedness to the German poet Friedrich Klopstock.

Klopstock had arrived in Denmark in 1751 thanks to an invitation by the foreign minister, Count J.H.E. Bernstorff. Bernstorff admired his work and felt he would be an asset to the cultural community, and this opinion was shared by King Frederick V, who became acquainted personally with the poet. Klopstock soon became the center of a German literary circle in Denmark, although he strongly supported the newly-formed Selskabet for de skiønne og nyttige Videnskaber and encouraged native talent wherever he found it. He took an active interest in promoting the young Ewald, and it was in fact Klopstock who had submitted the *Rolf Krage* manuscript to Selskabet. By 1770, however, rising anti-German sentiment in Copenhagen affected Danish attitudes towards authors like Klopstock. Once admired for the promise of culture they brought with them from Germany, they were now resented for what was perceived as a foreign intrusion on the fledgling Danish literary culture. Klopstock's sponsorship no longer had the authority to persuade the members of the Society which years before he himself had helped to empower.[22] Later that year he left Denmark permanently when his patron Bernstorff fell from political grace—ironically, due to the machinations of Struensee.[23]

---

[21] J.W. Eaton, *The German Influence in Danish Literature in the Eighteenth Century: The German Circle in Copenhagen, 1750-1770* (Cambridge: University Press, 1929), 83-84.
[22] Ibid., 53-84.
[23] Ibid., 87. For more on the dismissal of Bernstorff, see Chapman, *Carline Matilda*, 92-98.

On the lasting effects of Klopstock's stay in Denmark, historian J.W. Eaton writes:

> Klopstock's coming to Copenhagen meant for Danish literature much more than even his most ardent contemporary Danish disciples suspected. It was the point from which Danish literature began to move forward to a new and fuller development…Klopstock never sought to exercise any influence on Danish literature. It was by their mere existence, by their novelty, that his works exercised a challenging influence on the adherents of an older literary taste; and it was from the controversy over Klopstock's works…that a more intelligent criticism was developed in Denmark. From the very opposition to Klopstock came a greater clearness in Danish literary ideas.[24]

Ewald was a true product of his time, and absorbed all of the influences now considered typical of the German *Sturm and Drang* movement, including his interest in reviving legendary Scandinavian history. In a preface to the 1770 *Rolf Krage* he writes of his dependence on Klopstock, as well as his avowed devotion to James Macpherson's Ossian poems and Shakespeare (which he read in C.M. Wieland's German translation).[25] What distinguished Ewald from his contemporaries was perhaps simply a matter of being in the right place at the right time. After Klopstock's departure in 1770 Ewald began to free himself from his dependence on the style of his former mentor; after Struensee's death in 1772 Denmark was ready to embrace a native Danish voice. By 1773, with the completion of *Balders Død*, Ewald had established himself securely as Denmark's first great poet and a precursor to the writers of the later Danish Romantic movement. The *syngespil* was accepted by Selskabet for de skiønne og nyttige Videnskaber and was

---

[24] Ibid., 72-73.

[25] Eaton, *German Influence*, 83, which refers to Ewald's preface to a German translation of *Rolf Krage*, reprinted in Danish in Ewald, *Samlede* Skrifter, vol. 3, 248. For more on the effect of Ossian in Denmark, see Anna Harwell Celenza, "Efterklange of Ossian: The Reception of James MacPherson's Poems of Ossian in Denmark's Literature, Art, and Music," *Scandinavian Studies* 70/3 (1998): 359-96.

published in 1774. The following year Johannes Ewald, who had once been content to be a member of Klopstock's German literary circle, found himself at the center of a new Danish literary circle.[26]

The plot of *Balders Død*, which like that of *Rolf Krage* Ewald took from Saxo Grammaticus's monumental *Gesta Danorum* [History of the Danes], tells the tale of Balder, most beloved of all the gods, who fell in love with the mortal Nanna, herself in love with the brave Hother, king of the Danes.[27] Neither of the rivals is willing to kill the other for fear of upsetting their mutual beloved, but Hother is goaded by the evil demigod Loke and three Valkyries into fashioning the only weapon that can end Balder's life. In the end, although Hother is still reluctant to harm Balder, the god stumbles on the fated spear and expires, to the grief of all.

Ewald's handling of the action is not particularly adept or dramatic, but he paints vivid, psychologically revealing portraits of Hother, Nanna, Balder, and Balder's confidante and advisor, the god Thor. This quality of characterization may have been one result of the poet's study of Shakespeare, in pursuit of which he felt the need to learn English.[28] Ewald also pays homage to Shakespeare in his portrayal of the three Valkyries, whom he models after the three witches in *Macbeth*. The scene in which the Valkyries meet Hother and begin to urge him on to vanquish Balder echoes unmistakably Shakespeare's Act I, scene iii:

> HOTHER (He becomes aware of the VALKYRIES and stops. They go

---

[26] Mitchell, *A History of Danish Literature*, 96.
[27] *Gesta Danorum* also contains the original story of Shakespeare's *Hamlet*.
[28] Ewald, *Samlede Skrifter*, vol. 3, 248. Ewald writes of Wieland's German translations of Shakespeare and Ossian, "og saa ufuldkomne som disse ere, opvakte de dog, jeg vil ikke sige, en Lyst, men en Trang hos mig til at lære Engelsk" [and so imperfect as these are, they certainly spurred on, I won't say a desire, but a need to learn English].

hand-in-hand to meet him): Forgive my astonishment, fair Valkyries!
THE FIRST: Hail to thee, powerful warrior, bane of Gelder!
THE SECOND: Hail to thee, Skoldung, courageous son of Hothbrod!
THE THIRD: Hail to thee, my Hother, Leire's king!
HOTHER (Astonished): You know me?
THE THIRD: We love you, you noble youth!
HOTHER: I do not understand this good fortune—But what divinity
Has presented me with this happy meeting?
THE FIRST: I bring you a spear to fight with heroes!
THE SECOND: And this, I hand to thee, can slaughter demons!
THE THIRD: This spear is good in battle with giants.
HOTHER: How can I ever repay you for these rare gifts?
THE FIRST: Be valiant! fight! send the sons of battle to Valhalla!
THE SECOND: Extend the power of the Danes and the rule of Odin!
THE THIRD: Be father to warlike kings of Leire!
(They disappear) [29]

Balders Død also contains features common to other *Sturm und Drang* works. In particular, Balder's hopeless love for Nanna, engaged to Hother, recalls Johann Wolfgang von Goethe's *Die Leiden des Jungen Werthers* [The Sorrows of Young Werther].[30] As

---

[29] "HOTHER (i det han bliver Valkyrierne vaer, standser han noget. De gaae ham Haand i Haand i Møde): Tilgiver min Forundring, favre Skioldmøer!
DEN FØRSTE: Hil dig, du dierve Kæmper! Gelders Bane!
DEN ANDEN: Hil dig, Skioldunge! kiekke Søn af Hothbrod!
DEN TREDIE: Hil dig, min Hother, tapre Leire-Konge!
HOTHER (Forundret): I kiende mig?
DEN TREDIE: Vi elske dig, du Ædle!
HOTHER: Jeg fatter ei min Held - men hvilken Guddom / Har skienket mig det lykkelige Møde?
DEN FØRSTE: Jeg bringer dig et Spyd til Kamp med Tappre.
DEN ANDEN: Og det, jeg skienker dig, kan dræbe Trolde.
DEN TREDIE: Og dette Spyd er got i Kamp med Jetter.
HOTHER: Hvormed giengielder jeg saa sieldne Gaver?
DEN FØRSTE: Vær tapper! strid! send Kampens Børn til Valhal!
DEN ANDEN: Udbred de Danskes Magt, og Odins Love!
DEN TREDIE: Vær Fader til stridbare Leire-Konger!
(De forsvinde)" Ewald, *Samlede Skrifter*, vol. 3, 40.

[30] Goethe's prototypical hero, not surprisingly, shares Ewald's love of Ossian, and Werther reveals his reverence for Klopstock's poetry in the following episode with Charlotte: "She stood there, leaning on her elbows, her gaze penetrating the countryside; she looked up at the sky, at me, and I could see tears in her eyes. She laid her hand on mine and said, 'Klopstock.' I knew at once of what she was thinking—his magnificent ode ['Die Frühlingsfeier']—and was lost in the emotions that this one word aroused in me. I bent down and kissed her hand, and now there were tears in my eyes too as I looked into hers again. Oh, noble poet, if you could have seen the adoration in those eyes! I hope I need never have to hear your name, so oft profaned, spoken again by any other lips!" Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, *The Sorrows of Young Werther*, tr. Catherine Hutter (New York: Signet Classic, 1962), 41.

Goethe's novella was not published until the fall of 1774, it is impossible to cite it as a source of inspiration. Nevertheless, the following scene between Balder and Nanna is strikingly similar to the heated exchanges between Werther and Charlotte in Goethe:

NANNA (frightened): You sublime gods!
You frighten me! – Miserable me!
(She wishes to escape, but BALDER holds her back with force and throws himself down at her feet)
BALDER: Oh my Nanna!
Stay! I implore you with these tears,
With all of my sufferings! Stay, Nana! Stay!
NANNA (apprehensive): What do you want?
BALDER: And do I know? Ah! I have hoped, Nanna!
NANNA: Oh, let me go! – Let me fly! – What have you hoped for?
You surely know whom I love – Let me go, Balder!
BALDER: No, here at your feet I will hear
My doom. – Is there no, no hope remaining?
Can all of my love – can these tears –
Can nothing move you? Oh, answer me, Nanna!
Say no! Thrust the dagger into my breast!
NANNA: Ah, Balder,
Why do you love a mortal?
BALDER: Maybe you
Just doubt my love, just wish to test
The extent of your Balder's heart. Ha, I will raise
My right hand to heaven, and swear
To you eternal, eternal love, my Nanna!
And if you want greater proofs, just name them,
That I may show you how much I love you![31]

---

[31] "NANNA (forskrekket): I høie Guder! - / Du skrekker mig! - Jeg arme!
(Hun vil undflye, men Balder opholder hende med Magt, og kaster sig ned for hendes Fødder)
BALDER: O min Nanna! / Bliv! - jeg besværger dig ved disse Taarer, / Ved al min Qval - bliv Nanna! bliv!
NANNA: (beængstet): Hvad vil du?
BALDER: Og veed jeg det? - ak jeg har haabet, Nanna!
NANNA: O slip mig! - lad mig flye! - hvad har du haabet? / Du veedst jo, hvem jeg elsker - slip mig, Balder!
BALDER: Nei her, ved dine Fødder vil jeg høre / Min Dom. - Er intet, intet Haab tilbage? / Kan al min Kierlighed - kan disse Taarer - / Kan intet røre dig? - O svar mig, Nanna! - / Siig Nei! Stød Dolken i mit Bryst!
NANNA: Ha Balder! / Hvi elsker du en Dødelig?
BALDER: Maaskee du / Kun tvivler paa min Elskov, kun vil prove / Din Balders Hiertelav. Ha jeg vil løfte / Min høire Haand mod Himlen, og tilsværge / Dig evig, evig Kierlighed, min Nanna! / Og vil du større Prøver, o da nævn dem, / At jeg maa vise dig, hvor høit jeg elsker!" Ewald, *Samlede Skrifter*, vol. 3, 73-74.

What then secures *Balders Død* its place in Danish literary history? Ultimately, it is the simple fact of its being the first significant *syngespil* text written originally in Danish. It is therefore more than a little ironic to note that Det kongelige Teater had the libretto translated into Italian in 1775 to enable the popular Scalabrini to set it to music.[32] For some reason Scalabrini never composed the score (perhaps he found the writing uncongenial to his Italianate sensibility), and the libretto—in the original Danish—was passed on to the Theater's "Director of *Syngespil*," Thomas Chr. Walter.[33] Walter also proved himself unequal to the task, and in January 1778 *Balders Død* was performed in honor of the King Christian VII's birthday at the court theater—with no music at all.[34]

The mere fact that it could be credibly staged without arias and musical ensembles indicates something intrinsically lacking in the construction of the work itself. Although Ewald intended the work to be a *syngespil*, the opportunities in the libretto for musical settings are unconventional for the form. The almost exclusively gloomy and morose aria texts offer little variety in terms of poetic character or mood, and none is suitable for a strophic song. It may very well have been these failings in the libretto that Scalabrini and Walter found so unsettling.

Nevertheless a royal order, issued through Ove Høegh-Guldberg, was sent to the Theater to rectify the situation.[35] As the only two composers in Copenhagen with any experience writing for the stage had already withdrawn from the project, the task fell to the next-most qualified musician, a violinist who had come from the German-speaking province of Holstein in 1761. Guldberg's order stated quite plainly:

---

[32] Mulvad, Introduction to *Balders Død*, 10-11.
[33] Bruun, *Dansk Musiks Historie*, vol. 1, 59.
[34] Ibid.
[35] Mulvad, Introduction to *Balders Død*, 11-12.

> It is commanded that Det Kongelige Kapel's concertmaster, Joh. Ernst Hartmann, compose music for *Balders Død*.[36]

Despite the dissolution of his French court troupe several years before, Christian VII still had retained his taste for *opéra comique*, and this preference was obliged. Hartmann's score bore little resemblance to recently favored Italian styles. Rather, it was in the tradition of such popular French composers as Pierre-Alexandre Monsigny and André-Ernest-Modeste Grétry. Hartmann also leaned towards the clearer prosody of Christoph Willibald Gluck's Paris style, the so-called "talende musik" [speaking music] as opposed to Sarti's and Scalabrini's "klingende musik" [jingling music].[37] *Balders Død* also featured, in addition to the standard pit orchestra, a large offstage band of no fewer than eighteen instruments, an incredible luxury for Det kongelige Teater, and one which presented numerous problems in terms of music preparation (both rehearsals and the actual preparation of score and parts) and theatrical rehearsals.[38] This use of instrument placement to create a larger sense of space and multiplicity of physical locations, in addition to a supernatural or godlike atmosphere, can as well be traced to French *opéra comique* of the 1770s.[39]

The *syngespil* was performed at Det kongelige Teater for the first time on January 30, 1779 (again in honor of King Christian VII's birthday), and Hartmann showed himself to be an able composer. Even though his music did not differ significantly from

---

[36] "Det befales Det kgl. Kapels koncertmester, Joh. Ernst Hartmann at komponere musik til Balders Død." Qtd. in Mulvad, Introduction to *Balders Død*, 11.
[37] Bruun, *Dansk Musiks Historie*, vol. 1, 58.
[38] These problems, including the lack of score paper with a sufficient number of staves, are detailed in Johannes Mulvad, "Omkring udgivelsen af *Balders Død*," *Dansk Årbog forMusikforskning* 10 (1979): 67-126.
[39] According to Hervé Lacombe, "Grétry and his librettists were the pathfinders, and *Zémire et Azor* (1771) was a prototype." Hervé Lacombe, *The Keys to French Opera in the Nineteenth Century*, tr. Edward Schneider (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001), 125-26.

prevailing French conventions, traces of what would eventually become prominent features of Danish music can be observed in the score. In the words of historian Nils Schiørring, "Something of that which is characteristic of the Nordic tone can be found expressed here—dark settings in minor keys and a particular type of instrumentation."[40] After the premiere, however, Hartmann revised a small part of the score, and when *Balders Død* was performed again in 1784, there was a new setting for Thor's aria, "Naar Sielen ei vil vinde" [When the soul will not remain free]. Hartmann had marked as a tempo indication, "In Gusto Nationale d'Islandia."

What precisely did Hartmann mean by this, and where did he get the idea? According to musicologist Johannes Mulvad,

> The stern words of the aria are declaimed with sublime equanimity in the simple rhythmic pattern which Hartmann had concluded was typical of the old Icelandic folk-songs. Melodically the aria has something alien or archaic about it by reason of a feeling for intervals of so peculiar and harsh a character that the tritone itself becomes a natural element in the melodic line.[41]

The simple rhythmic pattern—essentially a preponderance of half-notes—characterizes not necessarily Icelandic music in general, but the five "Chansons anciennes Scandinaves, comme on les chante encore en Islande" [ancient Scandinavian songs, as they are still sung in Iceland] that Hartmann transcribed in 1780 for Jean-Benjamin de Laborde.[42]

---

[40] "Noget af det der karakteriseres som nordisk tone, findes udtalt heri—mørkladne mol-satser og særegen instrumentation." Schiørring, *Musikkens historie i Danmark*, vol. 1, 90.
[41] Mulvad, Introduction to *Balders Død*, 29-30.
[42] Jean-Benjamin de Laborde, "Chansons du Danemark, de la Norvege & de l'Islande." Vol. 2, book 4, chap. 9 in *Essai sur la Musique ancienne et moderne* (Paris: Ph. D. Pierres, 1780), 397-418. The melodies referred to are found on pp. 402-07.

Laborde, compiling his monumental *Essai sur la Musique ancienne et moderne*, wished to include folk music from Scandinavia, and enlisted the aid of the Secretary of the Copenhagen Royal Society of Sciences. This Secretary Jacobi selected a number of songs and ballads, translated the texts into French, and had J.E. Hartmann transcribe the music from Norwegian and Icelandic singers (the Danish lyrics in the collection were printed without music). It is rather fortuitous that at the precise moment Danish opera emerges, Scandinavian folksong is notated and published internationally for the first time, and that J.E. Hartmann is responsible for both of these achievements.

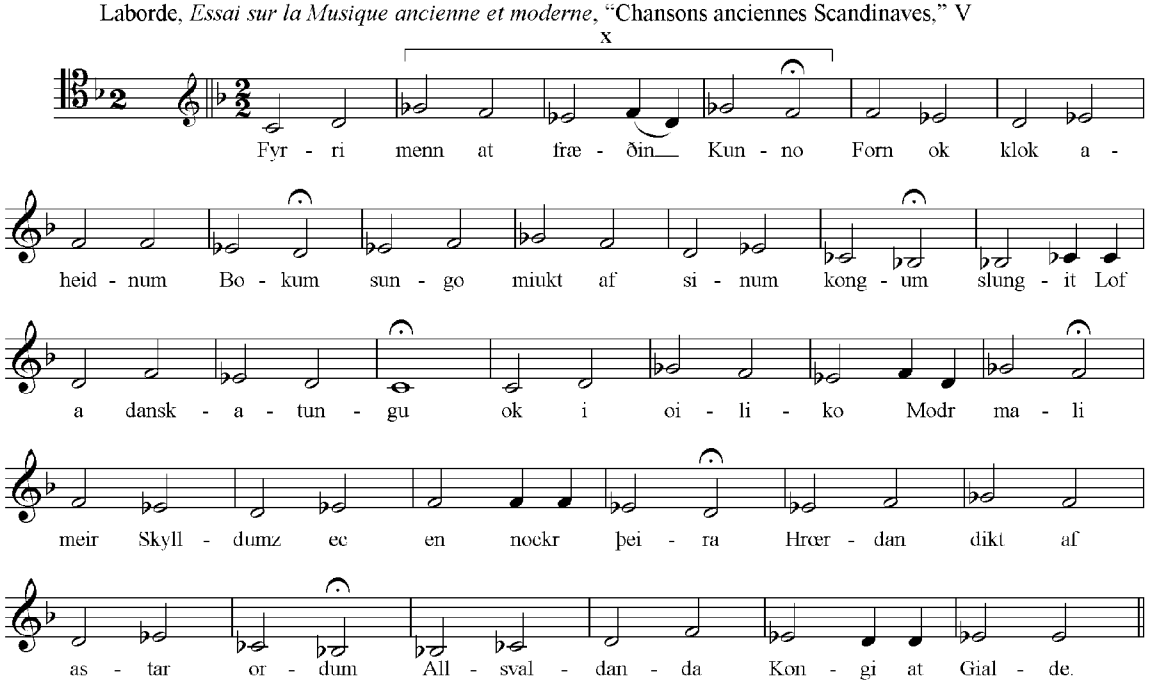
Although Hartmann's experience with the folksongs bore fruit in his later collaboration with Ewald, it is the 1784 version of "Naar Sielen ei vil vinde" that most clearly demonstrates the specificity of the new musical influence. The aria, in which Thor sadly reflects on Balder's fateful love of Nanna, reworks the fifth of the "Chansons anciennes Scandinaves," a setting of the fourth stanza from the medieval poem *Lilja* [*The Lily*], attributed to Eysteinn Ásgrímsson.[43] A comparison of the melody from Laborde (Example 1.1) with that of in "Naar Sielen ei vil vinde" (Example 1.2) shows that Hartmann used the second through fourth measures of the original song (labeled as "x") as the principal melodic idea to be developed in Thor's aria.[44] Here, then, is the earliest documented instance of one of the hallmarks of Danish nationalism: the incorporation of actual folk material into a Danish opera. The aria, which points the way to further developments throughout the nineteenth century, offers justification alone to classify *Balders Død* as the first genuine Danish work in the operatic repertory.

---

[43] For more on *Lilja*, see Stefán Einarsson, *A History of Icelandic Literature* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1957), 73-76.

[44] See also Bruun, *Dansk Musiks Historie*, vol. 1, 61-62, and Torben Krogh, *Zur Geschichte des dänischen Singspiels im 18. Jahrhundert* (København: Levin & Munksgaard, 1924), 127-28. Krogh cites another, similar Icelandic melody as Example 18, pg. 281.

Laborde, *Essai sur la Musique ancienne et moderne*, "Chansons anciennes Scandinaves," V

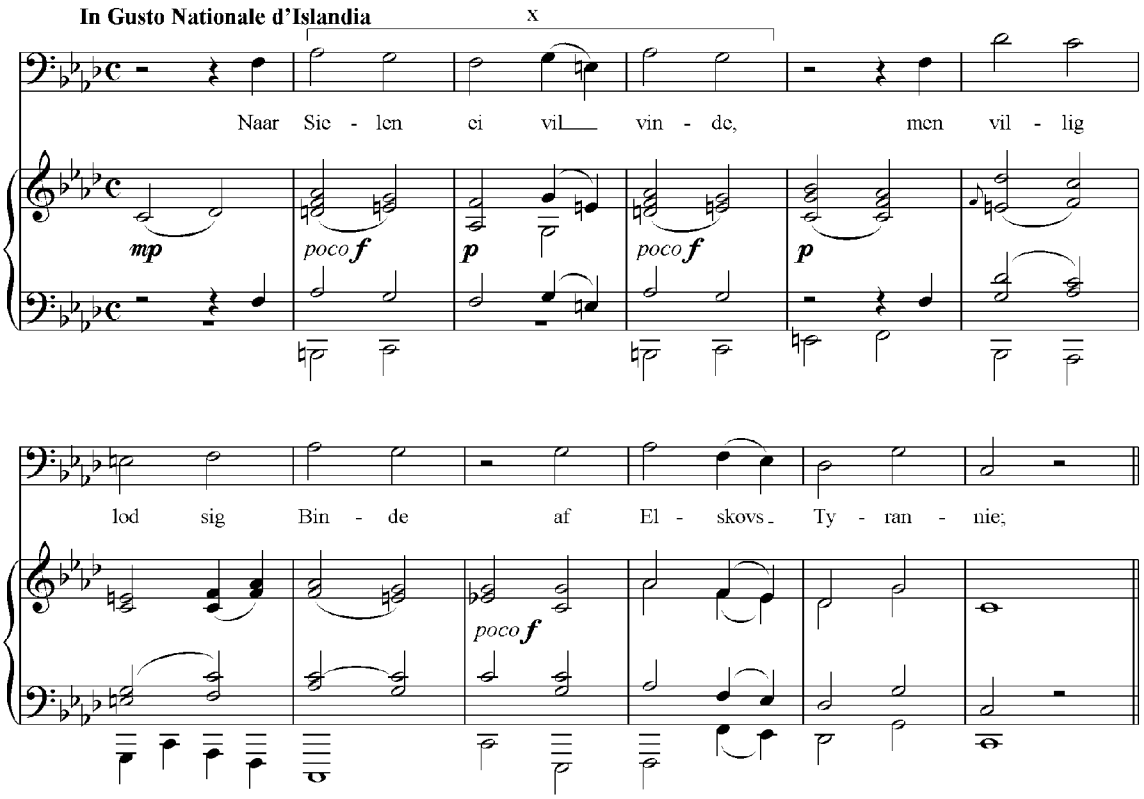


[Men of eld, that olden lore
learned and spelled from heathen vellum,
with smooth cunning have their kings'
praises told in Danish phrase.
How much more, then, mine to match
others in my mother speech,
moved with lively words of love
to delight a king all mighty?][45]

Example 1.1

[45] Translation by Alan Boucher, from *"The Lily" and "Lay of the Sun": Two mediæval religious poems* ([Reykjavík]: Bóksala Stúdenta, 1985), 2.1 - 2.2.

J.E. Hartmann, *Balders Død*, "Naar Sielen ei vil vinde"



[When the soul will not remain free,
But willingly allows itself be committed
To the tyranny of love]

Example 1.2

Fiskerne

After the success of *Balders Død*, Hartmann was asked to compose music for another *syngespil* by Ewald, *Fiskerne* [The Fishermen]. The story was drawn from the recently published *Store og gode Handlinger af Danske, Norske og Holstenere* by Ove Malling, mentioned above, and the final work was to be performed for King Christian VII's birthday celebration in 1780.[46] As the text was commissioned sometime after the 1778 spoken performance of *Balders Død*, it was written at the same time that Hartmann was supplying music for the earlier libretto, and thus it is quite likely that the composer had a strong influence on the poet.[47] Several years had passed since the 1774 publication of *Balders Død*, and Ewald had in the meantime become more familiar with the workings of the theater. This newly acquired experience manifests itself in a much more characteristic *syngespil* text, one for which a performance without music would be unthinkable.

The features of *Fiskerne* that make it more conventional than *Balders Død* are, not surprisingly, those of the French *opéra comique*. Like *Balders Død*, *Fiskerne* also combines spoken dialogue with singing, but here the musical numbers serve as the emotional crux of each scene instead of simply extended dramatic monologues. The plot centers not on the mythic deeds of a panoply of Norse gods, but the Danish peasants in the fishing town of Hornbæk. Although there is still death in *Fiskerne*, the characters

---

[46] Ove Malling, ed., *Store og gode Handlinger af Danske, Norske, og Holstenere* (1777; rpt. Copenhagen: Gyldendal, 1992). The original story can be found on pp. 64-68.

[47] Johannes Mulvad, introduction to *Fiskerne*, et syngespil i tre handlinger, tekst af Johannes Ewald, musik af Johann Ernst Hartmann (den endelige version fra 1792), udgivet af Johannes Mulvad. Dania Sonans 6 (Copenhagen: Edition Egtved, 1993), 19-26. Mulvad cautions that as Hartmann was only chosen to compose the music for *Fiskerne* after the premiere of the *syngespil Balders Død*, no explicit collaboration can be assumed.

who perish do so offstage, and they are only known of indirectly; that is, the audience is never given the opportunity to see them. The tone throughout is, if not quite humorous, certainly closer to the tragic-comic than that of the morbid Romanticism of *Balders Død*. The last act introduces a mysterious foreign nobleman, Odelheim, who helps to bring about the obligatory happy ending. By the final curtain, the four estranged lovers (Lise and Svend, and Birthe and Knud) are successfully reunited, which makes the *vaudeville final* much more in the spirit of the genre than that which mourns the death of Balder in the earlier work.

Ewald and Hartmann include several strophic texts and settings, each of which narrates a story in the manner of a folk narrative. It is in two of these—"Liden Gunver vandrer som helst i Qvel" [Little Gunver wandered at evenfall] and "En Edder-Fugl var haardt i Klemme" [An eider was in a bad spot] —that the link between French *opéra comique* and the mature Danish syngespil of the early nineteenth century is most evident. Both of these numbers are diegetic; that is, Ewald takes pains to specify in the dialogue that they are indeed to be heard as "songs," and not natural expressions of the thoughts and emotions of the characters who sing them.[48] They do reflect in some way, of course, on the emotional situations being enacted, but a clear demarcation between speech and song is indicated verbally before the numbers begin.

In "Liden Gunver vandrer som helst i Qvel," Lise commands Svend, "Listen to my song of little Gunver's fate!"

---

[48] I use the word "diegetic" here and elsewhere in its simplest sense; it describes only the fact that the characters onstage are themselves aware that music is being performed. Carolyn Abbate also refers to this music as "'phenomenal' performance, which might be loosely defined as a musical or vocal performance that declares itself openly, singing that is heard by the singer, the auditors on stage, and understood as 'music that they (too) hear' by us, the theater audience." See Carolyn Abbate, *Unsung Voices: Opera and Musical Narrative in the Nineteenth Century* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991), 5.

LISE: Away! You are ferocious and cruel, and hard as a rock;
And deceitful like all of your brothers.
Forever will I shun the false menfolk,
So what happened to poor Gunver will not happen to me.
Listen to my song of little Gunver's fate!

Little Gunver wandered at evenfall,
Sunk deep in thought.
Her heart was of wax, her spirit all
Of fine gold wrought.
Beware, my child, of the false menfolk!

Little Gunver fished with a silken thread
On the sea strand;
The billows reared, the water sped
Far up the sand.
Beware, my child, of the false menfolk!

Then in green attire a merman fleet
Came from the sea.
Tender his glance, and a voice as sweet
As a harp had he.

"Little Gunver, you torture me night and day
With love's hot anguish.
My soul is faint and my heart always
Doth pine and languish.

"Oh, trust and give me your snow-white arm
To ease my pain,
And I'll hold it close to my breast so warm
And have peace again.

"Little Gunver, my heart in its scaly sheath
Is soft and mild.
Fear not in a simple merman's faith
To be beguiled!"

"If my arms can give thee delight in sooth
And thy longing slake,
O beautiful merman, I give thee both.
Come here and take!"

Glad in his wiles the merman swept
Her away and fled.
Like a storm was his laugh, but the fishermen wept
Over Gunver dead.
Beware, my child, of the false menfolk![49]

In "En Edder-Fugl var haardt i Klemme," Knud requests of Lise's mother, "Sing us the song, Gunild!"

GUNILD (*as if waking up from deep thought*):
What do you want, child? I wasn't paying attention. I was thinking
About the legend of a certain naughty fisherman.
Forgive me, children! My age makes me talkative,
And the song is rather short.
KNUD: Sing us the song, Gunild!
GUNILD (*Romance*):
An eider was in a bad spot,
And cried to heaven for help.
A fisherman heard the bird's voice;
And hurried over, and freed it.

"Oh favored bird, honor of the North Sea,
How glad I am to have saved you!
Such white, beautiful, soft feathers!
From now on, you will keep me warm."

[49] "LISE: Bort! du est vild og grum, og haard som Klippen; / Og fuld af Svig som alle dine Brødre. / For evig vil jeg sky e de falske Mandfolk, / At det ei gaaer mig, som den arme Gunver. / Merk paa min Sang om lille Gunvers Skiebne! / (*Romance*) / Liden Gunver vandrer som helst i Qvel, / Saa tankefuld. / Hendes Hierte var Vox, hendes unge Siel / Var prøvet Guld. / O vogt dig, mit Barn, for de falske Mandfolk! / Liden Gunver meder med Silken-Snoer / Ved Havets Bred; / Da hævedes Bølgen, og Vandet foer / Saa bradt afsted. / O vogt dig, mit Barn, for de falske Mandfolk! / Skiøn Havmand sig op af Havet skiød, / Beklædt med Tang. / Hans Øie var kierligt, hans Tale var sød, / Som Harpers Klang. / Liden Gunver, du martrer mig Dag og Nat, / Med Elskovs Ild. / Mit Hierte vansmægter, min Siel er mat. / O vær dog mild! / Du rekker mig kun din sneehvide Arm, / Paa Søemands Troe; / Saa trykker jeg den til min brændende Barm, / Saa faaer jeg Roe. / Liden Gunver, mit Bryst, bag sit haarde Skiel, / Er blødt og ømt. / Trofast er mit Navn, min ukunstlede Siel / Foragter Skrømt. / Og er dig min Arm til saa stor Behag, / Til Trøst og Roe; / Skiøn Havmand, saa skynd dig, saa kom kun, og tag / Dem begge to! / Han trak hende fra den steile Bred, / Glad ved sin Sviig. / Som Storm var hans Latter; men Fiskerne græd / Ved Gunvers Liig. / O vogt dig, mit Barn, for de falske Mandfolk!" Ewald, *Samlede Skrifter*, vol, 3, 205-06. This translation of the *romance* is from *A Second Book of Danish Verse*, ed. and tr. by Charles Wharton Stork (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1947), 3-4. The translation of the dialogue is my own.

> Then he greedily plucked the poor creature,
> And, half-dead, it cried rightfully:
> "Cruel hand, that has taken my warmth from me,
> Why have you left me with breath in my body?"[50]

A third strophic text, "Kong Christian Stod ved Højen Mast" [King Christian Stood by the Lofty Mast], enjoyed a peculiar history.[51] For dramatic reasons, probably in regard to the brevity of the scene, it was shortened by the time of the libretto's publication to only one stanza, "Du Danskes Vei til Roes og Magt" [Path of the Dane to fame and might], and it was in this form that it was originally performed. Later on the remaining stanzas were restored, and the first musical setting, in a fast triple meter, was replaced with a patriotic hymn in common meter.[52] This hymn, with Ewald's text, was incorporated and reorchestrated for Friedrich Kuhlau's *Elverhøj* of 1828 and has become the national anthem of Denmark.

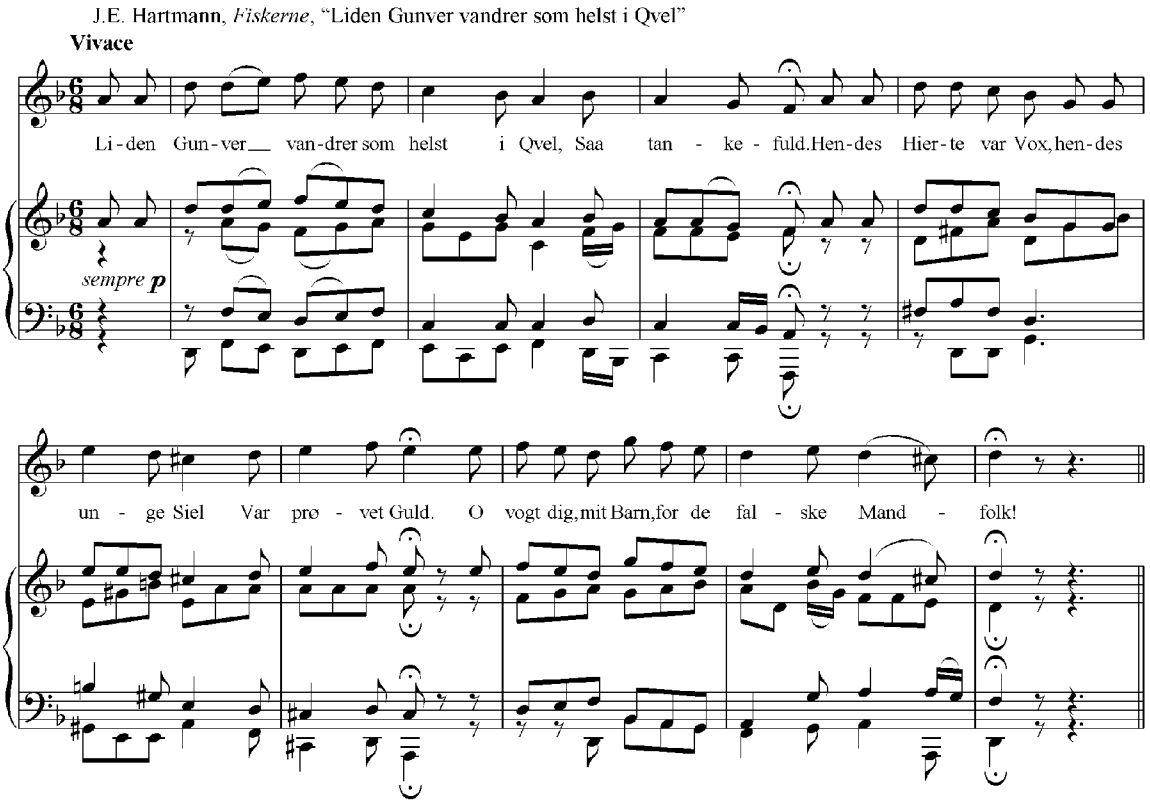
This close association in *Fiskerne* of the strophic form with the concept of diegetic song came to play an important role in all succeeding *syngespil* and Danish opera. The *romance* "Liden Gunver vandrer som helst i Qvel," as set by Hartmann (Example 1.3), serves as an almost perfect model of this new type. The Danish predilection for the *romance* is another inheritance from the *opéra comique* repertory, in which more often than not the *romance* "provides an excuse to sing a song on stage (in

---

[50] "GUNILD: (ligesom vognende af dybe Tanker) Hvad vil du, Barn? Jeg var adspredt. Jeg tænkte / Paa Sagnet om en vis vanartet Fisker. / Tilgiver, Børn! min Alder giør mig snaksom; / Og Visen er kun kort.
KNUD: Syng den, vor Gunild!
GUNILD (*Romance*): En Edder-Fugl var haardt i Klemme, / Og skreg om Hielp til Himmelen. / En Fisker hørte Fuglens Stemme; / Og skyndte sig, og frelste den. / Ak favre Fugl, Nord-Havets Ære, / Hvor glad er jeg, som frelste dig! / Hvor hvide, skiønne, bløde Fiære! / De skal herefter varme mig. /
Saa plukkede han gridsk den Arme; / Og halvdød klager den med Ret: / Ha grumme Haand, som toeg min Varme, / Hvi gavst du mig mit Aandedræt?" Ewald, *Samlede Skrifter*, vol, 3, 205-06.

[51] Henry Wadsworth Longfellow translated this text as "King Christian Stood by the Lofty Mast."

[52] Mulvad, introduction to *Fiskerne*, 48. For more on the origin of the patriotic melody, see Angul Hammerich, "Melodien til 'Kong Christian Stod ved Højen Mast': en Studie," *J.P.E. Hartmann: Biografiske Essays Tillage med en Studie over Melodien til "Kong Christian Stod ved Højen Mast"* (Copenhagen: G.E.C. Gads Forlag, 1916), 141-79.

lieu of continuing the drama in song without this pretext)."[53] The Danish *romances* add poetic atmosphere and indirectly contribute to the depiction of psychological character, but they rarely play the central role in the narrative as do, for instance, "Dans ma cabane obscure" from Jean-Jacques Rousseau's *Le Devin du Village* (1752; libretto by Rousseau) or "Un fièvre brûlante" from Grétry's *Richard Cœur de Lion* (1784; libretto by Michel Sedaine).[54]

Example 1.3

[53] Daniel Heartz, "The Beginnings of the Operatic Romance: Rousseau, Sedaine, and Monsigny," *Eighteenth-Century* Studies 15 (1981-82): 167.

[54] Of "Liden Gunver," musicologist Niels Martin Jensen writes, "Men en modsætning til fransk syngespilromance viser sig her, hvor folkevisestoffet kommer ind i den danske romance, som da får mere episk karakter end den franske, der langt overvejende var lyrisk" [But a contrast to the French *opéra comique romance* shows itself here, where the folk ballad material comes into the Danish *romance*, which at the time had a more epic character than the French, that had long been predominantly lyric]. Niels Martin Jensen, *Den danske romance 1800-1850 og dens musikalske forudsætninger* (Copenhagen: Gyldendal, 1964), 36.

Almost as a rule, the Danish *romances* conform to the following standards: they are in 6/8 meter; they are in a minor key, but can move frequently to the relative major without first having clearly established the minor tonality through an authentic cadence; the form is strophic, either purely or in a modified form; the texts are unambiguously diegetic, usually alluded to in the spoken dialogue as an old song, ballad, or legend; the vocal line is simple, lyrical, and mainly syllabic; the accompaniment tastefully harmonizes and supports the melody, with little attempt at orchestral word painting; and cadences are reached sooner than the end of the fourth (or eighth) bar of a phrase. "Liden Gunver" consists of a series of three-bar phrases, a feature that can be found in some older Scandinavian ballad melodies, and reappears in much of the theater music written after J.E. Hartmann's time. The merman theme in "Liden Gunver" alludes to longstanding Scandinavian mythic tradition, and the seduction of a young woman by a mysterious man from the sea can be found as early as the Medieval ballad "Agnete og Havmanden" [Agnete and the Merman] and as late as Henrik Ibsen's 1888 play *Fruen fra havet* [The Lady from the Sea].

All of these elements result in the *impression* of folk song, an impression that was engineered for the first time on the opera stage by the German-born Hartmann. Although K.L. Rahbek attested in his notes to *Udvalgte danske Viser fra Middelalderen* [Selected Danish Songs from the Middle Ages] that Ewald had written the text to "Liden Gunver" with the old ballad melody "Liden Kirsten ganger over Kirkerist" in mind, evidence has never been found that could determine whether any such tune existed, or whether Ewald

communicated it to Hartmann.[55] There are several Norwegian melodies transcribed in Laborde that are in triple meter and the minor mode, and the series of three-bar phrases similar to those in "Liden Gunver" can be found in some of the Medieval Scandinavian ballads published in *Udvalgte danske Viser*. The melodic structure of two melodically similar phrases with a refrain such as "O vogt dig, mit Barn, for de falske Mandfolk!" is also typical of the ballad melodies in *Udvalgte danske Viser*, but that is not sufficient evidence to tie the music for "Liden Gunver" to a specific source from Denmark's musical past.

What is more likely is that Hartmann, inspired by his recent forays into native Scandinavian music, created a tuneful and charming *romance* whose popularity encouraged later composers to include similar numbers in their own scores. Eventually the success of these set pieces led audiences to expect them in all operas and *syngespil*. By the middle of the nineteenth century, the inclusion of a folk ballad—either a *faux* Danish folksong or a setting of an authentic Scandinavian melody—had become the single most prominent feature in the national repertory.

---

[55] Mulvad, introduction to *Fiskerne*, 50. See also W.H.F. Abrahamson, Rasmus Nyerup, and K.L. Rahbek, *Udvalgte danske Viser fra Middelalderen; efter A..S. Vedels og P. Syvs trykte udgaver og efter haandskrevene samlinger, udgivne pa any af Abrahamson, Nyerup, og Rahbek*, 5 vols. (Copenhagen: J.F. Schultz, 1812-14), vol. 5, 127-128. The melody is included in the encyclopedic *Danmarks gamle Folkeviser* and numbered as "uncertain/9." The credited source is the 1789 piano arrangement of Hartmann's "Liden Gunver," since that is the earliest printed version that the editors could find. See *Danmarks gamle Folkeviser* (Copenhagen: Universitets-Jubilæets Danske Samfund, 1966-76), vol. 11, 410.

Chapter 2

Holger Danske and the German/Danish Language War

F.L.Æ. Kunzen, *Holger Danske* (1789, Jens Baggesen, after C. Wieland)
J.A.P. Schulz, *Høstgildet* (1790, Thomas Thaarup)

> …after we had spoken with each other for a long time, he asked me again for my name, and when I repeated it, he asked if I weren't the author of Holger Danske. Unfortunately! I said:
>
> *- - Hoc est mediocribus illis*
> *Ex vitiis unum!*"
> [*That is one of the lesser sins!*]
>
> —Jens Baggesen, *Labyrinten*[1]

In 1784, Crown Prince Frederik, the son of Christian VII and Caroline Mathilde, turned sixteen and thus old enough for a seat on the State Council. At his first Council meeting he quickly and effectively seized control of Denmark by persuading his father to sign a document ceding all essential powers of government. Although he would not become king until his father's death (twenty-four years later, in 1808), Frederik now took the place of the Dowager Queen as the acting head of state. Ove Høeg-Guldberg was immediately dismissed as prime minister and replaced with a man he had dismissed himself a few years earlier: the German-born A.P. Bernstorff, nephew of the former prime minister J.H.E. Bernstorff.[2]

A.P. Bernstorff maintained the enlightened spirit of reform that had characterized the liberal policies of Struensee and Høeg-Guldberg. He upheld the freedom of the press,

---

[1] "…da vi en Tid lang havde talt med hinanden, udbad han sig atter mit Navn, og da jeg gientog det, spurgte han, om jeg ikke var Forfatteren af Holger Danske? Desværre! sagde jeg." Jens Baggesen, *Labyrinten* (Copenhagen: Gyldendals Bibliotek, 1965), 181. The Latin is taken from Horace, *Satires*, I, iv.
[2] Palle Lauring, *A History of the Kingdom of Denmark*, tr. David Hohnen (Copenhagen: Høst & Søn, 1960), 185-86.

he revoked the adscription law that prevented peasants from moving off of the land on which they were born, he abolished the African slave trade, and he gave Jews permission to join trade guilds.[3] But a German had replaced a Dane in the high reaches of the government. Despite support for his political views, and despite his 1776 claim, "There is no Dane that is more enthusiastic for his Fatherland than I am for Denmark," Bernstorff's appointment fueled the anti-German sentiment in the country.[4]

This resentment left its mark on the theater as well. The conflict between a prevailing German aesthetic and the aspirations for a newer Danish aesthetic became manifest with the opening of F.L.Æ. Kunzen's opera *Holger Danske* in 1789. Kunzen, born in Lübeck in 1761, was an accomplished pianist at an early age. When his father died in 1781 Kunzen went to Kiel to study law. Kiel was the capital of Holstein, a German-speaking province which at the time, due to a complex historical tangle of laws, treaties, and hereditary rights, was governed by the Danish crown. The faculty at the university comprised both Danish- and German-speaking professors, making the city one of the more important centers of Danish/German cultural exchange. Kunzen came into the circle of the German professor and amateur musician C.F. Cramer, who in turn introduced Kunzen to the Danish author and theater critic K.L. Rahbek. Both men encouraged Kunzen to try his hand as a composer in Copenhagen. Cramer also introduced Kunzen to the German composer J.A.P. Schulz, who was similarly impressed with the young man. Backed by Cramer, Rahbek, and Schulz, Kunzen moved to

---

[3] Harald Weitemeyer, *Denmark: Its History and Topography, Language, Literature, Fine-Arts, Social Life and Finance* (London: William Heinimann, 1891), 22-25.
[4] Qtd. in J.H.S. Birch, *Denmark in History* (London: John Murray, 1938), 293.

Copenhagen in 1784, and by 1786 he had published his first collection of songs, *Wiser og lyriske Sange* [Melodies and lyric songs].[5]

For the libretto to his first opera, Kunzen turned to the twenty-four-year-old Jens Baggesen. Baggesen had published his first volume of poetry, *Comiske Fortællinger* [Humorous Tales], in 1785 to popular acclaim.[6] That same year, J.H. Wessel praised and encouraged the young writer in "Til Hr. Jens Baggesen." Composed on his death-bed, this symbolic passing of the torch was the last poem Wessel ever wrote:

> Against clever, against foolish critics,
> Never sharpen your pen!
> The latter would, unearned, thereby
> Receive too great an honor,
> For the former, let silence be well employed! [7]

This would prove to be prescient advice to Baggesen, who was soon to come under attack for what were perceived as German-leaning artistic sympathies.

The ambitious Baggesen, initially working without a composer, had already conceived a project of three opera librettos that together would demonstrate his views on "how opera should be—in three different ways."[8] These were *Erik Ejegod*, based on the life of the eleventh-century Danish king; *Arions Lyre*, set in ancient Greece; and an opera

---

[5] Kai Aage Bruun, *Dansk Musiks Historie: Fra Holberg-tiden til Carl Nielsen* (Copenhagen: J. Vintens, 1969), vol. 1, 90-91. See also Nils Schiørring, *Musikkens historie i Danmark* (København: Politiken, 1978), vol. 2, 99.

[6] P.M. Mitchell, *A History of Danish Literature* (New York: The American-Scandinavian Foundation, 1958), 98.

[7] "Mod klog, mod taabelig Kritik / Spids aldrig Pen !/ Den sidste derved ufortient / For stor en Ære fik, / Den første, taus, lad blive vel anvendt!" J.H. Wessel, "Til Hr. Jens Baggesen," *Samlede Digte*, ed. J. Levin (Copenhagen: Gyldendalske Boghandels Forlag, 1901), 164. See also Vilhelm Østergaard, "Ældre dansk Literatur," *Illustreret dansk Literaturhistorie: Danske Digtere i det 19de Aarhundrede* (Copenhagen: Gyldendalske Boghandel, 1907), 92.

[8] "...hvordan en Oper bør være—paa tre forskellige Maader." From Baggesen's deposition on *Trylleharpens Historie*, qtd. in Heinrich W. Schwab, *Friedrich Ludwig Aemilius Kunzen (1761-1817): Stationen seines Lebens und Wirkens* (Heide in Holstein: Westholsteinische Verlagsanstalt Boyens & Co., 1995), 77.

based on the dramatic poem *Oberon* by the German author C.M. Wieland. Of the three offered to him, Kunzen was most interested in the Oberon project. Baggesen worked through the summer of 1788 in the Copenhagen suburb of Ordrup, sending the libretto scene by scene to the composer, who was a few miles away in Lyngby.[9] Wieland's story was derived from the legend of Huon of Bordeaux, who, to atone for the killing of Charlemagne's son, must pluck the beard of the Sultan of Baghdad and kiss his daughter in full view of the court. Along the way Huon meets the elf king Oberon, who provides him with a magic horn that when sounded will cause all non-Christians to dance uncontrollably.[10] Wieland replaced the original Oberon with the Oberon from Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, which allowed him to import the character of the fairy queen Titania, and with her a subplot: the quarreling Oberon and Titania can only be reconciled when they find two mortal lovers who are true to each other in the face of death. These lovers turn out to be none other than Huon and the Sultan's daughter herself.

Baggesen and Kunzen followed the story relatively closely, but they made one significant change in the cast of characters, substituting for Huon of Bordeaux a national folk hero also from the time of Charlemagne, the knight Holger Danske, more commonly known outside Denmark as Ogier the Dane. According to legend, after serving as one of Charlemagne's knights, Holger Danske became so homesick that he left the Emperor's service and walked back to Helsingør in Denmark, where he remains asleep to this day in Kronberg Castle. In a time of great need, however, he will rise again. As Hans Christian Andersen described it in 1846,

---

[9] Ibid. See also Sven Lunn, "Oberons Tryllehorn," *Dansk Musiktidsskrift* 19 (1944): 76-78.
[10] The story of Huon is recounted in English in Thomas Bulfinch, *The Age of Chivalry* and *Legends of Charlemagne* (New York: New American Library, 1962), 552-74.

> In his dreams he sees everything that is happening in Denmark; and once a year, on Christmas Eve, God sends an angel down to reassure him that what he has dreamed is true and that Denmark is not in danger, therefore he can sleep on. Should Denmark ever be in danger, then he will rise, grab his sword, and fight so that all the world will hear it.[11]

The opera was renamed *Holger Danske*, but despite the change of title, the libretto did little to reflect the nationality of its hero. Not until the second act does the text refer to Denmark, when Holger introduces himself to the Sultan as follows:

> My name
> is Holger. Denmark is my native land –
> I was born for Denmark's crown – and battle
> was always the school for Denmark's sons.[12]

The only other instance of something particularly Danish is a *romance* sung by Holger's companion, Kerasmin, who presumably hails from Denmark as well. "De spøgelser dansed' ved midienat" [The phantoms danced at midnight] is a diegetic ballad, similar to Hartmann and Ewald's "Liden Gunver"; the libretto makes explicit Kerasmin's awareness of the fact that he is singing. The superstitious Kerasmin sings the romance to cheer himself and Holger in the gloomy forest. Also like "Liden Gunver," "De spøgelser dansed'" recounts a legend with supernatural overtones that comment on the action. At the end of the romance, there is a bolt of lightning, and Kerasmin exclaims that the Urian in the legend is actually Oberon, who later on in the scene reveals himself.

---

[11] Hans Christian Andersen, "Holger the Dane," in *The Complete Fairy Tales and* Stories, tr. Erik Christian Haugaard (New York: Anchor Books, 1983), 302-05. Nathaniel Hawthorne's 1837 "The Grey Champion" tells a similar tale, with the scene transplanted to New England. See Hawthorne, *Tales and Sketches*, ed. Roy Harvey Pearce (New York: The Library of America, 1982), 236-43. During World War II, a faction of the Danish resistance movement adopted the name "Holger Danske."

[12] "Mit navn / er Holger. Danemark er mit fødeland – / Til Danmarks krone fødte jeg – og Orlog /var altid Danmarks sønners skole." Jens Baggesen, libretto to *Holger Danske*, reprinted in CD booklet to F.L.Æ. Kunzen, *Holger Danske* (DaCapo Records 8.224036-37, 1995), 136.

KERASMIN: Allow me, master, to sing. Song
Eases my fear a little—I have had this habit
Since the cradle. May I?
HOLGER: Sing. Yes sing!
Sing, I am myself a friend of song in the forest.
KERASMIN: The phantoms danced at midnight
around Urian,
and mountain and valley and swamp and thicket
stood brightly in flames.
The thunder rolled in the night
around Urian,
and everything became so dark again,
like an extinguished fire.

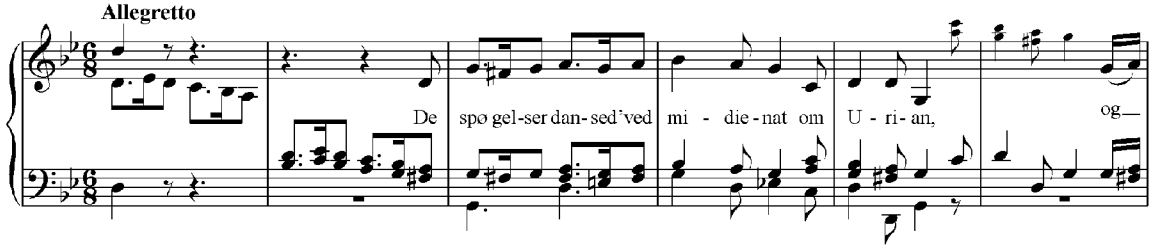
But the brave knight Oller rode into the forest
at full gallop
and quickly spurred on his horse.
Hop, hop, hop! Hop, hop, hop!
The phantoms danced against him
and broke the girth,
and the horse foamed, trembled, and stood—
like he was nailed fast.

Knight Oller jumped down from his horse;
his foot slipped—
and he saw that it slipped
into slimy blood.
The thunder rolled with red lightning
around Urian,
and suddenly everything in Oller's sight stood
around him in flames.

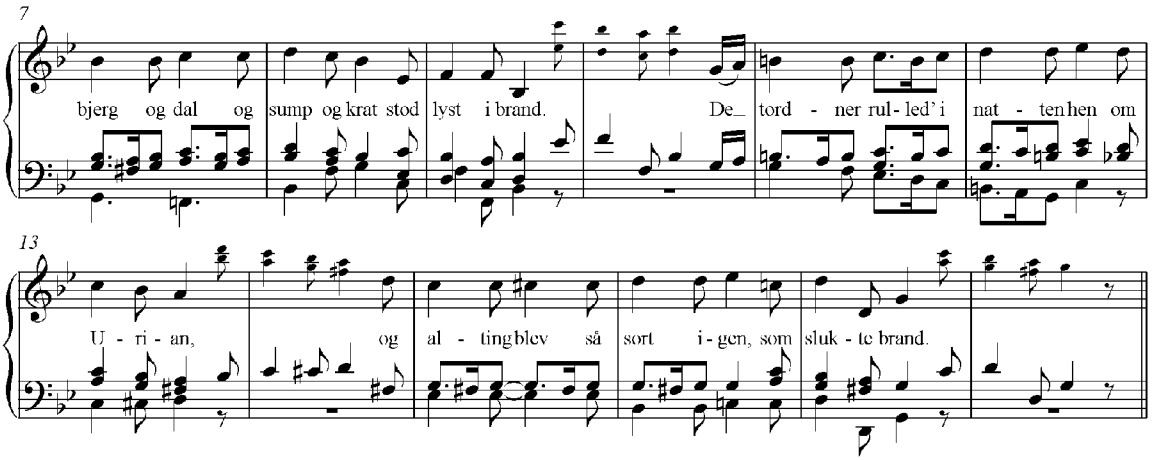
Behind the flames it could be seen that a bloody army
of devils stood,
and Oller with his sword drawn
went for them.
But Urian, fuming, stepped towards him:
"What are you doing here?"

and Oller and his horse became stone—
now they stand there![13]

As Baggesen's text takes its cue from Ewald, so Kunzen's music takes its cue from Hartmann. The setting of "De spøgelser dansed'" is strophic, in a minor key, and in 6/8 time; the melody is stepwise, has a narrow range, and the vocal line is grouped in three-measure phrases.[14] Kunzen expands each three-measure phrase into a four-measure phrase by adding an extra measure in the orchestra that completes the musical phrase with similar material (Example 2.1). This normalizing of phrases with an odd number of measures prefigures some of the arrangements Kuhlau would compose in the 1820s.

Kunzen, *Holger Danske*, "De spøgelser dansed' ved midienat"

[13] KERASMIN: Tillad me, herre, dog at synge. Sang / dog lindrer lidt min angst—den vane har / Jeg haft fra vuggen. Tør jeg?
HOLGER: Syng. Ja syng! / Syng, jeg er selv en ven af sang i skove.
KERASMIN: De spøgelser dansed' ved midienat / om Urian, / og bjerg og dal og sump og krat / stod lyst i brand. / De tordner rulled' i natten hen / om Urian, / og alting blev så sort igen, / som slukte brand. / Men kæk ridder Oller i skoven red / i fuld gallop, / og sporede rask sin hest asted. / Hop, hop, hop! Hop, hop, hop! / De spøgelser dansede ham imod— / og gjorden brast, / og hesten skummed', skjalv og stod— / som naglet fast. / Ridder Oller svang sig af hesten ned; / da glad hans fod— / og Oller mærked' at den gled / i levret blød. / De tordner rulled' i rode lyn / om Urian, / og fluks stod alt for Ollers syn / rundt om i brand. / Bag flammerne sås en blodig hær / af djævle stå, / og Oller med sit dragne sværd / gik løs derpå. / Men Urian fnysende mod ham treen: / 'Hvad gør du her?' / og Oller og hans hest blev sten / nu star de der!" Baggesen, libretto to *Holger Danske*, 94-96.

[14] Historian Torben Krogh cautions that these characteristics of the Medieval ballad are not necessarily specific to the Danish repertory. See Torben Krogh, *Zur Geschichte des dänischen Singspiels im 18. Jahrhundert* (Copenhagen: Levin & Munksgaards Forlag, 1924), 241.



Example 2.1

The melody also accentuates a clear metrical pattern similar to that found in part of "Liden Gunver," with alternating lines of four feet and two feet:

De **SPØ**-gel-ser **DAN**-sed' ved **MI**-die-**NAT**	(4)
om **U**-ri-**AN**,	(2)
og **BJERG** og **DAL** og **SUMP** og **KRAT**	(4)
stod **LYST** i **BRAND**.	(2)

Li-den **GUN**-ver **VAN**-drer som **HELST** i **QVEL**,	(4)
saa **TAN**-ke-**FULD**.	(2)
Hen-des **HIER**-te var **VOX**, hen-des **UN**-ge **SIEL**	(4)
var **PRØ**-vet **GULD**.	(2)

With "De spøgelser dansed'" and other simple, folklike numbers, Kunzen catered to the frequently limited vocal abilities of the performers at Det kongelige Teater. At the same time he indulged in his and his audience's taste for unadorned and singable melody. Indeed, it was partially his interest in strophic songs and dance forms that attracted him to

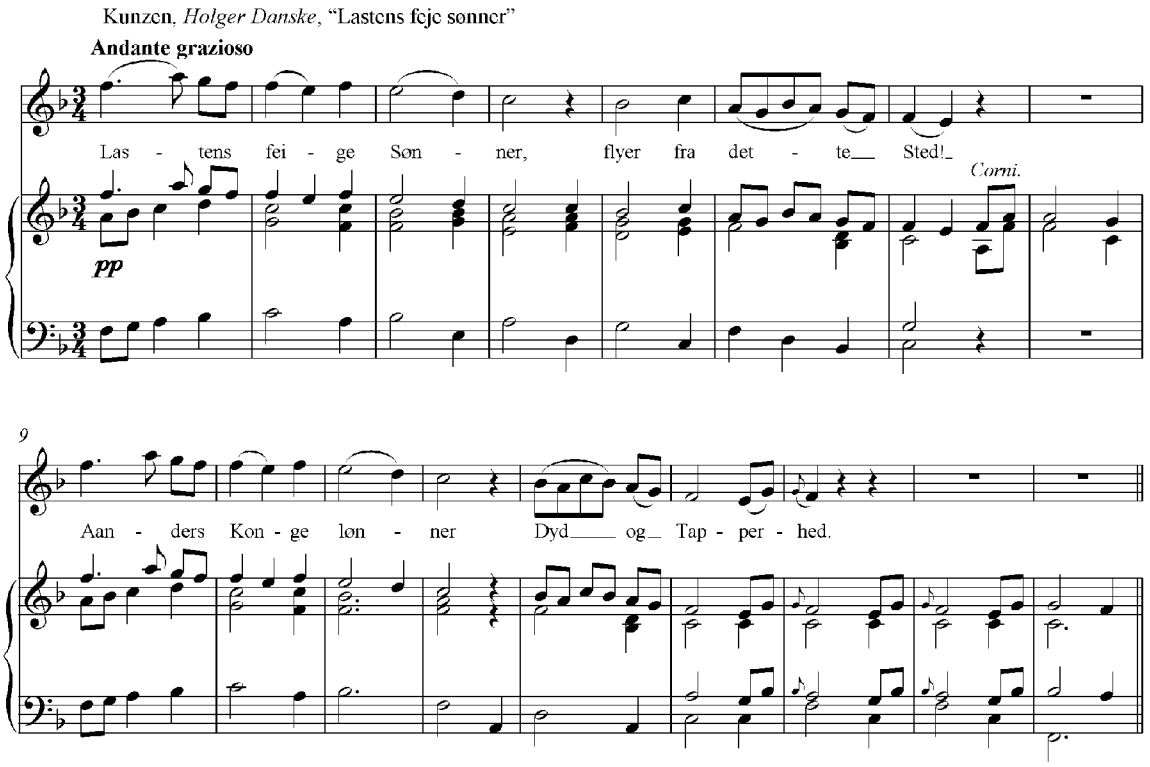
the Oberon libretto in the first place.[15] But *Holger Danske* was no *syngespil*. Not only was there no spoken dialogue, but also there was not any *secco* recitative. The orchestra accompanied throughout, and scenes were elided by musical transitions instead of separated by pauses, revealing this to be one of the earliest attempts at "continuous opera" composed in Denmark.

Additionally, and noted as early as 1792 in a lengthy review by Peder Grønland, Kunzen employed a number of recurring musical ideas used as reminiscence motives.[16] All of Oberon's stage entrances are heralded by horn calls, and the chorus of invisible spirits that accompany Oberon in the first act returns in the second and third acts with the same music. In the chorus, the vocal line consists of two seven-measure phrases. As he did with "De spøgelser dansed'," Kunzen adds a one-measure echo to the end of the first phrase, making the composite phrase eight measures long (Example 2.2). The invisible spirits sing from offstage, a continuation of the tradition of using offstage placement to symbolize the supernatural.

Another instance of motivic recurrence is Oberon's warning, "Forsvinder! Forsvinder! / For Oberons Harm" [Be gone! Be gone! / On account of Oberon's wrath], which appears in both the second and third acts to the same melody in G minor, as he twice saves Holger from danger.[17] In Act III, scene viii, Holger calls out the name of the Sultan's daughter, Rezia, to the same melody that he had sung previously in scene iv.[18] One more innovation was the introduction in the overture of themes from the opera: all

---

[15] Heinrich W. Schwab, "'A work of art that is a credit to poet and composer alike': Notes on the opera *Holger Danske*," in booklet to F.L.Æ. Kunzen, *Holger Danske*, 18.
[16] Ibid., 19-20. Portions of Grønland's review are reprinted in Schwab, *Friedrich Ludwig Aemilius Kunzen*, 83-87 and 93-94.
[17] Lunn, "Oberons Tryllehorn," 79. Lunn offers some less persuasive examples as well.
[18] C.A. Martienßen, "*Holger Danske*, Oper von Fr. L. Al. Kunzen," *Zeitschrift der Internationalen Musikgesellschaft* 13 (1911-1912): 231.

four sections are based on melodic passages that are heard later on, a technique that would be popularized some thirty-two years later by Weber in his overture to *Der Freischütz*.[19]

[Vice's cowardly sons
Fly from this place!
The king of the spirits rewards
Virtue and bravery.]

Example 2.2

These innovations were to bear no fruit in Denmark, because immediately upon its premiere on March 31, 1789, *Holger Danske* ignited a war of aesthetics between pro-Danish and pro-German thinkers. By changing the name of their opera to *Holger*

[19] The overture itself actually premiered in Copenhagen in 1820, conducted by Claus Schall. The complete opera did not premiere until the following year in Berlin. See Anna Harwell Celenza, *Hans Christian Andersen and Music: The Nightingale Revealed* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2005), 221, n 41.

Danske, Baggesen and Kunzen unwittingly invited a public debate on what the Danish audience should expect from its "national" theater. Baggesen's and Kunzen's attempts to create a coherent, motivically and thematically connected, and continuous musical fabric—widely perceived as catering to a more German operatic aesthetic—were seen not as a pioneering development for Danish theater, but rather as a step backward from the unadorned, dialogue-laden *syngespil* of Hartmann and Ewald.

The most virulent and literate attacks came from the author P.A. Heiberg and Kunzen's one-time supporter K.L. Rahbek. As rationalists, both Heiberg and Rahbek favored drama with what they considered to be a high literary value, and they opposed opera on general principle as an irrational form of theater. Rahbek wrote viciously in his monthly journal *Minerva*,

> As long as people in all seriousness assert that an opera can not be evaluated according to the ordinary rules of the drama, that it can not claim interesting and believable action, effective and well-considered characters, true and natural dialogue, but that it shall have its value from music, and the decorations, pageantry, dancing and tinsel that it evokes; as long as people still quarrel over whether its tremendous expense is an advantage or a fault; so long can and will [my] harshest judgment necessarily fall on an opera like *Holger Danske*.[20]

In Rahbek's opinion the fantastic, otherworldly setting was demeaning to an educated audience, as was the exaggerated *faux* Turkish setting of the Sultan's palace in Baghdad. Such works, he protested, would be the downfall of the Danish theater. But it was not only the theater that Rahbek felt was threatened:

---

[20] "Saa længe man endnu i fuld Alvor paastaaer, at en Opera ikke bør kunne prøves efter Dramets almendelige Regler, at man der ikke kan fordre interessant og sandsynlig Handling, virksomme og velregnede Caracterer, ædel og naturlig Dialog, men at den skal have sit Værd fra Musiken, og de Decorationer, Optog, Dandse og Glimmer, den foranlediger; saa længe vil og maae de stridigste Domme nødvendig fældes om en Opera af det Slags, som Holger Danske." Qtd. in Schwab, *Friedrich Ludwig Aemilius Kunzen*, 90.

> The destruction of our theater is a lesser thing in comparison with the damage such thoughtless, cheaply-glittering amusements do to our national character, in that they accustom us to thoughtlessness, effeminacy, and indulgence…such foolishness was the means by which the Romans lost the last remains of their former greatness and manhood.[21]

Part of the subtext to the resistance occasioned by the source material can be found in the objections to anything Heiberg and Rahbek deemed to be typically German, as opposed to Danish. Wieland's *Oberon* was calculated to appeal to the German audiences of the time, and in addition to *Holger Danske* Wieland's story spawned a number of operas and *Singspiele* in Germany and Austria, including Paul Wranitzky's *Oberon, König der Elfen*, a possible source for Emanuel Schikaneder's libretto to Mozart's hugely successful *Die Zauberflöte* (1791).[22] Given the enthusiasm south of Denmark for these kinds of magical stories in musical theater, including the continued popularity of "Turkish" settings exemplified by Mozart's *Entführung aus dem Serail* (1782), it may be that Baggesen and Kunzen had written the right opera at the right time, but premiered it in the wrong place.

Even before *Holger Danske* opened, Baggesen began to recognize the potential political ramifications of the opera. In particular, he realized that given the nationalist sensitivities of the time, the use of the national figure Holger Danske himself might be provocative; ultimately he expressed the desire to change the title character back to the original Huon of Bordeaux. But Michael Rosing, the Norwegian actor hired to perform

---

[21] "…Vor Skueplads' ødelæggelse er en mindre Ting i Sammenligning med den Skade slige tankeløse, smaaglimrende Forlystelser gjøre vor national Caracter, idet de vænne os til Tankeløshed, Blødagtighed og Overdaad…slige Abespil vare det Middel, hvorved Romerne blev betaget den sidste Levning af deres fordums Storhed og Manddom." Qtd. in Ole Kongsted, "Om Holger Danske og Holder-fejden," in *Bøger, samlinger, historier: En antologi*, ed. Lotte Philipson and John T. Lauridsen (Copenhagen: Det Kongelige Bibliotek, 1999), 225.

[22] See, for instance, Peter Branscombe, *W.A. Mozart: Die Zauberflöte* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 27-29.

the role, was insistent on portraying the legendary Scandinavian knight, and he chided Baggesen for even considering giving in to his anxieties over Rahbek's hatred of opera.[23]

Baggesen's fears were indeed well-founded. Whatever criticism would have been leveled on an Oberon opera was increased substantially by naming it after Holger Danske. All of the elements of the fantastic that Heiberg and Rahbek objected to were transformed into a perceived slur against the Danish character as personified in its glorious national hero. The news that C.F. Cramer was preparing a German translation of the libretto for publication in Kiel exacerbated the storm of articles, letters, and reviews that appeared day after day in the Copenhagen newspapers and journals. A number of independently printed pamphlets began to surface as well, and the controversy over nationalism in opera became known as the "*Holger*-Fejden," a pamphlet war much in the style of France's two controversies, the mid eighteenth-century "Querelle des Bouffons" as well as the later debate between the "Gluckists" and "Piccinnists."

The German translation of the libretto became available in Copenhagen near the end of April. In his introduction, Cramer further antagonized the pro-Danish faction by praising Baggesen's "correct and precise" style as a poet over that of the native Dane Johannes Ewald, which Cramer described as wild and untamed.[24]

The translation provided ample material for Heiberg, who included some scathing satire in his popular serial *Rigsdalers-sedlens Hændelsen* [Adventures of a rix-dollar banknote]. In one passage he relates the following fictional conversation between two Danes: Junker Laps (the Danish "laps" being roughly equivalent to the English "dandy") and a student with more nationalist leanings:

---

[23] Schwab, *Friedrich Ludwig Aemilius Kunzen*, 80-81.
[24] Ole Feldbæk and Vibeke Winge, "Tyskerfejden 1789-1790. Den første nationale konfrontation," in *Dansk Identitetshistorie*, ed. Ole Feldbæk, ii (Copenhagen: C.A. Reitzels Forlag, 1992), 45-46.

STUDENT: Although I am not unversed in German or other foreign languages, I really prefer to read a good book in my own mother tongue.
LAPS: Yes, but that's difficult to find.
STUDENT: May I ask if you are Danish, my lord?
LAPS: Yes I am, but what do you mean by that question?
STUDENT: I mean that I wouldn't expect to hear such a thing from a Danish man. I respect every good author, without regard to his nationality; but I am Danish, and doubly dear is a good book to me when it has been written in my fatherland. Other nations don't think that that can happen; the Germans in particular are unspeakably unjust towards us. Everything that is Danish is to them beneath contempt. [...] This book, I certainly think, can be the proof that there is truly genius in Denmark just as there is in Germany, even though it is just a theatrical piece.
LAPS: A theatrical piece! So then it's in my field!*). May I ask what piece it is?
STUDENT: It is Baggesen's *Holger Danske*, which I must say, I very nearly consider his best work.
LAPS: Yes, it is very nice, that piece, but when you read it in Professor Cramer's German translation, you forget that it is Danish.

*) The theatrical is the field of all dandies.[25]

Soon after the translation was released, an anonymous parodist—later revealed to be Heiberg—published a libretto called *Holger Tydske*, that is, Holger the German. The action no longer took place in Baghdad but in a little village near Holbæk. The Sultan

[25] "STUDENTEN: Uagtet jeg ikke er ukyndig i det tyske eller andre fremmede Sprog, saa læser jeg dog helst en god Bog i mit eget Modersmaal.
LAPS: Ja, men den er vanskelig at finde.
STUDENTEN: Maa jeg spørge, om De er Dansk, min Herre?
LAPS: Ja jeg er; men hvad vil det Spørgsmaal betyde?
STUDENTEN: Det vil betyde, at jeg ikke formodede at høre en slig Tanke af en dansk Mand. Jeg ærer enhver god Skribent, uden Hensigt til hans Nation; men jeg er Dansk, og dobbelt kjær er en god Bog mig, naar den er skrevet i mit Fødeland. At dette kan ske, tror ikke andre Nationer; især ere Tyskerne usigeligen ubillige imod os. Alt, hvad der er dansk, er i deres Tanker under al Kritik. [...] Denne Bog, tror jeg nok, ellers kan være et Bevis paa, at der gives virkelige Genier lige saa vel i Dannemark som i Tyskland, uagtet det er kuns et theatralsk Stykke.
LAPS: Et theatralsk Stykke! altsaa i mit Fag*). Maa jeg spørge, hvad det er for et Stykke?
STUDENTEN: Det er Baggesens Holger Danske, hvilket jeg dog maa sige, at jeg langt fra ikke holder for hans bedste Arbejde.
LAPS: Ja, det er ret skjønt, det Stykke, men naar De læser Professor Cramers tyske Oversættelse deraf, saa glemmer De, at den danske er til. / *) Det teatralske er alle Lapsers Fag." P.A. Heiberg, *Udvalgte Skrifter*, ed. Otto Borchsenius and Fr. Winkel Horn (Copenhagen: Otto B. Wroblewskys Forlag, 1884), 172-74.

became the town bailiff; his daughter, a serving girl. Oberon's lightning bolts were replaced with the lowing of cattle, and his magic horn was replaced with a magic snuff box which caused all non-believers to sneeze. As for Holger Tydske, he was a shoemaker's apprentice who hailed, like Cramer, from Kiel.[26] Heiberg's text, although in Danish, made liberal use of German phrases and expressions, some of them from Cramer's own version. Holger declares his nationality as follows:

> My name is Holger; Kiel is my native land –
> I was born by the University of Kiel – and battle
> Was always the school for Kiel's sons. Often
> My clenched fist has flashed against the enemies of the German,
> The two-time, ten-time dumb Danes—
> You know me![27]

The supreme irony, perhaps, is that although it was Kunzen who was actually German, it was Baggesen who was excoriated for pro-German sympathies. The pressure from the "*Holger*-Fejden" became too much to bear for the twenty-five-year-old poet. On May 24, less than two months after the premiere of *Holger Danske*, Baggesen left Denmark on an extended trip. His account of that journey, *Labyrinten, eller Reise gjennem Tydskland, Schweiz og Frankerig* [The Labyrinth, or Travel through Germany, Switzerland, and France], became his most enduring work. Although he refers to *Holger Danske* only once by name—in the epigraph at the beginning of this chapter—Baggesen implies early on that the furor caused by his first opera certainly played a large role in his decision to leave Copenhagen:

---

[26] Feldbæk and Winge, "Tyskerfejden 1789-1790," 49; Kongsted, "Om Holger Danske," 226.
[27] "Mit navn er Holger; Kiel det er mit Fødeland— / Ved Kiels Højskole fødtes jeg—og Orlog / Var altid Kielske Sønners Skole. Tit / Min knyttet Næve har mod Tydskens Fiender / Die zweymahl, zehnmahl dumme Dänen lynet— / Du kiender mig!" Qtd. in Feldbæk and Winge, "Tyskerfejden 1789-1790," 49.

> Truly, I had not just every possible desire, but additionally all conceivable reasons to travel. The shrewd *Sterne* has grouped all casual and idle persons that leave their home into four main classes: those who travel on account of *physical* or *spiritual dilapidation*; or out of absolute *necessity*; because of *something else*; or for *no reason at all*. I truly belong in the strictest meaning of the word to all of these classes. I wanted to travel, simply put, because my body was sick, because my soul was not fresh, because all circumstances compelled me to, and finally because I could not comprehend why I should continue in my current situation.[28]

Kunzen held out for a few months longer than Baggesen. For the most part, the critics involved in the "*Holger*-fejden" had limited their comments to the subject of the opera, and none had made derogatory comments about the quality of the music. Heiberg, Rahbek, and their supporters argued against the concept of *opera* as opposed to a *syngespil* or a comic play with music, but none of them had intimated that another musician could have composed a finer score given that genre. In the preface to *Holger Tydske*, however, Heiberg questioned whether it was perhaps just on account of the fact that Kunzen was German that *Holger Danske* had originally been well received by the audience:

> Seeing that it is, unfortunately (!), an all-too-well known fact that the Danish people have an excessive predilection for everything that is foreign, and particularly for that which is German, I venture to ask: Could this predilection not have some part in the success Hr. Kunzen's music has had?[29]

---

[28] "Sandelig, jeg havde ikke blot al muelig Lyst, men tillige al tænkelig Aarsag til at reise. Den skarpsindige *Sterne* har indeelt alle løse og ledige Personer, som forlade deres Hiem, i 4 Hoved-Klasser: dem nemlig, som enten reise formedelst *legemlig* eller *aandelig Brøstfældighed,* eller af uomgiængelig *Nødvendighed,* eller af *nogen anden* eller af *slet ingen Aarsag.* Jeg hørte virkelig i strengeste Forstand til alle disse Klasser. Jeg vilde reise, kort sagt, fordi mit Legeme var sygt, fordi min Siel var ikke frisk, fordi alle Omstændigheder tvang mig dertil, og endelig fordi jeg i dette Tilfælde ikke indsaae, hvi jeg skulde lade det blive." Baggesen, *Labyrinten*, 23. Sterne is Laurence Sterne, to whose *A Sentimental Journey Through France and Italy* Baggesen here acknowledges a literary debt. The reasons for travel that Sterne himself gives are slightly different than Baggesen's; see Laurence Sterne, *A Sentimental Journey* and *Journal to Eliza* (New York: New American Library, 1964), 18-20.

[29] "Da det er en, desværre! alt for bekiendt Sag, at det Danske Folk har en overdriven Prædilection for alt hvad fremmed er, og især for det Tydske, saa vover jeg at spørge: Skulle denne Prædilection ikke have nogen Andeel i den Lykke, som Hr. Kunzens Musik har giort…" Qtd. in Heinrich W. Schwab, "'Høit

Although he did not go so far as to disparage Kunzen's music, Heiberg did imply that instead of looking for more pieces from Kunzen, the Danish public should embrace the work of native-born composers such as Claus Schall, who had written a number of ballets for the choreographer Vincenzo Galeotti at Det kongelige Teater. Heiberg specified that his concern was not with the music itself, but rather with what he considered to be the usurpation by Germans of what should have been roles for Danes. He concluded,

> In consideration of this, Hr. Kunzen himself certainly will not condemn my patriotism if I openheartedly admit that I envy him as a foreign man—because as far as I know he receives no official wages here in the country, so how could he be considered my countryman—to have shown himself for the first time [as an opera composer] in the kind of work that, by all right and fairness, belongs to them that either by birth or through some other connection can consider themselves Danish.[30]

Kunzen responded on August 11 by taking out a notice in the newspaper *Adresseavisen*, advertising a new piece to be available on a subscription basis; that is, he was hoping that sufficient advance sales would pay for the initial cost of publication. He facetiously described the forthcoming work as "my cousin's music to *Holger Tydske* with his own and the publisher's annotations…that will also be for the entertainment of those

---

staaer Kunzen blandt Nutidens Sangcomponister…' (1817): Bericht über Forschungsinitiativen zu Leben und Werk des Friedrich Ludwig Aemilius Kunzen (1761-1817)," *Dansk Årbog for Musikforskning* 22 (1994): 31.

[30] "I Betragtning heraf vil Hr. Kunzen selv vist ikke fordømme min Patriotisme, naar jeg aabenhiertigen tilstaaer, at jeg misunder ham, som en fremmed Mand—thi han staaer ikke saa vidt jeg veed, i nogen Besoldning her i Landet, hvorfore han kunde ansees som min Landsmand—at have viist sig første Gang i et Arbeide, der, efter natural Ret og Billighed tilhørte dem, der enten ved Fødselen ere, eller i Følge andre Forbindelser bør ansees som Danske." Qtd. in Schwab, "'Høit staaer Kunzen,'" 31.

who can neither sing nor play [an instrument]."[31] As Heiberg had parodied Baggesen's poetry, so did Kunzen mock what he considered to be a lack of skill and training in the native Danish composers that Heiberg championed. The *Holger Tydske* score featured common beginner's errors such as parallel fifths, poor prosody, unsingable intervals and impossible modulations.[32]

Kunzen never did publish the *Holger Tydske* score, either because he failed to elicit a sufficient number of subscriptions, or else perhaps because he simply became too disheartened to remain in Copenhagen.[33] In October he returned to his native Germany. Four years later, in 1793, his *Singspiel Das Fest der Winzer, oder die Weinlese* [The Wine-Grower's Festival, or The Vintage] enjoyed a successful and scandal-free premiere in Frankfurt.

J.A.P. Schulz and *Høstgildet*

After Kunzen's departure, there were essentially only three composers left in Copenhagen who would compose music for the theater: the minor figures Claus Schall and H.O.C. Zinck, along with the *Kapelmester* of Det kongelige Teater, J.A.P. Schulz. Schulz was born in 1747 in the German town of Lüneberg and studied in Berlin with Johann Philipp Kirnberger, himself a pupil of Johann Sebastian Bach. Between 1780 and 1787 Schulz worked as *Kapellmeister* in Rheinsberg for Prince Heinrich of Prussia,

---

[31] "Meines Vetters Compositionen zu Holger Tydske mit seinen eigenen und den des Herausgebers dazu gemachten Anmerkungen…das auch für die unterhaltend seyn wird, die weder singen noch spielen können." Qtd. in Schwab, *Friedrich Ludwig Aemilius Kunzen*, 92.
[32] Kongsted, "Om Holger Danske," 230-31.
[33] The original manuscript is housed today in Det Kongelige Bibliotek.

brother of Frederick the Great. Like J.E. Hartmann, Schulz's compositional style was derived in part from a close association with the French operas he performed by Monsigny, Grétry, and Gluck.[34] Another important influence was the work of Johann Gottfried Herder, who had advocated a very plain, nationalist poetic style in his 1778 collection of *Volkslieder*, literally "songs of the folk." Schulz responded by publishing three volumes between 1782 and 1790 entitled *Lieder im Volkston* [Songs in a Folk Tone]. It was on the strength of the simple, tuneful, and unadorned music in the first volume, along with the choruses he had composed for Racine's *Athalie*, that Schulz was invited to Copenhagen to take charge of Det kongelige Teater.

It was thus that this German composer, after having encouraged Kunzen to go to Denmark in 1784, ended up following him there in 1787. By the end of 1789, Schulz had established himself as the most important and powerful musician in the country.[35] He had also begun work on three stage projects by three separate librettists: *Alfsol* by Thomas Thaarup; *Erik Ejegod*, the Jens Baggesen opera declined by Kunzen; and *Indtoget* [The Entry], a satirical *syngespil* by P.A. Heiberg. The first two were never completed, and the last was not performed until 1793.[36] Schulz's premiere as a composer of Danish opera came at the beginning of the 1790 season with *Høstgildet* [The Harvest Feast], a one-act *syngespil* by Thaarup that was part of the festivities surrounding the wedding of Crown Prince Frederik.

Schulz found a ready musical model for the *Høstgildet* score in Karl Ditters von Dittersdorf's popular German *Singspiel Doktor und Apotheker* (text by Gottlieb

---

[34] Bruun, *Dansk Musiks Historie*, vol. 1, 74-76.
[35] Ibid.
[36] For more on *Alfsol* and *Erik Ejegod*, see Max Seiffert, "J.A.P. Schulz' 'dänische' Oper," *Archiv für Musikwissenschaft* 1 (1919): 422-31.

Stephanie the Younger), which had already been performed eleven times at Det kongelige Teater since its premiere in November of 1789.[37] Schulz and Thaarup also cautiously avoided all of the mistakes made by Kunzen and Baggesen in *Holger Danske*. *Høstgildet* took place not in a faraway land, but in a Danish village. Instead of legendary heroes and mythical beings, the cast featured believable and recognizable peasants, farmers, seamen, and soldiers. The tone was lighthearted, the dramatic stakes were never particularly high, the recent social reforms granted by the government constituted a central (if understated) element of the story, and king and country were praised throughout. Additionally, the characters hailed from all three parts of the Danish kingdom (Denmark, Norway, and Holstein), emphasizing the breadth, diversity, and communality of its people.

The story of *Høstgildet* centers around Anna and Grethe, daughters of Hans, a Danish *Selvejerbonde*, a farmer who has managed to acquire the rights to his own land. Hans has decided to marry Anna to her cousin Peter, a skipper from Holstein. Anna, who loves the Norwegian farmer Halvor, is crushed, as is Grethe, who loves Peter. With a minimum of complications, the situation is resolved, and both couples rejoice at the lavish harvest festival: Anna and Halvor, and Grethe and Peter.

Høstgildet begins with a scene that would become a model for later Danish *syngespil*. As the curtain rises,

---

[37] Arthur Aumont and Edgar Collin, *Det Danske Nationalteater 1748-1889: En Statistisk Frenstilling* (Copenhagen: J. Jørgensen & Co., 1896-1900), "Skuespil- og Opera-repertoiret A-K," 33-35.

> Anna enters with her knitting; from time to time she looks up to the road that leads into town as though she is expecting someone. Her behavior betrays her anxiety.[38]

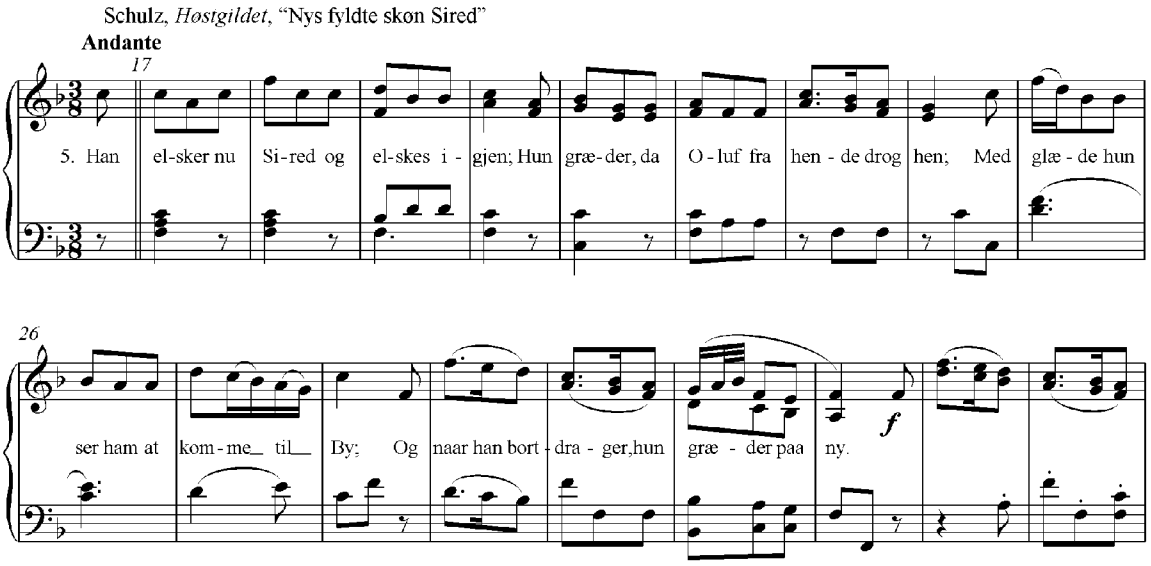
She at once begins singing a strophic folk ballad about the lovers Sired and Oluf, and by the end of the ballad the connection between the fictional lovers and Anna's own situation becomes explicit:

> Sired had just reached her eighteenth year,
> She was tranquil in Winter and merry in Spring;
> Like the brook in the flowering bosom of the meadow,
> So still, so clear the days flew by.
>
> She was pious in spirit, in temperament so mild,
> Red like a rose and white like a lily;
> Her two eyes were so clear, so blue,
> Like the heavens, which she looked towards so carefree.
>
> She bound effortlessly the most beautiful wreaths,
> Was always the first in song and dance;
> So many proud bachelors looked at her, lovestruck,
> But she let them all go away without hope.
>
> In the summer, the farmers ride briskly into town,
> The songs in their voices ring out so loudly;
> At the feast, she saw her Oluf for the first time,
> They understood each other's eloquent eyes.
>
> Now he loves Sired and is loved in return,
> She cries when Oluf goes away from her;
> With joy she sees him come to town,
> And when he leaves she cries again.

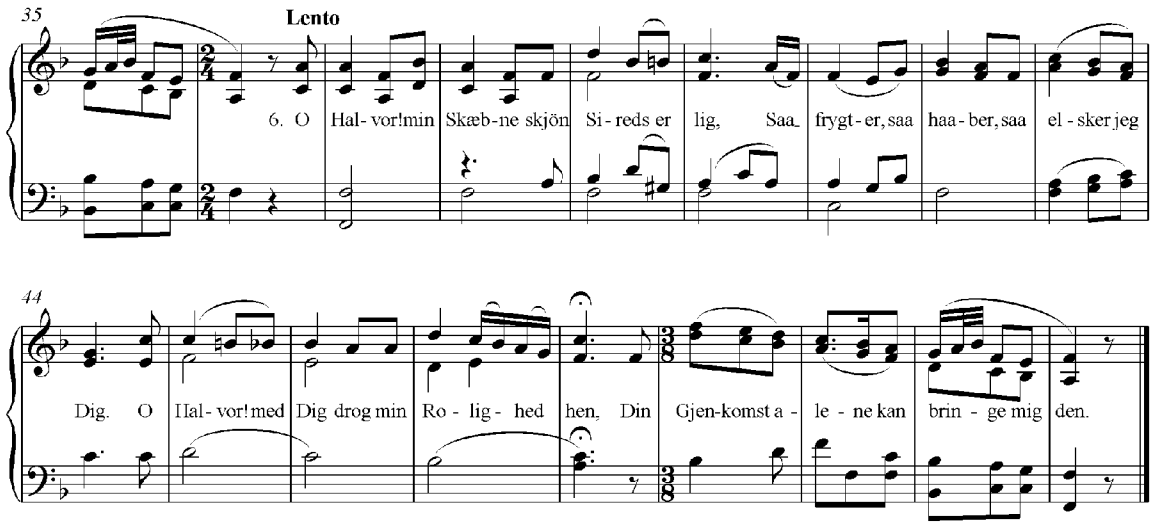
[38] "Anna kommer ind med sit Strikketöj; hun ser af og til hen ad Vejen, som fører til Landsbyen, som om hun ventede nogen. Hendes Adfærd forraader Urolighed." Thomas Thaarup, *Høst-gildet* og *Digte i Udvalg*, ed. J.V. Østerberg (Copenhagen: P. Hauberg og Jul. Gjellerup [1888]), 11.

O Halvor! My fate is like beautiful Sired's,
So I fear, I hope, I love you;
O Halvor! My peace left me when you did,
Your return alone can bring it back to me.[39]

Schulz illustrates musically the switch between the diegetic and the non-diegetic by changing from a 3/8 meter to 2/4 at the beginning of the sixth and final verse, when Anna sings of her real-life love, Halvor. Schulz also adds two chromatic inflections in mm. 39 and 45. The 3/8 meter returns for the final line of text, "Your return alone can bring it back to me" (Example 2.3).



[39] "Nys fyldte skjön Sired det attende Aar, / Var rolig i Vinter og munter i Vaar, / Som Bækken i Engens det blomstrende Skjød, / Saa stille, saa klare de Dage henflød. / From var hun i Hjærtet, i Adfærd saa blid, / Var rød som en Rose, som Lilien hvid; / To Öjne hun havde saa klare, saa blaa / Som Himlen, til hvilken hun sörgefri saa. / Hun bandt uden Hensigt den skjönneste Krans; / Var altid den förste i Sang og i Dans, / Saa mangen stolt Ungkarl forelskt hende saa; / Men haabløse lod hun dem alle bortgaa. / Rask ride de Bønder nu Sommer i By, / De Sange, de lyde saa höjt udi Sky, / Sin Oluf ved Gildet hun förste Gang saa, / Veltalende Öjne hinanden forstaa. / Han elsker nu Sired og elskes igjen; / Hun græder, da Oluf fra hende drog hen; / Med glæde hun ser ham at komme til By; / Og naar han bortdrager, hun græder paa ny. / O Halvor! min Skæbne skjön Sireds er lig, / Saa frygter, saa haaber, saa elsker jeg Dig. / O Halvor! med Dig drog min Rolighed hen, / Din Gjenkomst alene kan bringe mig den." Ibid., 11-12.

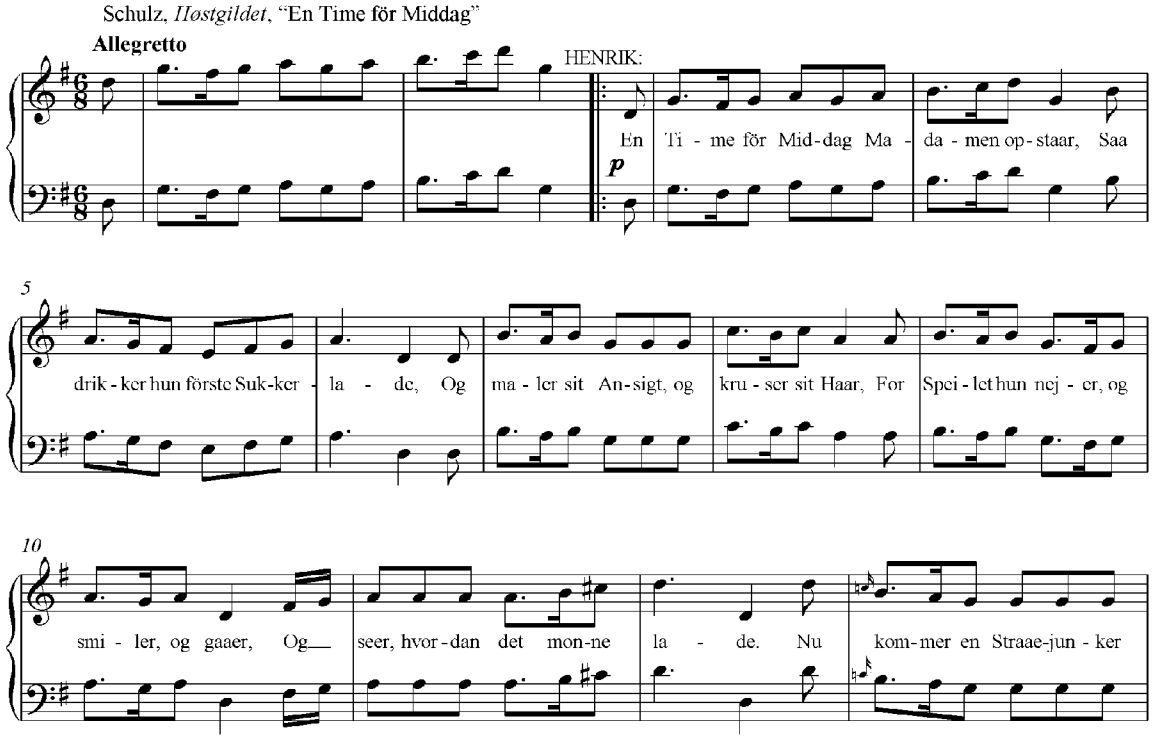
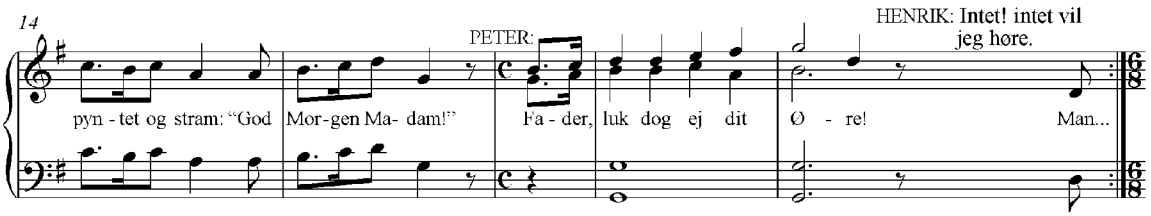


Example 2.3

Schulz also uses a change in meter to differentiate between two characters in a duet. In a dialogue scene between Peter and his father, Henrik, Peter tries to explain why he doesn't want to marry his cousin Anna. Henrik, incensed that his son would spurn her, refuses to listen, and instead sings him a ballad.

PETER: O listen to me, father!
HENRIK (extremely indignant): I will hear nothing.
The devil! What has my noble "Mister" son to say
Of the girl? Is she too lowly for "Mister Captain?"
He must want to marry a little girl from the town?
PETER: O no, my father! Listen to me.
HENRIK: With a lady?
Then it shall go with you just like it says in the song:
[Music begins]
One hour before lunch the lady wakes up,
She drinks her first hot chocolate,
Paints her face and curls her hair,
In front of the mirror she curtsies, smiles, and walks,
And sees how it may seem.
Now comes a straw-junker [a worthless, shallow nobleman],
dressed up in tightly-fitting clothes:
Good morning, Madame!

PETER: Father! don't close your ears [to me]!
HENRIK: Nothing! I will hear nothing.[40]

Henrik's ballad is in 6/8 meter; his first phrase is eight measures long, but his second is only five measures long, after which point the meter changes to 4/4 and Peter pleads alternately, "Father! don't close your ears" (verses one and three) or "Father! let my prayer move you" (verses two and four). Henrik's response, "Nothing! I will hear nothing" is spoken and unaccompanied.

[40] "PETER: O hør mig, Fader!
HENRIK (yderlig opbragt): Intet vil jeg høre. / For Pokker! hvad har min Herr Sön at sige / Paa Pigen! er hun Herr Kaptajn for ringe? / Han vil vel giftes med en Kjøbstad-Frøken?
PETER: O nej min Fader! hør mig.
HENRIK: Med en Dame? / Saa skal det gaa Dig, som der staar i Visen: / En Time för Middag Madamen opstaar, / Saa drikker hun först Sukkerlade, / Og maler sit Ansigt, og kruser sit Haar, / For Spejlet hun nejer, og smiler,og gaar, / Og sér, hvordan det monne lade. / Nu kommer en Straajunker pyntet og stram: / God Morgen, Madam!
PETER: Fader! luk dog ej dit Øre.
HENRIK: Intet! intet vil jeg høre." Ibid., 32.

Example 2.4

This abrupt shift in meter, coupled with the change in texture from monophony to homophony, anticipates a common feature of later Danish theater music inspired by the Medieval ballad: the use of a choral refrain at the end of a repeating strophe.[41]

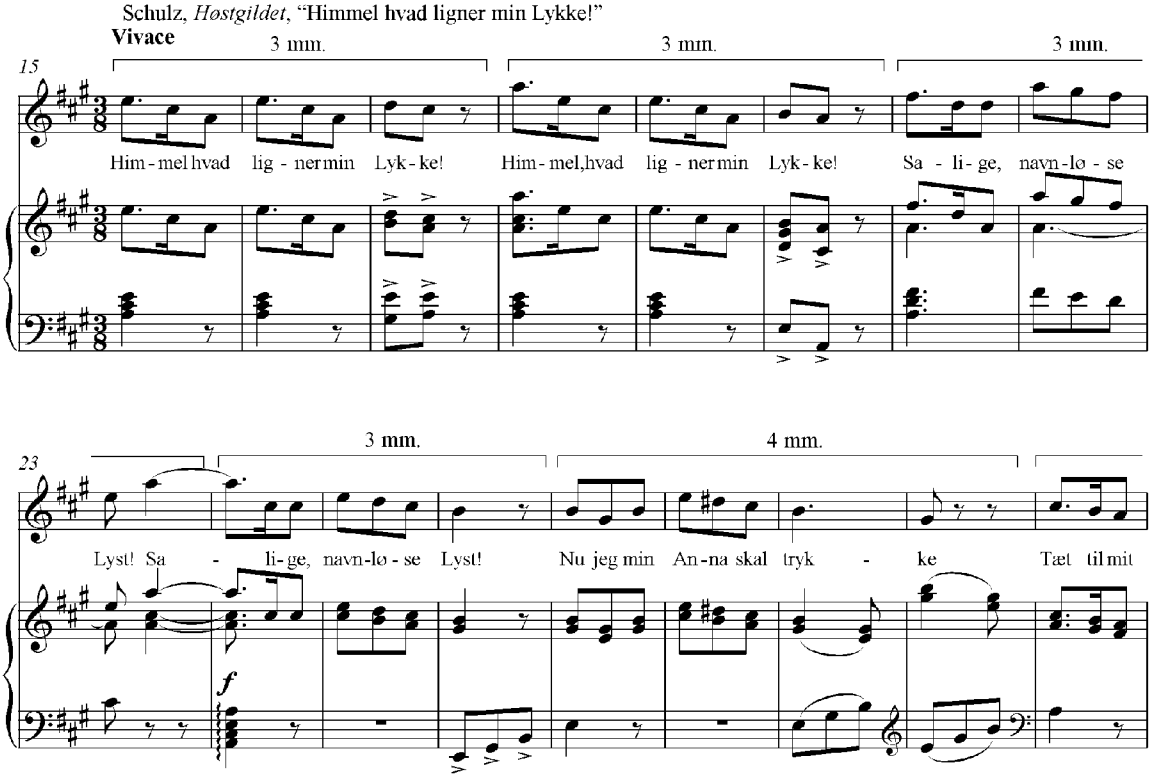
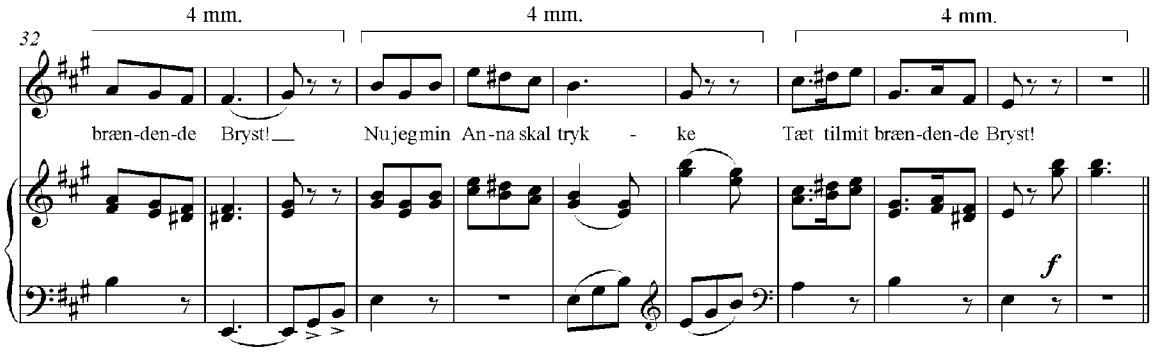
Schulz employs the changing of meter to separate the singing of multiple characters throughout *Høstgildet*, particularly in the two extended musical scenes: the return of the soldiers (including Halvor) from battle, and the eponymous harvest feast at the finale. But aside from this rhythmic device, the style of Schulz's score is, like his settings in *Lieder im Volkston*, extremely simple. The accompaniment is spare and light throughout, and there are only a few brief and perfunctory instances of counterpoint in the vocal lines.[42] Also striking is the predominance of the major mode. In the entire score there are only two short passages in minor: the first is a sixteen-measure section of a dance, and the second is a portion of the finale sung by Halvor's father in praise of his native Norway.

---

[41] In 1815 Peder Grønland first put forth the argument that the refrains of Medieval Danish ballads were sung by a chorus; his work is discussed further in Chapter 4.

[42] Schulz, who contributed to many of Kirnberger's theoretical writings, strenuously avoided any demonstration of his contrapuntal skill in the music he composed for the Danish theater. Although the precise nature of the collaboration is unclear, after Kirnberger's death Schulz claimed sole credit for the authorship of Kirnberger's *Die wahren Grundsätze zum Gebruach der Harmonie* (Berlin, 1773) and for all of the articles from "S" onward published in Johann Georg Sulzer's encyclopedia, *Allgemeine Theorie der schönen Künste* (Leipzig, 1771-74). See David Beach's introduction to Johann Philipp Kirnberger, "The True Principles for the Practice of Harmony," tr. David W. Beach and Jurgen Thym, *Journal of Music Theory* 23 (1979): 163-65. Friedrich Kuhlau, discussed in Chapter 5 of this dissertation, similarly left no evidence of his masterful contrapuntal technique in his *syngespil*.

Most of the numbers in the score are either strophic or—as in the extended scenes—made up of short, folk-like sections. There are, however, a few instances of longer, through-composed pieces. Halvor's joyful aria, "Himmel, hvad ligner min Lykke!" [Heavens, what is like my good fortune!], is in ternary form; after a fourteen-measure introduction, there is a section in A major (40 mm.), a contrasting section in the dominant based on the same opening motive (41 mm.), and a final section that returns to the opening text and tonic key (42 mm.). As Hartmann had done in "Liden Gunver," Schulz groups the beginning of "Himmel, hvad ligner min Lykke!" into three-bar phrases (Example 2.5).



[Heavens, what is like my good fortune!
Blessed, indescribable joy!
Now I shall press Anna close to my burning breast!]

Example 2.5

Because it served as a celebratory work for Crown Prince Frederik and his bride, Schulz and Thaarup devoted a significant portion of *Høstgildet* to praise for Frederik, his father King Christian VII, and Denmark itself. Additionally, having witnessed the *Holger Danske* debacle first-hand, Schulz and Thaarup ensured that there would be no doubt as to the "Danishness" of the characters onstage. For the final scene of the *syngespil*, everyone gathers around a *frihedsstøtte*, a memorial column honoring the recent freedoms the government had granted for the peasants. While Anna and Grethe sing to their new husbands, they make explicit their love of king and country:

ANNA: Testament of freedom!
O, how beautiful you are!
When I become an [honorable] Danish woman,
I will joyfully bring to that monument
My firstborn son.
The plow shall he drive,
The sword shall he wield,
But by the time he is able to say, "Mother,"
He shall be able to name his Fatherland
And blessed [King] Christian.

GRETHE (to PETER): Your Grethe will live well the day
She can bring her Peter joy with a son;
Then I will take the Danish flag
And spread it over his cradle.
My Peter shall teach him early
The seaman's true nature;
To be proud of his honorable trade,
And to fight and die for Denmark's flag.
CHORUS: From the North Cape down to the banks of the Elbe
Dwell prosperity, freedom, and peace.
Long live our king! Long live his son!
That is our wish, that is our prayer.[43]

Immediately following, Hans suggests that since the three fathers (Hans, Henrik, and Halvor's father Tord Halvorsen) come from the three lands of Denmark, Norway, and Holstein, they should each sing a song in their respective languages—Danish, Norwegian, and Low German. The three songs all begin by extolling the natural wonders of the Danish kingdom and conclude with a declaration of allegiance to the King. After 1814, when the Treaty of Kiel stripped the land of Norway from Denmark, Thaarup altered the libretto for subsequent revivals: the Norwegian Tord and Halvor were replaced by a father and son from the Danish colony of Ahlheden.[44]

---

[43] "ANNA: Friheds Minde! / O, hvor er Du skjön! / Naar jeg vorder Dannekvinde, / Bringer jeg til det Minde / Glad min förstefødte Sön. / Ploven skal han kjøre, / Værget skal han føre; / Men naar han kan nævne Moder, Skal han nævne Fødeland / Og velsigne Christian.
GRETE (til PETER): Din Grethe lever vel den Dag, / Hun med en Sön sin Peter glæder; / Da tager jeg det danske Flag / Og over Drengens Vugge breeder. / Min Peter tidlig ham skal lære / En Sømands sande Sindelag; / Stolt af sin Hædersstand at være, / Og slaa og dø for Danmarks flag.
KOR: Fra Nordkap ned til Elbens Bred / Bor Velstand, Frihed og Fred. / Leve vor Konge! Leve hans Sön! / Det er vort Ønske, det er vor Bön." Thaarup, *Høst-gildet*, 48

[44] J.V. Østerberg, introduction to Thaarup, *Høst-gildet*, 9.

Kunzen's Return

Audiences received *Høstgildet* enthusiastically, and in 1793 Schulz and Thaarup premiered a sequel, *Peters Bryllup* [Peter's Wedding], which was similarly well received. But Schulz found the Danish climate uncongenial, and his already-poor health deteriorated quickly. In 1795 he left his post in Copenhagen, hoping to travel to the warmer city of Lisbon. Along the way he was shipwrecked and forced to spend the winter in Arendal, Norway. By 1797 he was too weak to compose, and in 1800 the fifty-three-year-old J.A.P. Schulz died in Schwedt ved Oderen, Germany.[45]

With the departure of Schulz in 1795, Det kongelige Teater asked Kunzen to return to Copenhagen to take over the post of *Kapelmester*. Kunzen served in this capacity for the next twenty years, gradually introducing the Danes to the operas of Mozart: *Così fan tutte* in 1798, *Don Giovanni* in 1807, and *Die Entführing aus dem Serail* in 1813.[46]

Kunzen also composed a large number of *syngespil* which, guided by the example of Schulz's works, were more to the taste of the public than *Holger Danske* had been. In his second season at Det kongelige Teater he premiered *Hemmeligheden* [The Secret], with a libretto by A.G. Thoroup, and *Dragedukken* [The Magic Doll], with a libretto by Enevold Falsen. During that same season his *Das Fest der Winzer* [The Wine-Grower's Festival], which had been so successful in Germany, proved equally popular in Danish

---

[45] "Johan Abraham Peter Schulz," *Dansk biografisk Lexikon*, ed. C.F. Bricka (Copenhagen: Gyldendalske Boghandels Forlag, 1887-1905), vol. 15, 42-43.

[46] Aumont and Collin, *Det Danske Nationalteater*, "Skuespil- og Opera-repertoiret A-K," 82-83, 148-51, 180-81. Interest in Mozart may also have been encouraged by the presence of his widow Constanze, who moved to Copenhagen in 1810 with her second husband, the Dane Georg Nikolaus Nissen.

translation (as *Viinhøsten*).[47] The following season included his setting of Baggesen's old *Erik Ejegod* libretto, which Kunzen had unluckily rejected ten years earlier. The patriotic opera, based on the legend of the Danish king, was performed twenty-one times during Kunzen's lifetime; there were no plans, however, to revive the fruit of his previous collaboration with Baggesen. One of Kunzen's final works was the 1816 *Auswahl der vorzüglichsten altdänischen Volksmelodien* [Selected excellent ancient Danish folk melodies], a collection of arrangements for piano and voice of fifteen Medieval Danish folk ballads—with the texts translated into German.[48]

The careers of Kunzen and Schulz reveal one of the central paradoxes of Danish opera: the Danes were happy to employ German composers at Det kongelige Teater, as long as they didn't compose "German" operas. The criteria for distinguishing German music from Danish music were initially vague, however, and only slowly, through a process of trial and error, were composers able to determine precisely the conventions of the Copenhagen theater. The case of *Holger Danske* also demonstrates how audiences in a time of growing nationalism were becoming more sensitive to the portrayal onstage of Danes.

In 1941, one year after the Nazi occupation of Denmark, Det kongelige Teater mounted a second production of *Holger Danske*.[49] After lying dormant for over one hundred and fifty years, the opera was no longer considered too German but rather one of the forgotten masterpieces of Danish music. Reviewing the opera for *Dansk Musiktidsskrift*, Sven Lunn wrote,

---

[47] Aumont and Collin, *Det Danske Nationalteater*, "Skuespil- og Opera-repertoiret L-Ø," 426-27.
[48] Erik Dal and Niels Martin Jensen, "F.L.Æ. Kunzens folkeviseharmoniseringer 1816: En facsimile med kommentar," *Dansk Årbog for Musikforskning* 7 (1973-1976): 51-67.
[49] Kunzen had conducted a performance of the first act in 1804. See Schwab, "'A work of art,'" 17.

> It has been said that the time is not right to revive an opera like *Holger Danske*. That is thoughtless, nonsense. The time is altogether right. We shall protect our culture, and through our culture's great works we shall find the [strength] that will bring us forth through the present chaos.[50]

In 2006, more than two centuries after the *Holger*-fejden, during which its composer and librettist were vilified for creating an opera that was too "German," the Danish Ministry of Culture selected Kunzen's opera to be first on the list of its new *Kulturkanon* project. Explaining its decision, the Ministry wrote,

> *Holger Danske* is one of the earliest Danish operas. But not until as late as a concert performance in the 1980s did it become clear that there was talk of a major work: a fresh and original opera, in which each and every detail was thoroughly prepared and entirely exceptional.[51]

This inclusion in the *Kulturkanon* heralded a profound reassessment of *Holger Danske*. Separated from the contentious political atmosphere of 1789, it was now considered one of the twelve works of classical music that best represented a quintessentially Danish aesthetic.

---

[50] "Man har sagt, at Tidspunktet ikke er rigtigt til at genoptage en Opera som Holger Danske. Det er noget ubetænkt, Sludder. Tidspunktet er det helt rigtige. Vi skal værne om vor Kultur, og vi skal gennem vor Kulturs Storværker hente det, der skal bringe os frem gennem det øjeblikkelige Kaos." Sven Lunn, "Omkring Holger Danske," *Dansk Musiktidsskrift* 16 (1941): 27.

[51] "*Holger Danske* er en af de tidligste danske operaer. Men først så sent som ved en koncertopførelse i 1980'erne kom det til at stå klart, at her var tale om et hovedværk, en frisk og original opera, hvor hver eneste detalje var gennemarbejdet og helheden enestående." "Kanon for Musik," ed. Torben Bille, in *Kulturkanon*. *Kulturkontakten* January 2006 (Copenhagen: Kulturministeriet, 2006), 50. The other eleven works are C.E.F. Weyse, *Otte Morgensange* (1837) and *Syv Aftensange* (1838); H.C. Lumbye, *Telegraph-Galop* (1844), *Champagne-Galop* (1845) and *Kjöbenhavns Jernbane-Damp-Galop* (1847); Niels Gade, *Elverskud* (1854); J.P.E. Hartmann, *Vølvens Spaadom* (1872); Peter Heise, *Drot og Marsk* (1878); Carl Nielsen, *Maskarade* (1906); Carl Nielsen, Symphony No. 4, "Det uudslukkelige" (1916); Rued Langgaard, *Antikrist* (1923); Per Nørgård, Symphony No. 3 (1976); Pelle Gudmundsen-Holmgreen, *Symfoni-Antifoni* (1978); and an assortment of twelve "højskolesange." Ibid., 50-55.

Chapter 3
Two Representative *Syngespil*

Edouard Dupuy, *Ungdom og Galskab* (1806, N.T. Bruun, after Jean-Nicolas Bouilly)
C.E.F. Weyse, *Sovedrikken* (1809, Adam Oehlenschläger, after C.F. Bretzner)

The Danish—yes, because Weyse was Danish,
Himself and his native muse,
An enigma to foreign zones.
In Denmark the trunk struck forth its roots,
Which bore his worthy branches,
And those who did not understand our language,
Neither did they understand his tones.

—J.L. Heiberg, "Weyse"[1]

Kunzen was not the only protégé of J.A.P. Schulz. In the fall of 1789, the fifteen-year-old C.E.F. Weyse moved from the German-speaking city of Altona (at the time, still under Danish rule) to Copenhagen. Weyse studied and lived with Schulz—whom he met through C.F. Cramer— for several years, and so he was close at hand during the writing and stage production of *Høstgildet* (1790) and *Peters bryllup* (1793). Although Schulz offered the younger composer much in the way of education, friendship, and professional advancement, eventually Weyse sought out additional instruction from Peter Grønland, who would later make a name for himself with his editions of Scandinavian folk songs. As Weyse described it in an autobiographical sketch from 1820,

> Schulz seldom had the patience to go through my compositions in detail with me and separate the wheat from the chaff. As a rule he judged things—particularly at the end of my stay in his house—only in general, and often, especially when sickness or other things had put him in a bad

[1] "Den danske, — ja, thi Weyse var dansk, / Han selv og hans Musa fædrelandsk, / En Gaade for fremmede Zoner. / I Danmark slog den Stamme sin Rod, / Som bar hans lønnende Kroner, / Og Den, som ikke vort Sprog forstod, / Forstod ei heller hans Toner." Johan Ludvig Heiberg, *Poetiske Skrifter*, ed. Carl S. Petersen (Copenhagen: C.E.G. Gads Forlag, 1932), vol. 3, 323.

> humor, he rejected a whole piece because a single part of it was not satisfactory to him. Then I sought and found comfort with my friend Grønland, who with the finest criticism went through my compositions, and scrupulously and thoroughly detailed both the good and the bad in them.[2]

By the time Weyse published his *Blandede Compositioner* [Assorted Compositions] in 1799, the young composer had produced three piano sonatas, seven symphonies, and some vocal music, with texts in both German and Danish.[3] In addition to his work as a church organist, he was engaged by the wealthy merchant Peter Tutein as a piano tutor for his daughter Julie. The close relationship between Weyse and Julie Tutein became romantic, and although they kept it secret, it held every promise of a happy marriage.[4]

The following year, buoyed by the success of his professional as well as his personal life, Weyse began to think seriously of composing for the Danish stage. The text he selected was the German libretto *Der Schlaftrunk* [The Sleeping Potion], by Christoph Friedrich Bretzner. It was no coincidence that Weyse was attracted to this particular author, for Bretzner's earlier *Belmont und Constanze* had been adapted by Gottlieb Stephanie (the Younger) to form the libretto for Mozart's 1782 *Die Entführung aus dem Serail*. In contrast to his mentor Schulz, Weyse was a passionate devotee of

---

[2] "Schulz havde sjelden Taalmodighed til at gjennemgaae mine Compositioner detailleret med mig og sigte Avnerne fra Hveden. Han fældede, især mod Slutningen af mit Ophold i hans Huus, sædvanlig kun en Dom i Almindelighed, og tidt, især naar Sygelighed eller andre Ting satte ham i ondt Lune, forkastede han et heelt Stykke, fordi et enkelt Parti deraf ikke var ham tilpas. Da søgte og fandt jeg Trøst hos min Ven Grønland, der med den fineste Critik gjennemgik min Compositioner, og nøje og grundigt detaillerede baade det Gode og Slette deri." A.P. Berggreen, *C.E.F. Weyse's Biographie* (Copenhagen: C.A. Reitzels Forlag, 1876), 30-32. Weyse's own early memoir from 1820 was written in German for inclusion in a magazine. Ultimately it was not published, and the memoir was translated into Danish for inclusion in Rahbek's *Hesperus*. Berggreen includes this uncredited Danish translation on pp. 6-41 of his book.

[3] For more on Weyse's symphonies, see Carsten Hatting, "C.E.F. Weyse's Symphonies," *Musik & Forskning* 21 (1996): 7-48. Hatting adds, "It is notable that over the years Weyse mastered the Danish language completely."

[4] Schiørring, *Musikkens historie*, vol. 2, 164-65.

Mozart's music. It was undoubtedly with an eye to emulating *Die Entführung* that Weyse began to think about composing his first *syngespil*. He knew Mozart's work from the printed score, but it would not enter the repertory of Det kongelige Teater until 1813 and it is unknown whether he had seen it in performance prior to his moving to Copenhagen. As music director, Kunzen had so far managed to stage only one work of Mozart's, a single performance of *Così fan tutte* in 1798. The reception was poor, however, and it would be almost ten years before the company would agree to perform Mozart again.[5]

Weyse later wrote of his initial decision to compose a *syngespil*,

> I studied diligently his [Mozart's] and Gluck's scores, and I even decided to undertake an experiment in dramatic music myself. In the spring of 1800, at the bookseller Brummer's, I happened to find Bretzner's *Singspiele* and took them home. Among them I thought *Der Schlaftrunk* the best one that I would dare to try my luck on. I composed during the summer all of the first act up to the end of the finale, where I didn't like the words, and the first four numbers of Act Two, but without actually writing down any of it.[6]

With the encouragement of Kunzen, Weyse looked for someone to translate *Der Schlaftrunk* into Danish. The task fell to the young Danish poet Adam Oehlenschläger.

Oehlenschläger was all but unknown in 1800, although the publication of his first book of poems two years later would make him the most important poet in Denmark and the father of the entire Danish Romantic literary movement. On the title page of the

---

[5] Jørgen Hansen, "C.E.F. Weyse and *The Sleeping Draught*," tr. James Manley, notes to C.E.F. Weyse, *Sovedrikken* (DaCapo 8.224149-50, 2001), 19.

[6] "Jeg studerede nu flittig hans og Gluck's Partiturer, og fik endog Lyst til selv at foretage et Forsøg i den dramatiske Musik. I Foraaret 1800 fandt jeg hos Boghandler Brummer tilfældig Bretzner's *Singspiele* og tog dem hjem med. *Sovedrikken* syntes mig det bedste deriblandt, som jeg vel turde prove min Lykke paa. Jeg componerede nu i Løbet af Sommeren hele den første Akt indtil Slutningen af Finalen, hvor Ordene ikke stode mig an, og de fire første Numere af anden Akt, dog uden at skrive det Mindste op deraf." Berggreen, *C.E.F. Weyse's Biographie*, 34.

simply-named *Digte 1803* [Poems 1803] (actually published at the end of 1802), he quotes not Ewald or Baggesen, his early spiritual mentors, but Goethe's "An die Günstigen," and the lines are printed in the original German:

> What I erred in, what I strove for
> What I suffered and what I lived—
> Are here just flowers in a bouquet! [7]

Why did Oehlenschläger's audience embrace this unabashed tribute to German Romanticism? The spirit of the poetry may have reflected contemporary Germanic trends, but the subject matter was Scandinavian. The most important poem in *Digte*, "Guldhornene" [The Golden Horns], treated the recent theft of two ancient drinking horns, or *lurer*, which had been on display at the Royal Art Collection in Copenhagen. Oehlenschläger bathes the event in the characteristic Romantic nostalgia for lost antiquity, but here that antiquity was Danish, and the loss was genuine:

> You old, old
> Days gone by!
> When [the light] shone in the north,
> When the sky was over the earth,
> *Give us a glimpse back!*
>
> …The heavens darken, the storm crashes!
> The fateful hour has come.
> What they [the gods] gave, they have taken back.
> The holy relics, gone forever.[8]

---

[7] "Was ich irrte, was ich strebte / Was ich litt und was ich lebte— / Sind hier Blumen nur im Strauß!" The title page is reproduced in Mitchell, *A History of Danish Literature*, between pp. 112 and 113.

[8] I gamle gamle / Hensvundne Dage! / Da det straalte i Norden, / Da Himlen var paa Jorden, / *Giv et Glimt tilbage!* […] Himlen sortner, Storme brage! / Visse Time du er kommen. / Hvad de gav de tog tilbage. / Evig bortsvandt Helligdommen." Adam Oehlenschläger, "Guldhornene," *Poetiske Skrifter*, ed. H. Topsøe-Jensen (Copenhagen: J. Jørgensen & Co., 1926), vol. 1, 20-25.

Using the later works of Friedrich Schiller as dramatic models, Oehlenschläger tried his hand at the theater. Here too he enjoyed resounding success, pioneering what historians Frederick and Lise-Lone Marker describe as "the Nordic heroic genre with which his name has become synonymous."[9] His first play, *Hakon Jarl* (1808), brought the then-popular Gothic style to the old legend of Hakon Jarl's unsuccessful attempt to repel the forces of King Olaf Tryggevesøn, who fought to convert Norway to Christianity.[10] Oehlenschläger's version eventually inspired musical settings by J.P.E. Hartmann (1844) and his son Emil Hartmann (1877) as well as a tone poem by Bedřich Smetana (1864).[11]

Oehlenschläger's lasting contributions to the spoken theater include *Palnatoke* (1809), *Axel og Valborg* (1810), and *Hagbarth og Signe* (1816), but he also continued to supply *syngespil* texts for Weyse, completing *Faruk* (1812) and *Ludlums Hule* [Ludlam's Cave] (1816). In between these last two he produced a traditional rescue-opera *syngespil* for Friedrich Kuhlau, *Røverborgen* [The Robbers' Castle] (1814, after C.F. Heyne).

All of this lay in the poet's future when in 1801 he finished his transformation of the German *Der Schlaftrunk* into the Danish *Sovedrikken* [The Sleeping Potion]. Weyse had waited eagerly for the translation, but by the time Oelehschläger's text was ready, the composer had begun to lose interest in the project. A personal crisis robbed him of any inclination to complete the musical score.

---

[9] Frederick J. Marker and Lise-Lone Marker. *The Scandinavian Theatre: A Short History* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1975), 107.

[10] Ibid. Marker and Marker point out that many of the actual stage sets were borrowed from earlier Gothic productions.

[11] *Hakon Jarl* is the name of the works by J.P.E. Hartmann, Emil Hartmann, and Smetana. Edvard Grieg's only opera, which was to remain unfinished, was based on the same story, but the Norwegian composer and his Norwegian librettist, Bjørnstjerne Bjørnson, entitled the work *Olav Trygvason*.

In the beginning of 1801, Julie Tutein told Weyse that her feelings for him had changed. She would be his friend, but would not reciprocate his love. On March 17 he wrote her—in German—a scathing letter of reproach:

> It is of course not for me to judge your conduct. It is enough for me that I now definitely know that the thought that I was in love with you, this thought, that made me so happy, was just an idle fantasy. The bitter sorrow over having been so deluded, and the pain of seeing my most beautiful hopes destroyed, will surely heal with time.[12]

Julie's father discovered the letter, and Weyse was thereafter forbidden to enter the Tutein home.

Weyse was heartbroken. Although obliged to continue his work as an organist, he ceased all composing.[13] As he wrote in 1820,

> …in the beginning of the year 1801 a passionately made plan for my life's happiness unexpectedly failed, and it threw me into the blackest melancholy and left me apathetic towards everything. I was tired of art, myself, and life, continued rather mechanically my business to earn my bread, and literally carried on in a completely vegetative state.[14]

The libretto for *Sovedrikken* lay dormant for over six years. No music had been added to the score since that summer of 1800, and not a single note would be added until the summer of 1807.

---

[12] "Doch es kommt mir nicht zu Ihre Handlungsweise zu beurtheilen. Genug für mich dass ich jezt bestimmt weiss der Gedanke mich von Ihnen geleibt zu glauben, dieser Gedanke, der mich so glücklich machte war nur ein leerer Wahn. Den bittern Unmuth, mich so getäuscht zu haben, und den Schmerz, meine schönsten Hofnungen gescheitert zu sehen, wird ja wohl die Zeit heilen." C.E.F. Weyse, *Breve*, ed. Sven Lunn and Erik Reitzel-Nielsen (Copenhagen: Munksgaard, 1964), 25.

[13] Schiørring, *Musikkens historie*, vol. 2, 164-66.

[14] "…i Begyndelsen af Aaret 1801 en lidenskabelig fattet Plan for mit Livs Lykke uventet var slaaet fejl, og at det havde styrtet mig i den sorteste Melancholie og gjort mig ligegyldig for Alt. Jeg var kjed af Kunsten, mig selv og det hele Liv, forsatte Ganske mechanisk mine Forretninger for at erhverve Brødet, og førte i bogstaveligste Forstand et reent Planteliv." Berggreen, *C.E.F. Weyse's Biographie*, 35.

That was the year in which Kunzen was finally able to persuade the rest of the company to produce Mozart's *Don Giovanni*. On May 5 the opera was performed in Denmark for the first time, with the composer Edouard Dupuy in the title role. The mysterious Dupuy, of French or possibly Swiss birth, had appeared in Copenhagen in 1799, after having been exiled from Prussia and Sweden.[15] He displayed prodigious talents as violinist, composer, and singer. The nineteenth-century theater historian Thomas Overskou later wrote of Dupuy's Danish premiere as a tenor,

> …it was the first time anyone had heard a truly musically educated tenor in a Danish *syngespil*, and not just a talented beginner, but a consummate artist. He was then twenty-nine years old, with a beautiful figure, an appealing face, a friendly vivacity, and he brought all of these personal characteristics to his performance. It is therefore no wonder that the earlier admiration now escalated to an ecstasy, and that everyone, in consideration of his rare advantages, gladly overlooked the fact that despite the pains he took, he was unable to acquire a correct Danish pronunciation.[16]

Dupuy was also an unusually gifted seducer; in addition to his two children with his wife, Lise Müller, Dupuy was responsible for at least three illegitimate children.[17] Dupuy's colorful adventures as a soldier, musician, and lover were romanticized in August Bournonville's ballet from 1871, *Livjægerne paa Amager* [The King's Volunteers

---

[15] Little is known of Dupuy's early life, and records of his later career conflict drastically. See Frits Eibe, "Du Puy-Forskningen," *Danske Musiks Tidsskrift* 11 (1936): 135-40.

[16] "…det var første Gang man hørte en virkelig musikalsk uddannet Tenorist i et dansk Syngestykke, og det ikke blot en talentfuld Begynder, men en fuldendt Kunstner. Han var da 29 Aar gammel, indtagende ved en smuk Figur, et interessant Ansigt, en elskværdig Vivacitet, og førte alle disse personlige Egenskaber over paa sin Fremstilling. Intet Under derfor, at den tidligere Beundring nu steg til Henrykkelse, og at man ligeoverfor hans sjældne Fortrin gjerne fandte sig i, at han , uagtet al den Umage an anvendte, ikke formaaede at tilegne sig en correct dansk Udtale." Th. Overskou, "Biographiske Meddelelser om J.B.E. Dupuy," introductory material to Edouard Dupuy, *Ungdom og Galskab*, syngestykke i to akter af J.B.E. Dupuy (Copenhagen: Horneman and Erslev, n.d.), 1. Apparently Dupuy's range was wide enough to accommodate the baritone role.

[17] These children were born to Henriette Montroze, Fredrika Löf, and Anna Dorothea Sølver. See Sten Høgel, "Edouard Dupuy, 'The Don Juan of the North,' tr. James Manley, in CD booklet to Edouard Dupuy, *Ungdom og Galskab* (DaCapo 8.224066-67, 1997), 6-8.

on Amager], with a score that was adapted from Dupuy's own music. In the fourth scene Lieutenant Edouard, despite his marriage to Louise, flirts with the two servant girls Else and Trine. Bournonville's sketch for the action reads as follows:

> Edouard sits down in an armchair and reads himself to sleep, but is soon disturbed by a melody that continues to haunt him. He tries in vain to find some peace, but it is no use; he must get up and confine his fantasies to the piano.
>
> Else steals into the room, lured by the strains of the melody. She beckons Trine, and they both harken to the tender harmonies which each girl believes to be a sign of the Lieutenant's infatuation for her. They start to slip away, when they are noticed; but Edouard detains Else, tells her how pretty she is, and, as usual, assures her of his ardent love. Trine returns, stands there astounded, and begs pardon for having interrupted their conversation. Edouard tries to pacify her, but she reproaches him for his unfaithfulness, since he has also played up to her a good deal. (This evolves into a dancing trio, wherein Edouard tries to convince each girl in turn that she is the one he prefers.)[18]

Dupuy's only Danish *syngespil*, *Ungdom og Galskab* [Youth and Folly], won instant and lasting success at Det kongelige Teater as soon as it premiered in 1806. This success, coupled with Dupuy's personal popularity and superb artistry as a singer, helped Kunzen persuade the reluctant board of the theater to attempt a production of *Don Giovanni* with Dupuy in the title role. *Ungdom og Galskab* was in repertory when *Don Giovanni* (performed in Danish as *Don Juan*) opened in 1807, giving Dupuy the rare distinction of serving as both composer and opera star over the course of several days in the beginning of May. The performance schedule (not including ballet and spoken

---

[18] Rpt. in "The Ballet Poems of August Bournonville: The Complete Scenarios, Part Eight," tr. Patricia McAndrew, *Dance Chronicle* 5 (1982): 92-93.

theater) was as follows: May 5, *Don Juan*; May 8, *Ungdom og Galskab*; May 9, *Don Juan*.[19]

In the audience that week was the melancholy Weyse. Although he knew *Don Giovanni* from the printed score, the effect of seeing it on stage was profoundly restorative. In his own words,

> I didn't know what happened to me. From the orchestral score and the piano score, I [already] knew almost the entire opera by heart; but that performance far exceeded even my expectations. During the scene with the [Commendatore's] ghost I became shaken to my innermost marrow, but that shaking was beneficial in that it awakened my genius, which more powerfully than ever began to flap its wings.[20]

Newly inspired, he resumed work on his once-abandoned *syngespil*, and in a few months he had completed his sketch for the second act.

In August of that year the British army surrounded Copenhagen, burning almost one third of the city in an effort to prevent the Danish fleet from falling into Napoleon's hands. Dupuy fought as a volunteer, and it was his heroism against the British that earned him a promotion to Lieutenant. Due to the conventions of the time, his new position prevented him from any further performance on the Danish stage.[21] Weyse, meanwhile, despite the interruption, was able to finish the orchestral score of *Sovedrikken* by March 1808. He remained unmarried at his death in 1842.

---

[19] Arthur Aumont and Edgar Collin, *Det danske Nationalteater 1748-1889: En statistisk Fremstilling* (Copenhagen: J. Jørgensen & Co., 1896-1900), "Skuespil- og Opera-repertoiret A-K," 148-51; "Skuespil- og Opera-repertoiret L-Ø," 393-95. Dupuy also performed the role of Rose in *Ungdom og Galskab*.
[20] "Jeg vidste ikke, hvad der foregik med mig. Af Partituret og Claveerudtog kunde jeg næsten hele Operaen udenad; men denne Virknung overgik endnu langt min Forventning. Ved Gjenfærdscenen blev jeg rystet til inderste Marv, men Rystningen var velgjørende den vakte min Genius, der mægtigere end nogensinde begyndte at røre sine Vinger." Berggreen, *C.E.F. Weyse's Biographie*, 35-36.
[21] Schiørring, *Musikkens Historie*, vol. 2, 158.

Dupuy's *Ungdom og Galskab*

Ungdom og Galskab and *Sovedrikken*, the two most frequently performed *syngespil* of their day, reveal much about the tastes of the Danish theater audience in the first decade of the nineteenth century. Dupuy and Weyse had thoroughly familiarized themselves with local and foreign operatic repertory through both study and their professional careers. As members of the very small circle of writers and musicians working in Copenhagen just after the turn of the century, they also enjoyed close relationships with Kunzen, Schulz, and Claus Schall, all of whom had learned through personal experience what was and was not acceptable and effective on the Danish stage. Unlike the *syngespil* of those three composers, however, *Ungdom og Galskab* and *Sovedrikken* managed to retain their popularity throughout the rest of the century. They epitomized important musical and dramatic trends at the precise moment that those trends were beginning to solidify into the foundations of a new, national aesthetic.

Like *Sovedrikken*, *Ungdom og Galskab* was a translation from a foreign source: Jean-Nicolas Bouilly's libretto for Etienne-Nicolas Mehúl's *La folie*.[22] According to popular legend, Det kongelige Teater had scheduled several performances of *La folie* for the 1806 season. The orchestra parts did not arrive in time, and so Dupuy quickly set the libretto to new music.[23] A more likely account, however, is that the mercurial Dupuy simply did not wish to sing in Mehúl's opera, and N.T. Bruun, who had already gone to

[22] Bouilly also provided the libretto for Luigi Cherubini's *Les deux journeés* (1800); Beethoven's *Fidelio* was based on Bouilly's libretto for *Léonore*.
[23] John Horton, *Scandinavian Music: A Short History* (London: Faber and Faber, 1963), 79.

the trouble of translating the libretto into Danish, persuaded the composer to compose his own score.[24]

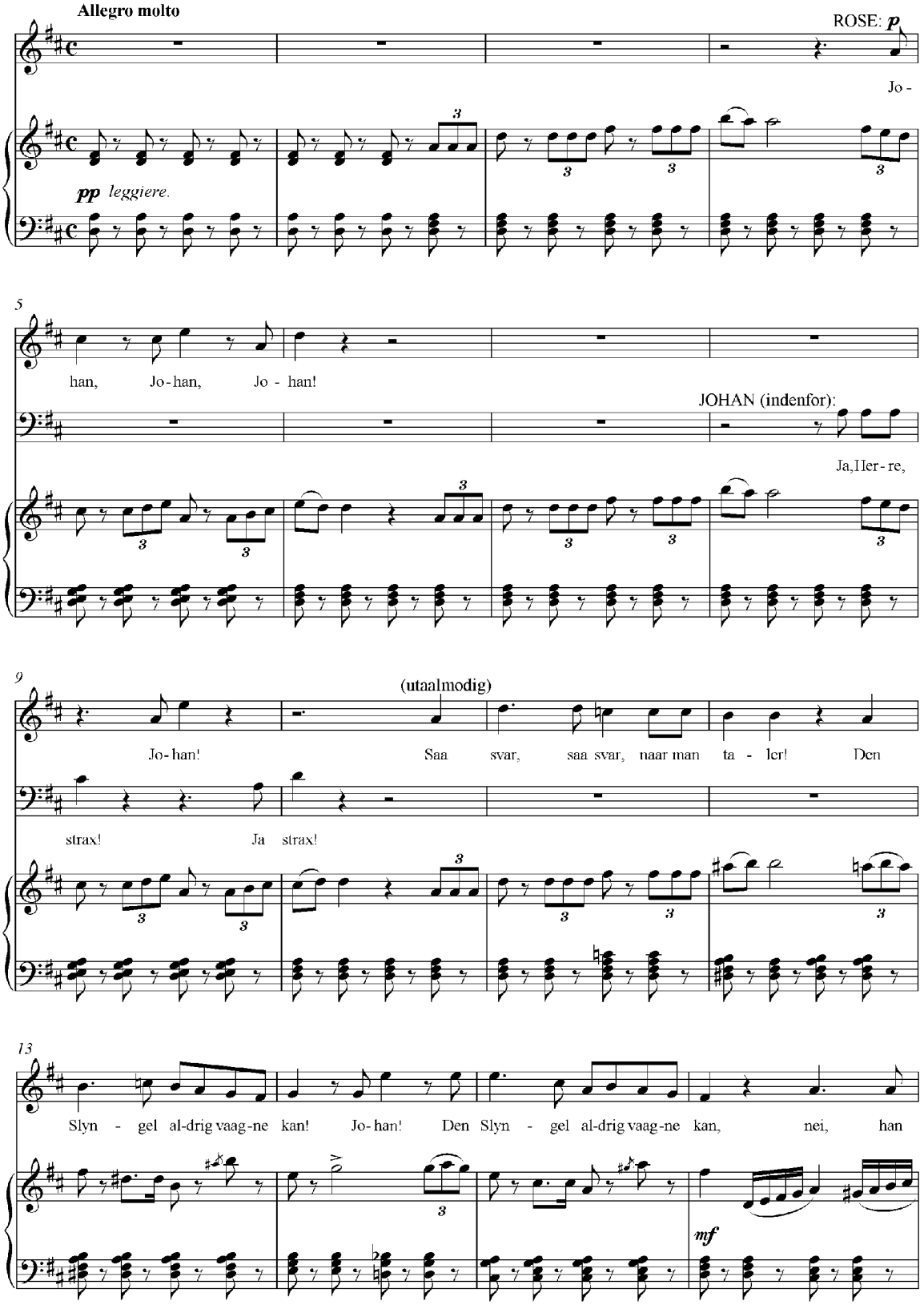
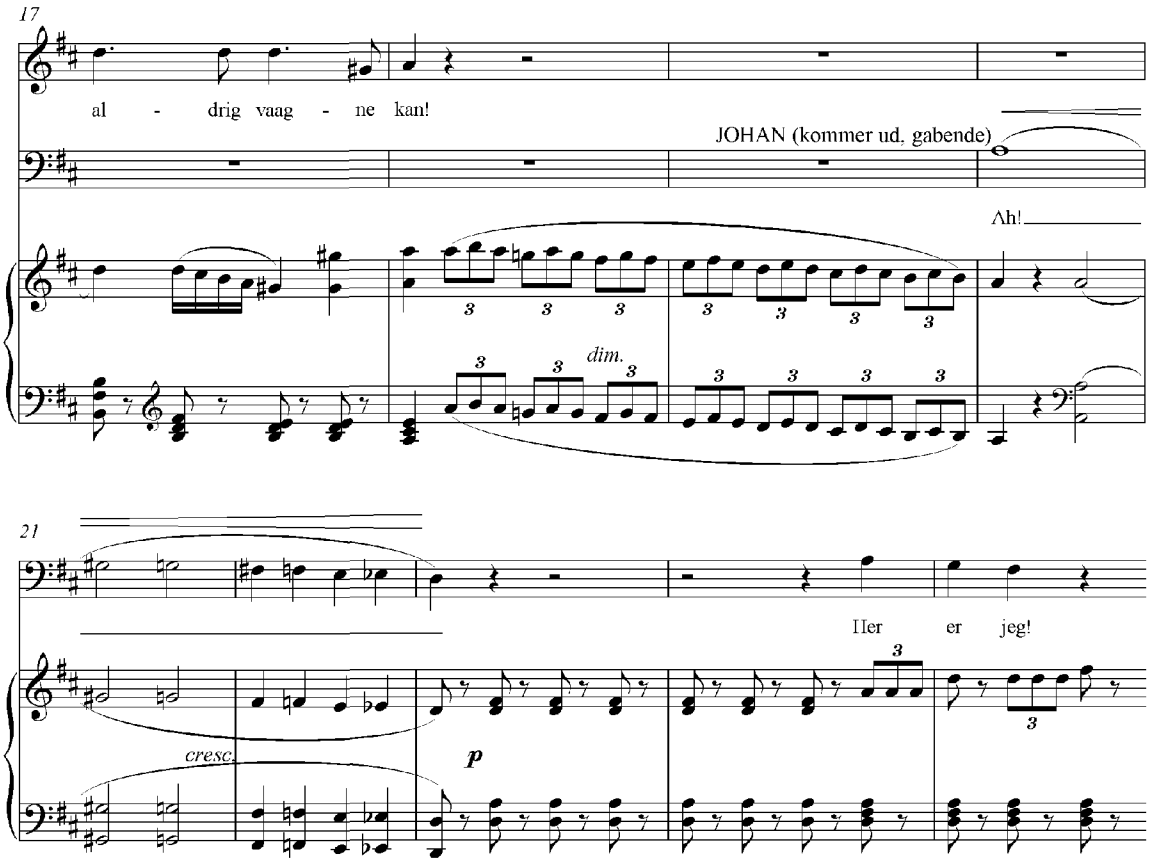
Bruun set the action of *Ungdom og Galskab* in Copenhagen, gave Bouilly's characters Danish names, and sprinkled a number of references to Danish locations and customs throughout the dialogue. In essence, however, the characters and plot are those of French comic opera in all but the spoken language. The handsome, wealthy Captain Rose (sung by Dupuy himself) has fallen in love with the beautiful young Vilhelmine, who is in turn desired by her guardian, the painter Grøndal. Through a series of comic escapades and disguises, Rose, with the assistance of his faithful servant Johan, succeeds in wooing Vilhelmine and convincing Grøndal that he should let her make her own choice as to whom she would like to marry.

The opening of the *syngespil* demonstrates the lightness, briskness, and exuberance of Dupuy's music as compared to Schulz's (Example 3.1). The curtain rises on a street in Copenhagen. Captain Rose, coming out of a tavern, looks around and calls for Johan in a low voice, hoping he will be able to help formulate a plan for making a mysterious girl Rose's bride. "I do not [yet] know her," Rose confesses, "but forever, forever will I burn for her!"[25]

---

[24] Høgel, "Edouard Dupuy," 12.

[25] "Jeg kjender hende ei; / men evig, evig for hende jeg brænder." Edouard Dupuy, *Ungdom og Galskab*, syngestykke i to akter af J.B.E. Dupuy (Copenhagen: Horneman and Erslev, n.d.), 19-20. The text in this vocal score differs slightly from that of the printed libretto.

Dupuy, *Ungdom og Galskab*, Opening

[ROSE: Johan, Johan, Johan!
JOHAN (from inside the tavern): Yes, master, at once!
ROSE: Johan!
JOHAN: Yes, at once!
ROSE (impatiently): Then answer, then answer, when someone speaks!
That scoundrel can never wake up!
Johan!
That scoundrel can never wake up,
No, he can never wake up!
JOHAN (coming out, yawning): Ah!
Here I am!]

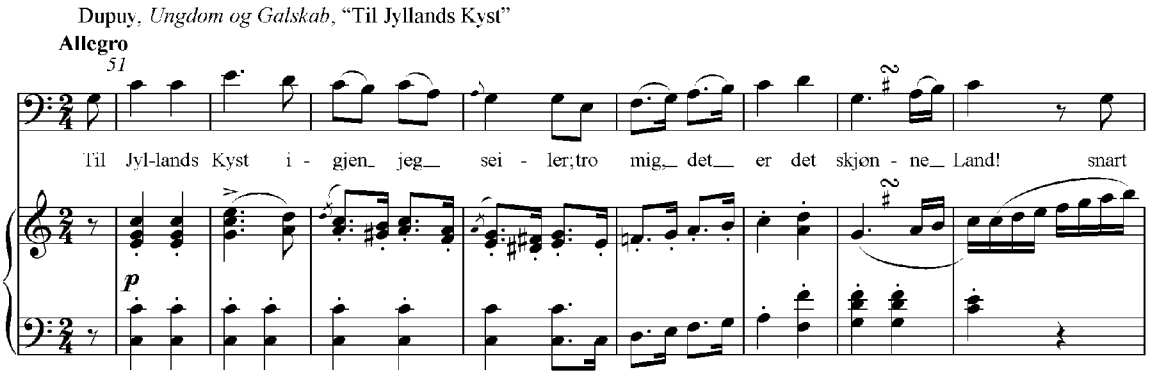
Example 3.1

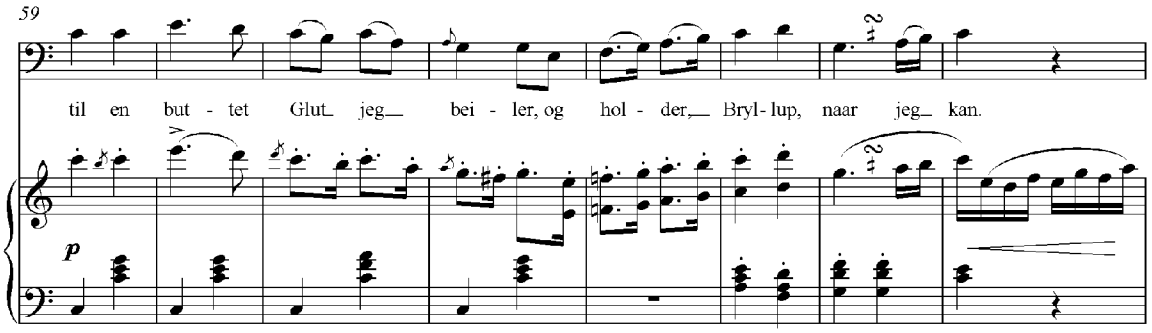
Much like Leporello from *Don Giovanni*, Johan yearns to be free of Rose. Johan, however, neither resents his servitude nor does he condemn his master's behavior. He

simply looks forward to the day when he can leave the machinations of Copenhagen society for a simpler, purer life in the country, back home in his native Jutland.

> Goodnight, cabals! Goodnight, intrigues!
> Johan will reform himself!—
> I say farewell to all of my cronies!
> Guardians of young girls,
> Rejoice! Johan has ended his game! [26]

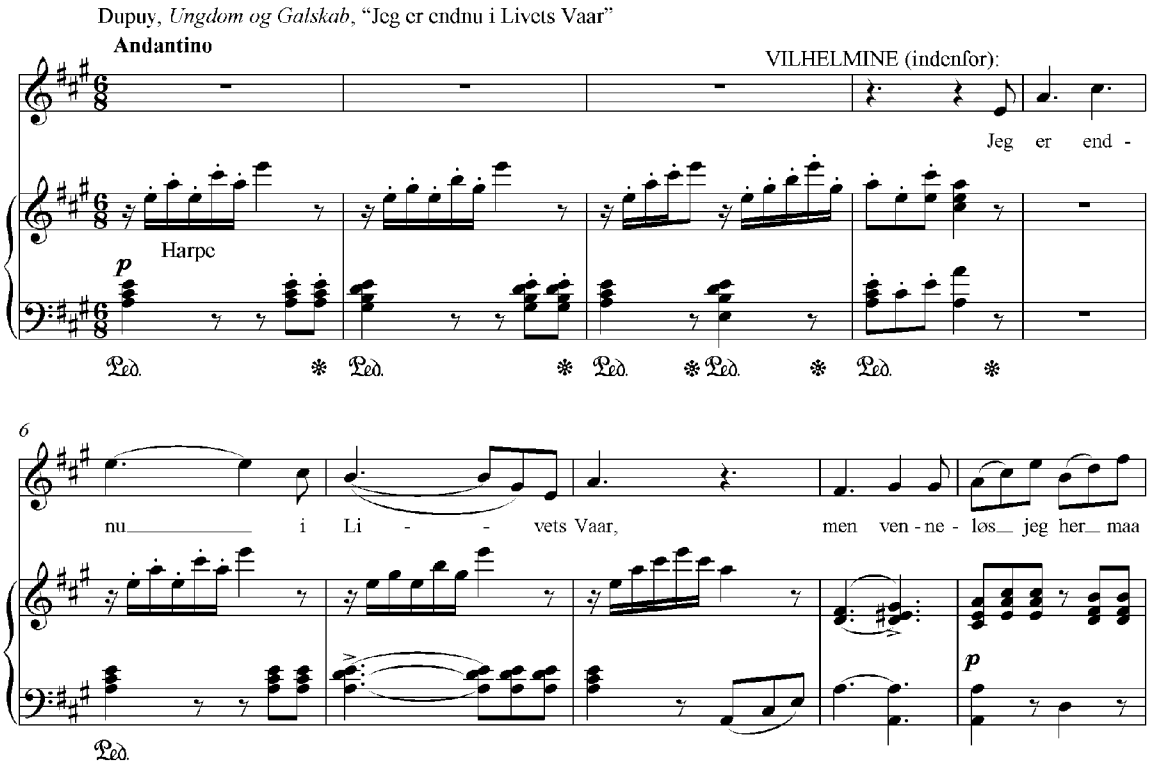
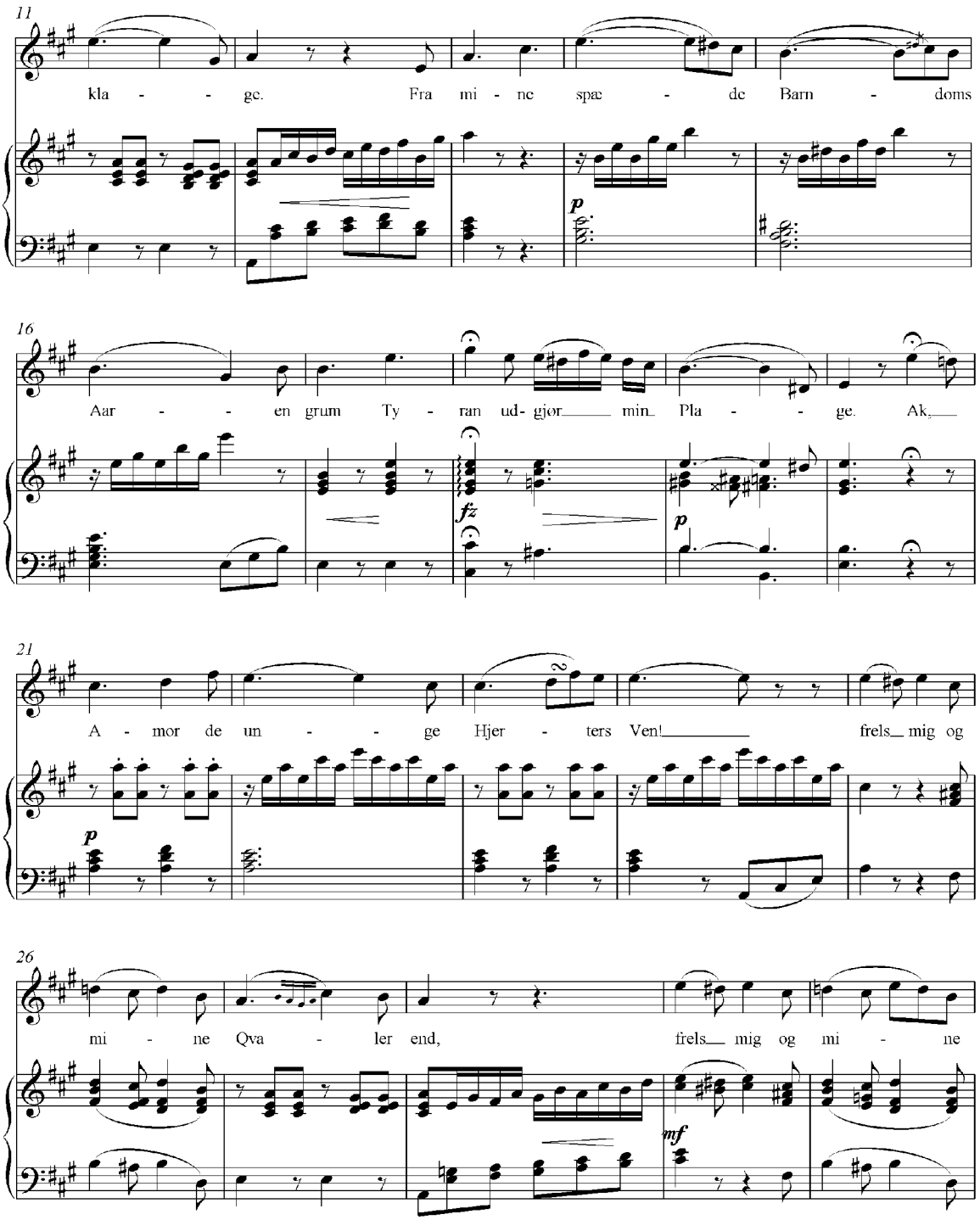
Where Mozart and da Ponte sought to comment on the morality of the class system, Dupuy and Bruun find an opportunity to celebrate one of the regions of Denmark. With a bright, folk-like march, Johan rhapsodizes,

> I sail again to the coast of Jutland;
> Trust me, it is a beautiful land!
> I'll woo a chubby lass,
> And have a wedding as soon I can (Example 3.2).[27]

[26] "God Nat, Cabaler! God Nat, Intriguer! / Johan sig nu omvende vil!— / Hver gammel Knark Farvel jeg siger! / Formyndere for unge Piger, / Glæd Eder! Johan har endt sit Spil!" Ibid., 47-49.
[27] "Til Jyllands Kyst igjen jeg seiler; / Tro mig, det er et skjønne Land! / Snart til en buttet Glut jeg beiler, / Og holder Bryllup naar jeg kan." Ibid., 49-50. The melody here anticipates the Allegro vivace section from the overture to Rossini's 1829 *Guillaume Tell*.

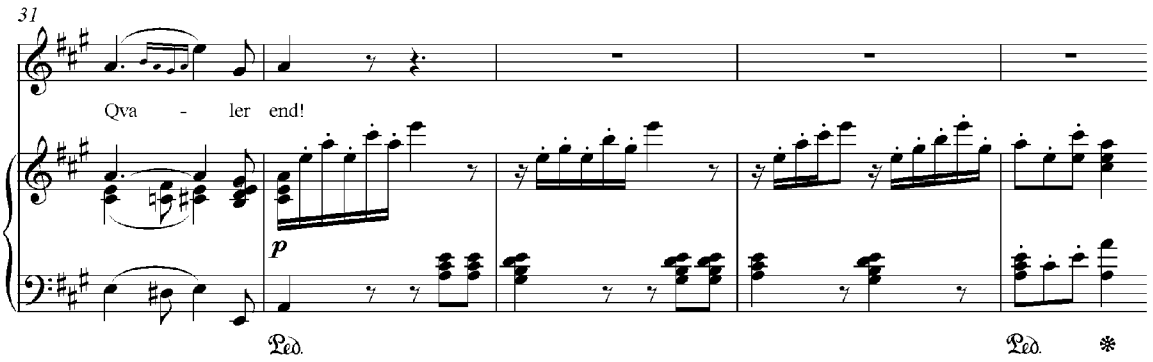


Example 3.2

Dupuy also includes more tender and lyrical music. In Vilhelmine's "Jeg er endnu i Livets Vaar" [I am still in the springtime of life], the young ingénue bewails her lonely existence, locked away inside the jealous Grøndal's house. The number begins as a strophic *romance*, which Vilhelmine sings to harp accompaniment (perhaps her own) from behind her shuttered windows (Example 3.3).



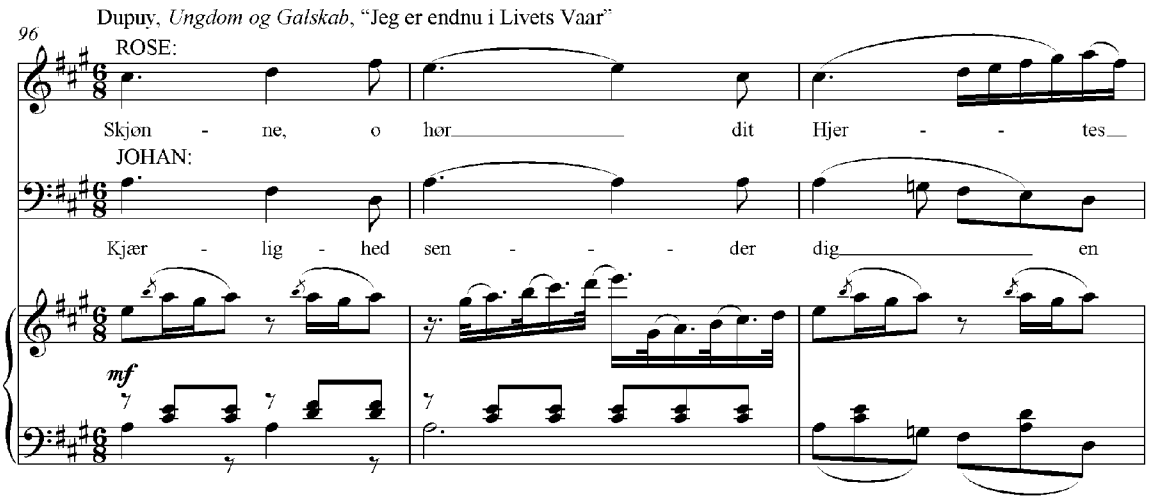
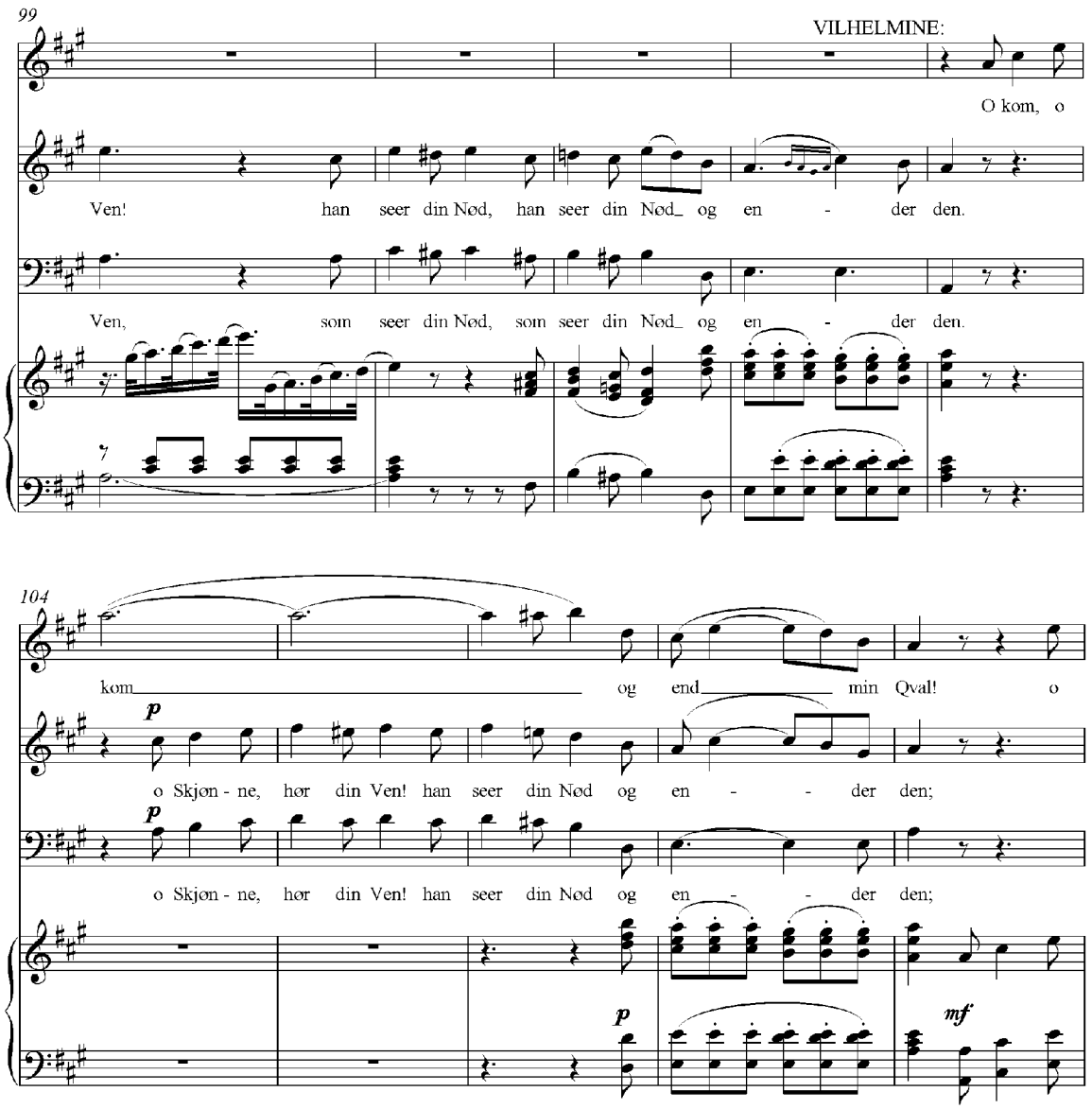
11
kla - - ge. Fra mi - ne spæ - de Barn - doms
p
16
Aar - - en grum Ty - ran ud- gjør min Pla - - ge. Ak,
fz
p
21
A - mor de un - - ge Hjer - ters Ven! frels mig og
p
26
mi - ne Qva - ler end, frels mig og mi - ne
mf

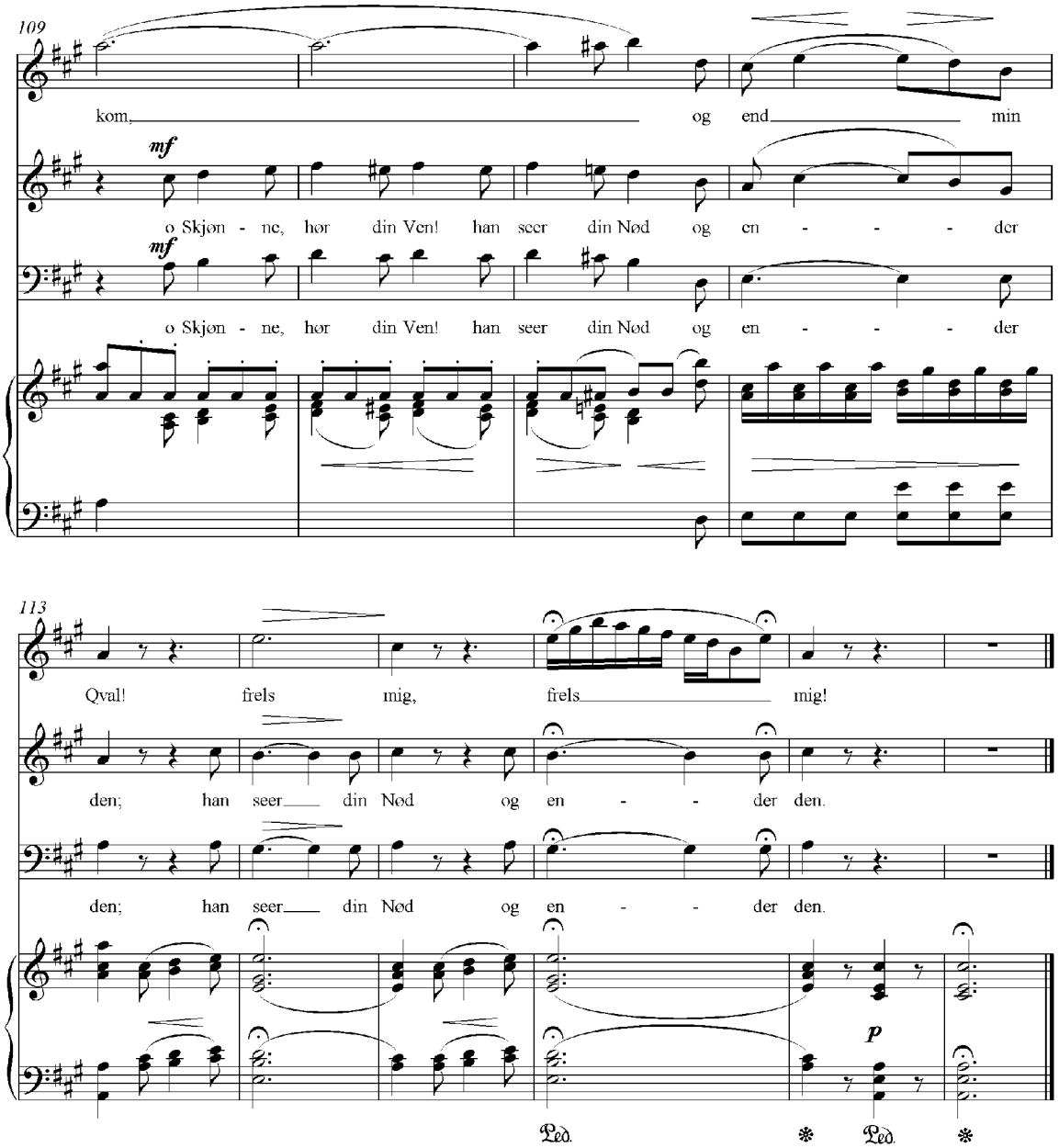


[VILHELMINE (from inside): I am still in the springtime of life,
But friendless, I must here complain.
From the tender years of my infancy,
A cruel tyrant has been my plague.
Ah, Amor, the friend of young hearts!
Save me and end my agony!]

Example 3.3

Rose and Johan, onstage, hear her singing, and respond. Vilhelmine replies in turn, transforming the solo *romance* into a trio. (Example 3.4).



99
VILHELMINE:
O kom, o
Ven! han seer din Nød, han seer din Nød_ og en - der den.
Ven, som seer din Nød, som seer din Nød_ og en - der den.
104
kom og end min Qval! o
p
o Skjøn - ne, hør din Ven! han seer din Nød og en - - der den;
p
o Skjøn - ne, hør din Ven! han seer din Nød og en - - der den;
p
mf

[ROSE: Beautiful one, hear your heart's friend!
He sees your distress, he sees your distress,
And puts an end to it.
JOHAN: Love sends you a friend
Who sees your distress, who sees your distress,
And puts an end to it.
VILHELMINE: O come, o come,
And end my agony!
Save me, save me!

ROSE and JOHAN: O beautiful one, hear your heart's friend!
He sees your distress
And puts an end to it.]

Example 3.4

With passages like these, and the Mozartean finales for the first and second acts, Dupuy brought a robust counterpoint back to the Danish musical theater seventeen years after *Holger Danske*. Upon returning to Copenhagen in 1795, Kunzen had for the most part followed Schulz's example, avoiding the more complex textures of his earlier music in favor of simple, homophonic accompaniments. *Ungdom og Galskab* illustrates that by 1806 audiences were certainly not bothered by the occasional use of polyphony in a *syngespil*.

Dupuy's most significant historical accomplishment, though, may be the sense of warmth, tenderness, and delicacy that the French-speaking composer brought to the Danish opera, which had previously been dominated first by Italians and then by Germans. As Bournonville wrote in his memoirs,

> Our lyric stage possesses an invaluable treasure in his *Youth and Folly*, sparkling as it does with humor and genius, which qualities, combined with his personal charm, seem to have been his principal character traits, for his frivolity had become proverbial.[28]

In 1809 Dupuy's Danish career ended suddenly when he seduced one of his music students, the Princess Charlotte Frederikke. Her husband, Prince Christian Frederik, quickly dissolved the marriage and banished Dupuy from the country. Christian Frederik remarried and in 1836 assumed the throne as King Christian VIII, making Charlotte

[28] August Bournonville, *My Theatre Life*, tr. Patricia N. McAndrew (Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 1979), 367.

Frederikke perhaps the only woman in history to lose a queenship over an affair with a theater composer.[29]

Weyse's *Sovedrikken*

Like *Ungdom og Galskab* and *Høstgildet*, *Sovedrikken* also deals with the triumph of young love over the obstacles thrown in its way by an older, paternal figure. The surgeon Brausse has blessed his daughter Charlotte's marriage to her fiancé Walther, whom Brausse believes is also a surgeon. This blessing is soon angrily revoked: when asked to amputate the leg of a farm hand, Walther is forced to admit that he is not a surgeon, but a lawyer. Brausse also stands in the way of the wedding of his niece Rose to her lover Valentin, since Brausse insists that she instead marry his assistant Saft. Valentin, however, has discovered Brausse's weakness: he has fallen in love with Abelone, wife of the already-jealous miller Malz. Rose and Valentin determine to use the miller's wife to secure permission for both of the unhappy couples to marry. Further complications arise from the eponymous sleeping potion of the title. Before the end of the first act, Walther mistakenly drinks a bottle of wine mixed with opium, intended for use as an anaesthetic for surgery. He loses consciousness and is presumed dead for the rest of the *syngespil*, only to awaken just before the final number.

---

[29] The story of Dupuy and Charlotte Frederikke has been fictionalized in Mogens Wenzel Andreasen, *Ungdom og galskab: En guldalderroman om Du Puy og Weyse* (Copenhagen: Borgen, 2002). In the biographical sketch of Dupuy from the nineteenth-century vocal score of *Ungdom og Galskab*, Charlotte Frederikke is identified only as "en Dame af meget høi Stand" [a woman of very high position]; see Overskou, "Biographiske Meddelelser," 2. See also Robert Neiiendam, *Ungdom og Galskab: Princesse Charlotte Frederikke og Edouard Du Puy* (Copenhagen: V. Pios Boghandel, 1923) and Axel Kjerulf, *Nordens Don Juan: Edouard Du Puy, en livsroman* (Copenhagen: Hassings Forlag, 1952).

Despite the rather unconventional indisposition of a leading character for most of the action, *Sovedrikken* conforms to the basic patterns of German-language *Singspiel* from the end of the eighteenth century. These patterns had been solidified by Gottlieb Stephanie the Younger in his texts to Mozart's *Die Entführung aus dem Serail* and Dittersdorf's *Doktor und Apotheker*. In 1792, writing in the preface to an edition of his collected librettos, Stephanie set forth his principles of Viennese *Singspiel* construction:

> Firstly, there must be neither too many nor too few musical numbers. Twenty-four in an entire Singspiel is the acceptable maximum and eighteen the minimum; these must be suitably divided into arias and concerted pieces, and then again divided up proportionately so that the chief voices, in particular, are not overtaxed and especially not neglected. The Singspiel must begin with a concerted piece, and each act must end with an action finale in which the main characters appear. Seldom must more than two arias follow one another, and these must not be sung by the same person; a duet, trio, or quartet must then create a kind of paragraph. Each of the principal voices must have at least three arias and a duet or trio, and especially must appear in the finales. Furthermore, the composer must be given the opportunity to vary the manner of the music…The fewer the characters to which a Singspiel is confined, the better it will turn out, since the third and fourth roles are usually weak vocally and musically, and quite often upset the audience's good humor.[30]

Sovedrikken does not stray far from these precepts. Not including the overture, the *syngespil* contains twenty-one musical numbers, placing it squarely in the middle of Stephanie's recommended range. Thirteen of the numbers are for solo voices and eight are ensembles: a duet, a quartet, three quintets (one of which serves as the opening), one chorus, and the large finales for each of the acts. Although there are five consecutive solo numbers near the end of the first act, they are sung by five different characters. Because the principal male character Walther sleeps through so much of the action, he

---

[30] Qtd. in John Warrack, *German Opera: From the Beginnings to Wagner* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 138-39.

only sings one solo piece, "Kærlighed er stærk som døden" [Love is as strong as death]; it is, however, one of the most extended arias in the score. To fill this lacuna, Brausse, Valentin, and even Saft each sing a number, and the comic figure of Malz assumes a dominant role in the second act, with two solos and a duet with Abelone. Charlotte and Abelone each have three solo numbers, while the smaller role of Rose has only one, the arietta "Amor! Bacchus! Synk herned" [Cupid! Bacchus! Descend].

Because Weyse had already composed the majority of the score before enlisting Oehlenschläger's services, the poet remained true to the basic situations and placement of musical numbers in Bretzner's original and tried to accord as closely as possible with the rhythm of the German sung texts. In some places, however, Oehlenschläger adapted the actual dialogue and the sense of the sung texts quite freely. His perception of what would best please the Danish audience may have played a large role in *Sovedrikken*'s success. As he himself recounted in 1830,

> The fantastic humor in Shakespeare's comedies had inspired me, and I felt a spiritual kinship with such theatrical mirth…With that feeling I adapted Bretzner's *Sovedrikken*. The humor and almost all of the fancy in the dialogue, with which the *syngespil*'s figures achieve their poetic characters, belong to me; although I certainly built upon Bretzner's merry foundation.[31]

Never one to be modest, Oehlenschläger three years later again claimed credit for much of the lightness and humor in the dialogue:

---

[31] "Den fantastiske Humor i de Shakspeareske Komedier havde begejstret mig, og jeg følte mig aandelig beslægtet med in slig dramatisk Munterhed…Med denne Følelse omarbejdede jeg Bretzners Sovedrik. Lunet og næsten alle Indfaldene i Dialogen, hvorved dette Syngespils Figurer vinde poetisk Personlighed, tilhøre mig; skjøndt der lod sig godt bygge paa Bretzners lystige Grund." Qtd. in Carl Elberling, *Om Syngestykket "Sovedrikken"* (Copenhagen: Bianco Lunos Bogtrykkeri, 1876), 7-8.

> I have related before in my career that I, following Weyse's wish, adapted that piece in such a way that I held myself to the situations and the placement of songs in scenes, but gave everything new dialogue, in which most of the humor and mirth belong to the adaptation; as witness the humor of the masterful performances of the roles of Brausse and Saft, which have now entertained the public for about twenty-four years' time.[32]

The critic Carl Elberling, comparing the Danish *Sovedrikken* with the German *Der Schlaftrunk*, explains that

> …the relationship is not the same throughout the entire work, but that Oehlenschläger has translated some parts of the piece literally, while he has translated others so freely, it is as though he had read Bretzner's libretto once or twice and since then had misplaced the book.[33]

Elberling points out that although a number like Valentin's *romance* "Skøn Jomfru, luk dit Vindue op!" [Fair maiden, open up your window!] is close to the original German, Rose's "Amor! Bacchus! Synk herned" has little in common with Bretzner's original besides the meter of the poetry. A comic aria for Saft, "For Dem mit Hjerte bruser" [My heart boils for you], was added by Oehlenschläger.[34] The differences between the Danish and the German grow more pronounced by the end of the second act, after the point where Weyse had stopped composing in 1800:

> In the following part of the work any similarity between the songs in the two texts disappears: a short aria for Brausse and a duet between the miller and his wife [Malz and Abelone] are completely left out in the Danish text; the miller's wife's aria "Ej Manden alene for alle Ting staaer" [The husband alone does not manage everything], together with the well-known

---

[32] "Jeg har fortalt i mit Levnetsløb, at jeg, efter Weyses Ønske, bearbejdede dette Stykke saaledes, at jeg holdt mig til Situationerne og Scenernes Sang, men gav det Hele en ny Dialog, hvori det Meste af de Spøg og de Indfald tilhøre Omarbejdelsen, som ved Brauses og Safts mesterlige Fremstilleres Lune har moret Publikum nu henved en 24 Aars Tid." Ibid., 8.

[33] "…at dette Forhold ikke er det same hele Stykket igjennem, men at Oehlenschläger har oversat nogle Dele af Stykket nøjagtigt, medens han har gjengivet andre saa frit, som om han kun havde læst Bretzners Stykke en Gang eller to og siden havde forlage Bogen." Elberling, *Om Syngestykket "Sovedrikken,"* 23.

[34] Ibid., 10-11.

> *romances* "Det blanke Sværd paa Væggen hang" [The bright sword hung on the wall] and "Knap Klokken slog det tolvte Slag" [As soon as the bell struck midnight] are so different from the corresponding pieces in the German text that they may be called entirely original, and in the Danish finale, scarcely a single one of Bretzner's lines can be recognized.[35]

Abelone's "Det blanke Sværd paa Væggen hang," singled out by Elberling as one of the more original of Oehlenschläger's lyrics, became in Weyse's strophic setting a Danish *romance* in the tradition of "De spøgelser dansed'" and "Liden Gunver." It is in F minor, in 6/8 time, and it recounts a supernatural legend (Example 3.5). Like its predecessors, it unequivocally establishes its diegetic nature in the dialogue: at the end of the *romance*, Malz chides her, "Tsk, tsk, Abelone! You are always singing these old, simple superstitious songs."[36] The melody also follows what musicologist Niels Martin Jensen found to be a typical pattern for what he labeled the *folkeviseromance*, or folk ballad romance, all of which are in the minor mode: "Characteristic for this…group is the opening leap of a fourth up to the tonic note, after which the melody continues up to the third, eventually with a turn around the leading tone."[37]

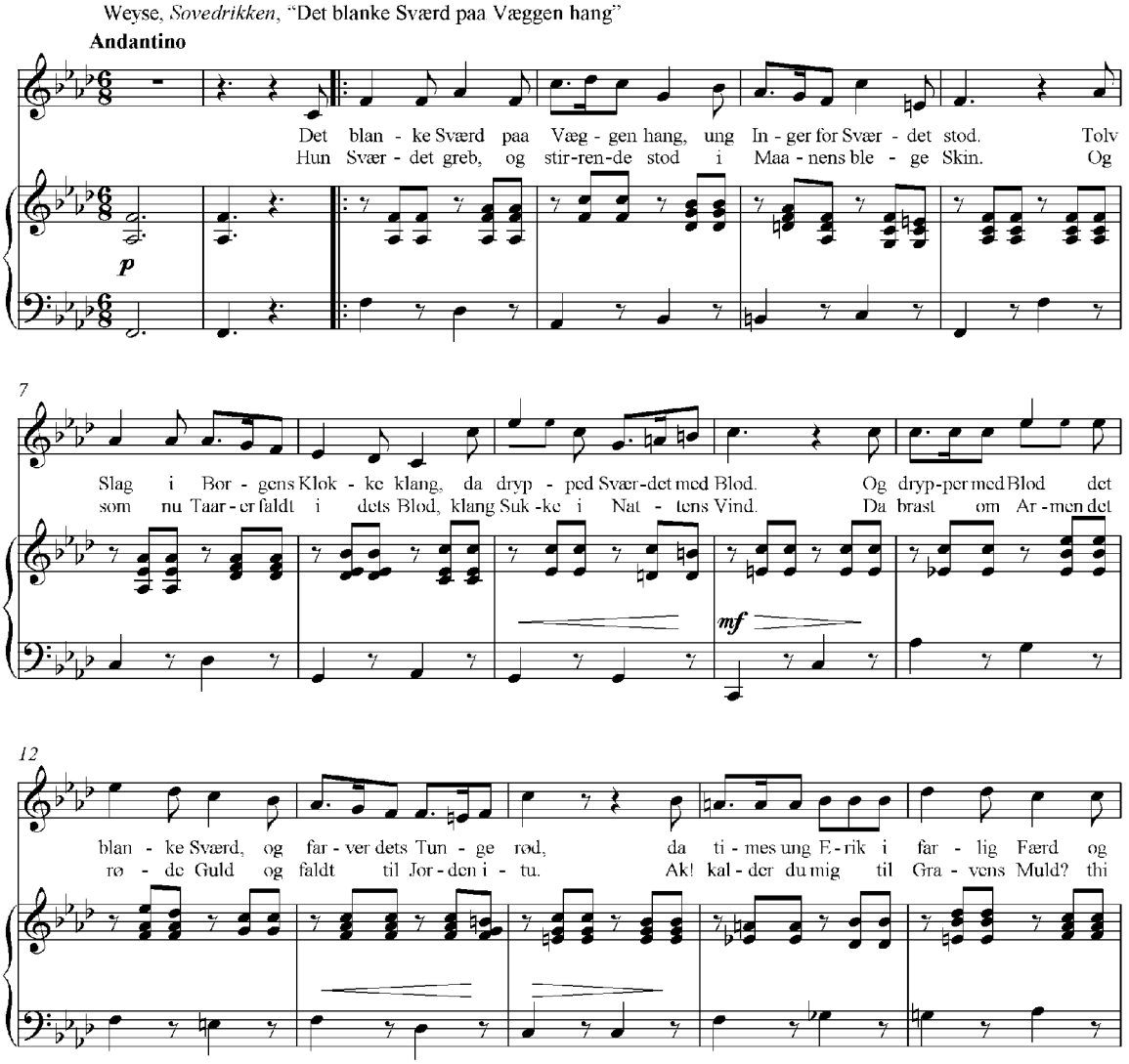
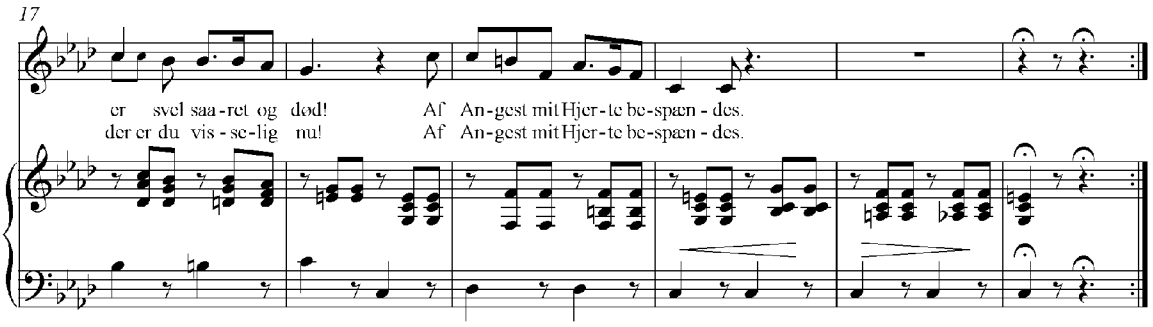
The phrase structure also reflects the influence of the Medieval Danish folk ballad, a tradition that will be discussed further in Chapter 4. The vocal line is divided into five phrases: the first four are each four measures long (mm. 3-6, 7-10, 11-14, and

---

[35] "Og i den følgende Del af Stykket forsvinder enhver Lighed mellem Sangene i de to Texter: en lille Aria af Brausse og en Duet imellem Mølleren og hans Kone ere helt udeladte i den danske Text; Møllerkones Aria "Ej Manden alene for alle Ting staaer," samt de bekjendte Romancer "Det blanke Sværd paa Væggen hang" og "Knap Klokken slog det tolvte Slag" ere saa forskellige fra de tilsvarende Stykker i den tydske Text, at de maa kaldes aldeles originale, og i den danske Finale vil man neppe gjenkjende en eneste af Bretzners Repliker." Ibid., 12.

[36] "Ei, ei, Abelone! alletider synger du disse gamle, enfoldige, overtroiske Viser." Adam Oehlenschläger, *Digterværker og Prosaiske Skrifter* (Copenhagen: Andr. Fred. Høsts Forlag, 1852), vol. 13, 78.

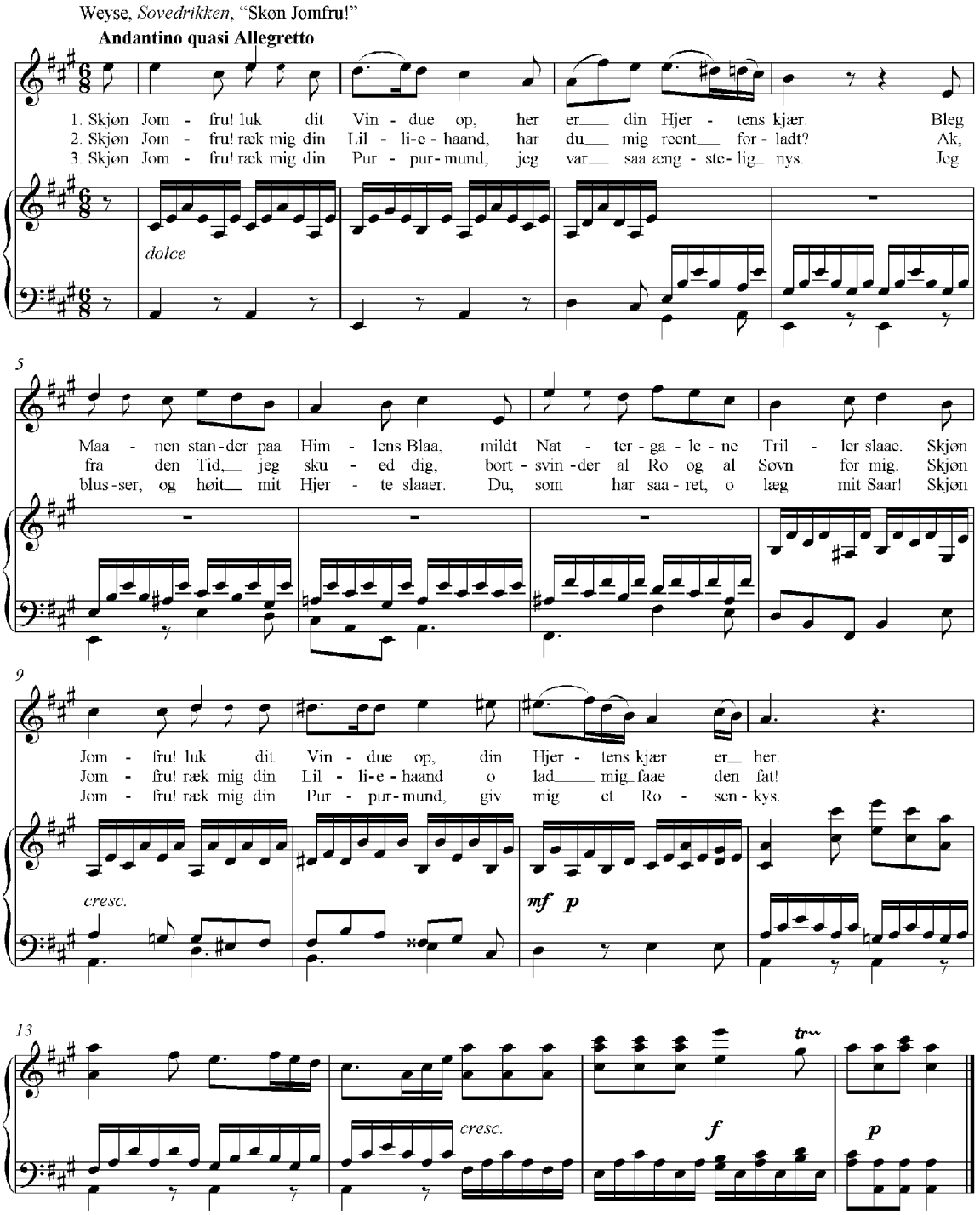
[37] "Karakteristisk for denne…gruppe er det indledende kvartspring op til grundtonen, hvorefter melodien fortsætter op til tertsen, evt. Med en drejning omkring ledetonen." Niels Martin Jensen, *Den danske romance 1800-1850 og dens musikalske forudsætninger* (Copenhagen: Gyldendal, 1964), 69-70. Jensen's ambiguous term "drejning" does not necessarily refer to a musical "turn" in the sense of an ornament.

15-18), but the last contains only two measures (mm. 19-20). This final phrase, along with the two-measure half-cadence which follows it, takes on the nature of a short refrain. This impression is confirmed when the text, "Af angest mit Hjerte bespændes" [My heart is bursting with dread], is repeated during the second stanza. Although so much of *Sovedrikken* lies in the tradition of the Viennese *Singspiel*, Weyse and Oehlenschläger took care to include at least one number that the audience would recognize as belonging to the Danish folk tradition.

[The bright sword hung on the wall,
Young Inger stood before the sword.
The castle bell rang twelve times,
And the sword dripped with blood.
And the bright sword dripped with blood
And colored its tongue red.
Danger has befallen young Erik,
He is certainly wounded and dead!
My heart is bursting with dread.

She grabbed the sword, and stood staring
In the pale moonlight.
And as her tears fell in the blood,
A sigh came from the night's wind.
Then the red gold of her bracelet broke
And fell to the earth in pieces.
Ah! Do you call me to the dirt of the grave?
Because you are certainly there now!
My heart is bursting with dread.]

Example 3.5

Although Weyse would continue to compose *folkeviseromancer* like this for the remainder of his career, perhaps his most lasting contribution to Danish theater music was the large body of *romances*, also in 6/8 meter, that he set in major keys. "Skjøn Jomfru, luk dit Vindue op!" (Example 3.6), a serenade sung by Valentin at Rose's window, serves as an excellent example of Weyse's style. The simple orchestral accompaniment consists almost entirely of arpeggiated sixteenth notes, over which the melody develops lightly and gracefully, often falling into the dotted rhythmic figure of

the *sicilienne*. A four-measure postlude, based on motives from the vocal line, rounds out the uneven number of four-measure sung phrases.

[Fair maiden, open up your window,
Here is your heart's beloved.
The pale moon is in the blue of the sky,
Softly the nightingales trill.
Fair maiden, open up your window,
Your heart's beloved is here.

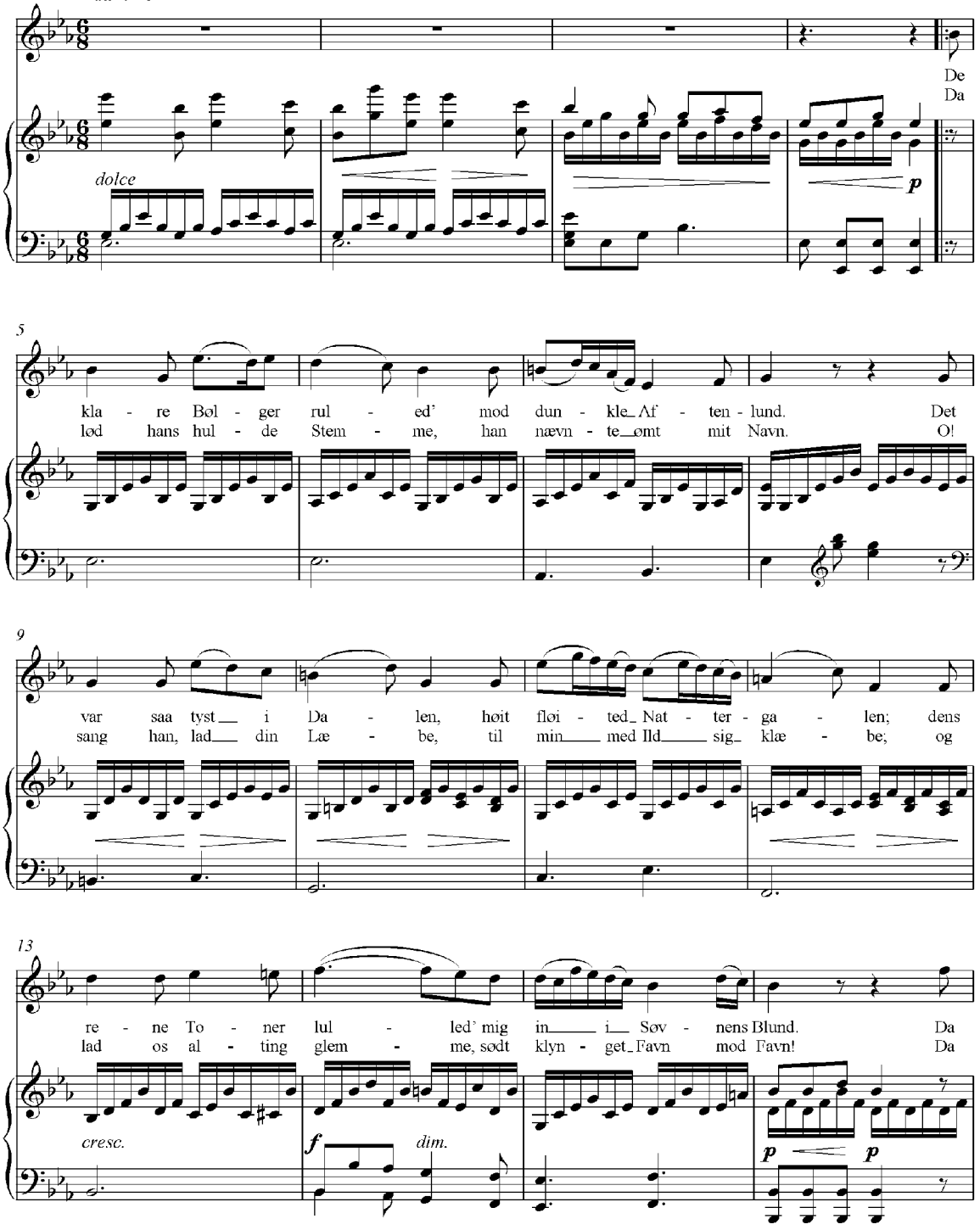
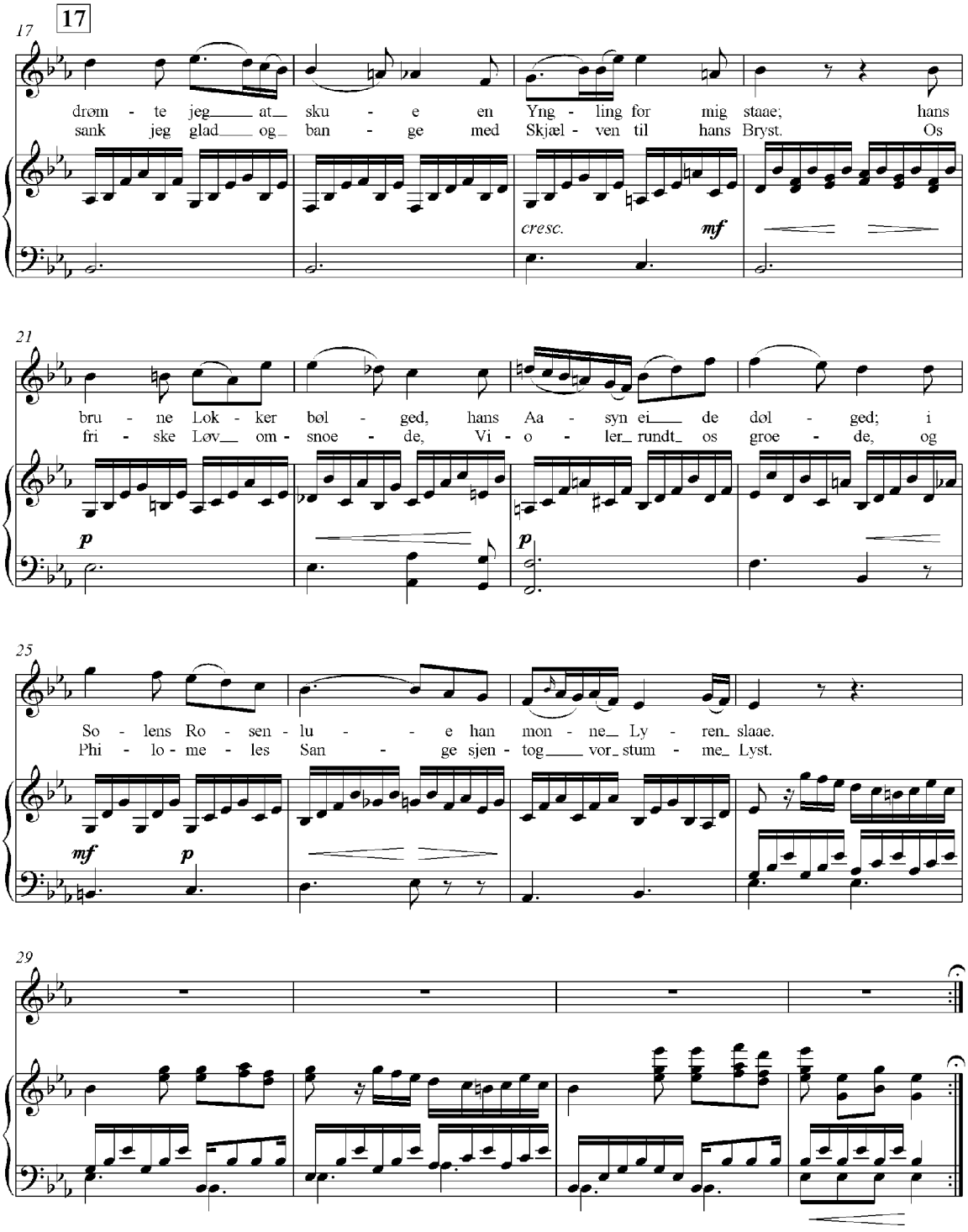
Fair maiden, reach out your lily hand to me,
Have you completely forsaken me?
Ah, from the time I first beheld you,
All peace and sleep disappeared from me.
Fair maiden, reach out your lily hand to me,
And let me take hold of it.

Fair maiden, give me your scarlet lips,
I have been so anxious.
I blush, and my heart beats loudly.
You, who have wounded, o heal my wound!
Fair maiden, give me your scarlet lips,
Give me a rosy kiss.]

Example 3.6

Similar to "Skjøn Jomfru" is Charlotte's "De klare Bølger rulled'" [The clear waves rolled], in which she explains to her father how she had first seen Walther in a dream, and therefore knew that she was meant for him when they finally met in person (Example 3.7). A half-cadence divides the thirty-two-bar *romance* into two equal halves: the first consists of a four-bar introduction followed by three four-bar phrases, and the second continues with three four-bar phrases followed by a four-bar postlude. The light accompaniment, with its sixteenth-note arpeggiation, is emblematic of Weyse's style, and does not necessarily reflect any type of instrumental word-painting.

Weyse, *Sovedrikken*, "De klare Bølger"

Andantino

[The clear waves rolled
Towards the dark evening grove.
It was so quiet in the valley,
The nightingales sang loudly;
Their clear tones lulled me
To sleep.

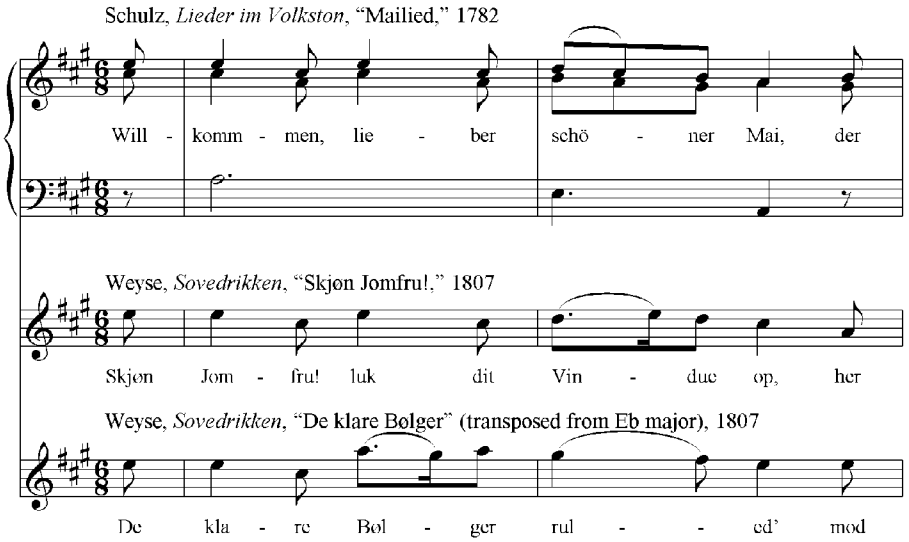
Then I dreamed I beheld
A youth standing before me;
His flowing brown locks
Did not conceal his face;
In the rosy flames of the sun
He struck up his lyre.

Then his sweet voice rang out,
He tenderly called my name.
O! he sang, let your lips
Cleave to mine with fire,
And let us forget everything,
Sweetly embracing!

Then I sank with joy and fear
Against his breast, trembling.
The fresh leaves wrapped around us,
Violets grew around us,
And Philomel's song
Repeated our mute pleasure.]

Example 3.7

The beginning of the vocal line shares the same descending-third motive as "Skjøn Jomfru," which in turn is strikingly reminiscent of "Mailied" [May song] by Schulz, from the first volume of *Lieder im Volkston* (Example 3.8).



[Welcome, dear, beautiful May]

Example 3.8

Weyse would never again witness a theatrical success to equal that of *Sovedrikken*, which was performed sixty-two times during his lifetime. This total was greater than the combined number of performances for four of his succeeding *syngespil*—*Faruk* (1812) and *Ludlams Hule* [Ludlam's Cave] (1816), both with librettos by Oehlenschläger; *Floribella* (1825), with a libretto by C.J. Boye, and *Festen paa Kenilworth* [The Feast at Kenilworth] (1836), an adaptation by Hans Christian Andersen of the novel by Sir Walter Scott.[38]

Despite the small number of theatrical performances Weyse's *syngespil* received, many of the arias and *romances* became available as excerpts in both individual publications and anthologies.[39] After having thoroughly absorbed the Danish language and culture, Weyse gave his adoptive country a repertory that would become one of the pillars of its national music. The *romances* offered his audiences a compromise between the short, simple tunes of Schulz and the more elaborate melodic lines of Mozart; they helped establish a style that was recognizable as Danish.

---

[38] Aumont and Collin, *Det Danske Nationalteater*, "Skuespil- og Opera-repertoiret A-K," 223-24, 235, 246; "Skuespil- og Opera-repertoiret L-Ø," 29-30.

[39] Some of the anthologies which included excerpts from Weyse's *syngespil* are *Den Danske Vaudeville*: 50 sangspil i arrangement for klaver med underlagt tekst af A. Grandjean; redigeret af Erik Bøgh, 3 vols. (Copenhagen: Wilhelm Hansen, 1911); *Fra Teatrene*: 400 sange af operetter, sangspil, vaudeviller, eventyrkomedier, farcer, etc: for klaver med underlagt tekst; folkeudgave, redigeret af Erik Bøgh, 3 vols. (Copenhagen: Wilhelm Hansen, [n.d.]); Henrik Hertz, *Samling af danske Sange* (Copenhagen: Selskabet for Trykkefrihedens rette Brug, 1836); F.L.Æ. Kunzen, *Polyhimnia: Udtog af Operaerne*, 2 vols. (N.p., 1814-16); *Musik Fra den Danske Skueplads*: et Udvalg af Det kongelige Theaters Arkiv, bestaaende af Arier og Romancer af Operaer, Syngestykker, Lystspil og Skuespil med Sang; for 1 stemme og klaver og for klaver med underlagt tekst; redigeret af Frederik Rung. 4 vols. (Copenhagen: Wilhelm Hansen, [n.d.]); *Musikalsk Theaterjournal*, udgivet af Ludvig Zinck, 3 vols. (N.p., 1817); *Musikalsk Theater Journal*, udgivet af Ludvig Zinck, 14 vols. (N.p., 1817-41); *Musikalsk Anthologie*, udgivet af Immanuel Rée, 4 vols. (N.p., 1856-).

Additionally, his 1837 collection of eight *Morgensange for Børn* [Morning Songs for Children], with texts by B.S. Ingemann, became part of the curriculum in Danish schools almost immediately upon publication. These melodies are still taught in public schools, and they are still known to all Danes today.[40]

What would eventually become Weyse's most often-performed *syngespil* was the 1827 *Et Eventyr i Rosenborg Have* [An Adventure in the Rosenborg Gardens]. With an original libretto by P.A. Heiberg's son J.L. Heiberg, and a lighthearted, comic story set in the largest public park in Copenhagen, it continued to hold the stage through the end of the nineteenth century. As the opera-going audience in Copenhagen developed more sophisticated tastes, Schulz's and Kunzen's works began to lose their appeal, and by the 1830s they had virtually disappeared from the repertory at Det kongelige Teater. At the same time, however, the public became dissatisfied with librettos that were mere translations from French or German; it began to look for more new and original works by Danish authors.

[40] For more on the *Morgensange*, including a facsimile edition, see Sten Høgel, "The Sun Arises in the East: The Morning Songs for Children, 1837 by B.S. Ingemann and C.E.F. Weyse," *Musik & Forskning* 21 (1996): 49-92.

Chapter 4
The Danish *Folkevise*

Udvalgte danske Viser fra Middelalderen,
ed. W.H.F. Abrahamson, Rasmus Nyerup, and K.L. Rahbek (1812-1814)

> When all that is finished, only then will come the crowning achievement. In other words, the public will receive in the end around one hundred genuine old song melodies that the supporters of our undertaking have generously supplied to us—melodies that Vedel, not without justification, praised in his preface, calling them "subtle and sweet."
>
> —W.H.F. Abrahamson, Rasmus Nyerup, and K.L. Rahbek, preface to *Udvalgte danske Viser fra Middelalderen*[1]

In 1809, while *Sovedrikken* was in its first year in the repertory of Det kongelige Teater, a literary project was underway that would eventually have an even more profound effect on the Danish opera repertory: W.H.F. Abrahamson, Rasmus Nyerup and K.L. Rahbek were preparing their monumental collection, *Udvalgte danske Viser fra Middelalderen* [Selected Danish Songs from the Middle Ages]. Texts to these *kæmpeviser*, or *folkeviser*, as Danish ballads from the Medieval period came later to be called, had been written down and published previously, most notably in the editions of Anders Sørensen Vedel (1591) and Peder Syv (1695).[2] In 1814, however, with the fifth

---

[1] "Naar alt Det er færdigt, da først sættes Kronen paa Værket, eller, med andre Ord, saa erholder Publicum til Slutning omtrent hundrede ægte gamle Visemelodier, som Vedel i sin Fortale ikke uden føje giver det Lov, at de ere 'subtilige og søde,' og som Ynderne af dette vort foretagende har meddelt os med rund haand." W.H.F. Abrahamson, Rasmus Nyerup, and K.L. Rahbek, *Udvalgte danske Viser fra Middlealderen; efter A.S. Vedels og P. Syvs trykte udgaver og efter haandskrevne samlinger, udgivne paa ny af Abrahamson, Nyerup, og Rahbek*, 5 vols. (Copenhagen: J.F. Schultz, 1812-14), vol. 1, xiv.

[2] Anders Sørensen Vedel, *It Hundrede vduaalde Danske Viser, om allehaande merckelige Krigs Bedrifft, oc anden seldsom Euentyr, som sig her vdi Riget, ved gamle Kemper, naffnkundige Konger oc ellers forneme Personer begiffuet haffuer, aff arilds Tid indtil denne neruærendis Dag* (Ribe: Anders Søffrenssøn Vedel, 1591); Peter Syv, *It hundrede udvaalde Danske Viser om allehaande merckelige Krigs-Bedrifft, oc anden*

and final volume of *Udvalgte danske Viser*, the melodies to these ballads were made available in print for the first time.[3] The first four volumes contained complete texts to 222 ballads; in the fourth volume Nyerup and Rahbek included unharmonized melodies to a little over half of these.[4] Under each melody the editors set the words of the first strophe, although occasionally they used a strophe other than the first, presumably because they felt that the syllables there fit the pitches of the melody more naturally.[5]

Nyerup and Rahbek had access to surviving manuscripts of the texts (in addition to Vedel's and Syv's work), but for the melodies themselves they enlisted the aid of a number of ballad collectors, many of them clergy or amateur musicians with an interest in local folklore. Over the course of several years these collectors sent in whatever melodies they could either find or remember and of whose authenticity they were quite certain.[6] One of these contributors, by the name of Hornsyld, assured Abrahamson, Nyerup, and Rahbek:

> I have reason to believe that the four melodies I am sending are genuinely old, since they have come down from only three sources, and strictly speaking only two, since I have learned them from my father's mother, a very old woman who died in Horsens over forty years ago, and whose mother lived in the times of Frederik III and Christian V. My father knew

---

seldsom Euentyr, som sig her udi Riget ved gamle Kemper, naffhkundige Konger oc ellers forneme Personer begiffuet haffuer [Udg. af Anders Søffrensøn Wedel]: *forøgede med det andet Hundrede Viser om danske Konger, Kæmper og Andre, samt hosføjede Antegnelser, til Lyst og Lærdom* (n.p.: Peter Syv, 1695). The term *folkevise* is a translation of the German *Volkslied*, after Johann Gottfried von Herder's 1778 collection, *Volkslieder*. See Karl Claussen, *Dansk Folkesang gennem 150 år* (1958; rpt. Copenhagen: Tingluti Forlag, 1975), 22.

[3] There had been two small trial editions published by Nyerup, Rahbek, and Abrahamson in 1809 and 1810; see H. Grüner Nielsen, "Danske Folkemelodier: Litteratur- og Haandskriftfortegnelse," *Aarbog for Musik* 2 (1923): 66-67.

[4] Abrahamson died after the first two volumes were complete, and perhaps it is for this reason that the entire edition is often referred to as "Nyerup and Rahbek."

[5] Cf. Tang Kristensen's comment below on the alteration of melody from strophe to strophe, as well as the discussion of "Kjæmperne paa Dovrefjeld."

[6] For a complete listing of the individual contributions, see Nielsen, "Danske Folkemelodier."

> them and sang them often to me, and both he and I, just as well as my grandmother, have good ears and good singing voices.[7]

The letter was one of several printed as part of the preface to the fifth volume, in an effort to demonstrate the pains that everyone involved with the project had taken to ensure that the music assembled was as accurate as possible.

What will always remain unclear is precisely how reliable the transcriptions themselves can be considered. Despite the numerous modifications that were undoubtedly made over the course of several hundred years of oral tradition, it may be that the most drastic alterations were made in the process of transcribing them for publication.

Another contributor, Steenbloch, expressed severe reservations about the use of nineteenth-century notation in conjunction with folk music from a much earlier time:

> Finally I ask you to forgive my shortcomings as an editor of the *kæmpeviser* music, if you should find any considerable mistakes in my transcriptions. I am just a tiny bit of a theorist, but really not at all a practical musician. Also it is sorely difficult to put these tones from the olden days on paper with our newer system of music notation. There will always be much lost, even if the work is done by an insightful artist, since [the original melodies] often completely diverge from the modality in which the transcribers think it belongs, and [this older music] is not so easily forced into a [modern,] foreign form.[8]

---

[7] "Jeg har Grund til at troe, at de 4 Melodier, jeg sender ere ægte gamle, da de fra omtrent 1690 kuns ere gangne igjennem 3 Organer, og stricte talt kun igjennem 2, da jeg har lært dem af min Farmoder, en højaldrende Kone som død i Horsens for noget over 40 Aar siden, og hvis Moder igjen levede i Frederik den 3dies og Christian 5tes Tider. Min Fader kjendte dem og sang dem ofte med mig, og baade han og jeg saavelsom min Farmoder havde godt Øre og gode Syngeorganer." Qtd. in *Udvalgte danske Viser*, vol. 5, vii.

[8] "Endelig maa jeg bede Dem, at undskylde mig hos Redacteuren af Kjæmpevisernes Musik, om han skulde finde betydelige Fejl i min Sats, da jeg blot er en Smule theoretisk, men næsten slet ikke pratisk Musikus. Desuden er det saare vanskeligt, at bringe hine Toner fra Oldtiden paa Papiret efter vort nubrugelige Musik-System; da ville altid tabe meget endog ved den indsigtsfuldeste Kunstners Behandling, da de ofte aldeles afvige fra den Toneart, hvortil de synes at henhøre, og lade sig ikke lettelig tvinge ind i den fremmede Form." Qtd. in *Udvalgte danske Viser*, vol. 5, xiv-xv.

When over sixty years later the ethnomusicologist Evald Tang Kristensen began to take a more systematic and scholarly approach to transcriptions, he admitted to similar misgivings, not only in regard to the use of a western scale for the designation of pitches, but in regard to the relatively standard practice of writing down the music for only one or two strophes of a much longer ballad:

> Perhaps I have not been as successful in notating the melodies as I should have been. It may well be that I have been guilty of downright errors. But it is not so easy to grasp these melodies:
>
> Sometimes I have simply not been able to find the notes on the violin, for sometimes they use some strange tones and it is just these that have the magical effect that no written-down folk-melody can reproduce.
>
> The metre has also created great difficulties. The verses do not have the same number of bars. When a line has only a few syllables it is quite contrary to folk-practice to draw it out by means of slurs in the given melody, just as when there are many syllables in the line the notes should not on that account be subdivided into eighths and sixteenths.[9]

This last point can be illustrated by a comparison of the first stanza of "Kjæmperne paa Dovrefjeld" [The Warriors on Dovrefjeld] with the third.

1.	Paa Dovrefjeld i Norrig	(7 syllables)
	Laae de Kjæmper uden Sorrig.	(8 syllables)
	Men hvo skal føre vore Runer, men vi ej selv maa?	(14 syllables)
3.	Den første kunde vende Veiret med sin Haand,	(12 syllables)
	Den anden kunde stille det rindende Vaand.	(12 syllables)
	Men hvo skal føre vore Runer, om vi dem ikke selv maa?[10]	(16 syllables)

[9] Thorkild Knudsen, "Udgavens principper og melodiernes kompositionssystem/ Editorial Principles and the Compositional System of the Melodies," tr. John Bergsagel, prefatory material to *Danmarks gamle Folkeviser*, vol. 11 [*Melodier*], *42-*43.

[10] The first stanza is from *Udvalgte danske Viser*, vol. 1, 308; the third stanza is taken from vol. 5, XXXIII.

> [On Dovrefield in Norway
> Slept the warriors without concern.
> *But who shall tell our runes, while we may not ourselves?*
>
> The first could change the weather with his hand,
> The second could still the running water.
> *But who shall tell our runes, if we may not ourselves?*]

The text for the first stanza here is from the first volume of *Udvalgte danske Viser*, while that of the third is taken from the melody printed in the fifth volume. Nyerup and Rahbek must have felt that this third stanza, with the slightly longer variant of the third line, was a better fit for the received melody of the *folkevise*.

The collectors employed by Abrahamson, Nyerup, and Rahbek may not have all been so self-conscious as Tang Kristensen, but even Hornsyld, despite his confidence in the music itself, went on to recommend in his letter:

> Make sure you get an artist who has knowledge of and a feeling for ancient national music to go through them, in case any notes should offend by being less genuine.[11]

Hornsyld had originally specified, "Make sure you get Kunzen or another artist," but when Nyerup and Rahbek printed the letter in the preface, they omitted Kunzen's name, perhaps because his services had not been obtained and Nyerup and Rahbek didn't wish to give offense to the actual music editor, Ludvig Zinck.[12]

The original musical notations by the contributors were discarded shortly after they were typeset and printed, so it is not possible to determine precisely what changes

---

[11] "See nu, at faae en Konstner [*sic*], som har Kundskab til og Følelse for Oldtidens Nationalmusik, til at gjennemgaae dem, for om en Node skulde støde an som mindre ægte." *Udvalgte danske Viser*, vol. 5, vii-viii.

[12] "See nu at faae Kunzen eller an anden Kunstner." Niels Martin Jensen, *Den danske romance 1800-1850 og dens musikalske forudsætninger* (Copenhagen: Gyldendal, 1964), 77-78. See also Erik Dal, *Nordisk folkeviseforskning siden 1800* (Copenhagen: J.H. Schultz, 1956), 51-52.

Zinck made during the editing process.[13] The published melodies themselves betray many traces more characteristic of the early nineteenth century than the Middle Ages, not the least of which is the prevalent use of a raised leading tone in the minor mode. The composer Thomas Laub, writing in 1892, would question whether it was even appropriate to view the original melodies as being in major or minor, but this kind of scrutiny was largely unknown in Denmark between 1809 and 1814.[14] The ballad collectors were accustomed to music of the early nineteenth century, and their transcriptions bear the stamp of the music from that time. As the historian Erik Dal points out, "what these transcribers and arrangers considered to be restoration and standardization was for them not just a permissible, but a necessary process."[15]

Musical Characteristics of *Udvalgte danske Viser fra Middelalderen*

Putting aside all these questions, however, *Udvalgte danske Viser* was with no exaggeration a watershed achievement in Danish music. It spurred new interest in Scandinavia's musical and literary past, and it provided a trove of musical material for all

---

[13] Dal, *Nordisk Folkeviseforskning*, 53-54. Dal offers a thorough survey of the development of the edition, beginning with p. 50.

[14] Thomas Laub, "Studier over vore folkemelodiers oprindelse og musikalske bygning," *Dania* 2 (1892-94): 1-16, 149-79. Even Peder Grønland, who discusses the relationship between the tonality of the *folkeviser* and the Greek church modes in his foreword to Peder Grønland, ed., *Alte Schwedische Volks-Melodien gesamlet von E. G. Geijer und A. A. Afzelius; Für das Piano Forte harmonisch bearbeitet* (Copenhagen: C.C. Lose, 1818), uses major and minor modes for his own arrangements of the melodies from *Udvalgte danske Viser*, which will be discussed below.

[15] "Restitution og normering var for disse optegnere og bearbejdere ikke blot en tilladelig, men en nødvendig process." Dal, *Nordisk Folkeviseforskning*, 53.

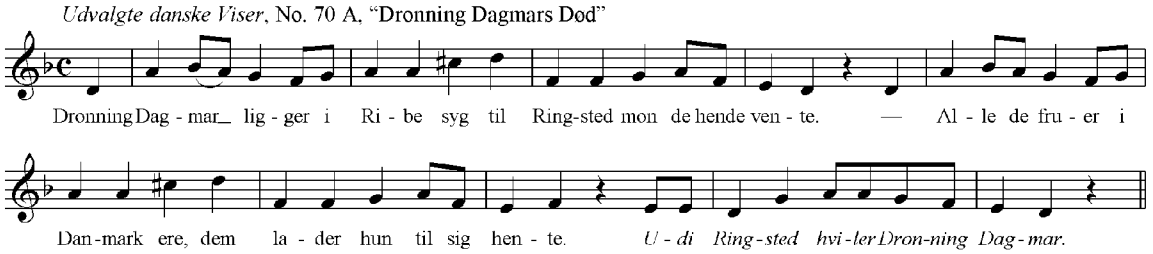
succeeding generations of Danish composers.[16] A brief survey of the melodies reveals a number of shared features and common trends that would, in modified form, resurface in much of the theater music written in Denmark after 1812. These include:

1. traditional ballad-type melodic structure
2. particularly Scandinavian trochaic cadential rhythm
3. preference for minor mode (i.e., scale forms with a lowered third)
4. frequent use of 6/8 or 3/8 meter
5. use of three-bar phrases

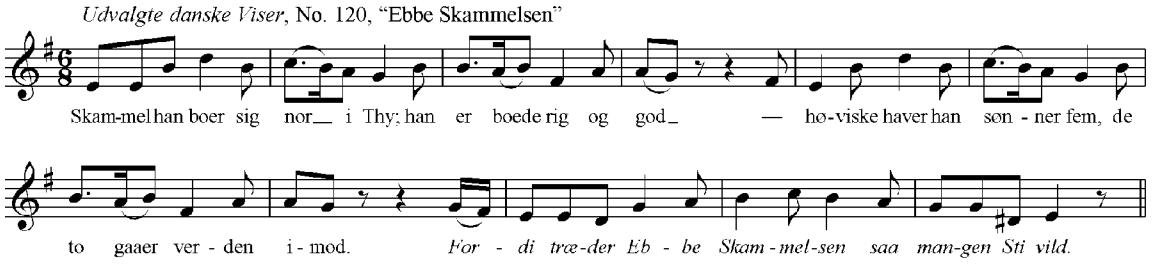
1. Melodic Structure: In the traditional Scandinavian ballad, the most frequent melodic design in *Udvalgte danske Viser*, each strophe can be broken down into a pair of melodically similar phrases followed by a short refrain, or *omkvæd*. Peder Grønland, in a review of *Udvalgte danske Viser*, clarified that in actual practice, the first two phrases of the ballad, which feature changing texts, were sung by individuals, whereas *omkvæder* would be sung by a group of people.[17] The first two phrases are often four or eight bars long, with or without a pickup, but the *omkvæd* can be of any length. In "Dronning Dagmars Død" [Queen Dagmar's Death] (Example 4.1a), the first two phrases are each four bars long, and are melodically identical except for the final note, which is a "d" in the first and an "f" in the second. The *omkvæd*, "*Udi Ringsted hviler Dronning Dagmer*," is two bars long. The first two phrases of "Ebbe Skammelsen" (Example 4.1b) are also four bars long, and the only melodic difference is the substitution of a quarter-note "e" at the beginning of the second phrase for the two eighth-notes at the beginning of the first phrase, to accommodate the smaller number of syllables in the text of the first measure:

[16] This is not to assume that this music was necessarily unknown to Danish composers before the work's publication. See Jensen, *Den danske romance*, 74-79.
[17] Dal, *Nordisk folkeviseforskning*, 55.

four ("hø-viske haver han") instead of five ("Skam-mel han boer sig").[18] Both phrases end on the same pitch, "g," and it should be clarified here that in these ballad tunes, it is of no structural importance whether or not the paired phrases share a cadential tone. The *omkvæd* of "Ebbe Skammelsen," "*Fordi træder Ebbe Skammelsen saa mangen Sti vild*," is three bars, a length just as typical as two or four bars.



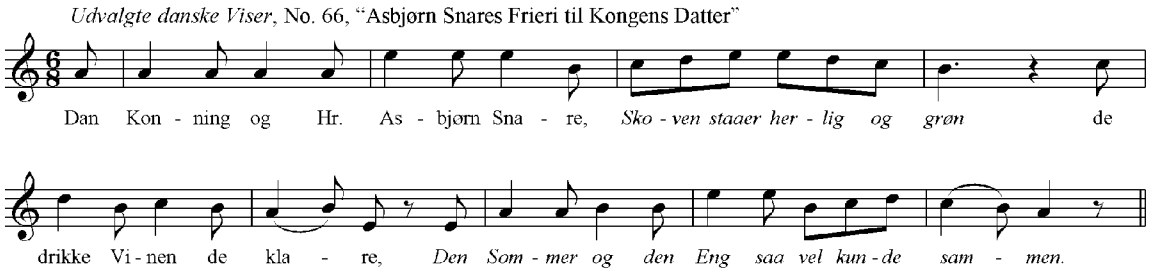
[Queen Dagmar lies sick in Ribe, they wait for her in Ringsted.
She has called all of the maidens in Denmark to her side.
In Ringsted rests Queen Dagmar.]

Example 4.1a

[Skammel he lives north in Thy; he is both rich and good
He has five proper sons, but two have turned against the world.
Thus treads Ebbe Skammelsen such a wild path.]

Example 4.1b

[18] The word "haver," like many other Danish words with a very weak second syllable, can be found set to one or two pitches in this collection. When such a word comes at the end of a phrase, however, it usually takes the two-pitch form of the Scandinavian trochaic cadence discussed later.

Many of the *folkeviser* include an additional inner refrain, or *mellemkvæd*, like the *omkvæd* sung by a group of people.[19] The melody is thus divided into four phrases, with the second and fourth phrases retaining the same text throughout every strophe. The melody of "Asbjørn Snares Frieri til Kongens Datter" ["Asbjørn Snare's Courting of the King's Daughter"] (Example 4.2) consists of a two-bar phrase, a two-bar *mellemkvæd* ("*Skoven staar herlig og grøn*"), another two-bar phrase, and finally a three-bar *omkvæd* ("*Den sommer og den eng saa vel kunde sammen*").



The Danish king and Mr. Asbjørn Snare,
The forest is magnificent and green,
They drink as much wine as they can handle,
The summer and the meadow suit each other so well.]

Example 4.2

2. Trochaic cadence: *Udvalgte danske Viser* also highlights one of the most characteristic occurrences in Danish music, which—for want of a better term—will hereafter be termed the trochaic cadence. The simple trochaic cadence, consisting of two pitches with the same rhythmic value, comes in two forms: the first is defined by the resolution of a stressed syllable, invariably on the downbeat, to an unstressed syllable, either on the next beat or a subdivision of the downbeat. In "Dronning Dagmars Død,"

[19] This also according to Grønland. See Dal, *Nordisk folkeviseforskning*, 55.

this cadence occurs at the end of each of the first two phrases ("**VEN**-te" and "**HEN**-te"), and also at the end of the *omkvæd* ("**DAG**-mar"). The second form occurs when there is only one syllable for the two pitches, a frequent occurrence in the strophic ballads. As the two pitches for the word "god" at the end of the first phrase of "Ebbe Skammelsen" illustrate, this second form of the trochaic cadence can sound much like an *appoggiatura*.[20] A more embellished form of the trochaic cadence, where the stressed beat takes the form of more than one pitch, can be seen in "Jeg gik mig ud en sommerdag" (Example 4.7).

Because the resolution of the cadence always falls on a weak beat or subdivision, there is almost always a rest on the next strong beat. Exceptions to this rule can be found when the phrase is seven bars long (in 3/8 or 2/4 meter) and ends with a fermata (such as Examples 4.5b, 4.5d, and 4.6; see below, in the discussion of the second type of three-measure phrases).

The trochaic cadence is derived from one of the more common metrical patterns of a Danish ballad strophe: the first and third verses contain four feet, and the second and fourth contain three feet, typically ending with a weak rhyme. The weak rhyme in turn is derived from the Danish language itself, which contains a large number of words ending

---

[20] Weyse, in his arrangement of "Ebbe Skammelsen," changes the quarter-note F# ("Ver-" to a dotted eighth-note F# and a sixteenth-note F# to accommodate both syllables of the word "Ver-den," moving the "i-" to the eighth-note A, and allowing the second syllable of "i-mod" to spread over two pitches, just like the word "god" in the first phrase. Grønland does almost the same thing, although in his version it is a dotted eighth-note F# and a sixteenth-note G. C.E.F. Weyse, *50 Gamle Kæmpevise Melodier harmonisk bearbeidede* (Copenhagen: C.C. Lose and Delbanco [1840]), vol. 1, 21; Peder Grønland, *Kæmpe-viser Bassen dertil af P. Grønland* (1814, unpublished). Bound manuscript housed at Det Kongelige Bibliotek, Musik- og Teaterafdeling, as part of Weyses Samling (C II, 180).

in unstressed syllables.[21] The first four lines of "Elverhøj" are representative, as are the first four verses of "Dronning Dagmars Død" and "Ebbe Skammelsen."

jeg **LAG**-de mit **HO**-ved til **EL**-ver-**HØI** (4)
mine **ØI**-ne de **FIN**-ge en **DVA**-le. (3)
der **KOM GAN**-gen-des to **JOM**-fru-er **FREM** (4)
som **GJER**-ne vil-de **MED** mig **TA**-le. (3)

[I laid my head down on Elves' Hill;
My eyes feigned a lethargy.
Two girls came walking by
Who would gladly talk with me]

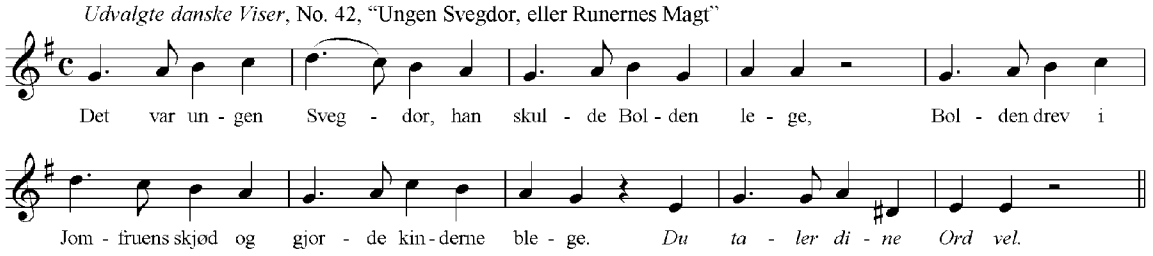
Although the number of feet remains the same from strophe to strophe, the number of syllables can vary greatly, and it is uncommon to find a consistent metrical pattern, such as iambic or anapestic.

3. Mode: Modality in the Danish *folkeviser* has been explored at length by a number of scholars, including Thomas Laub and Finn Matthiasen.[22] What is more pertinent in this discussion is the conception of modality as implied in the published melodies of *Udvalgte danske Viser* and, eventually, as interpreted by the composers who created arrangements and harmonizations between 1814 and 1842: Peder Grønland, F.L.Æ Kunzen, Friedrich Kuhlau, C.E.F. Weyse, and A.P. Berggreen. Despite their derivation from Medieval ballad and thus undoubtedly Medieval modes, these melodies mostly reflect early nineteenth-century ideas of tonality, and tend to be either in major or minor, moving easily between relative keys.

[21] Verb conjugations and definite articles, for instance, are indicated with the use of unstressed final syllables.
[22] See especially Laub, "Studier over vore folkemelodiers oprindelse"; and Finn Matthiassen, "Gammeldansk folketonalitet: En introduction til studiet af de tonale forhold i Danmarks gamle folkevisemelodier (DgF XI)," *Cæcilia* 2 (1992-93): 89-162.

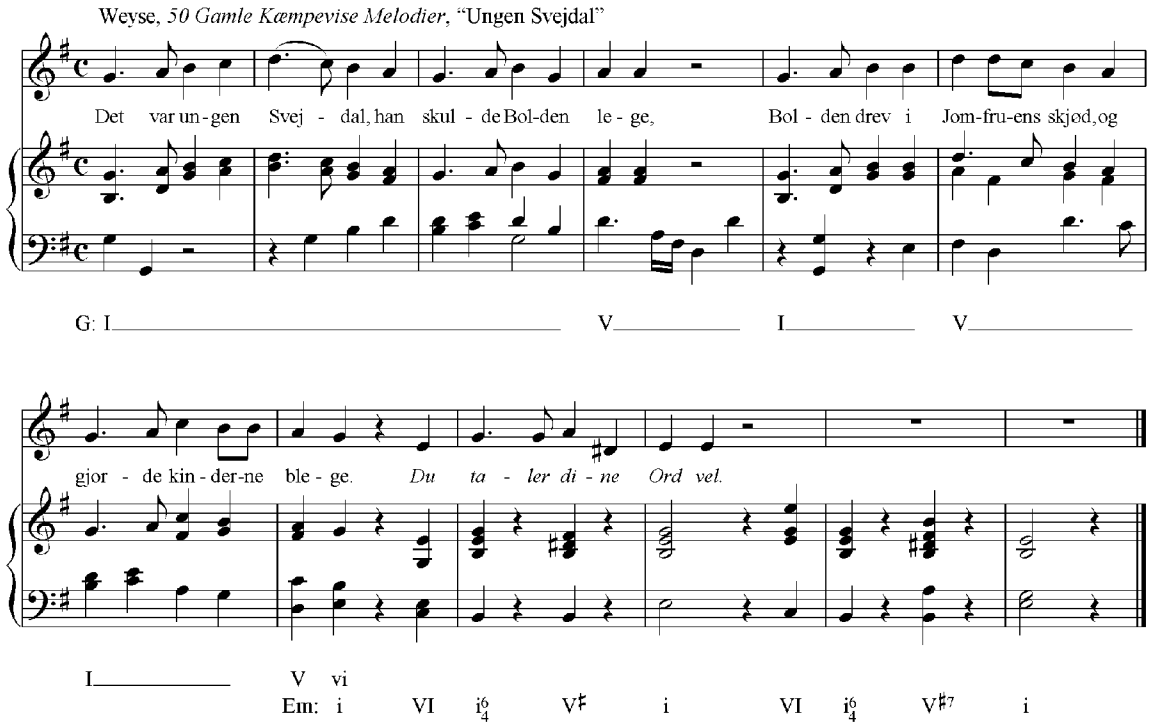
There is a marked preference for the minor mode in this collection, and it can be seen most clearly in the consistent use of a raised leading tone, as in the second and sixth bars of "Dronning Dagmars Død" (Example 4.1a). Although many passages are tonally ambiguous (that is, they have retained the flavor of the Medieval modes), this use of the accidental clarifies the minor mode, such as in the final bar of "Ebbe Skammelsen" (Example 4.1b).

It is common for a melody that begins in major to cadence in minor at the end of the *omkvæd*. "Ungen Svegdor, eller Runernes Magt" ["Young Svegdor, or the Power of the Runes"] (Example 4.3) begins with two phrases in G major, but ends in E minor ("*Du taler dine Ord vel*").



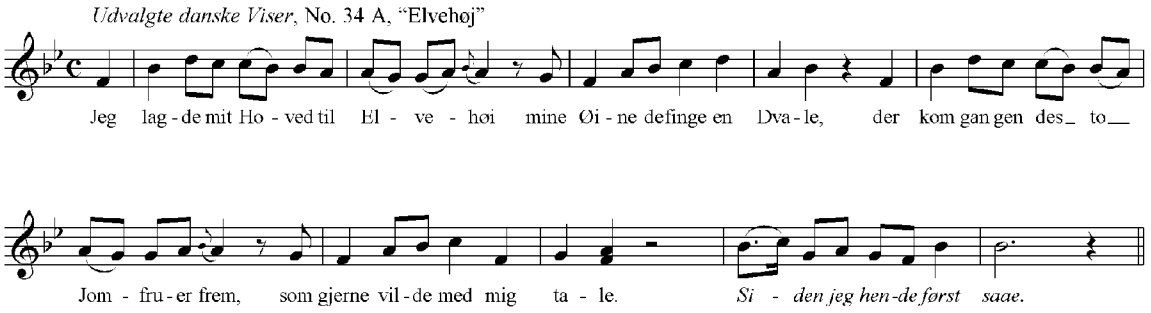
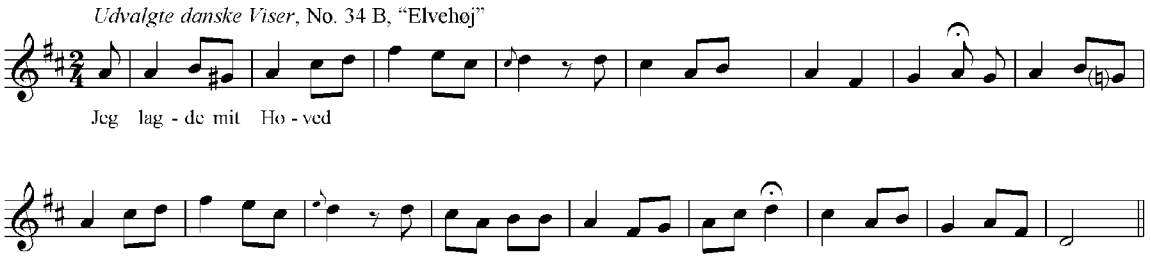
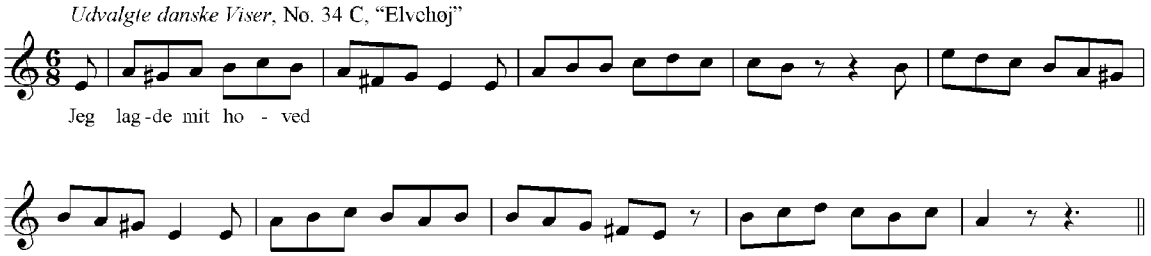
[It was young Svegdor, he was playing ball,
The ball flew into the maiden's breast and made her cheeks turn pale.
You choose your words well.]

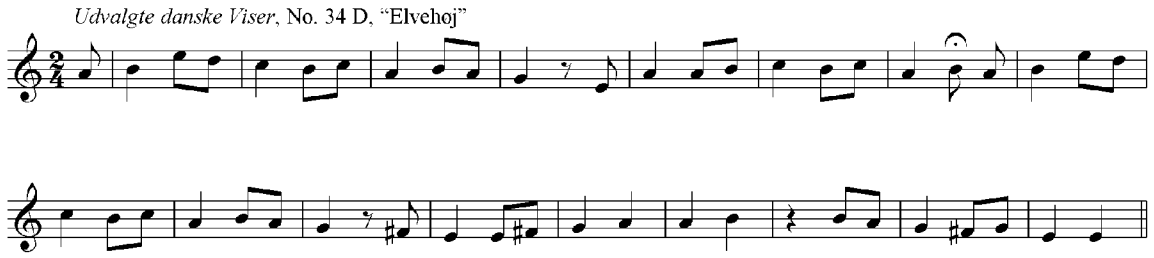
Example 4. 3

In Weyse's arrangement for voice and piano ("Ungen Svejdal," Example 4.4), this latent tonality is made explicit. The first phrase in G major moves from tonic to dominant, and the second phrase begins with the tonic, ending with a deceptive cadence to ensure a smoother transition to the E minor *omkvæd*.

Example 4.4

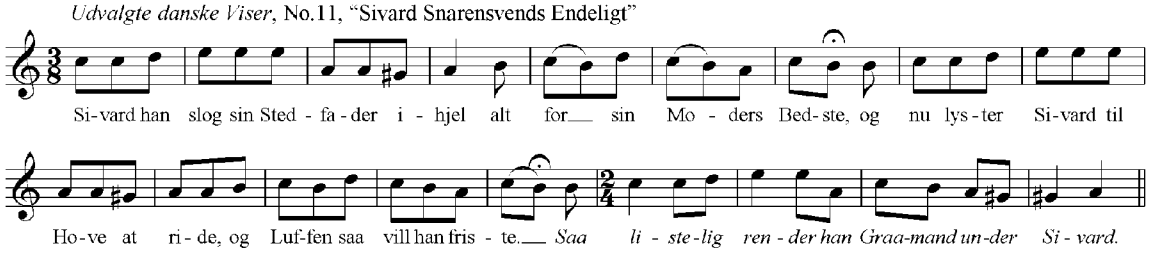
Whether a melody is in major or minor carries no connotation of the emotional quality of the lyric, something that can be seen most clearly when multiple melodies in different modes are printed for the same text.[23] For the ballad "Elvehøj," Nyerup and Rahbek include four melodies, two of which are in major (Examples 4.5a and 4.5b), and two of which are in minor (Examples 4.5c and 4.5d).[24]

[23] See also Peder Grønland, who wrote in his review of *Udvalgte danske Viser* in 1815, "Tonearten er oftere Mol end Dur; men deres Mol er ikke altid sørgemodig, ligesom deres Dur ikke altid er munter" [the key is minor more often than major; but their minor is not always melancholy, just as their major is not always cheerful]. Qtd. in Dal, *Nordiske Folkeviseforskning*, 55.

[24] Typically the complete text (of the first strophe) is only printed for the first melody, labeled "A." The rest will contain just a few opening words as an incipit, or else there will be no text at all; the use of the letters "B," "C," etc. suffice to indicate that the music can be fitted with the text for "A."

Example 4.5a[25]

Example 4.5b

Example 4.5c

[25] In the original, the word "ta-le" resolves to an F and an A, presumably a printing error. Weyse, Berggreen, and Grønland read it as F in their arrangements (see below).

Example 4.5d

4. Meter: The melodies are all notated in a regular, fixed meter, the most prevalent of which are 2/4 and 4/4, followed by 6/8 and 3/8. 3/4 is less common. Out of a total of 126 printed melodies, 27 are in 2/4, 27 are in 4/4, 24 are in 6/8, 17 are in 3/8, 10 are in 3/4, and one ("Åge og Else," which was probably composed by Oehlenschläger himself) is in 6/4.[26] There are a few instances where the *omkvæd* will be in a different meter than the previous phrases, such as "Sivard Snarensvends Endeligt" [Sivard Snarensvend's Death] (Example 4.6), which begins in 3/8 but shifts to 2/4 for the *omkvæd*.



[Sivard beat his stepfather to death for his mother's sake,
And now Sivard would like to ride to court to try his luck.
So cleverly runs (the horse) Grayman under Sivard.]

Example 4. 6

[26] See Nielsen, "Danske Folkemelodier," 69.

Due to the loss of the original transcriptions, it is not known to what extent, if any, Zinck changed the written meters of the melodies, and thus it is unclear whether there is any significant difference between 2/4 and 4/4 or 6/8 and 3/8. There are a number of instances where an odd number of strong beats can be presumed to have called for 3/8 instead of 6/8, or 2/4 instead of 4/4. The first melody for "Elvehøj" (Example 4.5a) features phrases with eight strong beats, and these are written as four-bar phrases in 4/4. The second melody (Example 4.5b) features phrases with seven strong beats, and these are written as seven-bar phrases in 2/4. A further comparison of these first two melodies with the third, in 6/8, demonstrates that the poetic meter of a given text does not necessitate a particular musical meter.

Although the melodies in 6/8 or 3/8 do not constitute a statistical majority, it is worth noting that there are approximately four times as many of them as there are melodies in 3/4 time. Following the lead of J.E. Hartmann's "Liden Gunver," and with the added influence of Kunzen's and Weyse's *romances*, Danish musicians began to associate 6/8 meter (and the minor mode) with the sound of the *folkevise*, and many of the pastiche *folkeviseromancer* they composed feature melodic material that can be traced to *Udvalgte danske Viser*.[27]

5. Three-bar phrases: There are a number of three-bar phrases in the Nyerup and Rahbek collection, and they fall into three categories.

First are the three-bar *omkvæder*, such as in "Ebbe Skammelsen (Example 4.1b)" and "Asbjørn Snares Frieri til Kongens Datter" (Example 4.2).

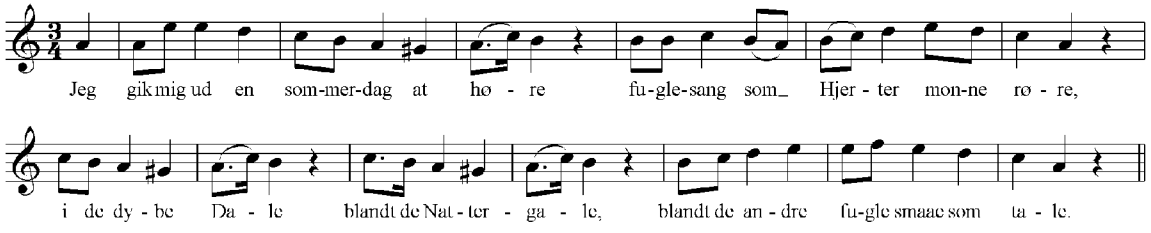
---

[27] See Niels Martin Jensen's chapter "Eksurs: Folkevise og folkeviseromance" in *Den danske romance*, 68-79, for an excellent introduction to this subject.

The second type is more precisely the second half of a seven-bar phrase that ends with a trochaic cadence and a fermata, such as "Sivard Snarensvends Endeligt" (Example 4.6) or the second or fourth melodies to "Elvehøj" (Examples 4.5b and 4.5d). In these instances, the effect can seem to be that of an eight-bar phrase that ends slightly early; if the fermata were held for long enough, it would indeed sound like an eight-bar phrase. Kuhlau, in his arrangement of the second "Elverhøi" melody, holds the second syllable of "**DVA**-le" for two beats and follows it with an eighth-note rest, thus regularizing the original meter and mitigating the effect of the trochaic cadence.

The third category contains three-bar phrases that appear with regularity in a setting; in other words, there are multiple three-bar phrases in the melody. These melodies tend not to fit the traditional ballad pattern. In "Jeg gik mig ud en sommerdag" [I went out one summer's day] (Example 4.7), both the first two and the final phrases contain three bars each, while the third and fourth phrases contain only two bars each. "Jeg gik mig ud en sommerdag" also features three instances of a slightly varied trochaic cadence: for the words "**HØ**-re," "**DA**-le," and "Nat-ter-**GA**-le," the quarter-note beat on the stressed syllable consists of a dotted eighth note with a sixteenth note.[28]

Udvalgte danske Viser, p. lxxxiv, "Jeg gik mig ud en sommerdag"



[28] A.P. Berggreen thought it was probable that this melody was of Swedish origin: "Meget troligt, at Sverrig er Sangens egentlige Hjem." A.P. Berggreen, ed. *Folkesange og Melodier fædrelandske og fremmede, samlede og udsatte for pianoforte af A.P. Berggreen* (Copenhagen: C.A. Reitzel, 1861-1870), vol. 1, 279.

[I went out one summer's day to hear
The songs of birds that might stir my heart,
In the deep valleys
Among the nightingales,
Among the other small birds that speak.]

Example 4.7

Arrangements and Harmonizations

In the years following the publication of *Udvalgte danske Viser fra Middelalderen*, a number of prominent Danish musicians arranged some of the melodies for piano and voice, and in so doing left a record of contemporary thoughts on the harmonic implications of the *folkeviser* tunes. The later arrangements from 1840 and 1842 brought this music to the public in a popular form, but as early as 1814, these harmonizations had an even greater effect on Danish music: they began to influence the way Danish composers conceived a national musical language. The most significant arrangements are as follows:

1814 – Peder Grønland, unpublished settings
1816 – F.L.Æ. Kunzen, *Auswahl der vorzüglichsten altdänischen Volksmelodien*[29]
1828 – Friedrich Kuhlau, *Elverhøj*[30]
1840 – C.E.F. Weyse, *50 Gamle Kæmpevise Melodier harmonisk bearbeidede*[31]
1842 – A.P. Berggreen, *Folke-sange og Melodier fædrelandske og fremmede*[32]

---

[29] Erik Dal and Niels Martin Jensen, "F.L.Æ. Kunzens folkeviseharmoniseringer 1816: En facsimile med kommentar," *Dansk Årbog for Musikforskning* 7 (1973-1976): 51-67.
[30] Friedrich Kuhlau, *Elverhöi*, Skuespil i fem Acter af J.L. Heiberg sat i Musik med Benyttelse af gamle danske Folkemelodier af F. Kuhlau; Klaveerudtog af Componisten (Copenhagen: C.C. Lose & Delbanco [1828]).
[31] C.E.F. Weyse, *50 Gamle Kæmpevise Melodier harmonisk bearbeidede* (Copenhagen: C.C. Lose and Delbanco [1840]).
[32] A.P. Berggreen, *Folke-sange og Melodier fædrelandske og fremmede, udsatte for Pianoforte ved A.P. Berggreen* (Copenhagen: C.A. Reitzel, 1842).

Grønland arranged the melodies for two voices, but indicated choral singing for *mellemkvæd* and *omkvæd* by writing the text under both the soprano and the bass staves. Although his work remained in manuscript, in 1816 Grønland published a review of *Udvalgte danske Viser* in the Leipzig *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung* and included some of his settings.[33] Grønland also supervised the 1818 publication of *Alte Schwedische Volks-Melodien gesamlet von E. G. Geijer und A. A. Afzelius; Für das Piano Forte harmonisch bearbeitet*, which featured piano arrangements and was a primary source for Kuhlau's music to the s*yngespil Elverhøj*, to be discussed in the next chapter.[34]

Kunzen's edition of fifteen melodies arranged for piano and voice, with texts translated into German, was the first attempt to present the music of *Udvalge danske Viser* for use in the home, but only a limited number of copies appeared in print.[35] Weyse's fifty settings were more widely distributed, and the composer went on to publish an additional volume of fifty arrangements in 1842, although many of these were of melodies from a collection of later folk melodies published in 1821 by Nyerup and P. Rasmussen.[36] The arrangements in Berggreen's anthology, some of which he commissioned from other musicians, were part of a project to make folk music easily accessible.[37] He released a second edition of *Folkesange og Melodier* in 1860, expanding his work to four volumes, and a third edition followed in 1869 with eleven volumes.

---

[33] This was essentially a German translation of a review published in Danish the previous year (without the musical examples) in *Danske Litteraturtidende*. See Dal, *Nordisk Folkevise-forskning*, 23, 54-57.
[34] Peder Grønland, ed., *Alte Schwedische Volks-Melodien gesamlet von E. G. Geijer und A. A. Afzelius; Für das Piano Forte harmonisch bearbeitet* (Copenhagen: C.C. Lose, 1818).
[35] Dal and Jensen, "F.L.Æ. Kunzens folkeviseharmoniseringer 1816," 52-60.
[36] Rasmus Nyerup and P. Rasmussen, *Udvalg af danske Viser fra Midten af det 16de Aarhundrede til henimod Midten af det 18de, med Melodier: en Fortsættelse af de i Aarene 1812-1814 udgivne Kjæmpeviser i Forening med P. Rasmussen udg. af R. Nyerup*, 2 vols. (Copenhagen: J.F. Schultz, 1821).
[37] Anna Harwell Celenza, *The Early Works of Niels W. Gade: In Search of the Poetic* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2001), 182-83.

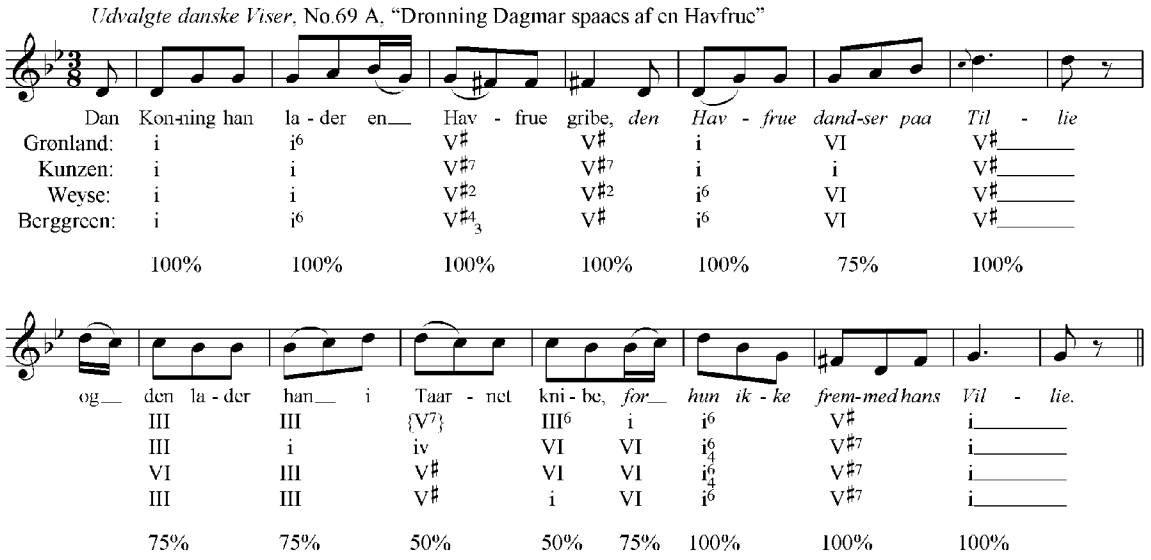
Berggreen also served as music consultant for Svend Grundtvig's encyclopedic *Danmarks gamle Folkeviser*, which sought to publish all of the Danish *folkeviser* in all of their surviving variants, a project begun in 1853 and not completed until over a century later in 1976.

Kuhlau's *Elverhøj* is a special case. The text was a *vaudeville* written by J.L. Heiberg, who specified that it be set to the music of Scandinavian folk ballads, many of which Heiberg himself chose from *Udvalgte danske Viser*. The melodies were arranged for soloists, chorus, and orchestra, but with Heiberg's own words, not those of the original ballads.

In terms of influence, it is worth noting that Berggreen was a pupil of Weyse, who in turn was a pupil of Grønland. The collected manuscripts of Grønland's settings are currently part of the Weyse collection at Det Kongelige Bibliotek, and it is possible that Weyse consulted them before publishing *50 Gamle Kæmpeviser* in 1840. Further, due to Weyse's close relationship with Kunzen, it is possible that the younger composer was also familiar with *Auswahl der vorzüglichsten altdänischen Volksmelodien*. Kuhlau's *Elverhøj* was enormously popular throughout Denmark, and well-known to musicians and non-musicians alike. Berggreen is likely to have familiarized himself with all previous arrangements in preparing his edition of *Folkesange og Melodier fædrelandske og fremmede*. When the same melody is found in arrangements by multiple composers, then, any comparison must take into account the effect that earlier settings may have had on musicians working at a later date.

Because the melodies in *Udvalgte danske Viser* are transcribed from unaccompanied sources, it is of particular interest to note the points of harmonic

agreement in the various settings. "Dronning Dagmar spaaes af en Havfrue" [Queen Dagmar is given a prophecy by a mermaid] was arranged by Grønland, Kunzen, Weyse, and Berggreen. Example 4.8 shows the original melody with chordal analyses from the four settings in G minor. Out of fifteen points of harmonization, the four composers used the same chord (100% agreement) nine times. There are four instances in which three of the four use the same chord (75% agreement), and only two instances in which only two of the four do so (50% agreement), at the end of the phrase "og den lader han i Taarnet knibe." The original *folkevise* may have had its origins in pre-tonal times, but the melody as published in 1814 offered clear harmonic implications for these arrangers.



[The Danish king caught a mermaid,
The mermaid dances on the dance-floor
And he locked her in the tower,
Because she did not do as he wished]

Example 4.8

These harmonizations of the *folkeviser*, together with the pastiche folk style that dated back to J.E. Hartmann's "Liden Gunver," formed the basis of a new Danish musical language. Throughout the remainder of the nineteenth century this language slowly distinguished itself from French, Italian, and especially German music, despite the fact that two of the new style's main proponents, Weyse and Kuhlau, were German-born.

Udvalgte danske Viser fra Middelalderen also influenced the actual drama of Danish opera. With the resurgence of interest in the old ballads came the desire to see these legends played on the stage. Kuhlau and J.L. Heiberg based their 1828 *Elverhøj* almost entirely on *folkeviser* texts and *folkeviser* music. It would become the most-performed piece in the repertory of Det kongelige Teater.

Chapter 5
Danish Ballad as Opera Libretto

Friedrich Kuhlau, *Elverhøj* (1828, J.L. Heiberg)

> It was the author's intention that this play, although not based on historical events, should certainly not on that account be any less nationalistic. With the dramatic representation of the quality of the folk tale, in so far as it is the basis of our country's native character, particularly as it can be said to be Danish, he strove to give the whole work a true national fragrance or color. He felt how much this would be augmented not just by the use of the music in general, but principally by a selection of some of the loveliest old folk melodies from the Middle Ages.
>
> —J.L. Heiberg, Introduction to *Elverhøj* [1]

Friedrich Kuhlau was born in the German town of Uelzen in 1786. Ten years later, after he and his family had moved to nearby Lüneberg, the young boy suffered an accident that was to scar him for life. He tripped and fell in the street, and the glass bottle he had been carrying gouged out his right eye. As he was confined to a bed for months, his musical family attempted to keep him occupied by setting up a tiny keyboard that he could reach from where he lay. Kuhlau was indeed interested, and he slowly developed into a skilled pianist. Eventually winding up in Hamburg (by way of Brunswick and Altona), he continued his musical training by studying composition and theory with the

[1] "Det var Forfatterens Hensigt, at dette Skuespil, uagtet det ikke er historisk, dog ikke derfor skulde være mindre nationalt. Ved at fremstille den Art af Sagn, der, for saa vidt som den er grundet i vort Lands naturlige Beskaffenhed, især kan siges at være dansk, stræbte han at give det Hele en ret national Duft eller Colorit. Han følte, hvor meget denne vilde forhøies ikke blot ved Musikens Anvendelse i Almindelighed, men fornemmelig ved et Udvalg af nogle af de Skjønneske gamle Folkemelodier fra Midddelalderen." J.L. Heiberg, "Forerindring til *Elverhøj*," *Prosaiske Skrifter* (Copenhagen: C.A. Reitzels Forlag, 1861-62), vol. 4, 47.

local cantor C.F.G. Schwencke, himself a student of Johann Philipp Kirnberger, Friedrich Wilhelm Marpurg, and C.P.E. Bach.[2]

After Napoleon's defeat of Prussia in 1806, Hamburg fell under French control. Several years later Napoleon's army began conscripting local citizens for military duty, and Kuhlau learned that despite the loss of his eye, his name was on the draft list. Under the pseudonym Kaspar Meier, he fled the country, ending up in Copenhagen in 1810.[3]

The ambitious Kuhlau, who had once opined to his brother that if circumstances did not change, he would never be more than a poor piano teacher, now found himself in a setting where his modest musical gifts could be put to better advantage than they had been in Northern Germany.[4] He quickly introduced himself to and ingratiated himself with Kunzen and soon found himself near the center of Danish musical life, working as a pianist, contributing articles to Leipzig's *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung*, and supporting his family by producing the large quantity of saleable flute and piano music on which his international reputation came to rest.

He became a Danish citizen in 1813 and the following year received a commission, his first from Det kongelige Teater, to compose an opera to a libretto by no less an author than Oehlenschläger himself.[5] The opera, *Røverborgen* [The Robbers' Castle], was a "rescue opera" in the style of Luigi Cherubini's *Les deux journées* [The

---

[2] Bruun, *Dansk Musiks Historie*, vol. 1, 186-87. Cf. the more recent Gorm Busk, "Friedrich Kuhlau's Operas and Theatre Music and their Performances at the Royal Theatre in Copenhagen (1814-1830)," *Musik & Forskning* 21 (1996): 94.

[3] Bruun, *Dansk Musiks Historie*, vol. 1, 187-88.

[4] Ibid., 187. The letter to Kuhlau's brother Andreas reads, "Ich bleibe, wenn meine Verhältnisse sich nicht ändern wollten, *immer* und *ewig* ein armseliger Klavierlehrer, steige nie eine Stufe höher (wie ich denn doch gern wollte)." Frederik Kuhlau, *Breve*, ed. Gorm Busk (Copenhagen: Engstrøm and Sødring, 1990), 32.

[5] Busk, "Friedrich Kuhlau's Operas," 94-97.

Two Days], which had proven very successful with the Copenhagen audience and was still in the repertory in 1814 as *De to Dage*.[6]

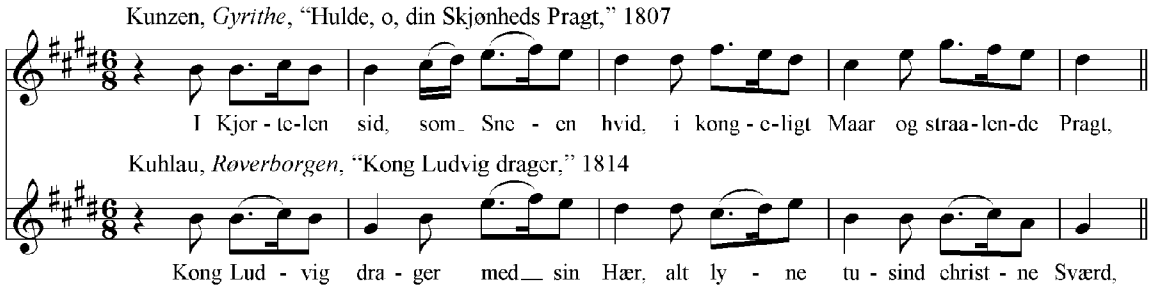
In this, his first major dramatic work, Kuhlau employed a technique that would become a hallmark of his compositional style. For several of the numbers, he found a preexistent piece that could serve as a musical model and based his own melody on motives from the original. All questions of creativity or inspiration aside, the knowledge of which excerpts served Kuhlau in this way offers an unparalleled insight into his own familiarity with, and opinion of, prevailing trends in operatic literature. Gorm Busk, in his biography and critical analysis of Kuhlau's theater works, offers a complete listing of the models used for all of the operas and *syngespil*.[7] Busk finds that of the numbers in *Røverborgen*, four are based on Mozart's *Don Giovanni* or *Così fan tutte*, one is based on Beethoven's "Ah! perfido!," and no fewer than five come from other rescue operas: Ferdinando Paer's *I Fuorusciti di Firenze*, André-Ernest-Modeste Grétry's *Richard Cœur de Lion*, Cherubini's *Faniska* (two ensembles), and an aria from *Les deux journées* itself.

Kuhlau also used one Danish piece as a model, a *romance* from *Gyrithe, eller Danmarks Frelse* [Gyrithe, or the Rescue of Denmark], a *syngespil* by Kunzen from 1807. The music served as a good example of the lilting, *sicilienne* rhythm that was becoming so characteristic of Danish theater music, and a comparison of Kunzen's and Kuhlau's *romances* shows clear similarities (Example 5.1). Kuhlau retains the original

---

[6] Arthur Aumont and Edgar Collin, *Det Danske Nationalteater 1748-1889: En Statistisk Frenstilling* (Copenhagen: J. Jørgensen & Co., 1896-1900), "Skuespil- og Opera-repertoiret L-Ø," 337-39. For more on the rescue opera, see David Charlton, "On Redefinitions of 'Rescue Opera,'" in Malcolm Boyd, ed., *Music and the French Revolution* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 169-88. Kuhlau may have been familiar with Beethoven's rescue opera *Fidelio* from his time in Hamburg, but the opera was not performed in Copenhagen until 1829. Cherubini's *Lodoïska*, also belonging to this genre, was performed in Copenhagen for the first time in 1815.

[7] Gorm Busk, *Friedrich Kuhlau: En biografi og en kritisk analyse af hans musikdramatiske produktion* (Copenhagen: Engstrøm and Sødring, 1986), 384-92. Busk devotes much of his work to an explanation of Kuhlau's "model" technique.

key and the rhythmic profile; through the first three bars, many of the actual pitches are identical. *Røverborgen* was hailed as a promising beginning for the newly-Danish composer, although the libretto was not considered to be one of Oehlenschläger's finer creations.

[In the long coat, white as snow, in royal fabric and glittering magnificence]

[King Ludwig marches with his army, already a thousand Christian swords gleam]

Example 5.1

One of the harshest critics of *Røverborgen* was Jens Baggesen, the same Baggesen whose perceived German leanings in his libretto for *Holger Danske* had precipitated the "*Holger*-Fejden" over twenty-five years earlier. Baggesen had been an early supporter of Oehlenschläger, and resentment that the younger poet had surpassed the older in popularity and influence had developed into a particularly virulent literary rift.[8] An operatic premiere was too much of a temptation for Baggesen, and it was no surprise that he would take the opportunity to deprecate Oehlenschläger's work publicly. For the music itself, however, Baggesen had only warm praise, writing,

[8] See P.M. Mitchell, *A History of Danish Literature* (New York: The American-Scandinavian Foundation, 1958), 110.

> To this new *syngespil* of Oehlenschläger's we Copenhageners are indebted in a similar way for the unusual aural magic in Mr. Kuhlau's— precisely on account of the difficulties he has had to fight with—often wondrously beautiful musical passion, which from the beginning to the end seems more, thanks to his art, like a single long dramatic fantasy than a specific theatrical [union of] text and composition; and in a particularly original way he blends [elements of opera] buffa, seria, pastorals and chorales, almost all sounds, tones, and manners of recitation in an ever-changing romantic concert.[9]

Baggesen eventually entrusted his libretto *Trylleharpen* [The Magic Harp] to Kuhlau, although only after it had been turned down by Kunzen and Weyse.[10]

Three days before the first performance of *Trylleharpen*, at the end of January 1817, Oehlenschläger's supporters had their revenge. A student named Peder Hjort published and distributed a pamphlet that accused Baggesen of plagiarism. According to Hjort, the plot of *Trylleharpen* had been stolen from a German opera named *Ossians Harfe* [Ossian's Harp] that had been premiered 18 years earlier in Vienna—with music by Kunzen.

The real story had begun ten years before that when, prior to the decision to write *Holger Danske*, Baggesen showed the young Kunzen the beginning of an opera libretto, *Arions Lyre*. Kunzen took the draft with him when he left Denmark in 1789, asked the author Johann Nikolaus Kleiber to complete it in German, and composed the score without informing the original librettist. Baggesen became enraged when he read the

---

[9] "Nærværende Oehlenschlägerske Syngespil skylde vi Kjøbenhavnere paa en lignende Maade en usædvanlig Ørefortryllelse i Hr. Kuhlaus, netop formedelst de Vanskeligheder, han har havt at kjæmpe med, ofte vidunderskjønne musikalske Sværmeri, der fra Begyndelsen til Enden mere ligner en i sin Art eneste lang dramatiske Phantasie, end en bestemt theatralsk Text-Composition—og paa en særdeles original Maade blander Seria, Buffa, Pastoraler og Choraler, næsten alle Klange, Toner og Foredrag i en afvexlende romantisk Concert." Jens Baggesen, "*Røverborgen*, Syngespil af Adam Oelenschläger," *Danske Værker*, 2nd ed. (Copenhagen: C.A. Reitzel, 1847), vol. 12, 1-41.
[10] Busk, "Friedrich Kuhlau's Operas," 98-101.

accusation in Hjort's pamphlet, and he confronted Kunzen the next day.[11] As Baggesen related in a court document,

> "It was my composition," he [Kunzen] said, "and the piece, such as it was—it was already performed in Vienna" (I don't remember if it was he or his wife who said it) "and also in Hamburg—although admittedly booed off the stage."
>
> I heard this now for the first time and became extremely indignant.
>
> "How? This piece has been performed? Under my name?" "No! The text was never printed, and the author never named."
>
> "And so, Kunzen, you allowed yourself to use *Arion's Lyre*?" No sooner had I named *Arion's Lyre* than he grabbed my hand with horrible convulsions. "Baggesen!" he cried, and I saw (what I and my wife said upon my returning home), that just the name Arion (whose sound brought him back once again to the first days of our friendship and collaboration) went through his soul with the shudder of death.[12]

The stress of this encounter was too much for the ailing composer. Kunzen died of a stroke later that evening.[13]

Like *Holger Danske*, *Trylleharpen* proved unable to withstand the scandal that raged around it. After two performances, the theater withdrew it from the season's repertory. Two years later, after Baggesen had successfully defended Hjort's claim of plagiarism, Det kongelige Teater presented *Trylleharpen* once more. The military had to

---

[11] Gorm Busk, *Friedrich Kuhlau: En biografi*, 131-32.

[12] "'Es war meine Composition, sagte er, and das Stück, mögs sein wie es wollte, es war einmal da—es war schon in Wien (jeg erindrer ikke, om det var ham eller hans Kone, der sagde dette) auch in Hamburg aufgeführt—freilich ausgepfiffen.' Dette hørte jeg nu for første Gang og blev yderst opbragt. 'Wie? Das Stück ist aufgeführt worden? Unter meinen Nahmen?' 'Nein! Der Text ist nie gedruckt und der Verfasser nie angegeben worden.' Und so Kuntzen könntest Du mit Arions Leyer umgehn? Jeg havde neppe nævnt Arions Lyre, saa greb han min Haand med gyseligt Krampetræk—Baggesen! rief er—og jeg saae (hvad jeg og ved min Hiemkomst sagde min Kone), at det blotte Navn Arion (hvis Lyd satte ham paa eengang tilbage i vort Samlivs og Sammenarbeidens første Dage) giennemfoer hans Siel med Dødens Gysen." Qtd. in Heinrich W. Schwab, *Friedrich Ludwig Aemilius Kunzen (1761-1817): Stationen seines Lebens und Wirkens* (Heide in Holstein: Westholsteinische Verlagsanstalt Boyens & Co., 1995), 172.

[13] Ibid., 196.

be called in to quell the rioting, and the theater, wishing to avoid further scandal, did not perform the opera again.[14]

Kuhlau's next opera did not fare much better when it premiered in 1820. *Elisa eller Venskab og Kjærlighed* [Elisa, or Friendship and Love], to a libretto by the Oehlenschläger supporter and imitator C.J. Boye, was performed only four times. Three years later, upon receiving the commission for the opera *Lulu* by C.C.F. Güntelberg, Kuhlau sent a plaintive request to the management of Det kongelige Teater:

> To solidify my art as a Danish composer through close acquaintance with the stage and the singers' abilities, it will be of particular use to attend the Theater's performances as often as possible; as I have already produced three compositions which have won the public's satisfaction, and I am working on the fourth, I may perhaps dare to hope that the esteemed management will look favorably on my humble request, and allow me complimentary tickets.
>
> Humblest
> Fr. Kuhlau
> Royal Chamber Musician[15]

Kuhlau worked on the score for over a year, during which time his theater tickets would have allowed him to see several performances of *Ungdom og Galskab*, *Sovedrikken*, *Indtoget* [The Entry] (with music by J.A.P. Schulz), and *Kjærlighed uden Strømper*, all of which still enjoyed favor in the repertory, and one performance of Kunzen's *Viinhøsten*. *Don Giovanni* was performed four times, and Weber's *Abu Hassan* was performed three times. Also in the repertory, and extremely popular since its

---

[14] Busk, *Friedrich Kuhlau: En biografi*, 132.

[15] "For ved nöjere Bekjændskab med Scenen og Syngepersonalets Evner, at begrunde min Kunst som dansk Componist, vilde det være mig til særdeles Nytte, saa ofte som muligt, at besøge Theatrets Forestillinger; da jeg nu allerede har leveret tre Compositioner, som have vundet Publikums Tilfredshed, og arbeider paa den fjerde, saa torde jeg maske haabe, at den höje Direction paa min underdanige Begjæring, gunstigst vilde tildele mig fri Entrée-Billet. / Underdanigst / Fr. Kuhlau / Kongl. Kammermusikus." Letter from September 9, 1823. Kuhlau, *Breve*, 98.

first Danish performance in April 1822, was Weber's *Der Freischütz*.[16] Weber was to have a decisive influence on the score to *Lulu*, and no fewer than six numbers from Kuhlau's betray traces of *Der Freischütz* in the music.[17]

Lulu was based on the same story by A.J. Liebeskind that had inspired Emanuel Schikaneder's libretto for Mozart's *Die Zauberflöte*, and while Mozart's opera had not yet been seen by a Danish audience, Kuhlau was certainly familiar with the printed score. He modeled three numbers on excerpts from *Die Zauberflöte*, and he based another three on music from *Don Giovanni*.[18] *Lulu* was first performed in October 1824 and eventually showed itself to be a moderate success with the public; by the time *Die Zauberflöte* received its Copenhagen premiere at the beginning of 1826, *Lulu* had already been performed twelve times, and for several weeks that season both operas were in production concurrently.[19]

At first glance *Lulu* is in many ways characteristic of German opera from the middle of the 1820s. Kuhlau attempts to create larger musical structures by stringing together smaller numbers without a break for dialogue, and his strong echoes of Mozart and Weber might also be expected from any German opera composer writing at that time. Where Kuhlau most clearly shows his incipient Danishness, however, is in the opening to the second act, set in the enchanted wilderness surrounding the sorcerer Dilfeng's castle. It is, according to Gorm Busk,

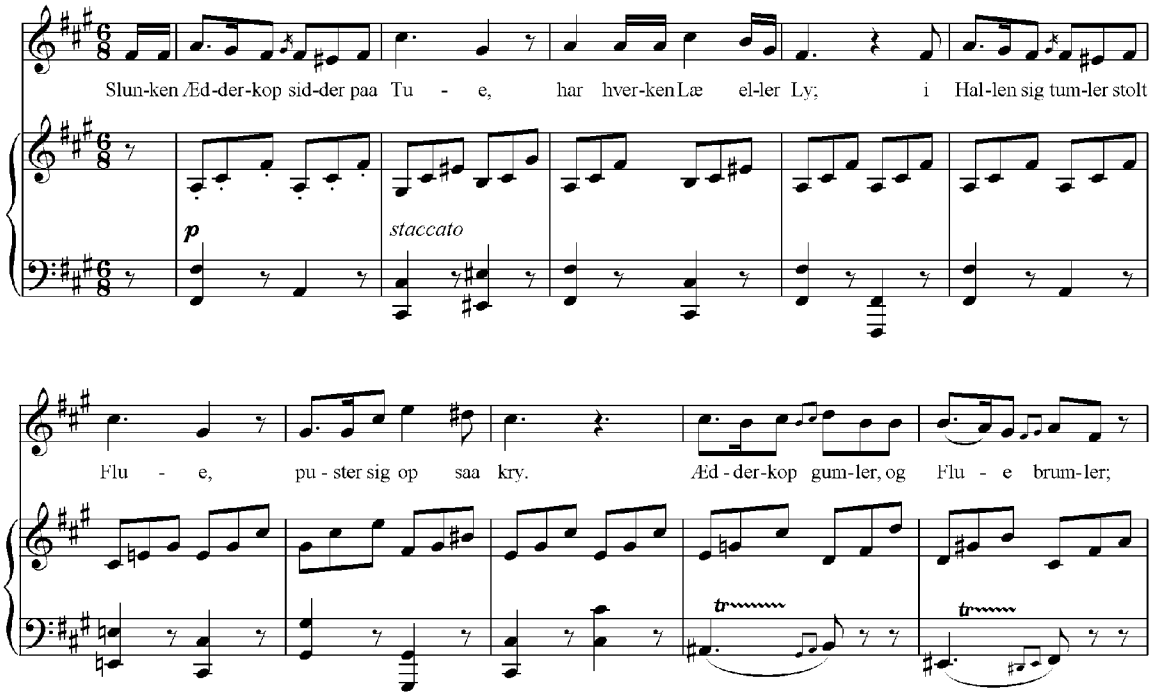
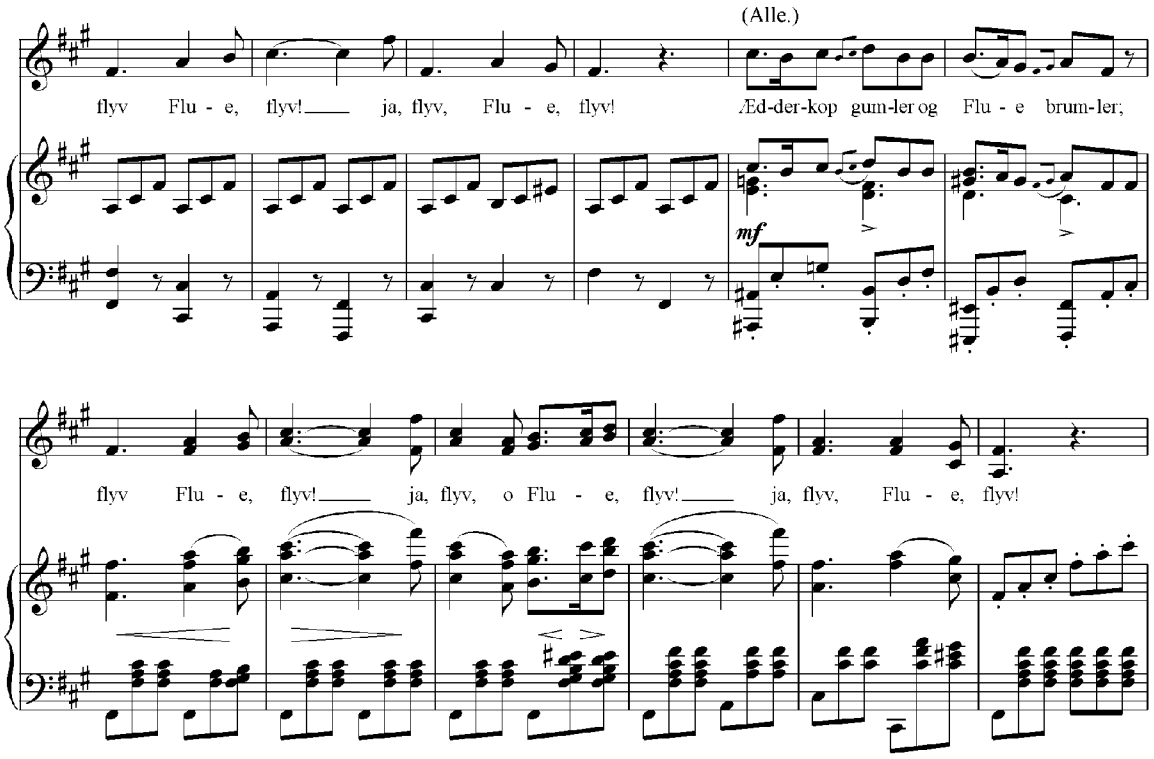
> a Danish counterpart of the Wolf's Glen scene in *Der Freischütz*, but transformed from German Gothic to a more fairytale atmosphere. It takes

---

[16] Aumont and Collin, *Det Danske Nationalteater*, "Alfabetisk Sæsonsregister," 64-68; "Skuespil- og Opera-repertoiret A-K," 5, 148-51, 439-42.
[17] Busk, *Friedrich Kuhlau: En biografi*, 389-90.
[18] Ibid.
[19] Aumont and Collin, *Det Danske Nationalteater*, "Skuespil- og Opera-repertoiret L-Ø," 32, 368-70.

> on a quite Mendelssohnesque feel in the following section where elves and pixies sing a ballad-like text to waltz-like 3/8 music and, after Lulu has entered to the notes of a long flute solo (quoting his cavatina in Act One), in the concluding antiphonal singing. This is Kuhlau's most striking anticipation of the Danish National Romanticism that later came to full expression in J.P.E. Hartmann and N.W. Gade.[20]

The next musical number, "Slunken Ædderkop sidder paa Tue" [A hungry spider sits on an anthill] (Example 5.2), is a strophic *romance* in the style of Weyse; its folk-narrative manner dates back to Hartmann's "Liden Gunver."[21] Here again we see the 6/8 rhythm, the minor mode, the two similar phrases followed by the choral *omkvæd*, and a diegetic, narrative text.

Kuhlau, *Lulu*, "Slunken Ædderkop sidder paa Tue"

[20] Busk, "Friedrich Kuhlau's Operas," 110-11.
[21] Busk finds more specific resonances with Weyse's *romance* "Tommeliden var sig en Mand" from *Ludlams Hule* (1816, with a libretto by Oehlenschläger). Busk, *Friedrich Kuhlau: En biografi*, 188.

[A hungry spider sits on an ant hill
With no shelter or protection.
In the hall the proud fly gambols about,
Puffing itself out so cockily.
The spider munches,
The fly buzzes.
Fly (away), fly, fly (away)!
Yes, fly (away), fly, fly (away).]

Example 5.2

Despite this rather obvious homage to his work, Weyse himself had some reservations about Kuhlau's score. He complained to a friend two months after the premiere,

> Kuhlau's opera *Lulu* has created a furor, although everyone finds the play boring and the music too longwinded and noisy, which is also my opinion. There are many fine things in the music, but it would gain considerably by shortening it, which the composer, however, will not bring himself to do.

> Alas, these composers are such stubborn creatures, *excepté* [except for] the organist and composer who lives in Kronprindsessegaden.[22]

The "exceptional" organist and composer was of course Weyse himself, but the rather tongue-in-cheek use of the French *excepté* does not quite hide his jealousy and resentment of the fact that, with six performances to date, *Lulu* had enjoyed far greater success than anything Weyse had composed in the previous fifteen years.

J.L. Heiberg's *Elverhøj*

It is perhaps not entirely fair to blame the somewhat lackluster reception of Kuhlau's or Weyse's operas and *syngespil* on the quality of the music. Denmark's ill-considered alliance with Napoleon Bonaparte brought disaster upon disaster to the country, beginning with the near-total destruction of Copenhagen during the British bombardment in 1807, continuing with the bankruptcy declared by the govement in 1813, and finally ending with the cession of Norway to Sweden in 1814. The following decade saw a general decline in the quality of all written work, especially that for the theater. Additionally, the petty literary feuds that practically defined the era crippled the reception of many would-be major works. The choreographer August Bournonville reflected in 1865, "Must one not both laugh and cry when one thinks how Kuhlau's and Weyse's superb compositions, *The Magic Harp* and *Ludlam's Cave*, were trodden in the mud and

---

[22] "Kuhlaus Opera Lulu har gjort Furore, skjøndt alle Mennesker finder Stykket kjedeligt og Musikken for langtrukken og støjende, hvilket ogsaa er min Mening. Der ere mange smukke Ting i Musikken, men den vilde betydeligen vinde ved Afkortning, hvortil Componisten imidlertid ikke vil bequemme sig. Ak de Componister ere nogle egensidige Creaturer, excepté Organisten og Componisten i Kronprindsessegaden." Letter of December 22, 1824 to M.F. v. Irgens-Bergh. Weyse, *Breve*, 75.

sacrificed to the fanaticism of the literary feud between the supporters of Baggesen and Oehlenschläger?"[23]

As historian Henning Fenger describes it,

> The period from 1815 to 1825 represents in general a nadir, one of the bleakest and most provincial phases in Danish literature. The Napoleonic Wars had crippled the national economy for many years, and writers waged a desperate struggle for financial survival. Literary life degenerated into a protracted and painful controversy between the Baggesen and Oehlenschläger factions. This debate sunk [*sic*] from an objective discussion of taste and ideals to the level of private polemic. It remained for Heiberg to restore this controversy to a more elevated plane in the 1820's.[24]

Johan Ludvig Heiberg enjoyed a literary pedigree. He was born in 1791 to P.A. Heiberg and poetic realist author Thomasine Buntzen, who would, after divorce and remarriage, become famous as the novelist Countess Gyllembourg. After P.A. Heiberg's exile to France in 1799, young Ludvig spent two years as a foster child to K.L. Rahbek, whose home, "*Bakkehuset*" [Hill House], was the scene of a regular artistic salon.[25] From these influences he inherited a sharp critical voice and a supreme intellectual confidence; "My taste," historian P.M. Mitchell quotes him as writing, "is correct."[26] When Jens Baggesen left his prestigious post as chair of Danish literature at the University of Kiel, it was J.L. Heiberg who succeeded him.[27] He also inherited a love for the theater, and when he returned to Copenhagen from Kiel in 1824 he began vigorously to produce works and translations for the stage, most of which were well received.

---

[23] August Bournonville, *My Theatre Life*, tr. Patricia N. McAndrew (Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 1979), 145.
[24] Henning Fenger, *The Heibergs*, tr. Frederick J. Marker (New York: Twayne Publishers, Inc., 1971), 46.
[25] Mitchell, *A History of Danish Literature*, 101 and 135. See also Fenger, *The Heibergs*, 43.
[26] Mitchell, *A History of Danish Literature*, 136.
[27] Clifford A. Bernd, "The Anticipation of German Poetic Realism in Danish *Poetisk Realisme*," *MLN: Modern Language Notes* 97 (1982): 578.

In May of 1828 King Frederik VI announced the wedding of his daughter Vilhelmine to Prince Frederik, the son of Princess Charlotte Frederikke, over whose besmirched honor Edouard Dupuy had fled Denmark twenty years earlier. The King asked Det kongelige Teater to produce a celebratory work "of appropriate splendour, but without direct allusion to the ceremony."[28]

Heiberg's translations from foreign sources had fared very well that year. In the first five months of 1828, *Kjærligheds Drømme* [*La somnambule*, by Eugène Scribe and Germain Delavigne] had enjoyed its seventh performance, and *Syv militaire Piger* [*Les jolis soldats*, by Marie-François-Denis-Théresa Leroi Francis, Armand D'Artois de Bournonville, and Marie Emanuel Guillaume Marguérite Théaulon] its ninth. *Pigen fra Søen*, Heiberg's Danish version of Rossini's opera *La donna del lago*, was performed seven times between January and April. Copenhagen audiences also responded well to Heiberg's original works, having seen the eighth performance of *Et Eventyr i Rosenborg Have* [An Adventure in Rosenborg Garden]; the twelfth performance of *De Uadskillelige* [The Inseparables]; the fifteenth performance of *Recensenten og Dyret* [The Critic and the Animal]; and the seventeenth performance of *Aprilsnarrene* [The April Fools].[29] When Det kongelige Teater solicited proposals for the royal festival play, they asked Oehlenschläger and Boye, and they also asked Heiberg.

Et Eventyr i Rosenborg Have was a *syngespil* with music by Weyse, but Heiberg used the term *vaudeville* to describe his other three original works. Heiberg had adapted the concept of the Danish *vaudeville* from the French *comédie-vaudeville*, whose

---

[28] Qtd. in Busk, "Friedrich Kuhlau's Operas," 117.
[29] Aumont and Collin, *Det Danske Nationalteater*, "Alfabetisk Sæsonsregister," 69; "Skuespil- og Opera-repertoiret A-K," 35-37, 205-06, 505-06; "Skuespil- og Opera-repertoiret L-Ø," 157-58, 185-87, 310-11, 377-79.

principal exponent was Eugène Scribe.[30] Although Heiberg aligned himself with the school of Baggesen (as opposed to that of Oehlenschläger), he did not support the idea of through-composed Danish operas such as *Lulu*. This perhaps was also a result of his upbringing; P.A. Heiberg and K.L. Rahbek had after all been two of the most virulent and outspoken critics of *Holger Danske*. While his first experiment, the 1825 *Kong Salomon og Jørgen Hattemager* [King Salomon and Jørgen the Hat-maker] was still running successfully, Heiberg outlined his defense of the genre in his 1826 article "Om Vaudevillen, som dramatisk Digtart, og om dens Betydning paa den danske Skueplads" [On the *vaudeville* as dramatic poetry, and on its significance for the Danish stage].

Heiberg had written his doctoral dissertation on Pedro Calderón de la Barca, commonly known as simply Calderón, and the work of the Spanish playwright remained a strong influence. According to Fenger, Calderón taught Heiberg that "drama should spring from the romance (the folk song) like a tree from its roots, music should mesh directly with the action and not merely provide accompaniment, and characterization should be subordinate to plot."[31] The study of Scribe's *pièce bien faite* inspired him to maintain a light, humorous tone and intricate plotting.[32] In addition to the incorporation of these ideals to the Danish theater, Heiberg designed the *vaudeville* to be distinguished from other contemporary musical theater pieces by its emphasis on the actual text at the expense of the score. He clarified,

> The difference between *opéra comique* or (as they are generally known) musical plays and vaudevilles can provisionally be defined in terms of the

---

[30] Marker and Marker, *A History of Scandinavian Theatre*, 111-13. For more on the original form, see Neil C. Arvin, "The Technique of Scribe's *Comédies-Vaudevilles*," *Modern Philology* 16 (1918): 159-65.
[31] Fenger, *The Heibergs*, 56.
[32] For more on the *pièce bien faite* or "well-made play," see Stephen S. Stanton, introduction to *Camille, and Other Plays,* ed. Stephen S. Stanton (New York: Hill and Wang, 1957), vii-xxxix.

> different relationships between the two elements of which both consist. The musical play (*syngespillet*) is closer to opera than drama; a vaudeville is closer to drama than to opera. In the former, everything must therefore aim at musical characters and situations, and dialogue must be no more than simply a means of leading up to them; in the latter, on the other hand, the characters and situations must be solely dramatic, for the dialogue is of prime importance, and the musical items must only be put in where the life and interest of the dialogue have reached their highest points. In musical plays, dialogue occurs in place of music; in vaudevilles, music occurs in the place of dialogue, and this is why in the latter many familiar and easy melodies are used, for the attention of the spectators is not to be captivated by the musical elements, but wholly devoted to the dialogue, which is enhanced and clarified by familiar melodies, the recollection of which puts the spectators in the mood which the author requires in each particular instance.[33]

When Heiberg submitted his proposal to the board of Det kongelige Teater, he had already corresponded privately with one of its members, Jonas Collin, who had suggested the possibility of designing a piece which could make use of some folk melodies. The playwright was all too happy to comply, hoping "thereby that a *vaudeville* (even if under a different name) could be found suitable for a national festival play."[34] In his actual proposal, he wrote, "In regard to the musical arrangement, it is my intention to suggest the work's national and local character by using as its basis some of our most beautiful old ballad melodies."[35]

Heiberg took his efforts at nationalism even further, incorporating the texts of two ballads from *Udvalgte danske Viser*, "Jeg lagde mit hoved til Elverhøi" [I laid my head

---

[33] Translation by Peter Briton, from *National Theatre in Northern and Eastern Europe, 1746-1900*, ed. Laurence Senelick (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 38-39. For more on the Danish *vaudeville*, see Fenger, *The Heibergs*, 78-89.

[34] "...dersom en Vaudeville (selv under en anden Benævnelse) kunde befindes passende til et nationalt Fest-spil." Qtd. in Bruun, *Dansk Musiks Historie*, vol. 1, 234. Cf. Fenger, who writes, "Whether one calls this work a romantic play or a national vaudeville in enlarged form remains a matter of preference." Fenger, *The Heibergs*, 88-89.

[35] "I Henseende til det musicalske Arrangement, da er det min Hensigt at antyde Stykkets nationale og locale Characteer, ved at lægge nogle faa af vore smukkeste gamle Kjæmpevise-Melodier til Grund." J.L. Heiberg, "Skizze til *Elverhøi*," *Prosaiske Skrifter*, vol. 11, 465.

down on Elves' Hill] and "Herr Oluf han rider saa vide" [Sir Oluf he rides so far]. The story was to combine the popular legend of the Elf King at Stevns (who supposedly would allow no Danish king to enter his enchanted territory) with the true story of the death of the explorer Jens Munk, as recounted by Holberg in his history of Denmark. Heiberg would set the action in the year 1640, so that he could feature the still-beloved King Christian IV as a major character.[36] After Boye withdrew from the competition, the board accepted Heiberg's plan for *Elverhøj* unanimously.[37]

Heiberg's story hinges on King Christian IV's sudden decision that the sheriff Ebbesen will marry Elisabeth Munk, the King's godchild and the ward of Walkendorff. Elisabeth herself is in love with Flemming, one of the King's courtiers, and Ebbesen is in love with the peasant girl Agnete. When Agnete confesses this love to her mother Karen, Karen admits to her that she is not really her daughter: Karen found her as a baby on Elves' Hill after her own daughter had died, and she simply raised Agnete in her place. After a dream ballet sequence in Elves' Hill, a surprise meeting with Christian IV, and a comical exchange with the hunter Mogens and an "enchanted" ring, it is revealed that it is Agnete who is actually Elisabeth Munk. Walkendorff's wife had lost her when she was in her care, and Walkendorff had substituted for her his niece, also named Elisabeth, who was the same age and had recently been orphaned. The King forgives all, both couples are happily reconciled, and the curtain falls after a rousing paean to the greatness of His Majesty: onstage, Christian IV, but in the theater, of course, Frederick VI.

In addition to the genuinely "Danish" elements in the libretto—the *folkeviser* music, the story, the ballad texts, the superstitions and folklore, and the iconic Christian

---

[36] Ibid., vol. 11, 455-57.
[37] Torben Krogh, "Omkring *Elverhøj*-Musikkens Tilblivelse," *Dansk Musiktidsskrift* 17 (1942): 163.

IV—the production promised one additional element sure to please the Copenhagen public: the role of the beautiful young Agnete would be played by the fifteen-year-old Johanne Luise Pätges. Pätges, born in 1812, become the theatrical sensation of the age with her debut at age thirteen in *Aprilsnarrene*. With her marriage to Heiberg at the age of eighteen (he was thirty-nine), she solidified both his position as the preeminent literary figure in the theater and her own as the unrivalled queen of the Danish stage. Henrik Ibsen wrote poetry to and about her; the adoring Søren Kierkegaard wrote a series of articles on her performances as Shakespeare's Juliet, which he later published as *Krisen og en Krise i en Skuespillerindes Liv* [The Crisis and a Crisis in the Life of an Actress]. Her final performance came in 1864 when, at the age of fifty-one, she played the young girl Elisabeth Munk in *Elverhøj*. Fru Heiberg continued to work for Det kongelige Teater as a stage director, presenting among other plays Ibsen's *De unges Forbund* [The League of Youth] and *Kongs-emnerne* [The Pretenders]. She retired only when the new theater building, still in use today on Kongens Nytorv, opened in 1875, feeling that "her life and her contribution as an artist were inseparably connected with the old playhouse."[38]

The theater announced a cast and appointed Kuhlau to be the composer. He and Heiberg came to an agreement over which Medieval ballad tunes would be used, with the majority coming, not surprisingly, from *Udvalgte danske Viser fra Middelalderen*. Heiberg, eager to draw a distinction between his work and a more traditional *syngespil*, included a complete listing of the musical sources in his published introduction to the text.[39] Kuhlau's own melodies (that is, the melodies *not* based on folk material) were limited to one chorus and a portion of the ballet music; in the introduction, these excerpts

---

[38] Fenger, *The Heibergs*, 166. See also 164-73 for more on her career as a director.
[39] Heiberg, "Forerindring til *Elverhøj*," 48-50.

are identified with the words, "Mel. Af Componisten selv" [Mel.(ody) by the composer himself].[40]

Most of the musical numbers in *Elverhøj* were clearly demarcated as folk ballads or songs in the actual dialogue, and this can be seen clearly from the very opening. As the curtain rises, the peasant woman Karen is polishing some kitchen utensils. While she works she sings the ballad "Jeg gik mig i Lunden" [I went into the grove], with the *omkvæd*, "Men vogt dig o min Pige, for Elverkongen seer dig!" [But watch yourself, my girl, for the Elf King sees you!]. Onstage listening are the hunter Mogens, and at a distance, King Christian IV (in mufti) and his courtier Flemming. At the conclusion of the final strophe, the following scene begins:

> FLEMMING: I can assure your Grace that this woman is a living archive for all of our old superstitious songs: they flourish yet on her lips, and spread themselves throughout the whole district. When she has died, it will all be over with our folk poetry.
> MOGENS (to Karen): Karen! Good morning! You are at work early.
> KAREN: I have to, since there will be a banquet here today.
> MOGENS: But why do you always sing such melancholy songs?
> KAREN: Melancholy? I certainly know some pleasant ones as well; I'll sing one for you now.
> FLEMMING (to the King): If your Grace will pay attention, you shall hear what this woman means by "pleasant."
> KAREN (singing): I laid my head on the Elf-hill,
> My eyes feigned a lethargy;

[40] Ibid., 50.

Thus I came to meet a young maiden
Who tempted me with song and with speech.
Eia! What a strange dance![41]

Almost fifty years after J.E. Hartmann's "Liden Gunver," Heiberg had found a way to enlarge the occasional yet characteristic use of folk song in the Danish *syngespil* into its own legitimate dramatic form.

Kuhlau's *Elverhøj*

Kuhlau was not actually Heiberg's first choice as composer; that distinction belongs to one of Kunzen's students, P.C. Krossing, who had published some *folkeviseromancer* that Heiberg had admired.[42] Kuhlau was, however, a logical choice. He was still under contractual obligation to Det kongelige Teater, and he was experienced in the composition of *syngespil* and opera. He was also ideally suited for the task, specified by Heiberg, of adapting the ballad melodies for dramatic use. With *Elverhøj* Kuhlau transformed the model technique he relied upon in his compositions from a crutch to a positive strength, and he transformed his role in the completion of the

---

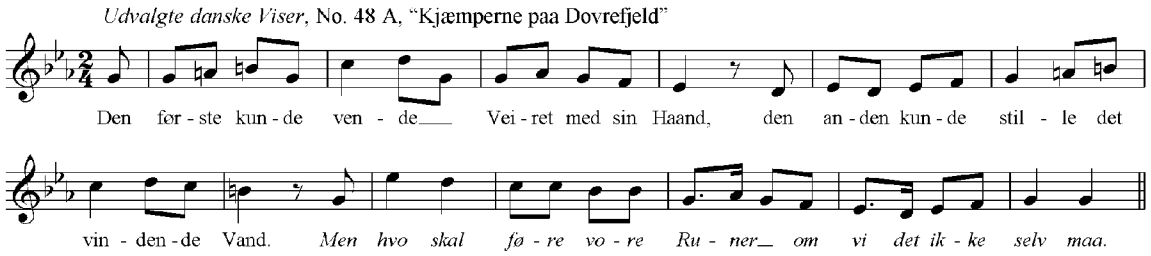
[41] "FLEMMING: Jeg kan forsikkre Eders Naade, at denne Kone er et levende Archiv for alle vore gamle overtroiske Sange: de blomstre endnu paa hendes Læber, og udbrede sig derfra over hele Egnen. Naar hun engang døer, saa er det forbi med vor Folkepoesie.
MOGENS (til Karen): Karen! god Morgen! I er tidlig paa Færde.
KAREN: Det faaer jeg vel, siden her skal være Gilde idag.
MOGENS: Men hvorfor synger I altid saadanne sørgelige Viser?
KAREN: Sørgelige? Da kan jeg saamæn ogsaa nok af de lystige; jeg skal strax synge Jer een.
FLEMMING (til Kongen): Vil Eders Naade give Agt, saa skal I høre hvad den Qvinde forstaaer ved lystigt.
KAREN (synger): Jeg lagde mit Hoved til Elverhøi, / Mine Øien de finge en Dvale; / Da kom mig imøde Jomfruer to, / Og lokked mig med Sang og med Tale. / Eia! hvor selsom en Dands!" J.L. Heiberg, *Poetiske Skrifter* (Copenhagen: C.A. Reitzel, 1862) vol. 3, 9-10.
[42] Jensen, *Den danske romance*, 98-100.

vaudeville from a simple job of arrangement and orchestration to the creation of a new form of dramatic music.

Busk describes the score as

> a series of folk song adaptations where Kuhlau, as was common at the time, has replaced the most conspicuously modal elements with more rounded major/minor cadences, especially at the end of the melody, and for dramatic purposes has often tightened up the melodic curves, expanded phrases, harmonized simply and tastefully and added atmospheric introductions and closes which set the old songs in relief.[43]

The first number, "Jeg gik mig i Lunden" (Example 5.4) offers a good illustration of the changes the composer made to these ballad tunes. Kuhlau took the melody from "Kjæmperne paa Dovrefjeld" [The Warriors on Dovrefjeld] published in *Udvalgte danske Viser* (Example 5.3), transposed it down one half-step, and halved the note values so that two measures of 2/4 in the original would equal one measure of 2/4 in his arrangement.



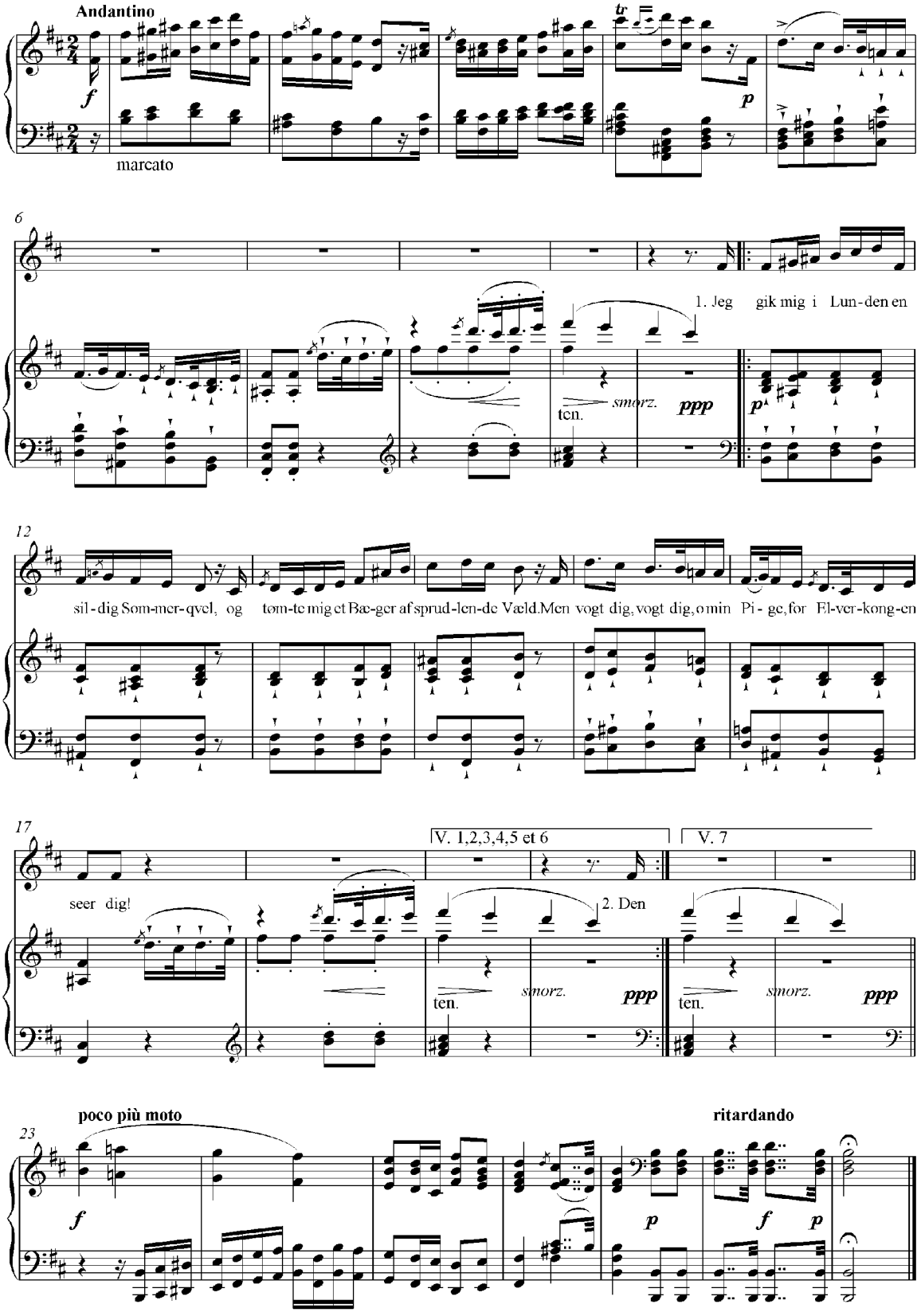
[The first could change the weather with his hand,
The second could still the running water.
But who shall tell our runes, if we may not ourselves?]

Example 5.3

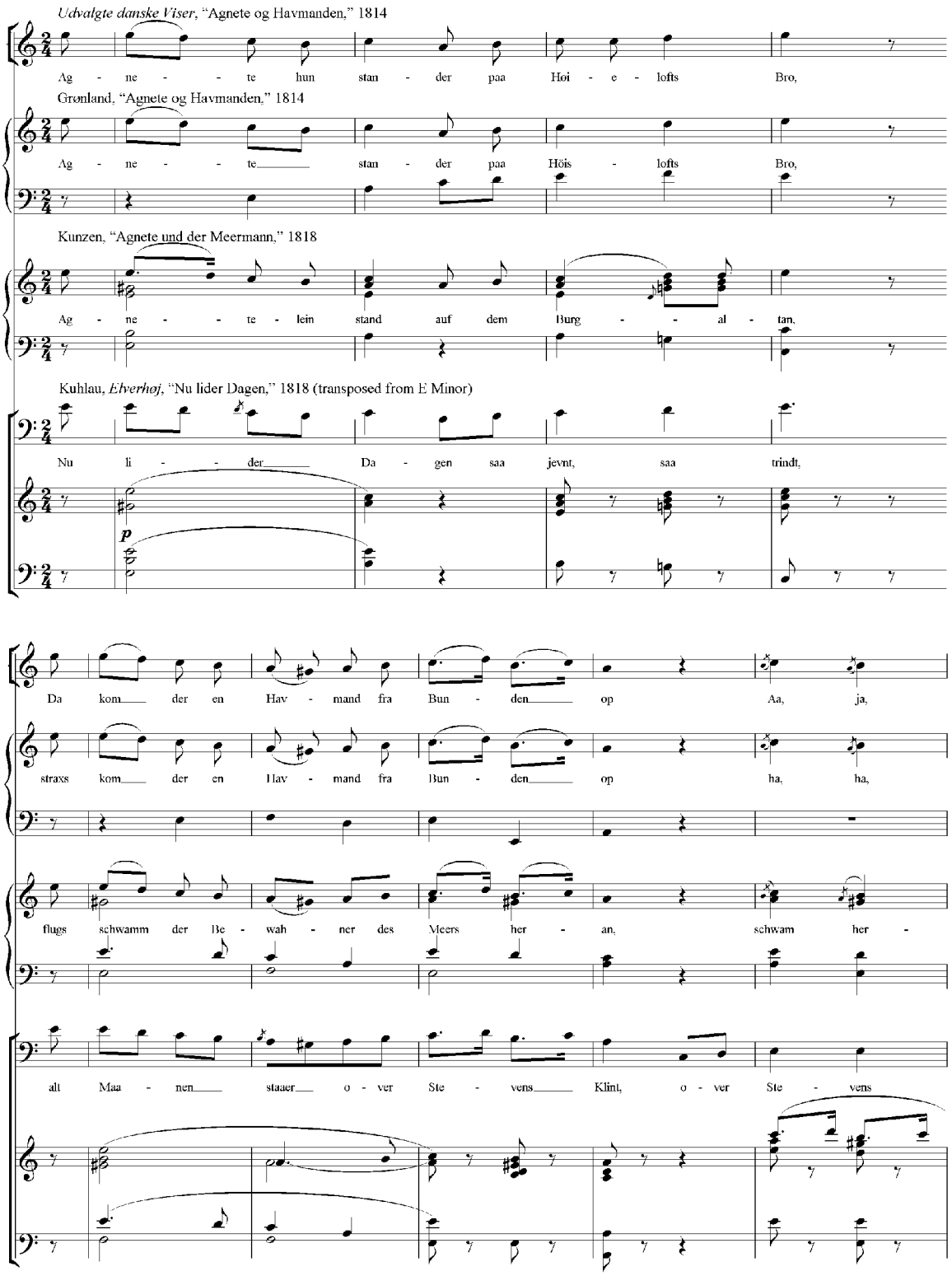
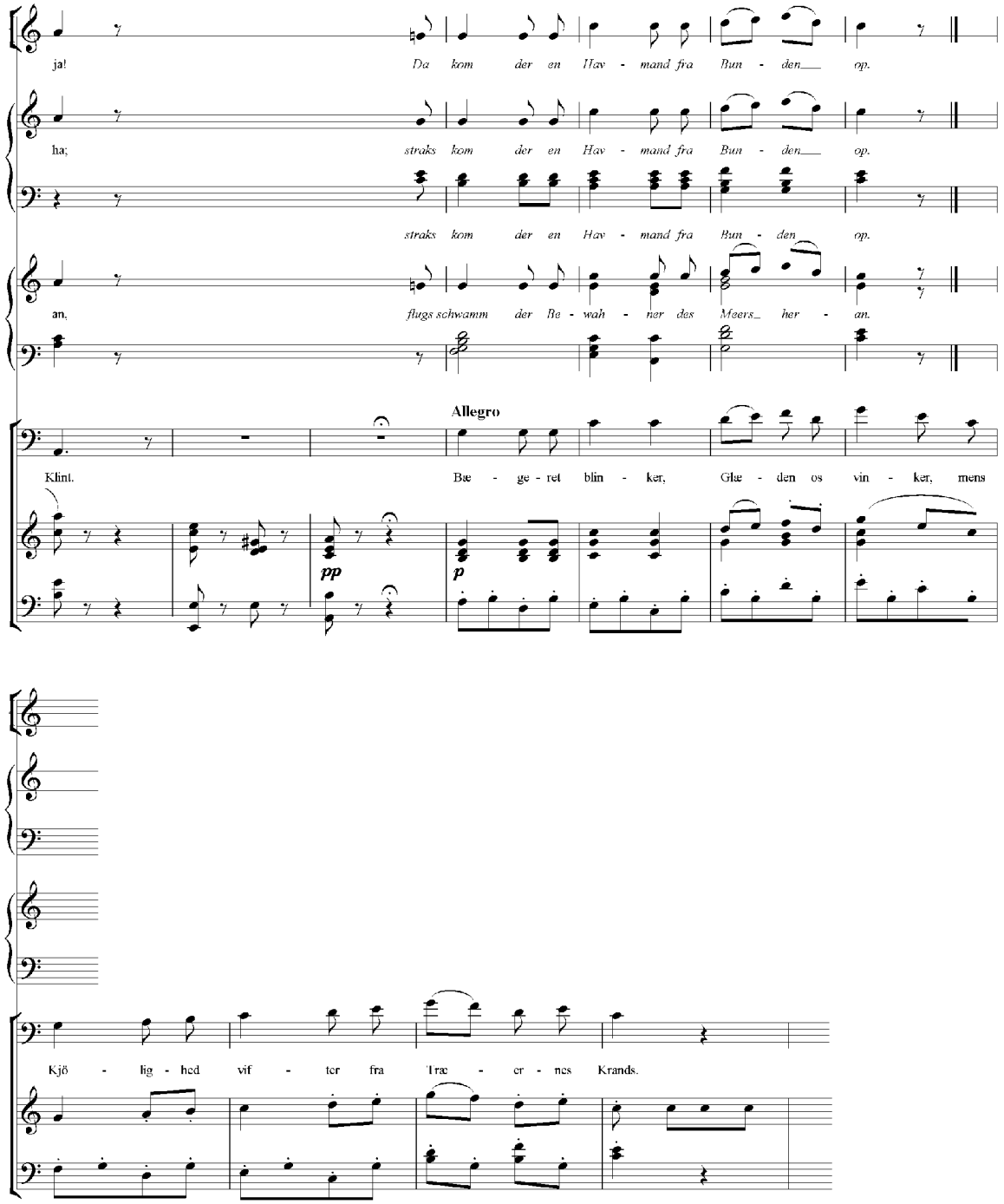
[43] Busk, "Friedrich Kuhlau's Operas," 121. See also Bruun, *Dansk Musiks Historie*, vol. 1, 237.

The uneven number of measures in the original melody's *omkvæd* would have been problematic for the musical sensibility of the time, but Kuhlau does not shorten or expand the tune itself. Rather, he adds a closing passage of music that repeats the last two measures of the melody in the orchestra and then repeats it again in counterpoint, thereby diffusing the sense of the asymmetric phrasing without actually rewriting the source material. Starting at the beginning of the vocal line, what would have been a passage six and one half measures long (from the original's thirteen) is expanded to one that is ten measures long, and as the expansion includes a brief musical interlude, it can be repeated literally for the first six strophes of the *romance*. Kuhlau's harmonization is limited to tonic and dominant chords in B minor, with the exception of one temporary tonicization of the relative major in the *omkvæd*, accomplished easily with a V^6-I cadence (mm. 5-6 of Kuhlau's melody), which returns immediately to the minor. The long introduction is essentially just an instrumental version of this melody, and the seven-measure postlude allows the two motives of the ascending melodic minor scale and the descending natural minor scale to subside in a logical conclusion (Example 5.4).

The changes in the ballad tune itself are minor but characteristic of the *Elverhøj* score: the first two measures are altered so that Kuhlau can maintain a more traditional harmonic rhythm in the accompaniment (i-$V^{\#}$-i-i as opposed to $V^{\#}$-$V^{\#}$-i-$V^{\#}$); the dotted rhythms at the end are incorporated earlier in the *omkvæd*; and the end of the second phrase ("vindende Vand") is transposed up a diatonic step, allowing the phrase to cadence on the tonic, and as Busk points out, "paradoxically enough, making it sound more modal than the folk ballad's [original, more] minor-sounding half cadence."

Kuhlau, *Elverhøj*, "Jeg gik mig i Lunden"

[I went to the grove one late summer evening,
And emptied a cup at the gushing stream.
But watch out, watch out, o my girl, for the Elf King sees you!]

Example 5.4

As discussed in Chapter 4, the various arrangements of Danish *folkeviser* from the first half of the nineteenth century share a relatively consistent harmonic style. Further, given Kuhlau's tendency to base his own work on that of others, it is not surprising to discover that he sometimes leaned heavily on earlier arrangements. "Nu lider Dagen" [Now the day wears on], from the third act of *Elverhøj*, was taken from "Agnete og Havmanden" [Agnete and the Merman]. This *folkevise* had been set previously by Peder Grønland in a version for two sung voices with the addition of a chorus for the ending *omkvæd*. Kunzen's "Agnete und der Meermann," however, with its simple piano accompaniments incorporating the original vocal lines, much more closely approximated the style expected by Heiberg and the board of Det kongelige Teater. Kuhlau essentially copies Kunzen's version whole, keeping the first ten measures almost note for note (Example 5.5). It is only when the ballad reaches the *omkvæd* that Kuhlau exercises his creativity, using the final four measures of the original as the beginning of a newly-composed melody, "Bægeret blinker, Glæden os vinker" [The cup gleams, gladness beckons to us], which is sung first as a solo, and then repeated by the chorus. This juxtaposition of a "borrowed" arrangement with a rare instance of music not adapted from folksong illustrates the very practical and pragmatic nature of Kuhlau's work on *Elverhøj*. He composed what needed to be composed, but he was perfectly content to appropriate what he could find already completed.

Udvalgte danske Viser, "Agnete og Havmanden," 1814
Ag - ne - - te hun stan - der paa Hoi - e - lofts Bro,
Grønland, "Agnete og Havmanden," 1814
Ag - ne - - te stan - der paa Höis - lofts Bro,
Kunzen, "Agnete und der Meermann," 1818
Ag - ne - - te - lein stand auf dem Burg - - al - tan,
Kuhlau, *Elverhøj*, "Nu lider Dagen," 1818 (transposed from E Minor)
Nu li - - der Da - gen saa jevnt, saa trindt,
p
Da kom der en Hav - mand fra Bun - den op Aa, ja,
straxs kom der en Hav - mand fra Bun - den op ha, ha,
flugs schwamm der Be - wah - ner des Meers her - an, schwam her -
all Maa - nen staaer o - ver Ste - vens Klint, o - ver Ste - vens

“Agnete og Havmanden”

[Agnete stands on Højeloft’s Bridge,
At once comes a merman
from the bottom of the sea.
Ha, ha, ha!

“Nu lider Dagen”

Now the day wears on so thickly and evenly,
The moon rises over the cliffs of Stevns,

Over the cliffs of Stevns.

At once comes a merman
from the bottom of the sea.]

The cup gleams,
Gladness beckons to us
While the wreaths of the trees
Fan cool air.]

Example 5.5

In her memoirs, Fru Heiberg remained adamant that it was her husband who had made all of the musical decisions concerning *Elverhøj*.

> People claimed that it wasn't the play, but Kuhlau's music that alone had ensured its success. Kuhlau's music! The public is so ignorant. . .A lot of people generally believe that the art of the play with songs comes into existence in the following way: the poet writes the play, and the composer takes care of the music. This holds true for opera, but by no means for a play like *Elverhøj*. Heiberg's musical sense and knowledge helped him to choose the right melodies, all but one of which were old Danish and Swedish folksongs. Kuhlau had so little to do with this, that he had no idea which melodies Heiberg was going to use until he brought him both text and music.[44]

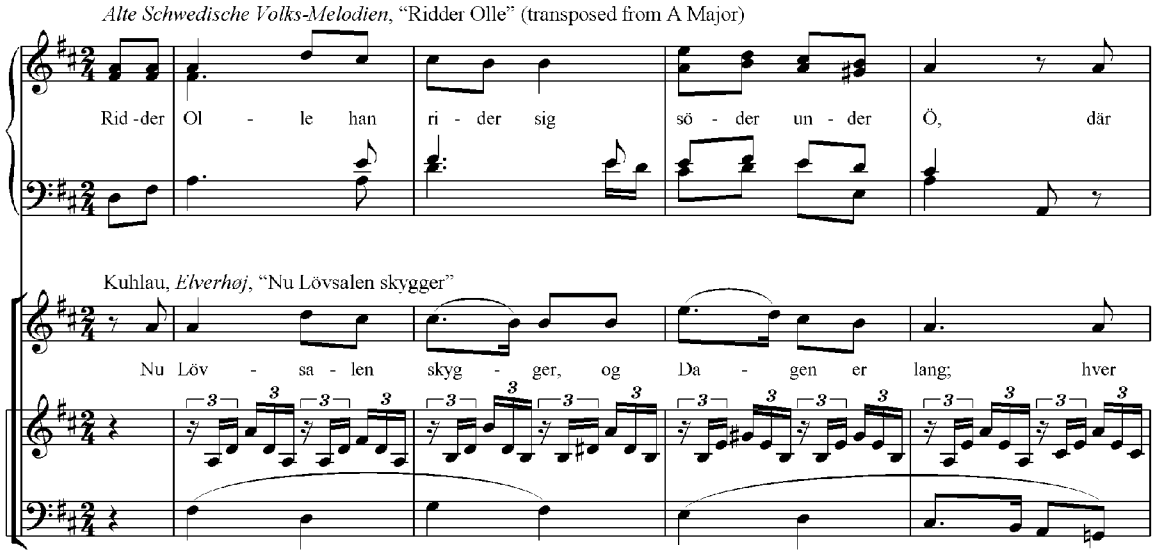
In 1930, however, the musicologist Karl Graupner discovered correspondence from Kuhlau to Heiberg that demonstrates the composer indeed chose some of the melodies himself.[45] In a letter of August 19, 1828, Kuhlau proposed two melodies from *Udvalgte danske Viser* to be adapted as *romances*.[46] This music never made it into the final score, but other suggestions from Kuhlau bore fruit. He wrote Heiberg two months later to inform him of the sources for three pieces of music which were indeed used for

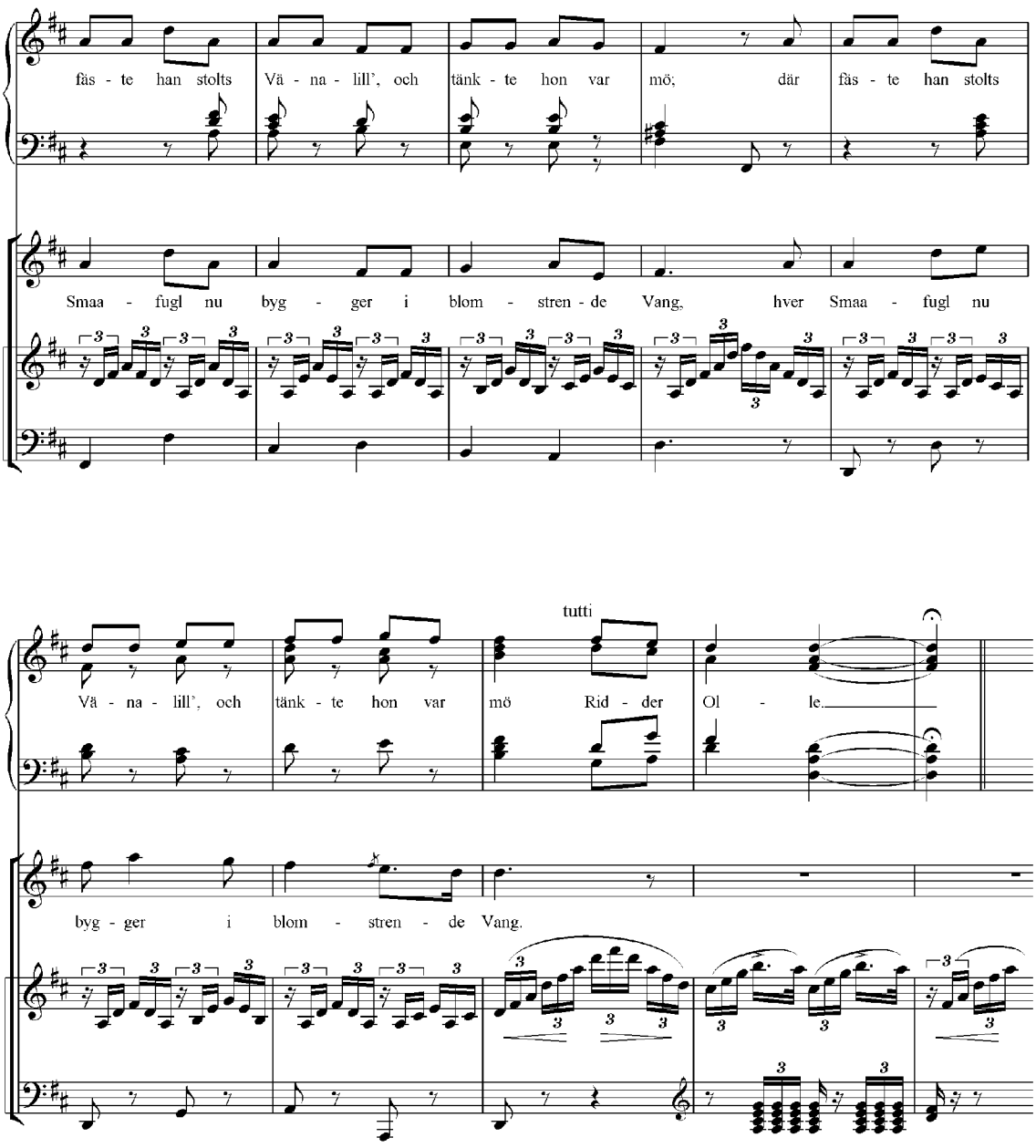
---

[44] "Man påstod, at stykket var intet, men at det var Kuhalus musik, som ene og alene havde gjorde dets lykke. Kuhlaus musik! Massen er så uvidende. . .Mængden tror i almindelighed, at denne art of skuespil med sang i bliver til på følgende måde: digteren skriver stykket, og komponisten sørger for musikken. Dette gælder vel om operaen, men ingenlunde om den art af skuespil som *Elverhøj*. Heibergs musikalske sans og kundskab hjalp ham til at vælge de rette melodier, som alle på én nær var gamle danske og svenske folkemelodier. Kuhlau havde så lidt hermed at gore, at han ikke havde anelse om, hvilke melodier Heiberg ville benytte, før denne bragte ham tekst og musik." Johanne Luise Heiberg, *Et liv genoplevet i erindringen*, ed. Niels Birger Wamberg (Copenhagen: Gyldendal, 1973), vol.1, 89-90.
[45] Krogh, "Omkring *Elverhøj*-Musikens Tilblivelse," 162.
[46] Kuhlau, *Breve*, 114-15.

Elverhøj.[47] One of these was another melody from *Udvalgte danske Viser*, one of the versions of "Dronning Dagmar ligger i Ribe syg." Kuhlau had previously composed a set of variations on this theme in the second movement of his op. 64 Sonata for Flute and Piano in E-flat, from 1825, and he enjoyed the theme enough to include it as the trio section to the "Pas de huit" from the ballet music to the fifth act of *Elverhøj*.[48]

The other two sources were arrangements from Peder Grønland's collection of harmonized Swedish folksongs, *Alte Schwedische Volks-Melodien*. Kuhlau reworked the first, "Ridder Olle," rather extensively, altering both the accompaniment style and the ending of the melody to produce the *romance* "Nu Lövsalen skygger" (Example 5.6).[49]



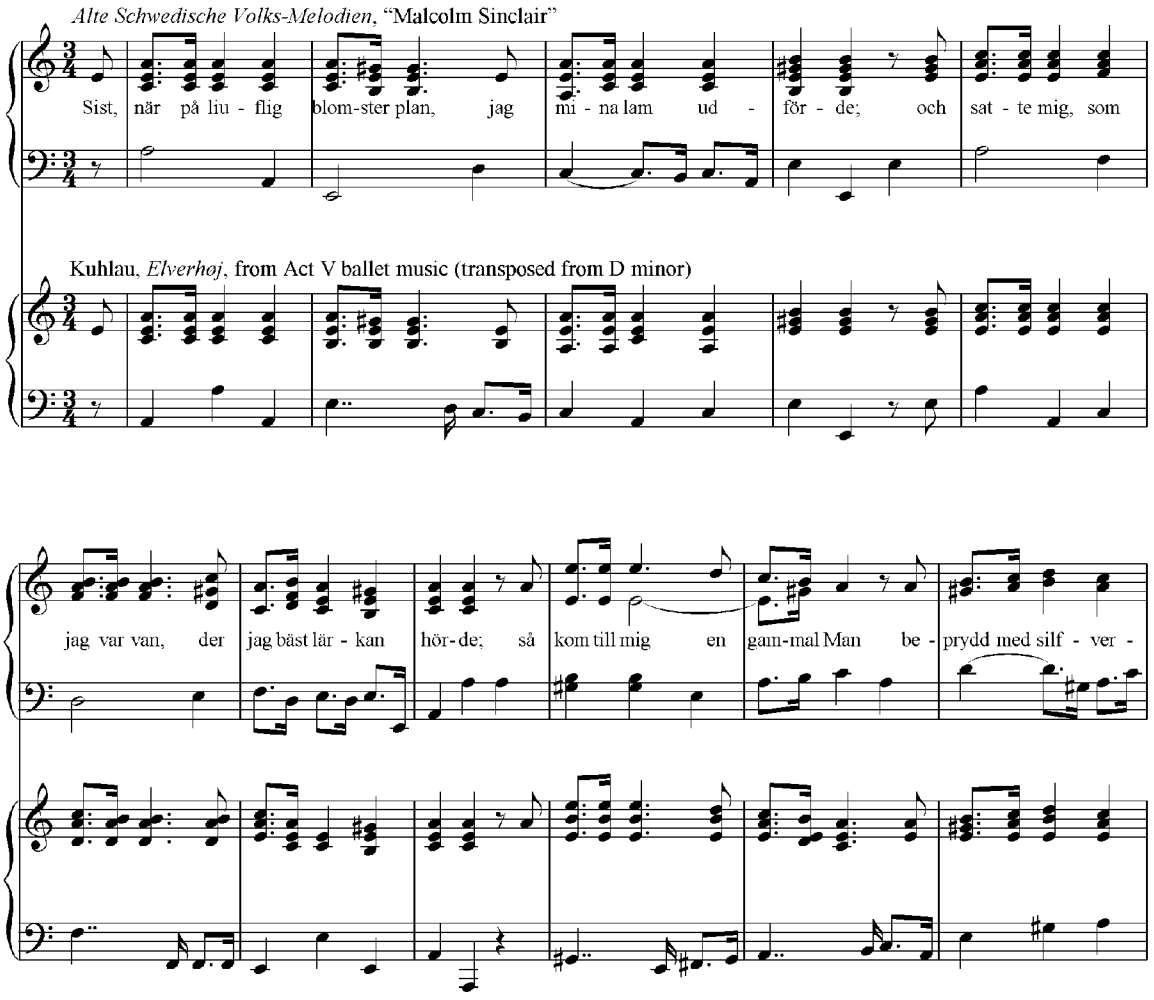
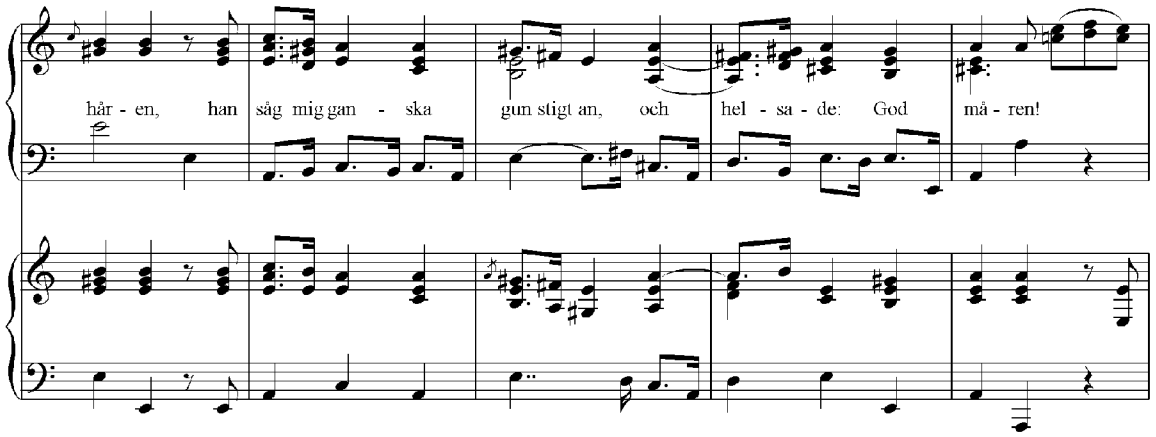
[47] Ibid., 119.
[48] Fr. Kuhlau, *Grande sonata en mi b majeur, op. 64* (Paris: Gérard Billaudot, n.d.).
[49] Peder Grønland, ed., *Alte Schwedische Volks-Melodien gesamlet von E. G. Geijer und A. A. Afzelius; Für das Piano Forte harmonisch bearbeitet* (Copenhagen: C.C. Lose, 1818).

"Ridder Olle"

[The knight Olle rides
South down the island,
He sees the proud Vännalill'
And thinks she is a virgin]

"Nu Lövsalen skygger"

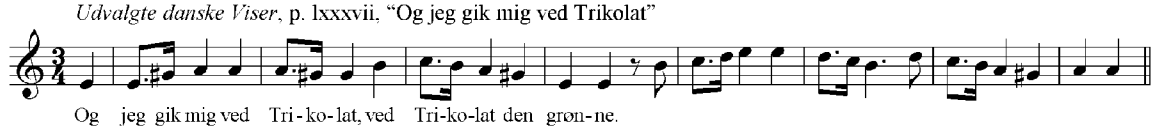
[Now the leafy bowers give shade
And the day is long;
Each small bird builds (his nest)
In the flowering field]

Example 5.6

Kuhlau used the second folksong, "Malcolm Sinclair," as the opening section of the ballet in the fifth act. A comparison of the original folksong with the published vocal score of *Elverhøj* (Example 5.7) shows that Kuhlau essentially used the same arrangement provided by Grønland. Kuhlau does not end the melody in the parallel major, but aside from that there are only minor differences between the two versions.

[In the end, when onto a lovely flowered plain
I led my sheep
And sat down, as I was wont,
Where I could best hear the lark;
Then an old man came,
Adorned with silver hair,
He looked at me very kindly,
And greeted me, good morning!]

Example 5.7

Heiberg, in his preface to the printed libretto, defended the use of Swedish folksongs in a "Danish national play," asking the audience to consider that many older tunes and ballads were common to all of Scandinavia.[50] Nyerup and Rahbek had indeed included in the fifth volume of *Udvalgte danske Viser* a melody (with only an inscrutable fragment of text) which bears a striking similarity to the first eight measures of "Malcolm Sinclair" in terms of its rhythmic profile and implied harmony (Example 5.8).

Udvalgte danske Viser, p. lxxxvii, "Og jeg gik mig ved Trikolat"

[50] Heiberg, "Forerindring til *Elverhøj*," *Prosaiske Skrifter*, vol. 4, 50.

[And I went out by Trikolat,
By Trikolat the green.]

Example 5.8

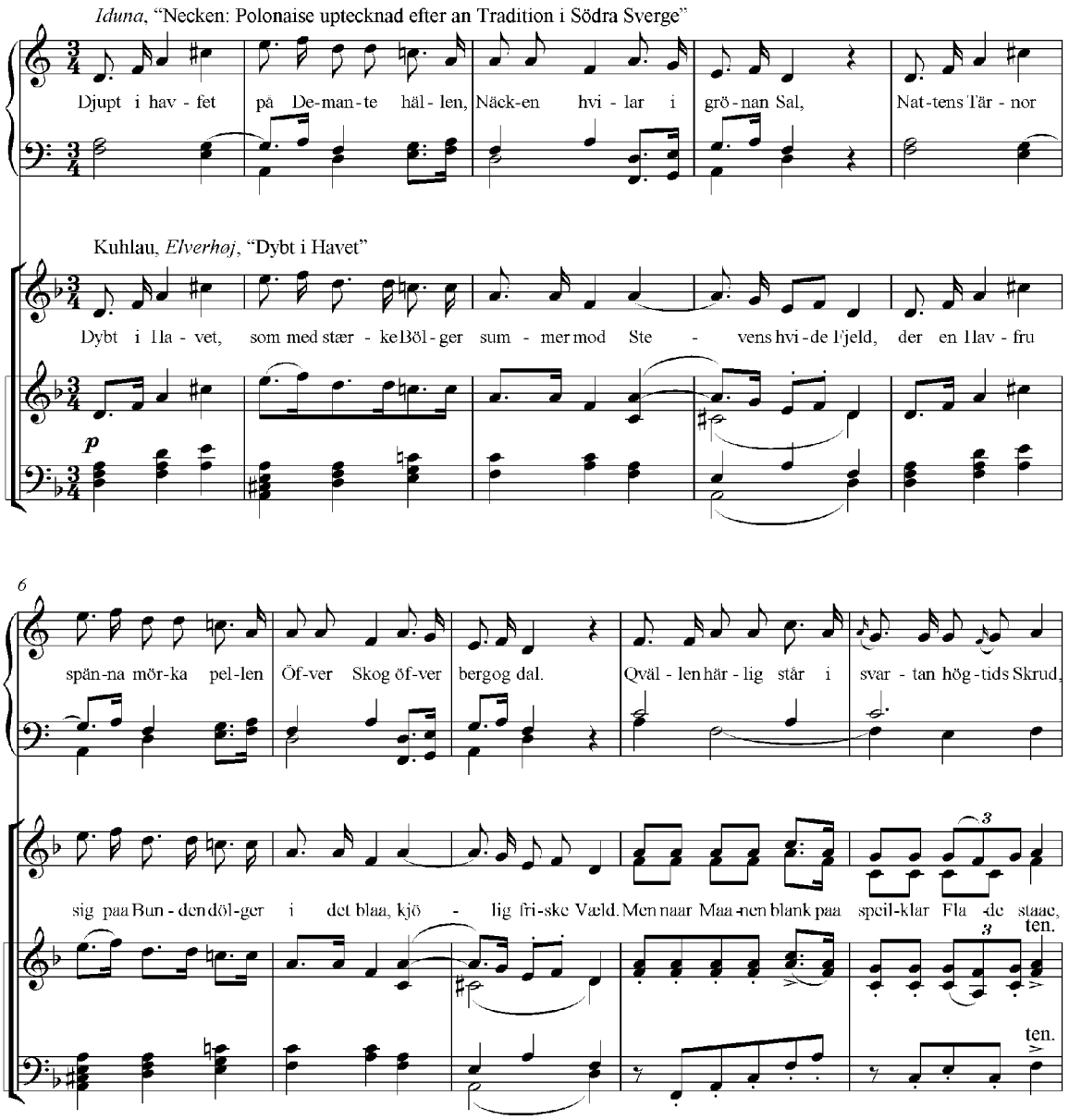
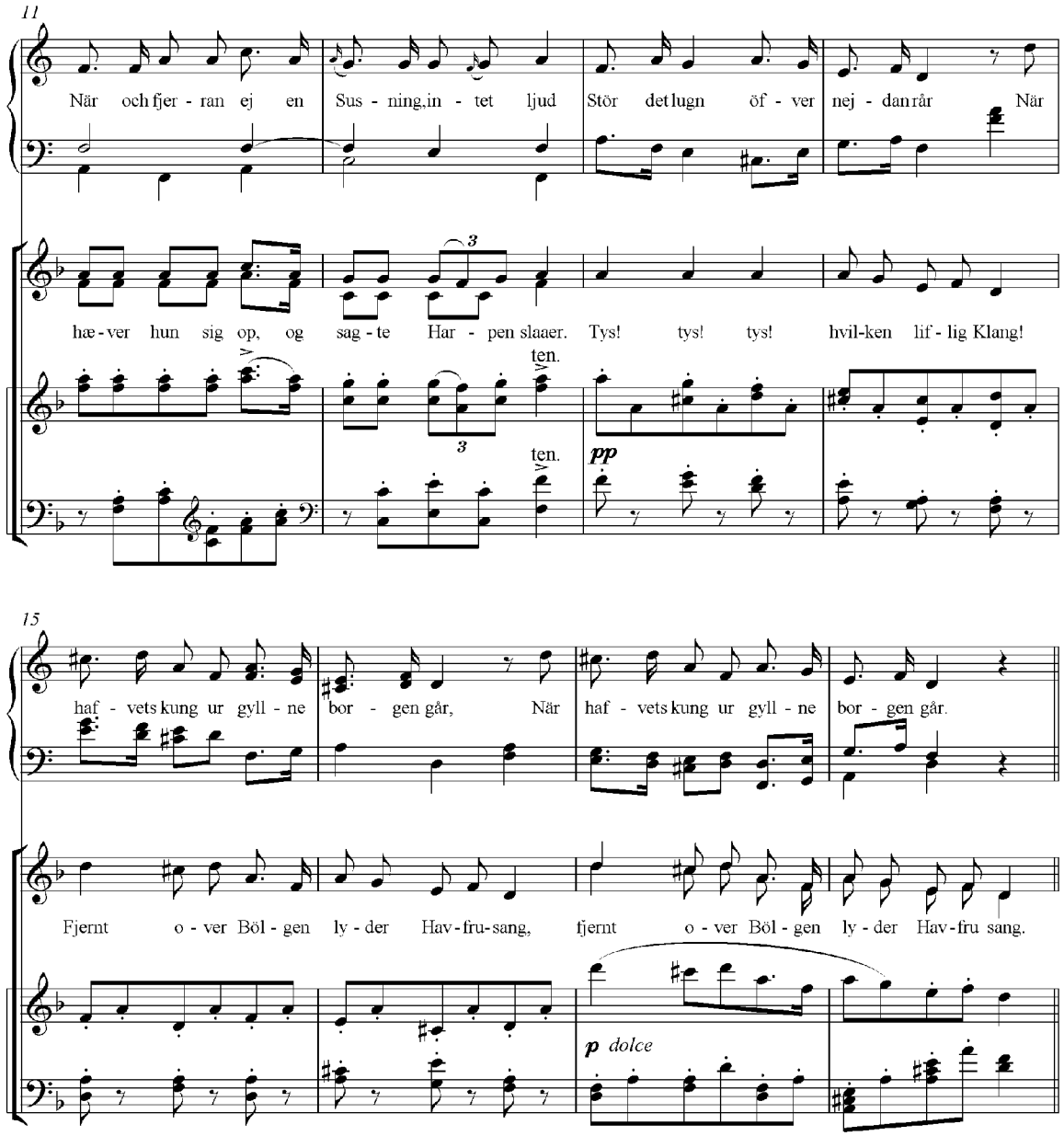
Kuhlau and Heiberg included one other Swedish ballad melody, a mazurka-like folksong known as "Necken" [The water sprite]. The song was published in a piano arrangement in the journal *Iduna*, edited by the Swedish folklorist E.G. Geijer, whose research had helped supply the material for Grønland's collection.[51] As with his use of "Malcolm Sinclair," Kuhlau's arrangement of "Necken" retains most of the published harmonies. What does change is the rhythm. Heiberg writes in his preface that the version from *Iduna* is "very incorrectly notated, particularly with regard to the barring," and goes on to explain that in the *romance* "Dybt i Havet" [Deep in the Sea] Kuhlau has adapted the number to conform to a version Heiberg himself had heard sung in Sweden.[52] Presumably, then, although Kuhlau worked from a copy of *Iduna*, Heiberg dictated the rhythmic changes that can be found in the setting from *Elverhøj*.

The difference between the two can be seen in Kuhlau's arrangement in the syncopation at the end of the third measure (Example 5.9). A quarter note A is added to the melody and tied to the fourth measure, which then continues following the melody from "Necken," now one beat behind, and omitting the rest at the end of the fourth measure in the original. At the beginning of the fifth measure the two melodies are once

---

[51] "Necken: Polonaise uptecknad efter en Tradition i Södra Sverge," *Iduna* 3 (1824): musical example 1; the complete text is printed on pp. 87-90. The use of the term "polonaise" probably refers only to its similarity to a Polish dance (the mazurka), since the rhythm is not that of a true polonaise. This melody has become known in Scandinavia as "Neckens Polska," since the Danish polska rhythm is roughly equivalent to that of the Polish mazurka.

[52] "Den findes i Geijers Iduna, 3die Hæfte, men meget ucorrect opskreven, især med Hensyn paa Tacten. Her er den bleven benyttet af Componisten med Forandringer ifølge Forfatterens egen Opskrift, saaledes som han har hørt den synges i Sverrig." Heiberg, "Forerindring til *Elverhøj*," *Prosaiske Skrifter*, vol. 4, 49-50.

again aligned for the repeat of the first phrase. This phenomenon is repeated later on, where Kuhlau's melody is again one beat behind the original starting with the first beat of measure fourteen.

"Djupt i havfet"

[Deep in the sea, in the diamond palace,
The näck rests in the green hall,
The birds of the night spread their dark canopy
Over forest, over mountain and valley.

The glorious evening wears its dark festival apparel,
Near and far not a rustling, not a sound
Disturbs the calm over the lovely area
When the king of the sea leaves his golden castle.]

"Dybt i Havet"

[Deep in the sea, where strong waves
(Beat and) foam against the white mountain of Stevns,
A mermaid hides herself at the bottom
Of the blue, cool, fresh waters.

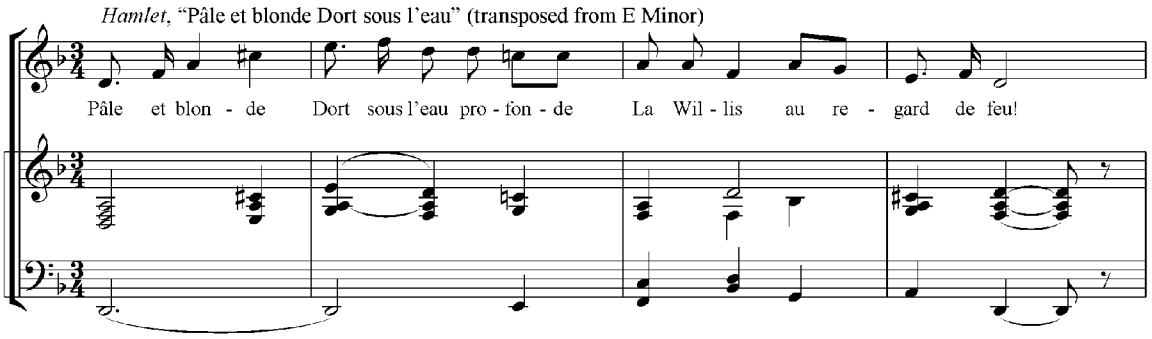
But when the pale moon shines over the water, clear as a mirror,
She rises (to the surface) and softly plays the harp.
Hush! Hush! Hush! Such a delicious sound!
Far away over the waves the mermaid's song can be heard.]

Example 5.9

Just as Kuhlau stays close to the original music, so Heiberg keeps the sense and the story of the original ballad text, even retaining the first three words, which are essentially the same in Danish and Swedish.[53]

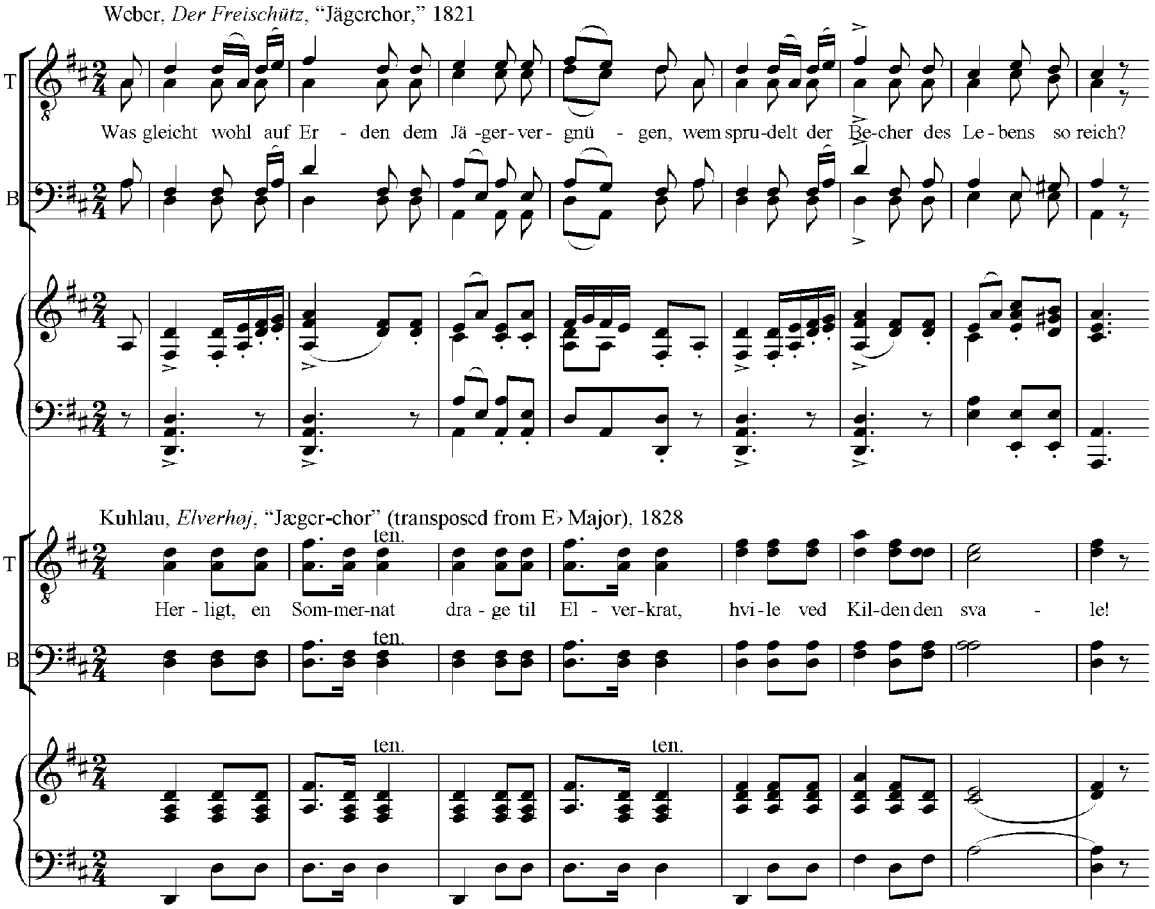
[53] This process was mirrored forty years later in another opera set in Denmark, *Hamlet*, by the French composer Ambroise Thomas (1868; libretto by Jules Barbier and Michel Carré). In Ophelia's mad scene Thomas used the same folksong, perhaps wishing to take advantage of the opportunity of a diegetic song to infuse his score with local Scandinavian color (Example 5.10). Ophelia sings the number "Pâle et blonde Dort sous l'eau" before she drowns herself, prefacing her performance with a single line of recitative, "Et maintenant écoutez ma chanson!" Thomas's version is close to that from *Iduna*, with an almost identical melody and extremely similar harmonization, although it omits the final two measures. Barbier and Carré also take the original ballad text as a point of departure, replacing the Swedish "näcken" with his French (and female) counterpart, "La Willis."

Hamlet, "Pâle et blonde Dort sous l'eau" (transposed from E Minor)



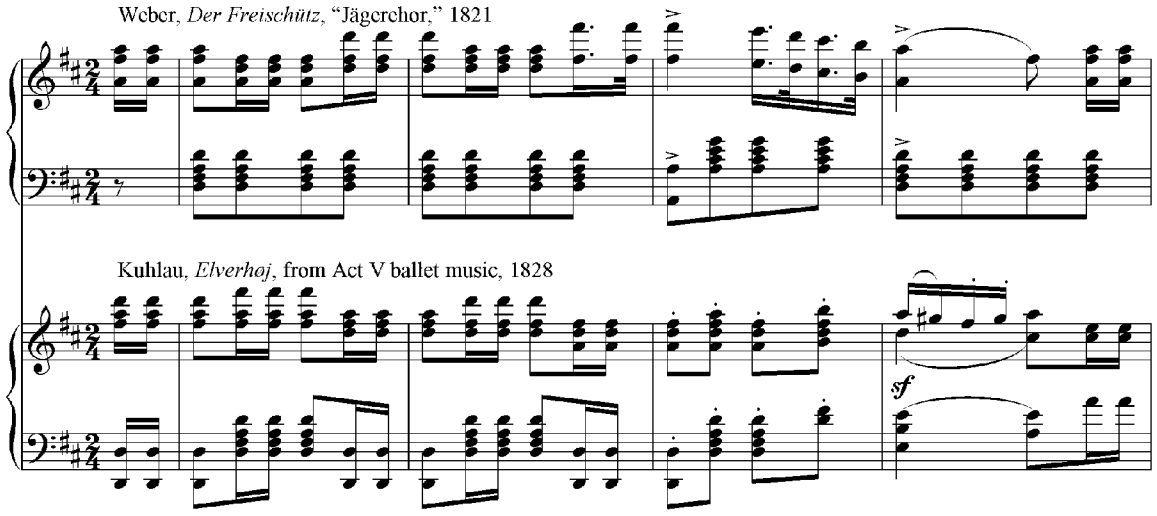
[Pale and blonde
There beneath the deep water
La Willis with eyes of fire!]

Example 5.10

As previously mentioned, some of the music in *Elverhøj* was indeed credited as the composer's own. Yet even these few excerpts betray a strong dependence on earlier music. As he had done with *Lulu*, Kuhlau looked to *Der Freischütz* for inspiration. Kuhlau modeled his "Jæger-chor" [Huntsmen's Chorus] after Weber's "Jägerchor," imitating the close, triadic male chorale along with the simple brass accompaniment that essentially doubled the vocal line. The musical character and general rhythmic profile of the two choruses are extremely similar throughout, but Kuhlau's indebtedness to the earlier work shows itself most clearly in the first two measures, the choral parts of which are practically the same as Weber's (Example 5.11).

"Was gleicht wohl auf Erden"	"Herligt, en Sommernat"
[What is there on earth like a hunter's pleasure, Whose cup of life bubbles so richly?]	[What a glorious summer night, Setting out for the Elves' thicket, Resting by the cool spring.]

Example 5. 11

Kuhlau also borrowed from the "Jägerchor" for the dance music in the final act of *Elverhøj*. Here the similar rhythms and the repetition of the tonic chord (D major in both cases) disclose the unmistakable connection (Example 5.12). *Der Freischütz* had played in the theater every year since its premiere, and less than a month before the first performance of *Elverhøj* it had enjoyed its thirty-fifth performance.[54] It is unlikely that Kuhlau would have expected the audience at Det kongelige Teater to ignore the resemblance between his and Weber's music; it is far more likely that he hoped to capitalize on the latter's success by reminding the public of a beloved work.

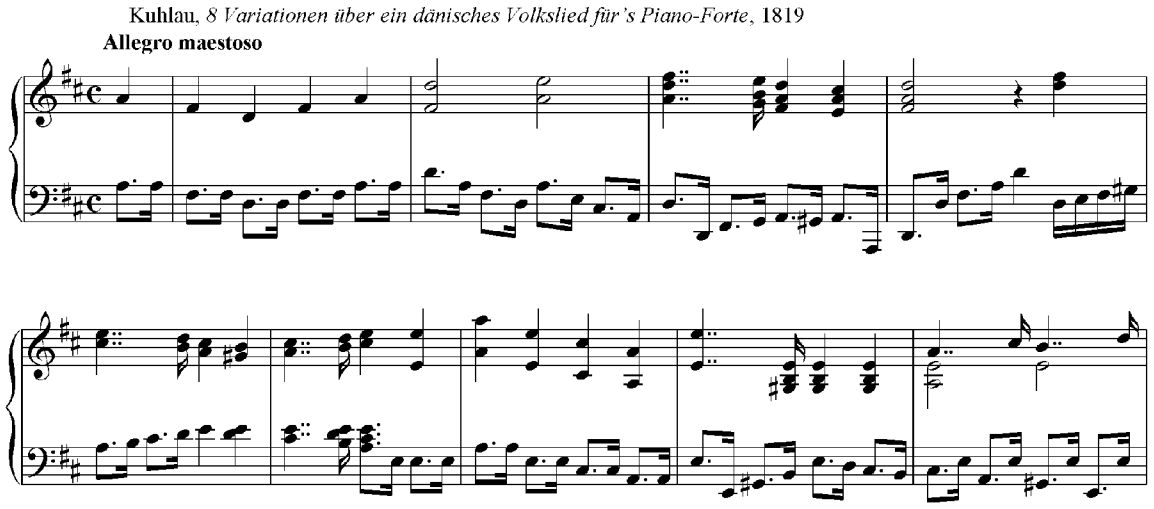


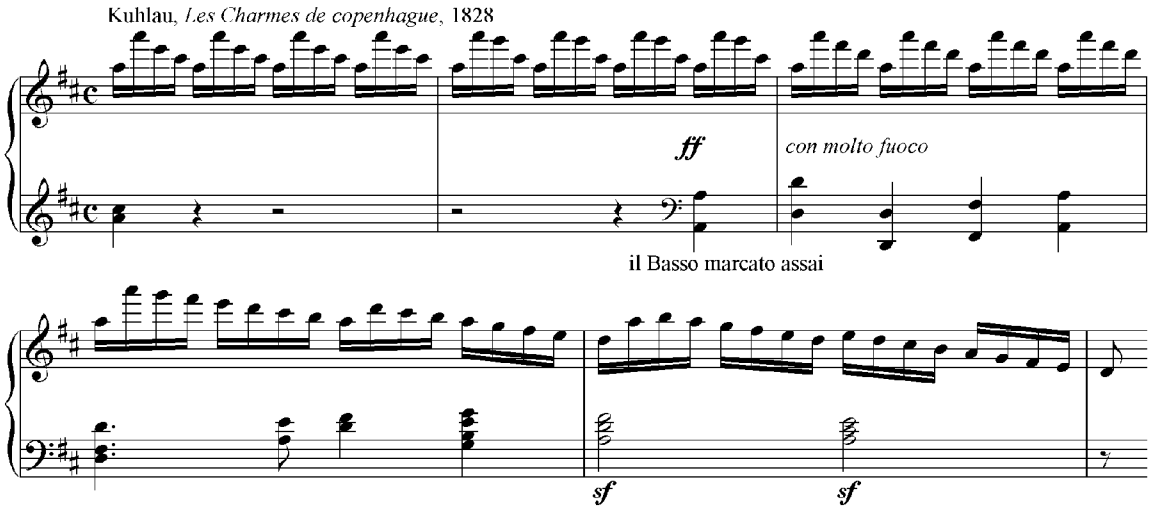
Example 5.12

[54] Aumont and Collin, *Det Danske Nationalteater*, "Skuespil- og Opera-repertoiret A-K," 439-42.

The final musical number in *Elverhøj* is "Beskiærm vor Konge, store Gud!" [Protect our king, great God!], sung by the ensemble to King Christian IV in appreciation for both his ability to reunite the two couples and for his mercy to Walkendorff. The patriotic hymn had been known to the Danish audience since the 1780s in various permutations, and it was in one of its earliest forms a setting of "Kong Christian Stod ved Højen Mast" [King Christian Stood by the Lofty Mast], from *Fiskerne*, by Johannes Ewald and J.E. Hartmann.[55] Kuhlau had made use of the tune to "Kong Christian" before, in his *8 Variationen über ein dänisches Volkslied für's Piano-Forte* from 1819 (Example 5.13), and in his *Les charmes de Copenhague*, an "Introduction et Rondeau brilliant mêlé des motifs favorits danois pour le Piano-Forte" from earlier in 1828 (Example 5.14). These two works feature slightly different versions of the melody. In *8 Variationen über ein dänisches Volkslied*, in the second and third bars of the melody, Kuhlau uses a bar of two half notes followed by a bar containing a double-dotted quarter note, a sixteenth note, and two quarter notes. In *Les charmes de Copenhague*, the rhythm of these bars is reversed, although now the double-dotted quarter note has been simplified to a dotted quarter note. The change reflects a growing preference for this later incarnation of the hymn.

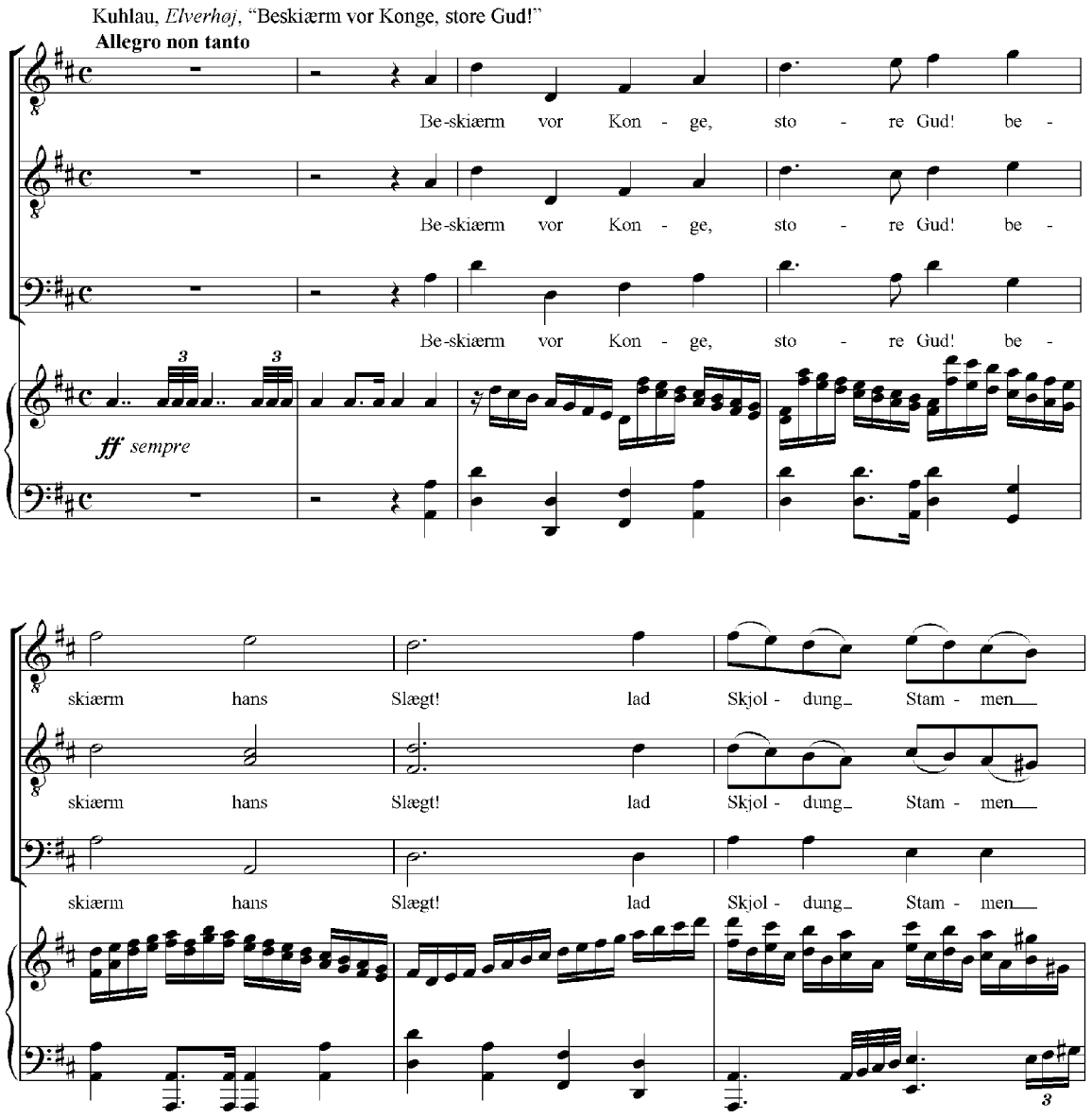
---

[55] Angul Hammerich, "Melodien til 'Kong Christian Stod ved Højen Mast': en Studie," *J.P.E. Hartmann: Biografiske Essays Tillage med en Studie over Melodien til "Kong Christian Stod ved Højen Mast"* (Copenhagen: G.E.C. Gads Forlag, 1916), 141-79. See also Torben Krogh, "Kong Christian stod ved højen Mast," *Dansk Musiktidsskrift* 17 (1942): 26-32, 70-76. Det Kongelige Bibliotek offers an excellent survey of the melody's history, complete with many illustrations and musical examples, on its website; see Det Kongelige Bibliotek, Musik- og Teaterafdeling, "De danske nationalsange," *Det Kongelige Bibliotek*, http://www.kb.dk/kb/dept/nbo/ma/nat/index.htm (updated March 2005).

Example 5.13



Example 5.14

Kuhlau's audience would have been familiar not just with the melody, but also with Ewald's original poem, which glorified three Danish heroes of the sea: Niels Juel, Peder Wessel Tordenskjold, and of course King Christian IV himself. Although Heiberg supplied new lyrics for *Elverhøj*, the resonances of Ewald's text, combined with the

occasion of the royal wedding, helped to convey a sense of patriotic pride. Kuhlau's musical setting, with its simple choral writing, military-sounding brass, and virtuoso string passagework, quickly established itself as definitive (Example 5.15). With the substitution of the original lyric, "Kong Christian" has become recognized as the royal anthem of Denmark.[56]

[56] This is distinct from "Det er et yndigt Land" [It is a lovely land], with a text by Oehlenschläger and music by H.E. Krøyer, which was later chosen as the *national* anthem.

[Protect our king, great God!
Protect his family!
Let the stock of Skjoldung…]

Example 5.15

Ironically, *Elverhøj*, which contained almost none of Kuhlau's own music, became his most successful work and the most successful dramatic work in the history of Det kongelige Teater. With *Elverhøj*, Kuhlau proved his skill and creativity as an arranger, adapter, and orchestrator. Once again it was a German-born musician who reinvented Danish opera. He and Heiberg provided the audiences of 1828 with what they desperately wished to see: a blending of supernatural legend and native folk tale with a dash of nationalism, all set to music that retained the vestiges of the Medieval ballad but was couched in the harmonic language of the early nineteenth century. *Elverhøj* was to Denmark what *Der Freischütz* was to Germany: a template for an indigenous and popular music theater. It would not be until the next generation, however, that these ideas would lead to the creation of a truly new and original Danish opera.

Chapter 6

Liden Kirsten and the Creation of Danish Romantic Opera

J.P.E. Hartmann, *Liden Kirsten* (1846, H.C. Andersen)

> What composer in Scandinavia with a genuine feeling for the spirit of Scandinavia does not remember today what he owes to Hartmann! The best, the most profound thoughts that a whole posterity of more or less important spirits have lived on have been first expressed by *him*, have been made to resound in us by *him*. Let us today remember that the rich formal development of Danish art through his successors would never have occurred without him.
>
> —Edvard Grieg[1]

In 1839, seven years after the premiere of J.P.E. Hartmann's opera *Ravnen* [The Raven], with a libretto by H.C. Andersen (after a play by Carlo Gozzi), the Copenhagen Musikforeningen published a piano score of the work. Robert Schumann offered a favorable review in the *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik*, praising the "young Copenhagen composer named more than once in these pages, and whose excellent efforts deserve the attention of his German brothers in art."[2] Schumann wrote that "in regard to the character of the music as a whole, it is decidedly German, Nordic" and added that those who study the score will be "assured that German art is even in other places always

---

[1] Edvard Grieg, "Johan Peter Emilius Hartmann," *Edvard Grieg: Diaries, Articles, Speeches*, ed. and tr. Finn Benestad and William H. Halverson (Columbus, OH: Peer Gynt Press, 2001), 205. The article, originally published in *Musikbladet* on May 14, 1885, was a tribute honoring Hartmann's eightieth birthday.

[2] ". . .Eines gleichfalls in diesen Blättern schon mehrmals genannten jungen Copenhagner Componisten, dessen tüchtiges Streben es verdient, das ihm auch deutsche Kunstverwandte Aufmerksamkeit schenken." Robert Schumann, "Dänische Oper: *Ravnen*," *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik*, 12 August 1840 (no. 13): 49.

taking root, and with the hope that a good reaction on their own [Danish] fatherland will with time not fail to appear."[3]

Schumann's view of Danish opera in 1840 was perhaps typical: namely, that Danish opera was merely an extension of German trends. Yet Hartmann himself was to prove in his opera *Liden Kirsten*, composed in 1846 to another libretto by H.C. Andersen, that Danish Romantic opera had become fundamentally different from German Romantic opera in its aims, ideals, stylistic characteristics, and compositional techniques.

J.P.E. Hartmann and H.C. Andersen, both born in 1805, were only twenty-seven when *Ravnen* premiered in October of 1832.[4] Although well-known as personalities in the small circle of Copenhagen's artistic life, neither had yet achieved anything like the success and popularity they were to attain later. What changed between 1832 and 1846 was not just their personal growth as artists but also the political climate surrounding them. Nationalism took on a more explicitly political significance in the 1840s as tensions in the Slesvig-Holstein provinces began to mount. Danish-speaking Slesvig had been forever tied to German-speaking Holstein through a 1481 decree of King Christian I—one of the great political errors in Denmark's history. Although Denmark had no particular objection to Holstein's German sympathies, the Holstein appeal to the German Confederation for military assistance left Denmark no choice but to go to war in 1848 in order to save its claims on both Slesvig and Holstein.[5]

---

[3] "Was nun den Charakter der Musik im Ganzen anlangt, so ist er ein entschieden deutscher, nordischer. . . Das unsere deutsche Kunst auch auswärts immer mehr Wurzel faßt, und mit der Hoffnung, das eine gute Rückwirkung auf das eigene Vaterland mit der Zeit nicht ausbleiben wird." Ibid., 50-51.

[4] The choreographer August Bournonville was also born in 1805, and in many ways his career parallels those of Andersen and Hartmann. Bournonville's ballet *Faust* premiered in 1832, but the Danish Romantic style for which he is remembered today did not reach maturity until 1836 with *La Sylphide*.

[5] For a more detailed introduction to the origins of the war, see Palle Lauring, *A History of the Kingdom of Denmark*, tr. David Hohnen (Copenhagen: Høst & Søn, 1960), 211-13, and J.H.S. Birch, *Denmark in History* (London: John Murray, 1838), 324-27.

Certainly not as a direct result, but perhaps not coincidentally either, it is also in the 1840s that Hartmann codified his typically "Danish" Romantic style. As described earlier, the raw materials of Danish Romanticism were already to be found in theater music by 1832: the dotted 6/8 rhythms, the modally inflected classical harmony, the reliance on ballad and folksong material (either authentic or imitated), and the trochaic cadence, complete with a setting that mitigated its rhythmic displacement. Hartmann decisively combined all of these features to create a national style which was to dominate Danish music for the rest of the century. Noteworthy also is that with the maturity of J.P.E. Hartmann, Denmark could boast an important native-born composer for the first time in the nineteenth century.[6]

Along with the preeminence of the Danish musical vocabulary came a distinctive shift away from German operatic dramaturgy. Although Danish opera still did not stray far from the models afforded by Dittersdorf, Mozart, and Weber, the next generation of German operas—including Heinrich Marschner's *Hans Heiling* (1833) and Richard Wagner's *Der fliegende Holländer* (1843)—did not prove as influential.[7] On the contrary, German innovations such as through-composed scores, greater reliance on orchestral word-painting, the narrative function of reminiscence motives, and the gradual de-emphasis of simple vocal melody in favor of more complex orchestral textures were conspicuously absent from *Liden Kirsten*.

---

[6] The Danish-born organist and composer Dieterich Buxtehude (c. 1637 –1707) was sufficiently esteemed to induce Johann Sebastian Bach to make the 250-mile pilgrimage (on foot) from Arnstadt to Lübeck to hear him play.

[7] *Hans Heiling* itself, however, was performed frequently in Danish translation, as was Marschner's earlier *Der Templer und die Jüdin*. Arthur Aumont and Edgar Collin, *Det Danske Nationalteater 1748-1889: En Statistisk Frenstilling* (Copenhagen: J. Jørgensen & Co., 1896-1900), "Skuespil- og Opera-repertoiret A-K," 336-37; "Skuespil- og Opera-repertoiret L-Ø," 327-28.

Genesis of the Libretto

The creation of *Liden Kirsten* dates from 1833, when the young H.C. Andersen was traveling in Rome.[8] He writes in his diary entry of Sunday, November 10, 1833:

> A princess became a nun; [the poet Ludwig] Bøtcher told me of a young girl he had seen, how they laid the shroud over her and rang the bells; I read the folk ballads and found an opportunity for a similar situation for the stage in the Romance "Herr Sverkel," which I will use for a drama. The folk ballads are a goldmine of subjects.[9]

Andersen had found the Sverkel ballad in his copy of *Udvalgte danske Viser fra Middelalderen*, which he had taken with him when he left Denmark.[10] In the story, set in the twelfth century, Sverkel returns home to Lady Malfred's palace after his long voyages in Byzantium. The next day, his foster-sister Kirsten is to enter a convent, but the two realize they are in love, and decide to marry. Lady Malfred tells them that it cannot be, for they really are brother and sister, but at the last minute—and here Andersen departs from the original—it is revealed that in fact there was a mix-up years earlier, and the two are indeed unrelated by blood.[11]

---

[8] For a thorough account of Andersen's journey and its effect on his operatic career, see Anna Harwell Celenza, *Hans Christian Andersen and Music: The Nightingale Revealed* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2005), 39-51.

[9] Qtd. in Frederick J. Marker, *Hans Christian Andersen and the Romantic Theatre: A Study of Stage Practices in the Prenaturalistic Scandinavian Theatre* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1971), 47-48.

[10] Introduction to J.P.E. Hartmann, *Liden Kirsten*, partitur, ed. Inger Sørensen and Niels Krabbe. The J.P.E. Hartmann Edition, series 4, vol. 1 (Copenhagen: Det Kongelige Bibliotek, 2005), xxi.

[11] For more on the theme of brother/sister love in Andersen's work and its Freudian implications, see Wolfgang Lederer, *The Kiss of the Snow Queen: Hans Christian Andersen and Man's Redemption by Woman* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986).

Andersen had recently completed another project based on a *folkevise*, his dramatic poem *Agnete og Havmanden* [Agnete and the Merman]. Sending a copy home to Denmark from France in 1833, he wrote,

> Far from Paris, high up in the Jura Mountains, in a northern clime, among dark forests of pines silent as death, is Agnete's birthplace, but it is Danish in soul and mind. I send my dear child to my father-land, where it belongs. Receive her kindly; she brings my greetings to all of you.[12]

Like much of Andersen's early dramatic work, however, it was not received kindly by Det kongelige Teater, and the project was shelved for several years.

In 1835 he submitted the completed *Liden Kirsten* libretto to the theater and received the following reply from the censor, C. Molbech:

> The extraordinarily meager plot, together with *as meager an execution* as possible, shall receive its entire dramatic effect from the frequent occurrence of ballads and *vexelsange* [literally, antiphonal songs] set to old folk melodies, together with some chorus and choral dances, etc. – Now as to whether therefore some effect can come into this meager composition—for maybe after all it can be possible—about that perhaps the composer (that is, the musical one) can best judge.[13]

Molbech's colleague C.L. Kirstein was no more laudatory, but the two decided that perhaps the work could be produced, and recommended I.F. Bredal, Andersen's collaborator on the earlier *Bruden fra Lammermoor* [The Bride of Lammermoor], to

---

[12] Qtd. in Hans Christian Andersen, *The Story of My Life*, tr. Horace Scudder (1871; rpt. as *The Fairy Tale of My Life*, New York: Paddington Press Ltd., 1975), 97.

[13] "Denne overordentlig magre Handling, der tillage er saa *magert udført*, som muligt, skal modtage sin hele dramatiske Virkning af de hyppigt forekommende Viser og Vexelsange til gamle Folkemelodier, tilligemed nogle Chor og noget Chordands m.m. – Om nu saadan Virkning kan komme ind i den magre Composition—som maaske dog vel kan være muligt—derom maatte maaske Componisten (den musikalske nemlig) bedst kunne dome." Qtd. in Gerhard Schepelern, "Liden Kirsten," introduction to J.P.E. Hartmann, *Liden Kirsten*, vocal score, ed. Gerhard Schepelern (Copenhagen: Samfundet til Udgivelse af Dansk Musik, 1975), iii.

arrange a medley of Danish folk melodies that would be appropriate.[14] Perhaps due to the lack of enthusiasm on the part of Det kongelige Teater, a score by Bredal never materialized, and the libretto lay untouched for nine years.[15]

In the meantime, interest in Andersen's *Agnete og Havmanden* was revived in 1842, perhaps at the request of the actor Wilhelm Holst, who was looking for a role he could perform for the summer season.[16] The task of composing the music for the libretto fell to Niels Gade, who had long been fascinated by the original ballad. Four years earlier, in 1838, the young Gade had written of a projected concert overture to his teacher Andreas Berggreen, one of the musicians who created piano/vocal arrangements of the *folkeviser*. In the letter, Gade explained,

> The fairytale about Agnete and the Merman has always seemed to me a very musical subject. Although I have never before actually made plans about how to work it out further as a composition, it has nonetheless constantly been an idea to me. [...]
>
> Now I have begun the work and given it the form of an overture. I have intended Agnete's yearning at the sea over an object unknown to her as the primary moment in the piece. The Merman's lamentation of love and her own conscious voice (in that she knows that to love the Merman will cause both joy and pain) appear as two opposing principles. This fight between good and evil makes up the mid-point until, towards the end, she surrenders herself unconditionally into the Merman's embrace. I am almost halfway finished with composing the music, and I am relatively pleased with it. I am working hard and it is coming along nicely.[17]

---

[14] In the original libretto, Andersen has noted "folk melody" a number of times in brackets. Introduction to J.P.E. Hartmann, *Liden Kirsten*, partitur, xxi.

[15] Bredal had also been the original composer of choice for *Ravnen*.

[16] Anne Ørbæk Jensen, "Hans Christian Andersen and Music: Agnete's Lullaby," tr. David Hohnen. *Det Kongelige Bibliotek*, 2004; http://www2.kb.dk/elib/noder/hcamusik/vuggevise/index_en.htm

[17] Qtd. in Anna Harwell Celenza, *The Early Works of Niels W. Gade: In Search of the Poetic* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2001), 21.

He never did finish the concert overture, but the following year, 1839, Gade began work on a five-movement program symphony entitled *Agnete og Havmanden*. This also was abandoned, but a sketch in Gade's composition diary indicates that he based elements of the story on the folk ballad as well as on an extended poetic adaptation by Jens Baggesen and probably also on Andersen's 1833 version.[18]

Although Det kongelige Teater only reluctantly agreed to stage Andersen's *Agnete og Havmanden*, Niels Gade was enthusiastic about completing music for the work. He provided songs for Agnete, the added character of her fiancé, a fisherboy, a church choir, a huntsmen's chorus such as that found in Weber's *Der Freischütz*, and a choir of mermaids. Holst himself, playing the Merman, did not sing. Heiberg's wife Johanne Luise Heiberg starred as Agnete, but despite this contribution from the most prominent actress of her era, the performance was by all accounts a disaster, and Heiberg himself panned the production in his review. *Agnete og Havmanden* closed after only two nights in 1843 and was never revived. Andersen was abroad at the time and received the news through a letter from his friend Edvard Collin: "A strange chill and state of boredom covered the entire presentation [...] The adaptation was mediocre—in the conclusion, even incredibly bad."[19] Andersen's response? "I hate Denmark, which hates and spits upon me!"[20]

In 1844 Andersen revised the *Liden Kirsten* text and submitted it to the theater again, whereupon it was read by Heiberg, who wrote,

---

[18] Ibid., 111-15.
[19] Ibid., 120.
[20] Qtd. in Marker, *Hans Christian Andersen*, 47.

> *Liden Kirsten* is not really a drama, for there is really no plot in it, but the situation is romantic and has a certain poetic atmosphere, which in combination with the music (if it is successful) can create a fairly attractive effect.[21]

Heiberg recommended that J.P.E. Hartmann compose the music, and work soon began.

The subtle change in the appraisal of Andersen's work no doubt can be attributed to his revisions, to the popularity of some of his novels and fairy tales, and to the fact that Heiberg was a more perceptive critic than most.[22] On the other hand, it shows as well that the Danish theater was slowly beginning to free itself from German dramatic standards. In 1835 Det kongelige Teater grudgingly conceded a possible future in a text with a "meager" plot, as long as it could elicit a folk-inspired score (such as the still-popular *Elverhøj*); in 1844 the romantic, poetic atmosphere was itself considered a positive theatrical value. With Hartmann's setting, these two elements were fused in what would become the model for all future Danish Romantic opera.

The Music of *Liden Kirsten*

As mentioned earlier, Hartmann was the first significant Danish-born operatic composer to work in Copenhagen, and his musical technique matured in tandem with the nascent Danish Romanticism. Even before the premiere of *Ravnen* he had composed a

---

[21] "*Liden Kirsten* er just ikke noget Drama, thi der er egentlig slet ikke nogen Handling deri, men Situationen er romantisk og har en vis poetisk Duft, som i Forbindelse med Musiken (hvis denne lykkes) kan udøve en ret tiltrækkende Virkning." Qtd. in Schepelern, "Liden Kirsten," iv.

[22] Some of these novels were *Improvisatoren* (1835), *O.T.* (1836), and *Kun en Spillemand* (1837). Andersen began to publish his fairy tales in 1835.

setting to Oehlenschläger's "Guldhornene" [The Golden Horns], in which the text was declaimed dramatically against an orchestral background. In 1836 he traveled through Europe, meeting with Chopin, Liszt, Spohr, Cherubini, and Johann Strauss.[23] In Paris he showed Rossini the score to a second opera, *Corsarerne* [The Corsairs], which he had completed in 1835 with librettist Henrik Hertz.[24] Rossini is reported to have summarized his years of musical experience with the advice, "Trop des notes! il faut toujours revenir à ses motifs!"[25]

In the 1840s Hartmann continued working in the theater, composing incidental music to plays by Oehlenschläger, Andersen, and Heiberg. Hartmann took over Weyse's job as the organist of Vor Frue Kirke after his death in 1842, symbolically assuming his mantle as the most important composer in Denmark. With Andersen's atmospheric, almost plotless libretto and a commission for a premiere at Det kongelige Teater in 1846, one might also say that Hartmann was in a fortuitous historical position to create the first truly nationalistic opera.

Although *Der Freischütz* showed Hartmann the possibilities of a national opera, Weber's *Euryanthe* (1823) offered a more instructive model. From *Euryanthe* emerged the idea that German popular opera could become continuous opera simply by setting text as recitative where spoken dialogue would have been expected.[26] Weber created a continuous musical form that was not merely a German version of French recitative

---

[23] Kai Aage Bruun, *Dansk Musiks Historie: Fra Holberg-tiden til Carl Nielsen* (Copenhagen: J. Vintens, 1969), vol. 2, 23.

[24] Although little remembered today outside of Denmark, Hertz's play *Kong Renés Datter* formed the basis of Tchaikovsky's final opera, *Iolanta*.

[25] [Too many notes! You must always return to your motives!] Qtd. in Bruun, *Dansk Musiks Historie*, vol. 2, 23.

[26] Louis Spohr completed his opera *Jessonda* in the same year and also dispensed with spoken dialogue.

opera, but rather combined elements of French, German, and Italian styles.[27] Hartmann built on Weber, setting all of Andersen's dialogue as recitative.[28] Hartmann also took one step further to a national, continuous opera by retaining all of the model features of Danish *syngespil*: the simple, often strophic settings with little melisma; the gentle, light-hearted atmosphere; and emphasis on secondary, comic characters—if not an actual subplot—instead of more harrowing dramatic complications for the principals.

From a post-Wagnerian viewpoint, it is difficult to recognize the significance of this achievement for Danish theater; after all, *Liden Kirsten* (1846) does fall chronologically between the infinitely more sophisticated *Tannhäuser* (1845) and *Lohengrin* (1850). Yet it is precisely in its lack of sophistication that Hartmann's work ultimately frees Danish opera of its dependence on a contemporary German counterpart. It may be useful to view the two operatic schools as developing together up until the time of Weber, at which point German opera turned in the direction of more cohesive musico-dramatic structure, and Danish opera turned in the opposite direction, becoming more like a characteristic *syngespil* which featured tuneful numbers lightly held in place by a folk-inflected accompanied recitative.

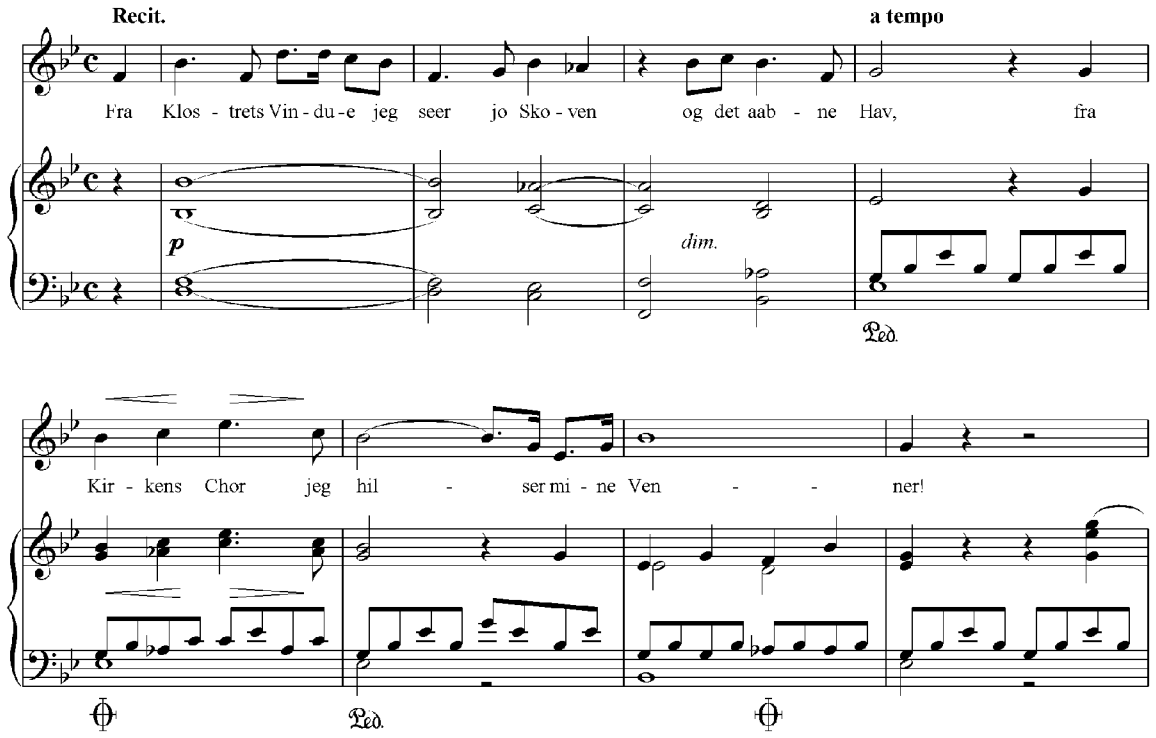
---

[27] Michael Tusa, Euryanthe *and Carl Maria von Weber's Dramaturgy of German Opera* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991), 49-56.

[28] Ironically, Andersen had complained bitterly in 1836 that in setting it to music, Weyse had ruined Andersen's libretto for *Festen paa Kenilworth* by replacing the recitative text with spoken dialogue and thus transforming it from an opera to a *syngespil*. See Celenza, *Hans Christian Andersen and Music*, 53. Weyse, who commissioned the libretto, had been an early supporter of Andersen, even organizing a subscription in 1819 to help raise living expenses for the fourteen-year-old. See Andersen, *The Story of My Life*, 28-32. Andersen additionally recalled, "The composer, Mr. Kuhlau, with whom I had never spoken, was also among the subscribers; Kuhlau himself had known what it was to be a poor child; he was brought up in poverty." Ibid., 31.

Hartmann's recitative writing may not be among the most inspired, but it did herald the successful return of continuous opera to the Danish stage almost sixty years after the furor surrounding *Holger Danske*. In the first scene of the opera, for instance, as Kirsten reassures her maid that she is eager to enter the convent, the music moves easily from recitative to arioso (Example 6.1). This brief exchange is then followed by a peasant dance and a ballad sung by the jester and the peasant chorus. Of Hartmann's recitative style in *Liden Kirsten*, the opinion expressed seven years earlier by Schumann in his review of *Ravnen* was still accurate: "A preference for Weber often makes itself heard; also Spohr shows himself be a favorite of the composer's; here and there also Marschner."[29]

J.P.E. Hartmann, *Liden Kirsten*, "Da seer I aldrig meer"

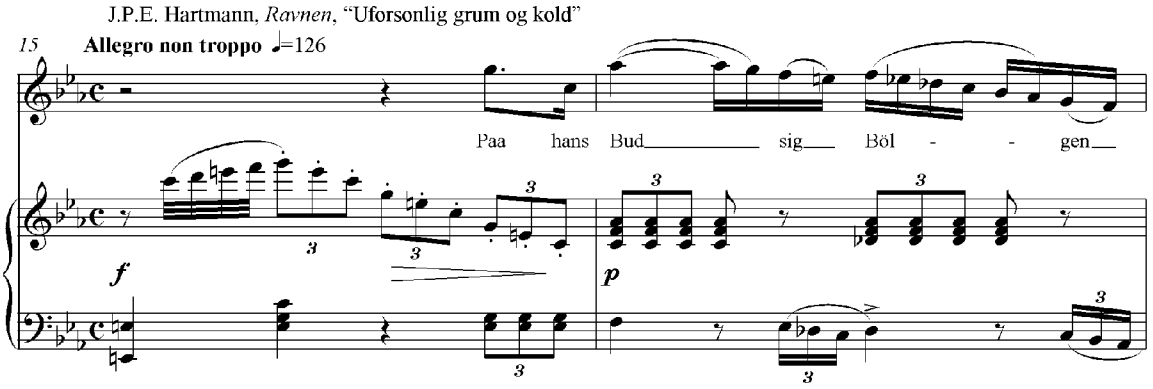


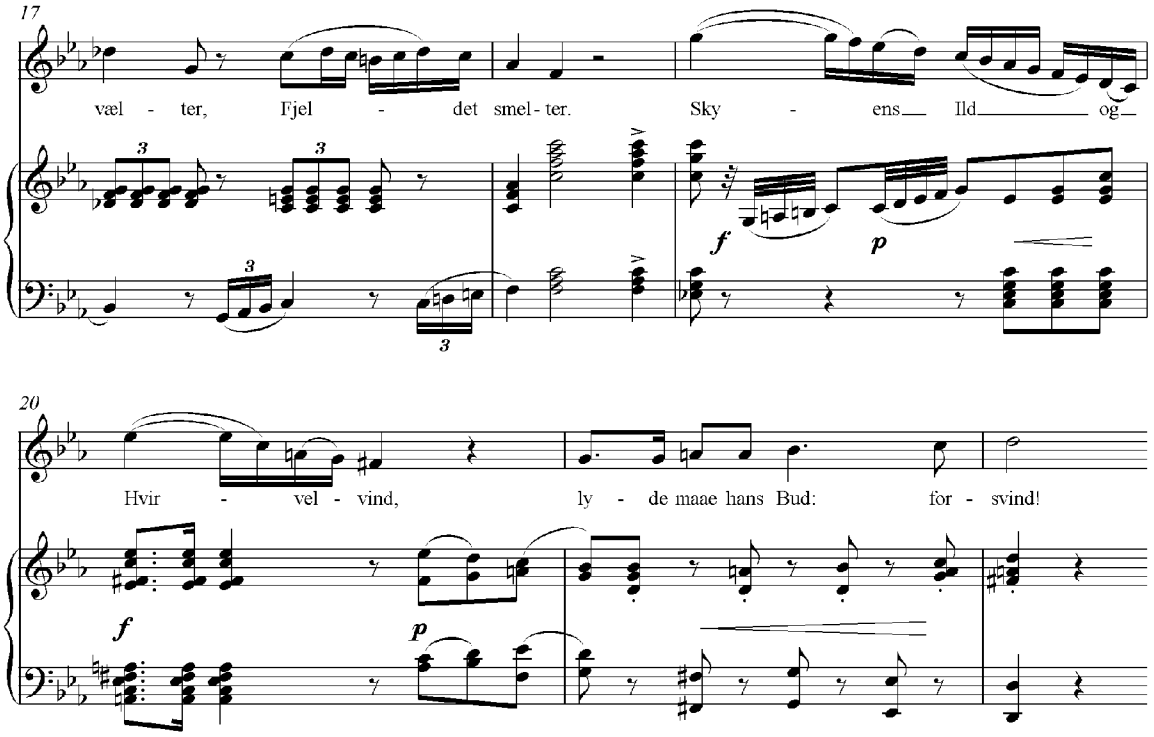
[29] "Eine Vorliebe für Weber spricht sich oft aus; auch Spohr ließe sich als ein Liebling des Componisten erkennen; hier und da auch Marschner." Schumann, "Dänische Oper: *Ravnen*," 50.

[From the convent window I will certainly see the forest and the open sea,
From the church choir I will greet my friends!]

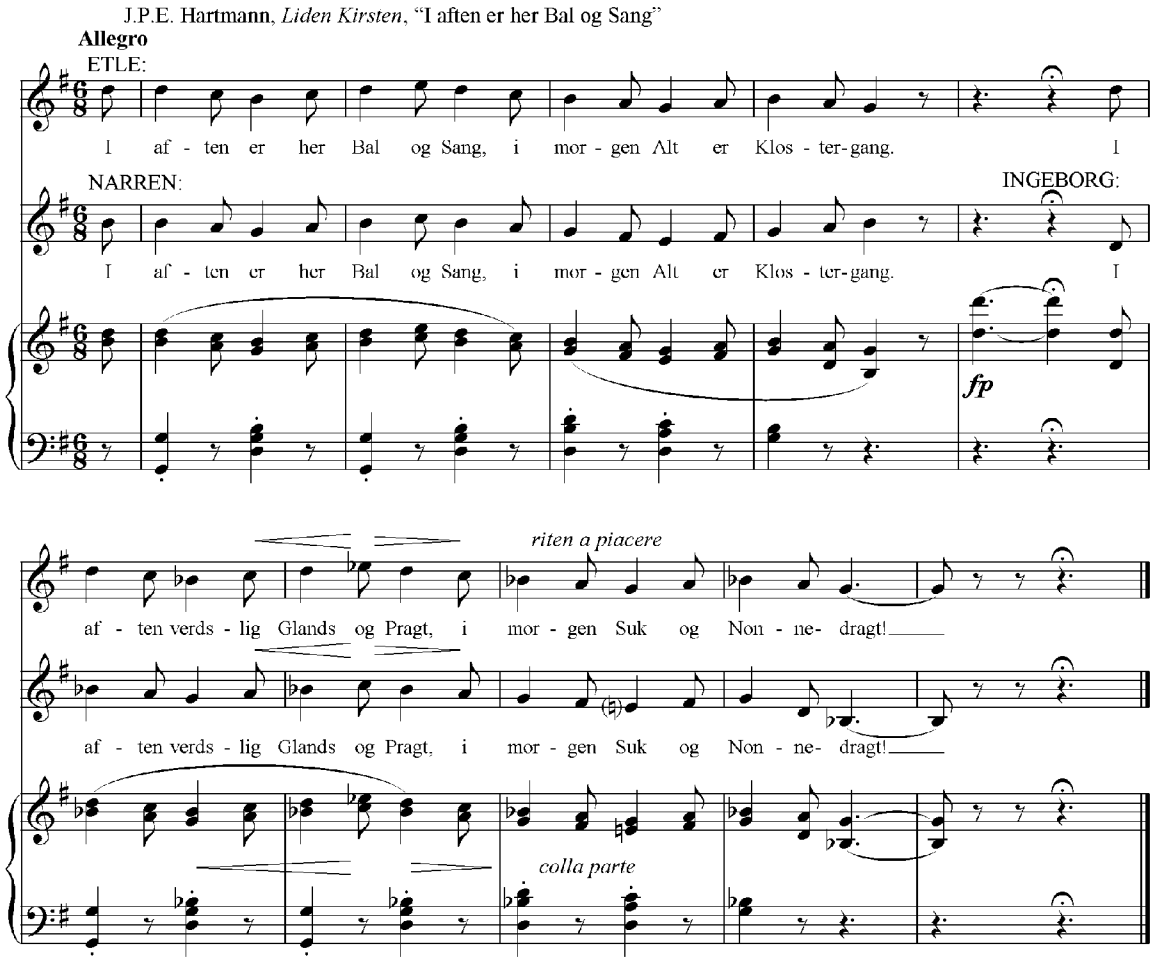
Example 6.1

As to the individual numbers, Hartmann constructed *romances*, duets, ballads, and choruses that recalled the sound of Danish folk music, but were (with few exceptions) not based on preexisting folk themes. A large part of *Liden Kirsten* is in 6/8 meter, and in fact the amount of music in 6/8, 3/8, 12/8, and 3/4 by far outweighs those numbers in 2/4 or 4/4—and there as well the duple meter is frequently subdivided into triplets.[30] The melodies are all simple, straightforward, and syllabic—a tremendous departure from his earlier *Ravnen*, which is frequently melismatic. Armilla's aria "Uforsonlig grum og kold" [Implacable, cruel, and cold] illustrates the more ostentatious vocal display called for in *Ravnen*'s score (Example 6.2).



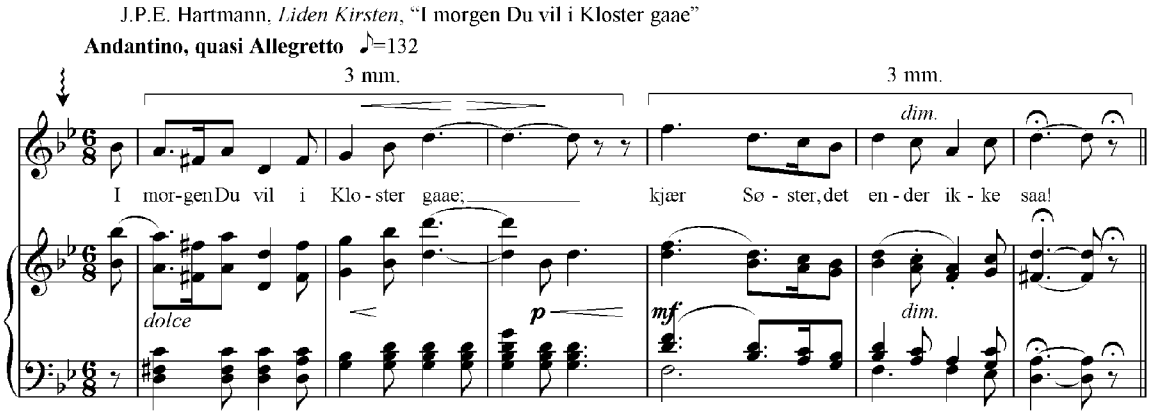
[30] In terms of meter, the comparison of *Liden Kirsten* with *Elverhøj*, which was based on actual folk material, is striking. Kuhlau uses 6/8 only twice in five acts; once for a brief bit of underscoring in the first act, and once as part of a dance. It is never used for sung text.

[At his command the waves rush,
The mountains melt away.
Lightning and whirlwind
Obey his command: be gone!]

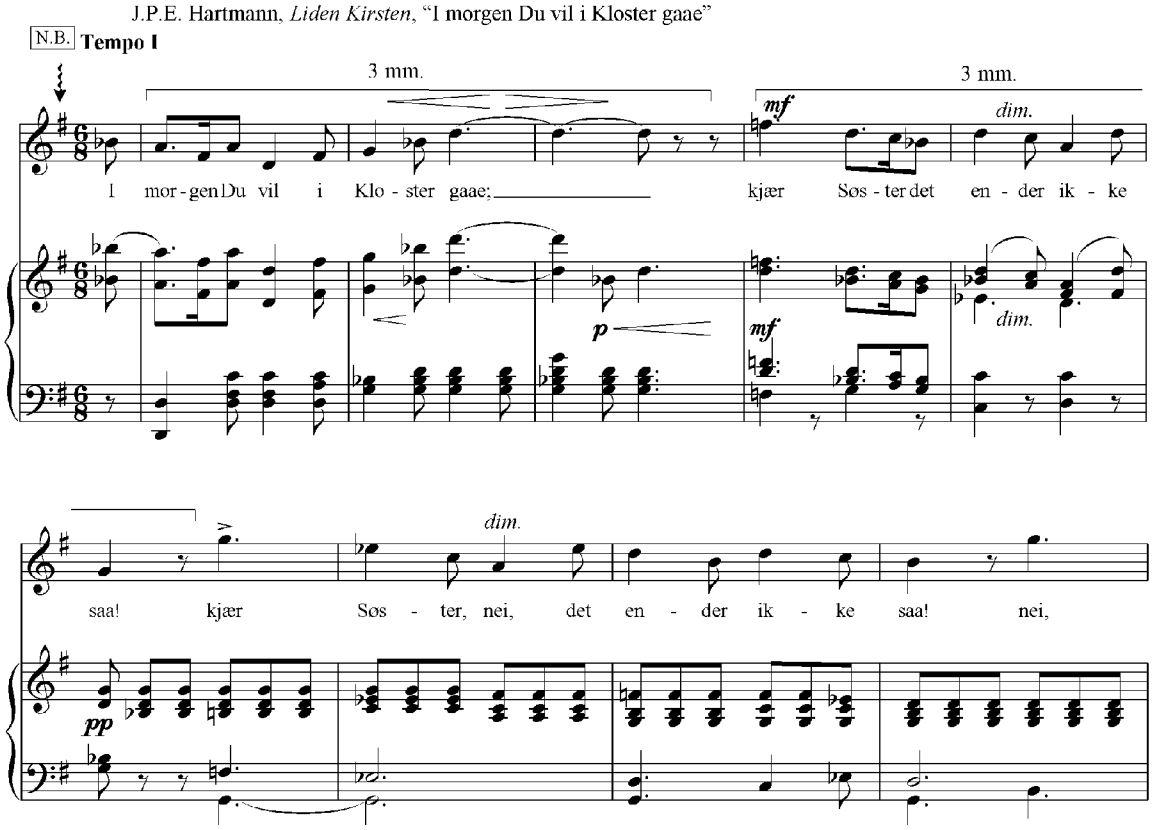
Example 6.2

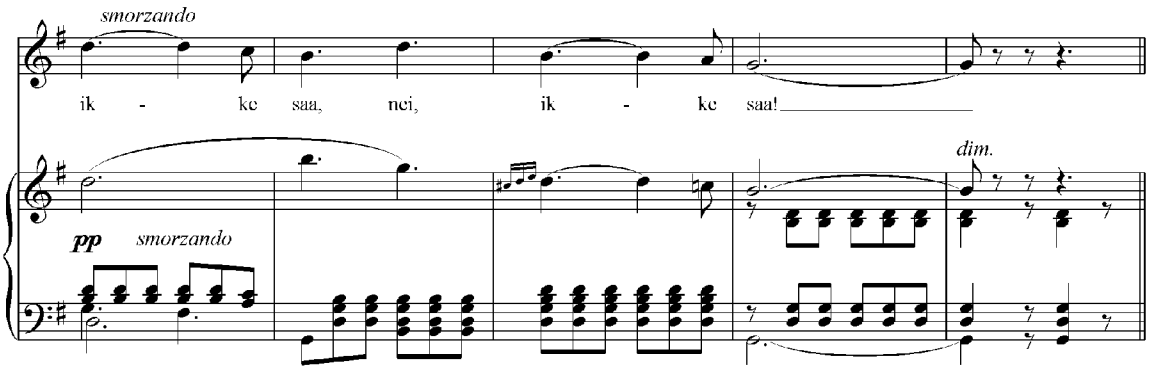
The medieval setting of *Liden Kirsten* makes the traces of modal harmony that characterize Danish Romanticism peculiarly appropriate. In terms of tonality, Hartmann prefers the parallel relationship to the relative, moving fluidly between major and minor versions of a key. The two couplets before the ensemble "I Kloster liden Kirsten gaaer" [Little Kirsten goes to the convent] are set as two five-measure phrases: the first in G major, the second in G minor (Example 6.3).

[ETLE and THE JESTER: Tonight there is dance and song,
Tomorrow the convent is all.
ETLE and INGEBORG: Tonight worldly splendor and glory,
Tomorrow sighs and a nun's habit.]

Example 6.3

In Sverkel's arioso "I morgen Du vil i Kloster gaae" [Tomorrow you will enter the convent], a melody in G minor is rewritten a short time later in the key signature of G major, because in the second instance it both follows and precedes passages in the major key. The arioso also illustrates an inheritance from Hartmann's grandfather's "Liden Gunver": the frequent use of three-measure phrases (Examples 6.4a and 6.4b).

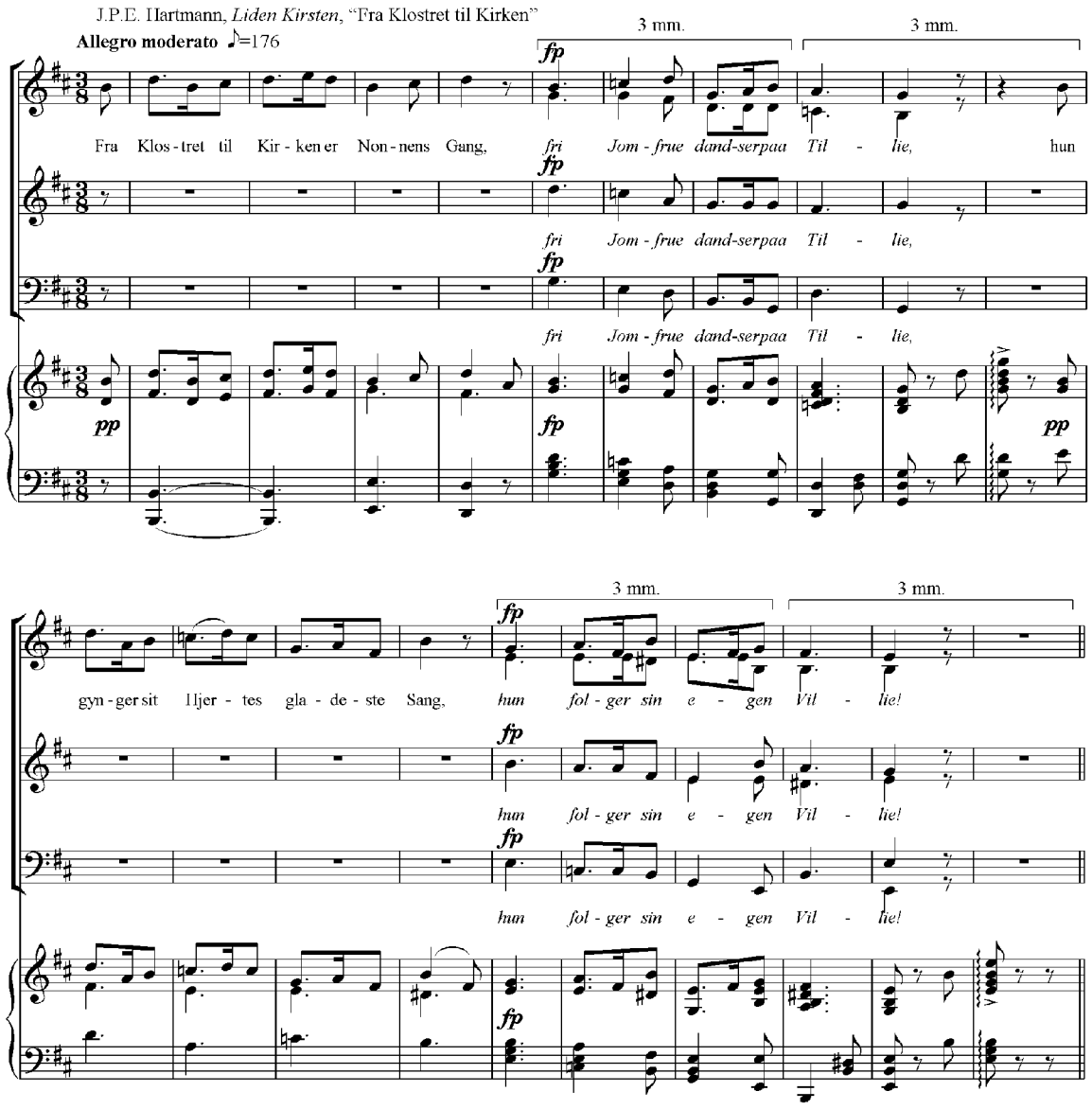

J.P.E. Hartmann, *Liden Kirsten*, "I morgen Du vil i Kloster gaae"
Andantino, quasi Allegretto ♪=132
3 mm.
3 mm.
I mor-genDu vil i Klo-ster gaae;
kjær Sø-ster,det en-der ik-ke saa!
dim.
dolce
p
mf
dim.

Example 6.4a

J.P.E. Hartmann, *Liden Kirsten*, "I morgen Du vil i Kloster gaae"
N.B. **Tempo I**
3 mm.
3 mm.
I mor-genDu vil i Klo-ster gaae;
kjær Søs-terdet en-der ik-ke
saa! kjær Søs-ter, nei, det en-der ik-ke saa! nei,
dim.
p
mf
dim.
pp

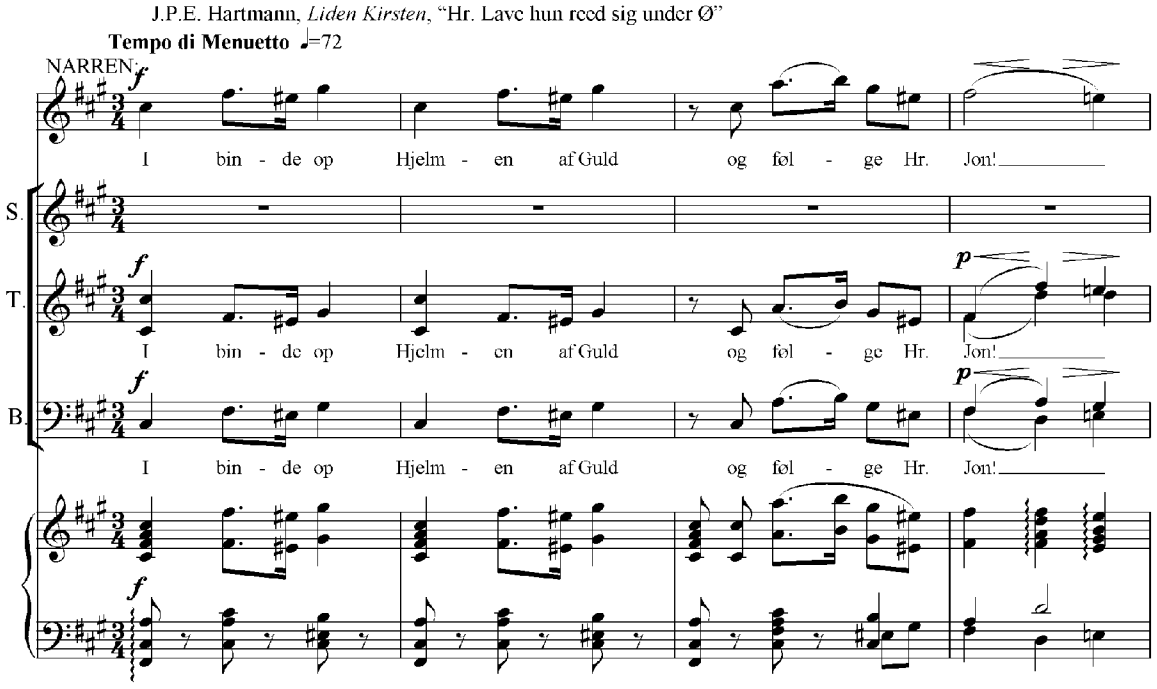
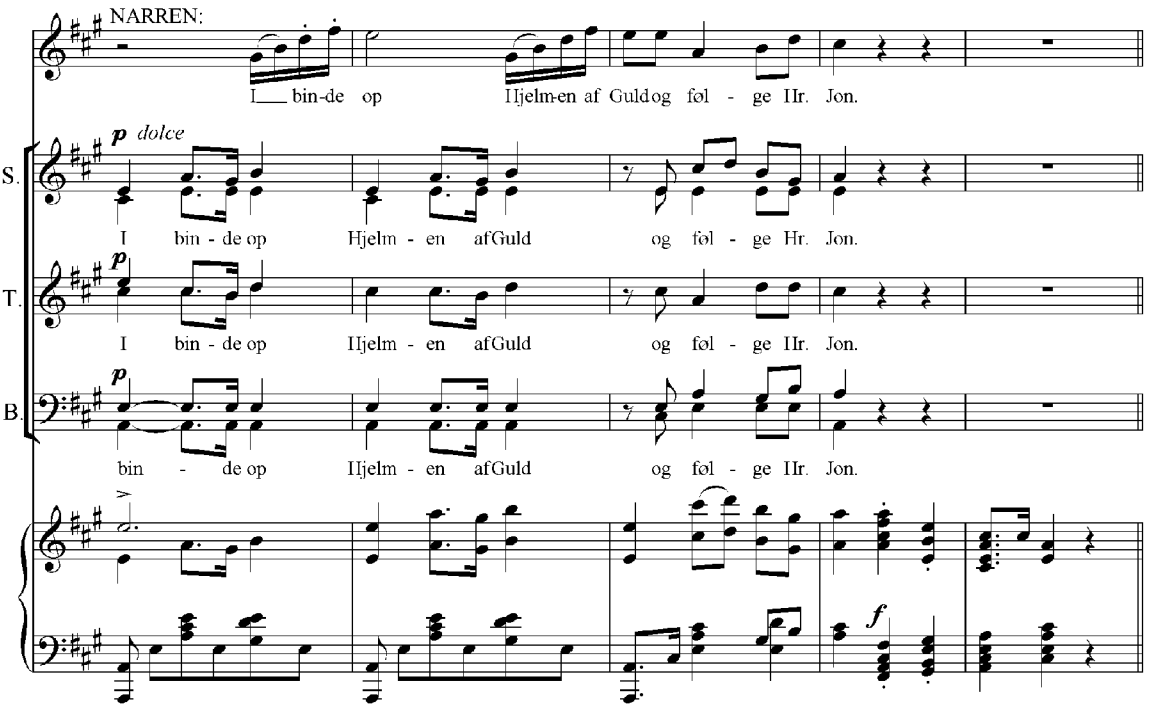


[Tomorrow you will enter the convent;
Dear sister, let it not be so!
Dear sister, no, let it not be so!
No, not so, no, not so!]

Example 6.4b

Reference to the *folkevise* style can be found in "Fra Klostret to Kirken" [From the convent to the church], where two solo vocal lines alternate with a choral *mellemkvæd* and *omkvæd* (Example 6.5). Here the refrains are likewise in three-bar units, and the refrain texts derive from another *folkevise* Andersen found in *Udvalgte danske Viser*, "Dronning Dagmar spaaes af en Havfrue" [Queen Dagmar is given a prophecy by a mermaid].

[From the convent to the church is the walk of the nun,
The free maiden dances on the dance-floor,
She sings her heart's gladdest song,
She follows her own will!]

Example 6.5

The ballad "Hr. Lave han reed sig under Ø" [Sir Lave rode along the shore], listed in the score as a *vise*, is a rewriting of "Herr Lave og Herr Jon" [Sir Lave and Sir Jon] which Andersen also took from *Udvalgte danske Viser*. Each solo strophe is followed by a choral refrain of "I binde op Hjelmen af Guld og følge Hr. Jon" [Bind up your helmets of gold and follow Sir Jon], which is almost identical to the original "I binder op Hjelm af Guld og følger Hr. Jon" (Example 6.6).

Example 6.6

Sverkel's *Romance* and "Tavlebordsduetten"

Even a brief glance at the beginning of *Liden Kirsten*'s second act reveals a fundamental departure from earlier German recitative opera.[31] Sverkel's solo scene consists of a long stretch of recitative, followed not by an aria but by a *romance*, the text of which is generic enough that it could easily be heard as diegetic. Although the sentiment of the poetry is certainly appropriate to Sverkel's state of mind, it offers little in the way of specific characterization and does not seem to originate from Sverkel's own

[31] The opera was originally billed as being in one act, with two "pictures" (tableaux), or scenes; each of these scenes gradually came to be considered a separate act.

personal emotions—rather, it resembles nothing so much as a simple folk song whose text is recalled by a character in a sympathetic situation.[32]

Originally there stood in the *romance*'s place a different number, which Hartmann marked "arioso," in 12/8 and in E major. The text begins, "Ja, jeg er hjemme! Ja, jeg er i Danmark!" [Yes, I am home! Yes, I am in Denmark!]. After praising the beauty of the landscape and his joy upon returning, Sverkel concludes with a short poem, "I Kjærlighed er ingen Sorg for tung" [In love no sorrow is too heavy]. The whole text is rather trite, and perhaps in an effort to compensate for this, Hartmann provides the most typically "operatic" music in the score. The result was ineffective, and the theater asked for a new piece to be inserted in its place.[33]

Andersen was abroad at the time of the premiere, and he tells this story of his first hearing of the opera:

> Hartmann's opera of "Little Christine," for which I had written the text, was during my absence brought on the stage and met with great success, which was ascribed to me. The music was appreciated, as it deserved, for it had the true Danish flavor, so peculiar, so touching. Heiberg had even taken a liking to it. I longed to hear and see that little work, and it happened that the very same day I arrived home "The Little Kirsten" [*sic*] was performed.
>
> "I am sure you will enjoy great pleasure," said Hartmann. "People are very well satisfied both with music and text!" I entered the theatre, and was noticed; I perceived this, and when "Little Christine" was finished there was applause, but also much hissing.
>
> "That never happened before!" said Hartmann; "I do not understand it!"

---

[32] This perhaps is Weber's intention as well in Agathe's "Und ob die Wolke sie verhülle" from *Der Freischütz*, another aria which could be seen as blurring the distinction between diegetic and non-diegetic. Future research may show that the use of this kind of number—whose text is not so detailed in terms of the singer, but which is also not quite a set piece—was a typical method of characterization in early Romantic opera.

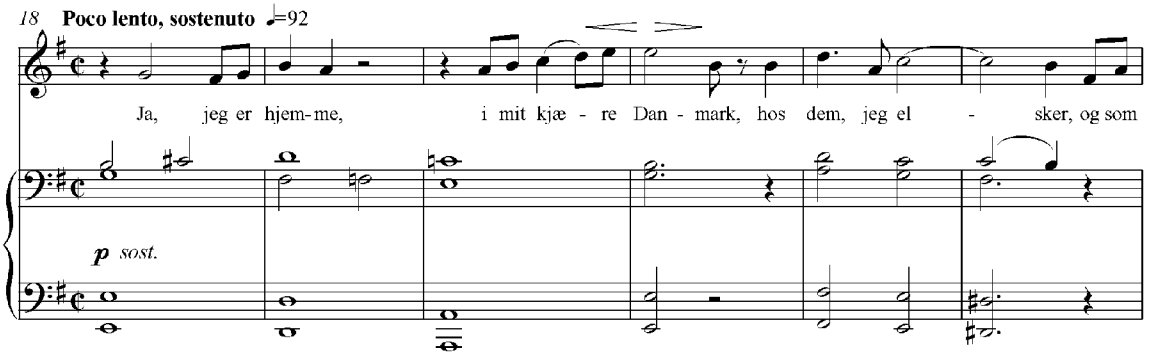
[33] Søren Sørensen, "En Dansk Guldalder-opera: Den Musikalske Karakteristik i Hartmanns *Liden Kirsten*," in *Guldalder Studier: Festskrift til Gustav Albeck den 5. Juni 1966* (Aarhus, Denmark: Universitetsforlaget i Aarhus, 1966): 229. For the original version itself, see the 1846 vocal score, pp. 54-57.

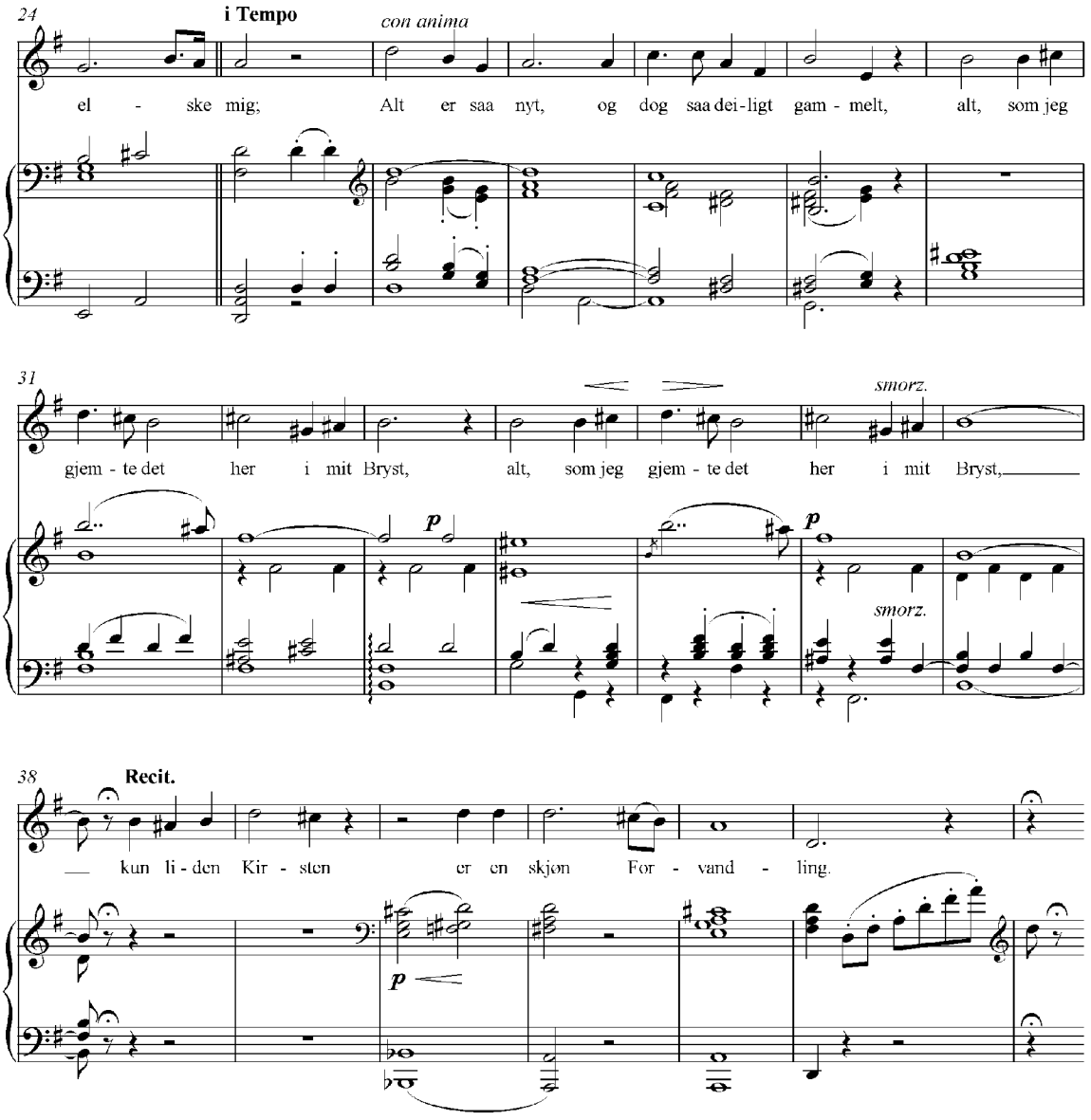
> "But I do," answered I. "Do not be vexed, it does not concern you; my countrymen, who saw that I had returned home, wished to give me a greeting!"[34]

Perhaps it was this incident, which only served to feed Andersen's constant ambivalence about spending time in his native country, that gave him the idea for a new number for Sverkel, "Langt, langt fra hjemmets Kyst [Far, far from the coast of home].[35] The text for the recitative could possibly be read as lightly sarcastic, particularly the phrase "hos dem, jeg elsker, og som elske mig" [home with those I love, and who love me]. In this reading "liden Kirsten" enjoys a double meaning, referring to both the character of whom Sverkel sings and the opera that Andersen sees on stage for the first time.

Hartmann's setting, nominally in E minor, achieves only two perfect authentic cadences: one in B minor, on the word "bryst" in the brief arioso, "Alt, som jeg gemte det her i mit Bryst" (although the four-measure phrase, with the cadence, is then immediately repeated); and one in D major, on the last syllable of the final word, "forvandling" [metamorphosis] (Example 6.7).

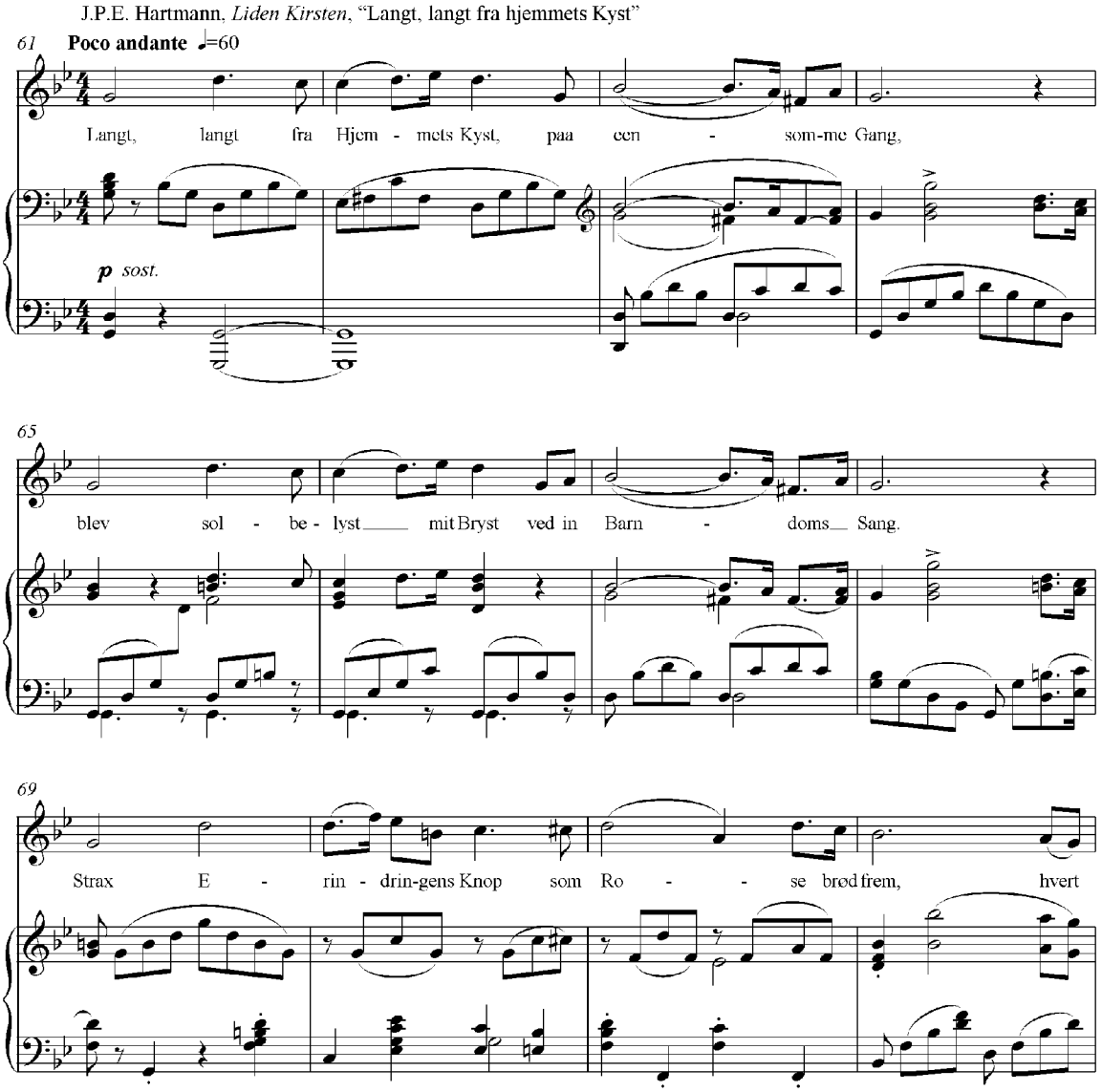
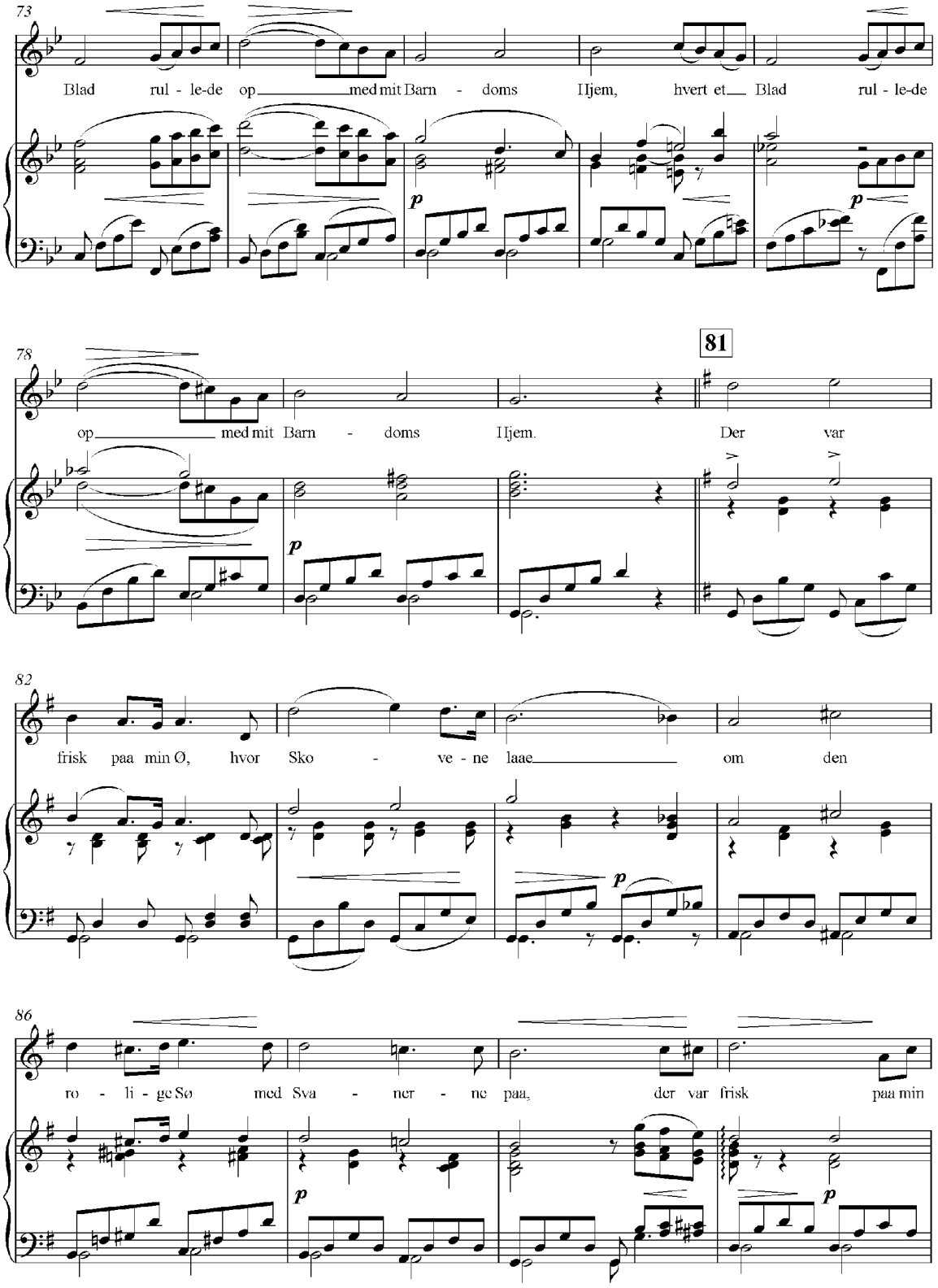
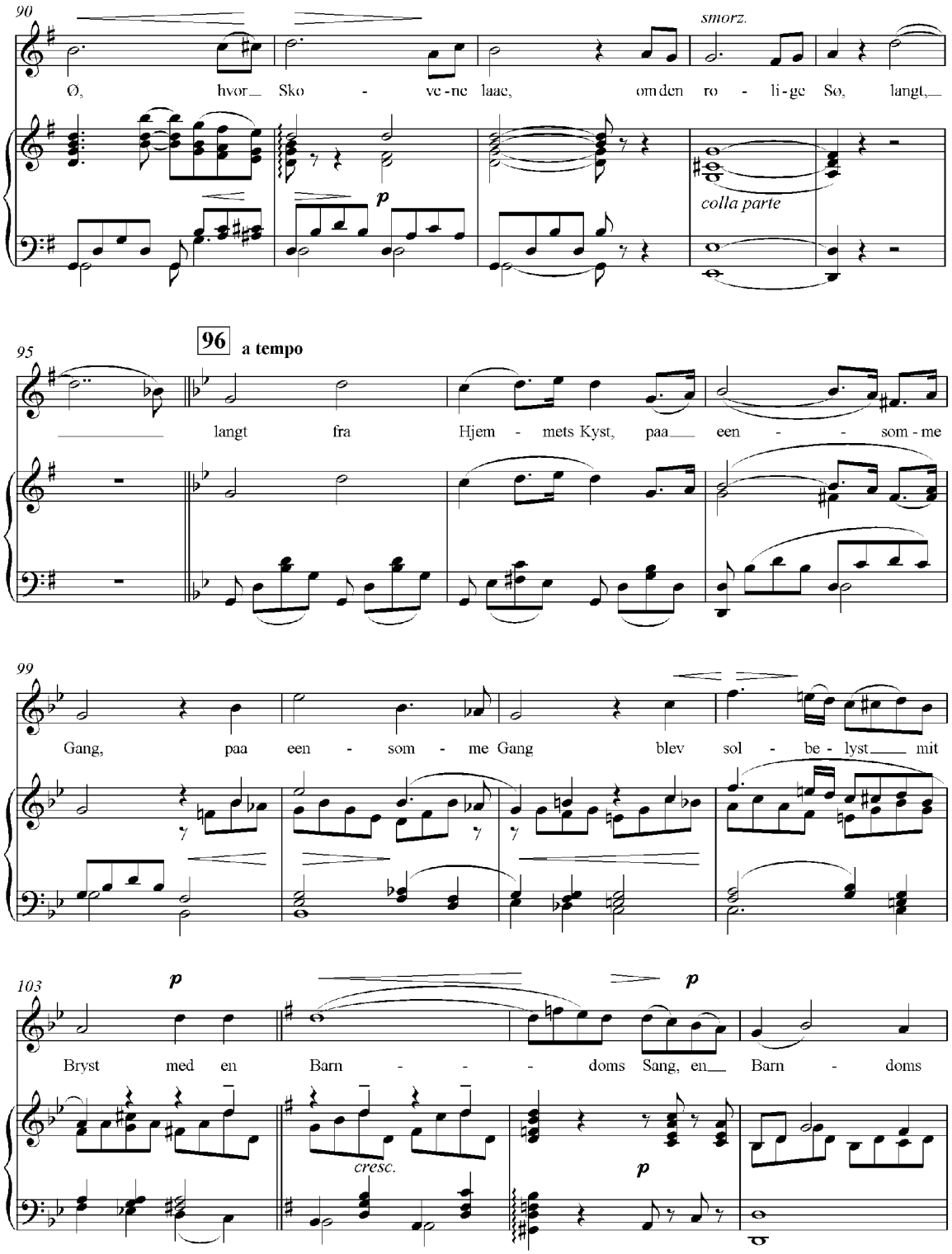
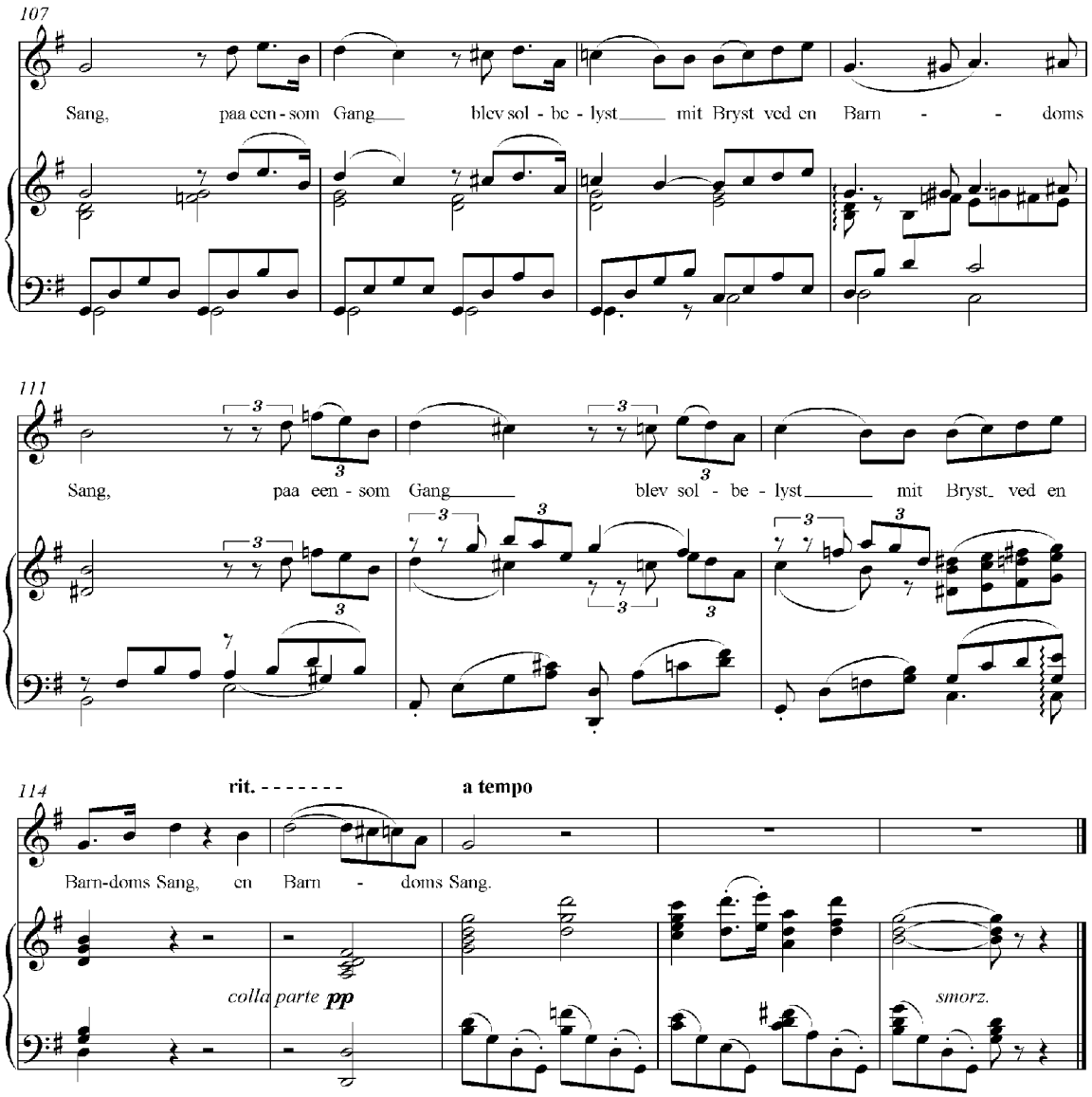
J.P.E. Hartmann, *Liden Kirsten*, "Langt, langt fra hjemmets Kyst"



[34] Andersen, *The Story of My Life*, 279-80.
[35] For more on Andersen's early relationship with Det kongelige Teater, see Celenza, *Hans Christian Andersen and Music*, 20-34.

[Yes, I am home, in my dear Denmark
Home with those I love, and who love me
All is so new, and still so delightfully old,
All that I treasured here in my breast,
Only little Kirsten is a beautiful metamorphosis.]

Example 6.7[36]

[36] The accompaniment in mm. 31-32 and 35-36 anticipates the music of Edvard Grieg, and hints at the common Scandinavian folk heritage shared by the two composers. Grieg himself wrote, in an often-quoted letter to Henry T. Finck, "There is, however, one peculiarity of our folk music that has always had a strong appeal to me: the treatment of the leading tone, in particular when the progression is from the leading tone down to the dominant." Letter of July 17, 1900, in *Edvard Grieg: Letters to Colleagues and Friends*, ed. and tr. Finn Benestad and William H. Halverson (Columbus, OH: Peer Gynt Press, 2000), 227. Grieg's music also features numerous instances of the trochaic cadence.

A tonally unstable instrumental passage follows, featuring a solo clarinet, which cadences on the dominant note of G minor, the key which will begin the *romance* proper. The *romance* itself, with its appropriately Danish reserve and understatement, would become—in Hartmann's setting—one of the most popular of all national songs (Example 6.8).

73
Blad rul - le-de op med mit Barn - doms Hjem, hvert et Blad rul - le-de
78
81
op med mit Barn - doms Hjem. Der var
82
frisk paa min Ø, hvor Sko - ve - ne laae om den
86
ro - li - ge Sø med Sva - ner - ne paa, der var frisk paa min

90
smorz.
Ø, hvor_ Sko - ve-ne laae, om den ro - li-ge Sø, langt,_
colla parte
p
95
96
a tempo
langt fra Hjem - mets Kyst, paa_ een - - som-me
99
Gang, paa een - som - me Gang blev sol - be - lyst_ mit
103
p
p
Bryst med en Barn - - - doms Sang, en_ Barn - doms
cresc.
p

[Far, far from the coast of home
On a lonely journey,
My breast was lightened
With a childhood song.

Instantly memory's bud
Like a rose broke forth (i.e., bloomed),
Each petal rolled out
With my childhood home.

It [the air] was fresh on my island,
Where the woods surround

The tranquil lake
With the swans on it.

Far, far from home's coast
On a lonely journey,
My breast was lightened
With a childhood song.]

Example 6.8

Although Andersen's text, with its four quatrains, seems to call for a simple "aaba" form, Hartmann's setting works against the natural tendency of the verse, creating its own formal design based on shifts from minor to major.[37] Ironically, the constant reinterpretation of verbal ideas in minor or major evokes Andersen's ambivalence in a way that a more straightforward setting would have been unable to achieve (Table 6.1).

Table 6.1
Harmonic design of "Langt, langt fra Hjemmets Kyst"

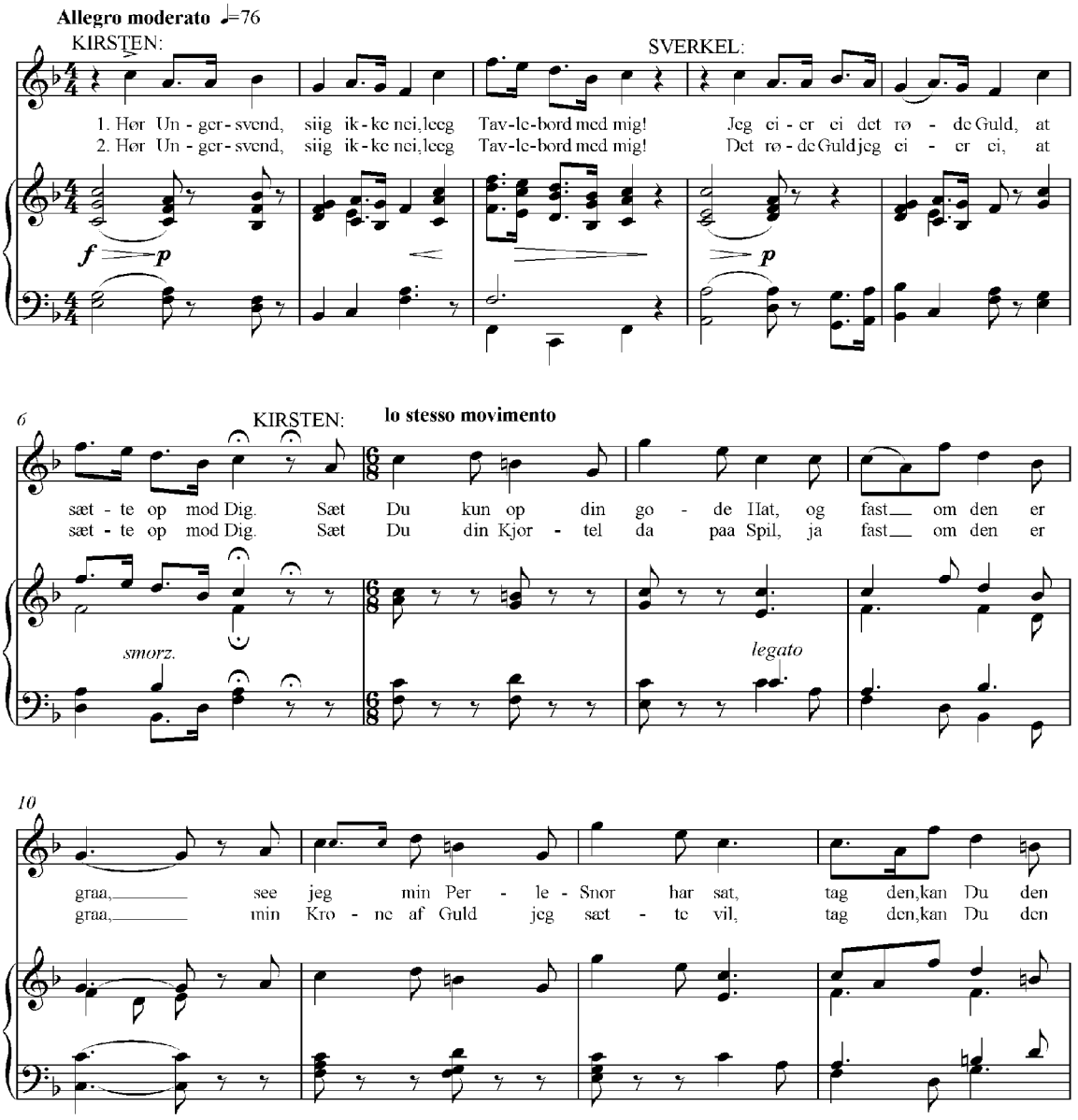
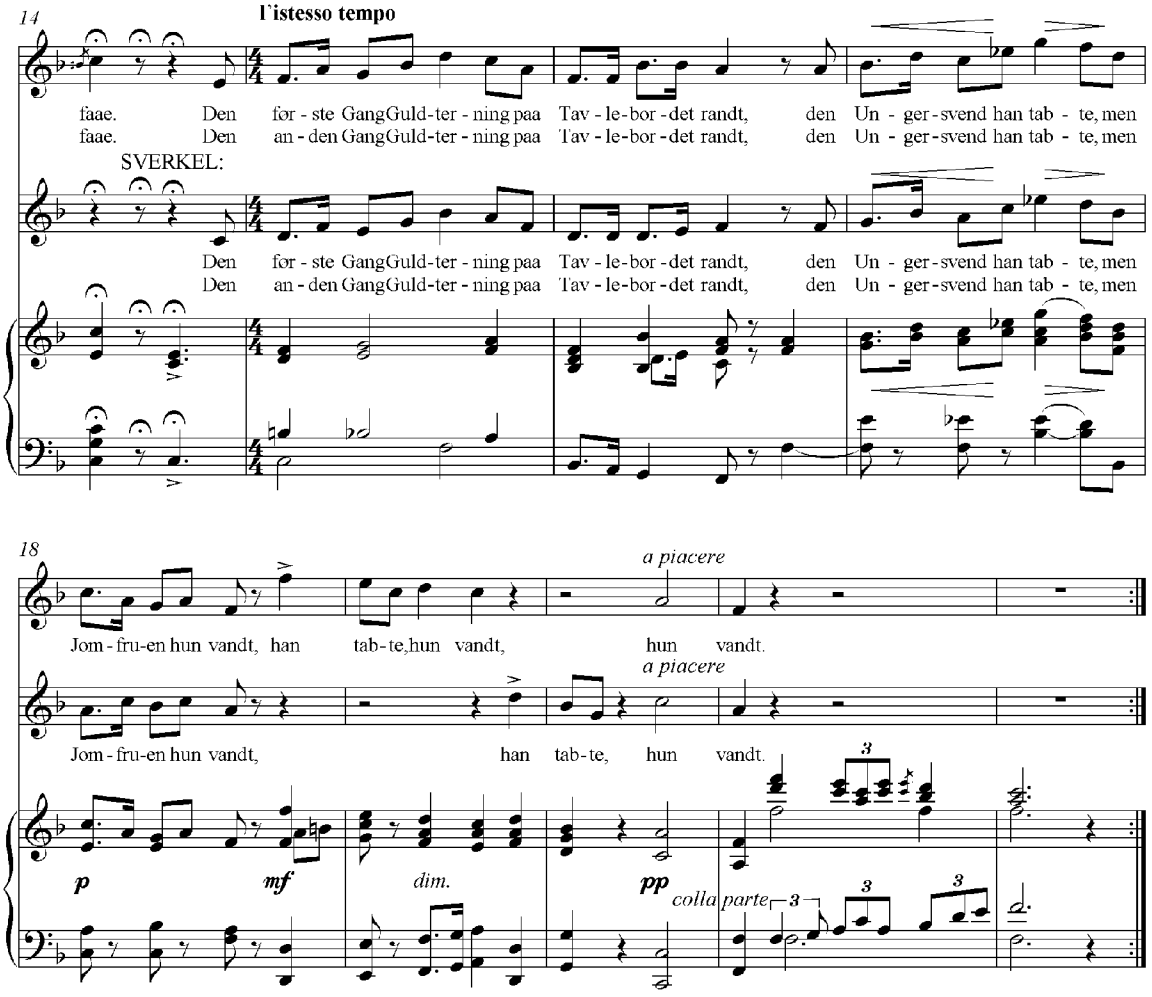
Langt, langt fra Hjemmets Kyst / På ensomme Gang	G minor:	i	(4 mm)
Blev solbelyst mit Bryst / Ved en Barndoms Sang.		i	(4mm)
Straks Erindringens Knop / Som Rose brød frem,		III	(4 mm)
Hvert Blad rullede op / Med mit Barnsdoms Hjem (2x).		i	(8 mm)
Der var frisk på min Ø, / Hvor Skovene lå	G major:	I	(4 mm)
Om den rolige Sø / Med Svanerne på.		I	(4 mm)
Der var frisk på min Ø, / Hvor Skovene lå		I	(4 mm)
Om den rolige Sø		half-cadence	(2 mm + 1 m)
Langt, langt fra Hjemmets Kyst / På ensomme gang,	G minor:	i	(4 mm)
På ensomme Gang, / Blev solbelyst mit Bryst		modulatory	(4 mm)
Ved en Barndoms Sang, / Ved en Barndoms Sang,	G major	I	(4 mm)

[37] Sørensen goes so far as to describe this as "not successful" ("ikke lykkeligt"). See Sørensen, "En Dansk Guldalder-opera," 229-30.

På ensomme Gang, / Blev solbelyst mit Bryst/			
Ved en Barndoms Sang	G major	I	(4 mm)
På ensomme Gang, / Blev solbelyst mit Bryst/			
Ved en Barndoms Sang		I	(5 mm)
instrumental codetta (begins on final measure of previous phrase)		I	(3 mm)

The scene that encompasses both this *romance* and the ensuing duet with Kirsten illustrates how Danish theater distinguishes itself with a certain emotional reticence and moderation. Upon concluding his recitative with the line, "Kun liden Kirsten er en skøn Forvandling" [Only little Kirsten is a beautiful metamorphosis], Sverkel does not refer directly to the object of his affection even once during the following *romance*. After the *romance*, Kirsten enters, and she and Sverkel share a scene of accompanied recitative. It is the first scene in which they find themselves alone, and it therefore must bear the dramatic weight of showing the transformation of their younger, more innocent friendship into mature love. Instead of a traditional love duet such as might be found in Italian Romantic opera or French *grand opéra*, Andersen supplies yet another diegetic song, here a *vexselsang*, a folk song with two antiphonal roles.

The story of the ballad is rather suggestive. An unknown serving boy wins the "honor" of a virgin princess through a game of dice; the horrified maiden prays for her death, but the serving boy reveals himself to be a king's son in disguise. Hartmann's music, though, seems to focus instead on the innocent joy of two young friends meeting again after many years and singing a favorite song. There is perhaps no better illustration of the unique qualities of Danish operatic dramaturgy than this indirect, evasive way of handling the passions of the leading couple in this "Tavlebordsduetten," a duet that deals with a dice game (Example 6.9).

J.P.E. Hartmann, *Liden Kirsten*, "Tavlebordsduetten"

[KIRSTEN: Listen, serving boy, don't say no:
Play *tavlebord* (a dice game) with me!
SVERKEL: I don't have any red gold
To wager against you.
KIRSTEN: Just put up your good hat,
Worn and gray.
See, I have put up my pearl necklace;
Take it, if you can!
BOTH: The first time the gold dice
Run across the table,
The boy, he loses, but the maiden, she wins.
He loses, she wins.

KIRSTEN: Listen, serving boy, don't say no:
Play *tavlebord* with me!

SVERKEL: Of the red gold I have none
To wager against you.
KIRSTEN: Put down your coat to play,
Worn and gray.
I will put down my gold crown;
Take it, if you can!
BOTH: The second time the gold dice
Run across the table,
The boy, he loses, but the maiden, she wins.
He loses, she wins.]

Example 6.9

The ballad itself was adapted from a well-known traditional text (also included in *Udvalgte danske Viser*) and would certainly have been familiar to a contemporary audience.[38] Andersen's adaptation follows a standard Scandinavian ballad formula, that of two separate "fore-singers" reciting the main body of the text, followed by a choral *omkvæd*.[39] In the opera Kirsten and Sverkal are of course the "fore-singers," and as an additional novelty, they act out the parts of the princess and the serving lad. The *omkvæd* is sung by both of them in harmony.

Hartmann's F-major setting consists of four 22-measure strophes, each strophe further broken down by meter into three sub-sections. The first six measures of the strophe, in 4/4, are divided into two nearly identical three-measure phrases, each ending with a plagal cadence. The next eight measures, now in 6/8, are divided into two four-

[38] Steenstrup uses it as an example twice in his 1891 study of Scandinavian ballads. See Johannes C.H.R. Steenstrup, *The Medieval Popular Ballad*, tr. Edward Godfrey Cox (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1914), 126-27 and 181-84. For more on the Medieval tradition of the dice game, see Tr. Fr. Troels-Lund, *Dagligt Liv i Norden i det Sekstende Aarhundrede*, vol. 9, "Trolovelse" (Copenhagen: Gyldendalske Boghandel, 1914), 131-36.
[39] See Steenstrup, *The Medieval Popular Ballad*, 92-95, and also John Horton, *Scandinavian Music: A Short History* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1963), 28-31.

measure phrases, again quite similar.[40] The final section returns to 4/4 for the *omkvæd*, "Den anden Gang Guldterning / på Tavlebordet randt, / den Ungersvend han tabte, / men Jomfruen hun vandt" [The second time the golden dice / run across the table / the serving lad, he loses, / but the maiden, she wins]. The text is sung homorhythmically and comes to a perfect authentic cadence in the tonic key after four measures; the remaining four measures, where both Kirsten and Sverkel repeat, "Han tabte, hun vandt" [He loses, she wins], serve as a codetta.

As Andersen originally conceived the libretto for a *syngespil*, it would seem unremarkable that after a charming, tentative scene two modest characters would express their deepening love with an attractive song whose underlying narrative would be recognized immediately by the audience. With J.P.E. Hartmann's decision to set all of the dialogue in *Liden Kirsten* as recitative, however, this 88-measure strophic song becomes the principal love duet of the first real Danish Romantic opera.

[40] More accurately, the first phrase ends on a half cadence in F major, and the second ends with a perfect authentic cadence in C major. I am indebted to William Rothstein for pointing out this distinction.

Epilogue

Schumann, writing in 1840 of Hartmann's *Ravnen*, had predicted, "of course we will hardly experience in Germany how it will work on the stage."[1] Hartmann's *Liden Kirsten* was destined to be only slightly more accessible to an audience outside of Denmark. In 1855 Andersen met with Franz Liszt, who agreed to perform *Liden Kirsten* at his theater in Weimar. Andersen writes in his diary:

> Thursday, September 6
> …At home. Later Liszt came. We discussed *The Raven*; I showed him several of the most beautiful places. He leafed through it and said it was laudable; decided to put it on stage. Then *Little Kirsten* was discussed; he looked through it, thought it fresher, and then he preferred it. It hasn't been translated; I offered to produce one [i.e., a German translation] with Beaulieu-Marconnay's [the theater Intendant's] help. We started on it that very evening.

The work apparently went very quickly, for only two days later he writes again:

> Saturday, September 8
> …Translated, with Beaulieu-Marconnay, most of *Little Kirsten*, which will be called *Little Karin*.
>
> Sunday, September 9
> …finished, with Beaulieu-Marconnay, the translation of *Little Kirsten*. Visited Liszt, who gave his most fervent promise that he would tend to the music and the staging of the work. There was something about this in the Weimar Sunday paper.[2]

---

[1] "Wie es von der Bühne herab wirkt, werden wir freilich in Deutschland schwerlich erfahren." Robert Schumann, "Dänische Oper: *Ravnen*," *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik*, 12 August 1840 (no. 13): 51. Louis Spohr had in fact tried unsuccessfully to produce the opera in Cassel. See Inger Sørensen, *Hartmann: Et dansk komponistdynasti* (Copenhagen: Gyldendal, 1999), 161; and Hans Christian Andersen, *The Story of My Life*, tr. Horace Scudder (1871; rpt. as *The Fairy Tale of My Life*, New York: Paddington Press Ltd., 1975), 83.

[2] Hans Christian Andersen, *The Diaries of Hans Christian Andersen*, selected and translated by Patricia L. Conroy and Sven H. Rossel (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1990), 237-38.

Even with Liszt's enthusiasm, *Klein Karin* received only two performances in Weimar, on January 17 and February 1, 1856. Despite purported interest in Mannheim and in Dresden, those performances in Weimar remained—and still remain—the only performances in Europe of *Liden Kirsten* outside of Denmark.[3] Perhaps those same qualities of emotional moderation and reserve that endeared—and continue to endear—*Liden Kirsten* to the Danish public make it less attractive for an international audience.

Surprisingly, Andersen supplied German translations of both Sverkel's original *arioso* and the newer *romance*. The performance materials from Weimar—including the score, the instrumental parts, and the vocal parts—contain both numbers, but the booklet of stage directions suggests that it was the earlier version that was sung in Weimar.[4] It is tempting to surmise that although "Langt, langt fra hjemmets Kyst" was extraordinarily popular in Denmark, Andersen and Hartmann felt that for a German audience, the *romance* was simply too Danish.

Niels Gade and *Elverskud*

Fourteen years earlier, and even before the composition of *Liden Kirsten*, Niels Gade had earned the distinction of being the only significant composer of the nineteenth century to have moved *from* Denmark *to* Germany, reversing the trend of J.E. Hartmann, F.L.Æ. Kunzen, J.A.P. Schulz, C.E.F. Weyse, and Friedrich Kuhlau. In 1842 Gade

---

[3] Liszt himself probably conducted the February 1 performance. See Introduction to J.P.E. Hartmann, *Liden Kirsten*, partitur, ed. Inger Sørensen and Niels Krabbe. The J.P.E. Hartmann Edition, series 4, vol. 1 (Copenhagen: Det Kongelige Bibliotek, 2005), xxix. Outside of Denmark, the opera was performed only once more, in Montreal in 1997.

[4] Ibid., xxix.

submitted his Symphony No. 1, "Paa Sjølunds fagre sletter" [On Zealand's fair plains] to Copenhagen's Musikforening. His *Efterklange af Ossian* [Echoes of Ossian] overture had proven successful the year before, and the composer had high hopes that this society, established in 1836 to promote and produce Danish concert music, would arrange a performance. There was to be no Danish premiere, however; the board of Musikforening, headed by J.P.E. Hartmann, deemed the symphony "too German."[5]

Gade's score did indeed find a more congenial audience in Germany. The symphony premiered in Leipzig the following year with Felix Mendelssohn conducting the Gewandhaus Orchestra. Mendelssohn sent a warm, congratulatory letter describing the audience's enthusiastic response. Gade obtained a travel stipend and journeyed to Leipzig to conduct the second performance. He was to become the first composer from Denmark since Buxtehude to achieve international recognition.

Robert Schumann was among Gade's ardent supporters. Writing in 1843 in the *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik*, Schumann declared,

> We have to do here with an entirely new musical personality. In fact, it would seem that the nations bordering on Germany were seeking emancipation from German dominion. […] While they all look to the German nation as the first and most beloved music teacher, no one should be surprised if they seek a characteristic musical language for their own countries, and without any disloyalty to the maxims of their teacher. For no country in the world has masters comparable to the greatest of ours, nor would anyone wish to deny it.
>
> In the north, too, we have already noted the emergence of national tendencies. […] And then the newly emerging and important Scandinavian poets cannot have failed to provide a powerful stimulus to young musicians, assuming that the latter had not already been reminded by their mountains and lakes, their runes and northern lights, that the north is entitled to a language of its own.

---

[5] Anna Harwell Celenza, *The Early Works of Niels W. Gade: In Search of the Poetic* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2001), 170.

> Gade, too, has been educated by the poets of his fatherland. He knows them all and loves them. The old tales and sagas accompanied him upon his childhood outings, and Ossian's mighty harp rang clear from England's shores. Thus we hear in his music, and first in this very 'Ossian' overture, an unmistakably Nordic character.[6]

Gade spent much of the next few years in Leipzig, where he worked as assistant conductor of the Gewandhaus Orchestra. In an attempt to capitalize on the popularity in Germany of his *Efterklange af Ossian*, he composed the narrative cantata *Comala*, based on Ossian's poetry. The success of *Comala* demonstrated to the German audience Gade's ability to portray dramatic ideas musically. It also attracted the attention of the German writer Louise Otto.

Otto, working with the philosopher Friedrich Theodor Vischer, had published a series of articles in the *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* calling for a renewal of German national opera, an idea that stretched at least as far back as Weber's 1821 *Der Freischütz*. She had herself written a libretto based on Nordic mythology, and now she persuaded Gade to set it to music.[7] In December 1846 he wrote to his parents, describing the various projects he was working on, "I have an opera text that is also going around in my head, and which I will probably also begin to set to music, since I have for a long time worked at, adapted, and moved things in and out of the text, but now I have got it rather

---

[6] Robert Schumann, "Gade," in *The Musical World of Robert Schumann: A Selection From His Own Writings*, ed. and tr. Henry Pleasants (London: V. Gollancz, 1965), 192.

[7] Niels Martin Jensen, "Niels W. Gade og den nationale tone: dansk nationalromantik i musikalsk belysning," in *Dansk Identitetshistorie*, ed. Ole Feldbæk, iii (Copenhagen: C.A. Reitzels Forlag, 1992), 263-68.

to my liking."[8] A few months later he had completed the first five scenes of Act I.[9]

After Mendelssohn's death in 1847, Gade became music director of the Gewandhaus Orchestra. The appointment was to be short-lived, however. With the precipitation of the Slesvig-Holstein crisis, war broke out between Denmark and Germany. Gade was forced to choose his allegiance in June of 1848 when he received a draft notice—from the German army.[10] He decided to return home, leaving behind both his position at the Gewandhaus and Otto's opera project.

Once back in Copenhagen, the man once considered "too German" was now hailed as a genuine Danish composer, and he quickly rose to prominence on the board of the Musikforening and in the cultural life of the city. His success with German audiences had somehow validated him. In 1852 he married J.P.E. Hartmann's daughter Emma Sophie. Perhaps under the influence of his father-in-law, Gade began work on two compositions based on Danish legend: the ballet *Et Folkesagn* [A Folk Tale], a collaboration with Hartmann and choreographer August Bournonville; and the cantata *Elverskud* [Elf-shot].[11] Like Kuhlau's *Elverhøj*, both pieces were set in Denmark several centuries in the past, and both dealt with the intersection between the real world and the sensual temptations of the elf world.[12]

---

[8] "En Operatext har jeg faaet, som ogsaa gaar omkring i Hovedet paa mig, og som jeg rimeligviis ogsaa begynder paa at componere, da jeg i lang Tid har arbeidet, omarbeidet, strøget ud og strøget ind paa Texten, men nu har faaet den temmelig efter mit Hoved." Letter of December 20, 1846. Niels W. Gade, *Optegnelser og Breve*, ed. Dagmar Gade (Copenhagen: Gyldendalske Boghandels Forlag, 1892), 117.
[9] Jensen, "Niels W. Gade," 268.
[10] Celenza, *Early Works*, 184.
[11] *Et Folkesagn* is still in the repertory of Den Kongelige Ballet. Gade's "Brudevals" [Bridal waltz] from act III is played today at every Danish wedding.
[12] "Herr Oluf han rider saa vide," the *folkevise* that inspired both *Elverhøj* and *Elverskud*, was translated into German by Johann Gottfried Herder. It was this German version, "Erlkönigs Tochter," that inspired Goethe's poem "Der Erlkönig."

Carl Nielsen, who staged both *Liden Kirsten* and *Elverskud* in Copenhagen's public Dyrehaven park in 1915, wrote the following notes for the program:

> *Gade* and *Hartmann*, *Elverskud* and *Liden Kirsten*, these are names that most Danes know and love. These names and these works contain in tones everything that the people have dreamed of throughout the centuries. It is the *soul of the Danish folk ballads* itself, that as if for the first time has seen itself in the mirror and recognized its own substance in a larger form and newer shape.
>
> *Liden Kirsten* and *Elverskud* are without comparison the most distinctly Danish music works we have, and it is of the highest interest that it happens to be the case that there is not—as there is in, for example, *Elverhøj*—a single of the *old folk melodies* used in them.
>
> It is the spirit, the feeling, the means of expression that are so Danish. And so is the Danish moderation.—It is *our* longing for the fantastic-romantic in *Elverskud* and *our* longing homeward for the hearth and dear ones in *Liden Kirsten*: Sverkel, who returns from Byzantium and rejoices over every little thing in the home, and Sir Oluf, who is drawn toward the elves' thicket, even if it costs him his life. These two sides of Danish spirit and tone have here received their truest and most beautiful expression.[13]

After Emma's early death in 1855, Gade for the most part abandoned any further attempts at explicit cultural nationalism in his own music. Perhaps he felt that it hindered the accessibility of his music to a wider audience; Schumann had written earlier, "One hopes that the composer does not succumb to his own nationalism…[but] that he will

---

[13] "*Gade* and *Hartmann*, "Elverskud" og "Liden Kirsten," det er Navne som de fleste Danske kender og elsker. Disse Navne og disse Værker indeholder nemlig alt det, som Folket igennem Aarhundreder har drømt om, i Toner. Det er selve den *danske Folkeviseaand*, der ligesom for første Gange har set sig selv i Spejl og erkendt sit egen Væsen i store Førmer og nyere Skikkelse. "Liden Kirsten" og "Elverskud" er uden Sammenligning de mest udprægede danske Musikværker vi ejer, og det er højst interessant, at dette virkelig er Tilfældet, skønt der ikke, saaledes som Tilfældet er i "Elverhøj," anvendes en eneste at de *gamle Folkemelodier* deri. Det er Aanden, Følelsen, Udtryksmaaden der er saa dansk. Og saa det danske Maadehold.— Det er *vor* Længsel udad mod det eventyrlig-romantiske i "Elverskud" og *vor* Længsel hjemad imod Arnen og de kære i "Liden Kirsten": Sverkel, der kommer fra Miklagaard og frydes over hver lille Ting i Hjemmet, og Hr. Oluf, der drages mod Elverkrat, selv om det koster Livet. Disse to Sider af dansk Aand og Tone har her faaet sit ægtetst og skønneste Udtryk." Carl Nielsen, "Opera i Dyrehaven," in *Carl Nielsen til sin Samtid*, ed. John Fellow (Copenhagen: Gyldendal, 1999), vol. 1, pp. 188-89. See also Arne Helman, notes to *The Complete Aksel Schiøtz Recordings 1933-1946, vol. 6* (Danacord DACOCD 456, 1997), 6, which includes a phrase omitted from John Fellow's edition.

focus his attention on other areas of nature and life."[14] In 1867, though, with J.P.E. Hartmann and the ballet composer H.S. Paulli, Gade founded *Københavns Musikkonservatorium*, the first music conservatory in the country.[15] The Danes had already ceased importing German composers to compose Danish music; now they no longer needed to send their young musicians to Germany in order to receive conservatory training.

Gade continued to favor the dramatic possibilities of the cantata, and he never returned to Louise Otto's opera. But what if he had? What if, after so many years of German composers creating Danish nationalist opera, a Danish composer had created a German nationalist opera? The folk material behind Otto's libretto belonged to a Nordic tradition that predated the national distinctions of the nineteenth century. Would an opera by a Danish composer with a German libretto have altered the complex dynamic between the music theater of the two countries? The legend that inspired the libretto was refashioned by another author in 1848 and eventually set to music in a larger, more expanded form, solidifying its composer's place in musical history. Perhaps Otto was a bit short-sighted when she wrote of Niels Gade in 1846, "Everyone whose judgment in this matter bears some weight is secure of at least this much: he and no other is the man for *Nibelungen*!"[16]

---

[14] Schumann, "Gade," 193.

[15] Nils Schiørring, *Musikkens historie i Danmark*, (København: Politiken, 1978), vol. 2, 301. Among Paulli's works are *Blomsterfesten i Genzano* and portions of *Napoli*, both of which are still in the repertory of Den Kongelige Ballet. In 1948 the state took over the conservatory and renamed it Det Kongelige Danske Musikkonservatorium.

[16] "Wenigstens versichern alle, auf deren Urteil in der Sache etwas zu geben: er sei der Mann zu den Nibelungen oder keiner!" Qtd. in Jensen, "Niels W. Gade," 264.

Appendix:
Cast of Characters

ANDERSEN, HANS CHRISTIAN (1805-1875) – Danish poet, playwright, and novelist, best known for his fairy tales. Among his opera librettos are those for J.P.E. Hartmann's *Ravnen* and *Liden Kirsten*.

BAGGESEN, JENS (1764-1826) – Danish poet and librettist; author of *Holger Danske* (Kunzen), *Erik Ejegod* (Kunzen), and *Trylle-harpen* (Kuhlau).

BERGGREEN, ANDREAS PETER (1801-1880) – Danish musician; student and biographer of C.E.F. Weyse; teacher of Niels Gade; editor of several collections of folksong arrangements.

BOURNONVILLE, AUGUST (1805-1879) – choreographer and balletmaster of Det kongelige Teater; many of his ballets, including *La Sylphide* and *Et Folkesagn*, are still in the repertory of Den Kongelige Ballet.

CRAMER, CARL FRIEDRICH (1752-1807) – professor at the University of Kiel and an amateur musician; translated the *Holger Danske* libretto into German.

DUPUY, EDOUARD (c. 1770-1822) – French or possibly Swiss musician; he composed *Ungdom og Galskab* for Det kongelige Teater, where he also sang the title role in the Danish premiere of Mozart's *Don Giovanni*.

EWALD, JOHANNES (1743-1781) – Danish poet and librettist; author J.E. Hartmann's *Balders Død* and *Fiskerne*.

GADE, NIELS WILHELM (1817-1890) – Danish composer whose works include the cantata *Elverskud* and the overture *Efterklange af Ossian*; briefly music director of the Gewandhaus Orchestra in Leipzig; J.P.E. Hartmann's son-in-law.

GRØNLAND, PEDER (1761-1825) – Danish music critic and editor with a particular interest in Scandinavian folksong; teacher of C.E.F. Weyse.

HARTMANN, JOHANN ERNST (1729-1793) – composer and violinist; he moved to Copenhagen in 1761, eventually becoming concertmaster of Det kongelige Kapel; composer of *Balders Død* and *Fiskerne*; grandfather of J.P.E. Hartmann.

HARTMANN, JOHAN PETER EMILIUS (1805-1900) – born in Copenhagen, he was the first significant Danish composer of the nineteenth century to have been born in a Danish-speaking city. His three operas are *Ravnen*, *Korsarerne*, and *Liden Kirsten*; grandson of J.E. Hartmann; father-in-law of Niels Gade.

HEIBERG, PETER ANDREAS (1758-1841) – Danish author; critic of *Holger Danske*; father of J.L. Heiberg.

HEIBERG, JOHAN LUDVIG (1781-1860) – Danish playwright, translator, and theater critic; librettist of *Et Eventyr i Rosenborg Have* (Weyse) and *Elverhøj* (Kuhlau); husband of Johanne Louise Pätges.

HEIBERG, JOHANNE LOUISE PÄTGES (1812-1890) – the leading Danish actress of the nineteenth century; three years after starring in *Elverhøj*, she married J.L. Heiberg.

KUHLAU, FRIEDRICH (1786-1832) – German-born composer who moved to Copenhagen in 1810; his operas and *syngespil* include *Røverborgen*, *Lulu*, and *Elverhøj*.

KUNZEN, FRIEDRICH LUDWIG ÆMILIUS (1761-1817) – composer; born in Lübeck, his Danish operas include *Holger Danske* and *Erik Ejegod*.

OEHLENSCHLÄGER, ADAM (1779-1850) – Danish poet; his "Guldhornene" from 1802 heralded the Danish Romantic movement in literature; librettist of Kuhlau's *Røverborgen*.

RAHBEK, KNUD LYNE (1760-1830) – board member of *Det kongelige Teater*; critic of *Holger Danske*; co-editor of *Udvalgte danske Viser fra Middelalderen*; foster-father of J.L. Heiberg after P.A. Heiberg's exile.

SARTI, GIUSEPPI (1729-1802) – Italian-born opera composer; between 1755 and 1775 he spent most of his time in Copenhagen serving alternately as music director either at Christiansborg or at Kongens Nytorv.

SCHULZ, JOHANN ABRAHAM PETER (1747-1800) – German composer who worked in Copenhagen from 1787 to 1795; his works include *Høstgildet*, *Peters Bryllup*, and the three-volume *Lieder im Volkston*.

THAARUP, THOMAS (1749-1821) – Danish poet; librettist of J.A.P. Schulz's *Høstgildet* and *Peters Bryllup*.

WEYSE, CHRISTOPH ERNST FRIEDRICH (1774-1842) – Danish composer; his works include *Et Eventyr i Rosenborg Have*, *Sovedrikken*, and a collection of eight *Morgensange for Børn*.

Bibliography

Scores and Musical Anthologies

Abrahamson, W.H.F. *Udvalgte Danske viser fra Middlealderen*; efter A.S. Vedels og P. Syvs trykte udgaver og efter haandskrevne samlinger, udgivne paa ny af Abrahamson, Nyerup, og Rahbek, 5 vols. Copenhagen: J.F. Schultz, 1812-14.

Berggreen, A.P., ed. *Folkesange og Melodier fædrelandske og fremmede, samlede og udsatte for pianoforte af A.P. Berggreen*, 11 vols. Copenhagen: C.A. Reitzel, 1861-70.

_____. *Folke-sange og Melodier fædrelandske og fremmede, udsatte for Pianoforte ved A.P. Berggreen*. Copenhagen: C.A. Reitzel, 1842.

Dal, Erik and Niels Martin Jensen, "F.L.Æ. Kunzens folkeviseharmoniseringer 1816: En facsimile med kommentar," *Dansk Årbog for Musikforskning* 7 (1973-76): 51-67. [Facsimile of *Auswahl der vorzüglichsten altdänischen Volksmelodien*]

Danmarks gamle Folkeviser, 12 vols. Copenhagen: Universitets-Jubilæets Danske Samfund, 1966-76.

Dupuy, Edouard. *Ungdom og Galskab*, syngestykke i to akter af J.B.E. Dupuy Copenhagen: Horneman and Erslev, n.d.

Grønland, Peder, ed. *Alte Schwedische Volks-Melodien gesamlet von E. G. Geijer und A. A. Afzelius; Für das Piano Forte harmonisch bearbeitet*. Copenhagen: C.C. Lose, 1818.

_____. *Kæmpe-viser Bassen dertil af P. Grønland*. Unpublished, 1814.

Hartmann, Johann Ernst. *Balders Død*, et heroisk syngespil i tre handlinger, tekst af Johannes Ewald, musik af Johann Ernst Hartmann, udgivet af Johannes Mulvad. Dania Sonans 7. Copenhagen: Edition Egtved, 1980.

_____. Musik til *Balders Død*, heroisk syngespil af J. Ewald, forkortet Klaver-Udtog af Chr. Barnekow. Copenhagen: Samfundet til Udgivelse af Dansk Musik, 1876.

_____. Musik til *Fiskerne*, syngespil af J. Ewald, forkortet Klaver-Udtog af Chr. Barnekow. Copenhagen: Samfundet til Udgivelse af Dansk Musik, 1886.

_____. *Fiskerne*, et syngespil i tre handlinger, tekst af Johannes Ewald, musik af Johann Ernst Hartmann (den endelige version fra 1792), udgivet af Johannes Mulvad. Dania Sonans 6. Copenhagen: Edition Egtved, 1993.

Hartmann, J.P.E. *Liden Kirsten*, partitur, ed. Inger Sørensen and Niels Krabbe. The J.P.E. Hartmann Edition, series 4, vol. 1. Copenhagen: Det Kongelige Bibliotek, 2005.

_____. *Liden Kirsten*, romantisk Opera i en Act af H.C. Andersen. Op. 44. Fuldstændigt Claverudtog af Componisten. Copenhagen: C.C. Lose & Delbanco, 1846.

_____. *Liden Kirsten*, romantisk opera i en akt (to billeder): op. 44. Tekst af H.C. Andersen; klaverudtog ved Gerhard Schepelern. Copenhagen: Samfundet til Udgivelse af Dansk Musik, 1975.

_____. *Ravnen*. Trylle-Opera i III Acter af H.C. Andersen. Opus 12. Arrangeret for Pianoforte af Componisten. Copenhagen, Musikforeningen, 1839.

Hertz, Henrik. *Samling af danske Sange*. Copenhagen: Selskabet for Trykkefrihedens rette Brug, 1836.

Kuhlau, Friedrich. *Les charmes de Copenhague: introduction et rondeau brilliant mêlé des motifs favorits danois pour le piano-forte*, op. 92. Copenhagen: C.C. Lose & Delbanco, 1828.

_____. *Elverhöi*, Skuespil i fem Acter af J.L. Heiberg sat i Musik med Benyttelse af gamle danske Folkemelodier af F. Kuhlau; Klaveerudtog af Componisten. Copenhagen: C.C. Lose & Delbanco [1828].

_____. *Grande sonata en mi b majeur, op. 64*. Paris: Gérard Billaudot, n.d.

_____. *Lulu*, romantische Oper in drei Aufzügen; Klavieraufzug vom Komponisten; herausgegeben von Gorm Busk & Toshinori Ishihara. Tokyo: International Friedrich Kuhlau Society, 2004.

_____. *Röverborgen*, Syngespil i 3 Acter af Oelenschlager; Musiken af Fr. Kuhlau; Fuldstændigt Claveerudtog af Componisten. Copenhagen: Wilhelm Hansen [1815].

_____. *8 Variationen über ein dänisches Volkslied für's Piano-Forte*. Copenhagen: C.C. Lose & Delbanco, 1819.

Kunzen, F.L.Æ. Musik til *Gyrithe, eller Danmarks Frelse*, Skuespil af L. Kruse, forkortet Klaver-Udtog af Chr. Barnekow. Copenhagen: Samfundet til Udgivelse af Dansk Musik, 1872.

_____. *Holger Danske, oder, Oberon*: eine Oper in drey Acten; Clavierauszug von Friedrich Aemilius Kunzen, ed. C.F. Cramer. Copenhagen: S. Sönnischsen, 1790.

Laborde, Jean-Benjamin de. "Chansons du Danemark, de la Norvege & de l'Islande." Vol. 2, book 4, chap. 9 in *Essai sur la Musique ancienne et moderne*, 397-418. Paris: Ph.D. Pierres, 1780.

"Necken: Polonaise uptecknad efter en Tradition i Södra Sverge," *Iduna* 3 (1824): 87-90, musical example 1.

Nyerup, Rasmus, and P. Rasmussen. *Udvalg af danske Viser fra Midten af det 16de Aarhundrede til henimod Midten af det 18de, med Melodier: en Fortsættelse af de i Aarene 1812-1814 udgivne Kjæmpeviser i Forening med P. Rasmussen udg. af R. Nyerup*, 2 vols. Copenhagen: J.F. Schultz, 1821.

Schulz, J.A.P. *Høst-gildet*; et syngespil i een akt, ved Thomas Thaarup; sat i musik og indrettet for klaveret af J.A.P. Schulz. Copenhagen: S. Sönnischsen [1790].

_____. *Lieder im Volkston bey dem Claviere zu singen*; facsimile. Dokumentation zur Geschichte des deutschen Liedes 12. Hildesheim: Georg Olms Verlag, 2005.

Syv, Peter. *It hundrede udvaalde Danske Viser om allehaande merckelige Krigs-Bedrifft, oc anden seldsom Euentyr, som sig her udi Riget ved gamle Kemper, naffhkundige Konger oc ellers forneme Personer begiffuet haffuer* [Udg. af Anders Søffrensøn Wedel]: forøgede med det andet Hundrede Viser om danske Konger, Kæmper og Andre, samt hosføjede Antegnelser, til Lyst og Lærdom. N.p.: Peter Syv, 1695.

Thomas, Ambroise. *Hamlet: opéra en cinq actes; musique de Ambroise Thomas; paroles de Michel Carré et Jules Barbier; partition piano et chant; réduction par M. Vauthrot*. 1868; rpt. New York: Joseph Patelson Music House, 1986.

Vedel, Anders Sørensen. *It Hundrede vduaalde Danske Viser, om allehaande merckelige Krigs Bedrifft, oc anden seldsom Euentyr, som sig her vdi Riget, ved gamle Kemper, naffnkundige Konger oc ellers forneme Personer begiffuet haffuer, aff arilds Tid indtil denne neruærendis Dag*. Ribe: Anders Søffrenssøn Vedel, 1591.

Weber, Carl Maria von. *Der Freischütz*, romantische Oper in drei Aufzügen. Leipzig: Edition Peters, 1976.

Weyse, C.E.F. *Sovedrikken*, Syngespil i 2 akter; klaverpartitur. Copenhagen: C.C. Lose & Delbanco, 1859.

_____, ed. and arr. *50 Gamle Kæmpevisemelodier*. Copenhagen: C.C. Lose and Delbanco [1840, 1842].

The following anthologies are available online through Det Kongelige Bibliotek. Excerpts, listed in alphabetical order by the title of the complete work, can be accessed via the following link:
http://www.kb.dk/permalink/2006/mus/TEA1800/

Den Danske Vaudeville: 50 sangspil i arrangement for klaver med underlagt tekst af A. Grandjean; redigeret af Erik Bøgh, 3 vols. Copenhagen: Wilhelm Hansen, 1911.

Fra Teatrene: 400 sange af operetter, sangspil, vaudeviller, eventyrkomedier, farcer, etc: for klaver med underlagt tekst; folkeudgave, redigeret af Erik Bøgh, 3 vols. Copenhagen: Wilhelm Hansen, n.d.

Kunzen, F.L.Æ. *Polyhimnia: Udtog af Operaerne*, 2 vols. N.p., 1814-16.

Musik Fra den Danske Skueplads: et Udvalg af Det kongelige Theaters Arkiv, bestaaende af Arier og Romancer af Operaer, Syngestykker, Lystspil og Skuespil med Sang; for 1 stemme og klaver og for klaver med underlagt tekst; redigeret af Frederik Rung, 4 vols. Copenhagen: Wilhelm Hansen, n.d.

Musikalsk Theaterjournal, udgivet af Ludvig Zinck, 3 vols. N.p., 1817.

Musikalsk Theater Journal, udgivet af Ludvig Zinck, 14 vols. N.p., 1817-41.

Musikalsk Anthologie, udgivet af Immanuel Rée, 4 vols. N.p., 1856-.

Books, Letters, and Journal Articles

Abbate, Carolyn. *Unsung Voices: Opera and Musical Narrative in the Nineteenth Century*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991.

Andersen, Hans Christian. *The Diaries of Hans Christian Andersen*, selected and translated by Patricia L. Conroy and Sven H. Rossel. Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1990.

_____, "Holger the Dane," in *The Complete Fairy Tales and Stories*, tr. Erik Christian Haugaard, 302-05. New York: Anchor Books, 1983.

_____. *The Story of My Life*, tr. Horace Scudder. 1871; rpt. as *The Fairy Tale of My Life*. New York: Paddington Press Ltd., 1975.

Andreasen, Mogens Wenzel. *Ungdom og galskab: En guldalderroman om Du Puy og Weyse*. Copenhagen: Borgen, 2002.

Argetsinger, Gerald S. *Ludvig Holberg's Comedies*. Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press, 1983.

Arvin, Neil C., "The Technique of Scribe's *Comédies-Vaudevilles*," *Modern Philology* 16 (1918): 159-65.

Aumont, Arthur, and Edgar Collin: *Det danske Nationalteater 1748-1889: En statistisk Fremstilling*, 5 vols. Copenhagen: J. Jørgensen & Co., 1896-1900.

Baggesen, Jens. Libretto to *Holger Danske*, reprinted in notes to F.L.Æ. Kunzen, *Holger Danske* (DaCapo Records 8.224036-37, 1995), 86-201.

_____. *Labyrinten*. Rpt. Copenhagen: Gyldendals Bibliotek, 1965.

_____, *Danske Værker*, 2nd ed., 12 vols. Copenhagen: C.A. Reitzel, 1845-47.

Barton, H. Arnold. *Scandinavia in the Revolutionary Era, 1760-1815*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1986.

Bates, Alfred, editor-in-chief. *The Drama: Its History, Literature, and Influence on Civilization*, vol. 17, *Scandinavian Drama*. London: The Athenian Society, 1903.

Berggreen, A.P. *C.E.F. Weyse's Biographie*. Copenhagen: C.A. Reitzels Forlag, 1876.

Bernd, Clifford A., "The Anticipation of German Poetic Realism in Danish *Poetisk Realisme*," *MLN: Modern Language Notes* 97 (1982): 573-89.

Birch, J.H.S. *Denmark in History*. London: John Murray, 1938.

Bournonville, August, "The Ballet Poems of August Bournonville: The Complete Scenarios, Part Eight," tr. Patricia McAndrew, *Dance Chronicle* 5 (1982): 92-93.

_____. *My Theatre Life*, tr. Patricia N. McAndrew. Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 1979.

Branscombe, Peter. *W.A. Mozart: Die Zauberflöte*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991.

Bruun, Kai Aage. *Dansk Musiks Historie: Fra Holberg-tiden til Carl Nielsen*, 2 vols. Copenhagen: J. Vintens, 1969.

Bulfinch, Thomas. *The Age of Chivalry* and *Legends of Charlemagne*. New York: New American Library, 1962.

Busk, Gorm. *Friedrich Kuhlau: En biografi og en kritisk analyse af hans musikdramatiske produktion*. Copenhagen: Engstrøm and Sødring, 1986.

_____, "Friedrich Kuhlau's Operas and Theatre Music and their Performances at the Royal Theatre in Copenhagen (1814-1830)," *Musik & Forskning* 21 (1996): 93-127.

Campbell, Oscar James, Jr. *The Comedies of Holberg*. New York: Benjamin Blom, 1914.

Celenza, Anna Harwell. *The Early Works of Niels W. Gade: In Search of the Poetic*. Aldershot: Ashgate, 2001.

_____, "Efterklange of Ossian: The Reception of James MacPherson's Poems of Ossian in Denmark's Literature, Art, and Music," *Scandinavian Studies* 70/3 (1998): 359-96.

_____. *Hans Christian Andersen and Music: The Nightingale Revealed*. Aldershot: Ashgate, 2005.

Chapman, Hester W. *Caroline Matilda: Queen of Denmark*. New York: Coward, McCann & Geoghegan, 1972.

Charlton, David, "On Redefinitions of 'Rescue Opera,'" in Malcolm Boyd, ed., *Music and the French Revolution*, 169-88. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992.

Claussen, Karl. *Dansk Folkesang gennem 150 år*. 1958; rpt. Copenhagen: Tingluti Forlag, 1975.

Dal, Erik. *Nordisk folkeviseforskning siden 1800*. Copenhagen: J.H. Schultz, 1956.

Dansk biografisk Lexikon, ed. C.F. Bricka, 19 vols. Copenhagen: Gyldendalske Boghandels Forlag, 1887-1905.

Eaton, J.W. *The German Influence in Danish Literature in the Eighteenth Century: The German Circle in Copenhagen, 1750-1770*. Cambridge: University Press, 1929.

Einarsson, Stefán. *A History of Icelandic Literature*. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1957.

Elberling, Carl. *Om Syngestykket "Sovedrikken."* Copenhagen: Bianco Lunos Bogtrykkeri, 1876.

Ewald, Johannes. *Samlede Skrifter*, 6 vols. Copenhagen: Gyldendal, 1969.

Feldbæk, Ole, and Vibeke Winge, "Tyskerfejden 1789-1790. Den første nationale konfrontation," in *Dansk Identitetshistorie*, ed. Ole Feldbæk, vol. 2, 9-109. Copenhagen: C.A. Reitzels Forlag, 1992.

Fenger, Henning. *The Heibergs*, tr. Frederick J. Marker. New York: Twayne Publishers, Inc., 1971.

Frits, Eibe, "Dupuy: forskningen," *Dansk Musiktidsskrift* 11 (1936): 135-40.

Gade, Niels. *Optegnelser og Breve*, ed. Dagmar Gade. Copenhagen: Gyldendalske Boghandels Forlag, 1892.

Goethe, Johann Wolfgang von. *The Sorrows of Young Werther*, tr. Catherine Hutter. New York: Signet Classic, 1962.

Grieg, Edvard. *Edvard Grieg : Diaries, Articles, Speeches*, ed. and tr. Finn Benestad and William H. Halverson. Columbus, OH: Peer Gynt Press, 2001.

_____. *Edvard Grieg: Letters to Colleagues and Friends*, ed. and tr. Finn Benestad and William H. Halverson. Columbus, OH: Peer Gynt Press, 2000.

Hammerich, Angul. *J.P.E. Hartmann: Biografiske Essays Tillage med en Studie over Melodien til "Kong Christian Stod ved Højen Mast."* Copenhagen: G.E.C. Gads Forlag, 1916.

Hansen, Jørgen, "C.E.F. Weyse and *The Sleeping Draught*," tr. James Manley, notes to C.E.F. Weyse, *Sovedrikken* (DaCapo 8.224149-50, 2001), 21-29.

_____, "The Singspiel in Denmark 1770-1817," tr. James Manley, notes to C.E.F. Weyse, *Sovedrikken* (DaCapo 8.224149-50, 2001), 10-20.

Hatting, Carsten, "C.E.F. Weyse's Symphonies," *Musik & Forskning* 21 (1996): 11-48.

Hawthorne, Nathaniel, "The Grey Champion," in *Tales and Sketches*, ed. Roy Harvey Pearce, 236-43. New York: The Library of America, 1982.

Heartz, Daniel, "The Beginnings of the Operatic Romance: Rousseau, Sedaine, and Monsigny," *Eighteenth-Century* Studies 15 (1981-82): 149-78.

Helman, Arne, notes to *The Complete Aksel Schiøtz Recordings 1933-1946, vol. 6* (Danacord DACOCD 456, 1997).

Heiberg, J.L. *Poetiske Skrifter* , 11 vols. Copenhagen: C.A. Reitzel, 1862.

_____. *Poetiske Skrifter*, ed. Carl S. Petersen, 3 vols. Copenhagen: C.E.G. Gads Forlag, 1932.

_____. *Prosaiske Skrifter*, 11 vols. Copenhagen: C.A. Reitzels Forlag, 1861-62.

Heiberg, Johanne Luise, *Et liv genoplevet i erindringen*, ed. Niels Birger Wamberg. Copenhagen: Gyldendal, 1973.

Heiberg, P.A. *Udvalgte Skrifter*, ed. Otto Borchsenius and Fr. Winkel Horn. Copenhagen: Otto B. Wroblewskys Forlag, 1884.

Horton, John. *Scandinavian Music: A Short History*. London: Faber and Faber, 1963.

Høgel, Sten, "Edouard Dupuy, 'The Don Juan of the North,'" tr. James Manley, notes to Edouard Dupuy, *Ungdom og Galskab* (DaCapo 8.224066-67, 1997), 6-17.

_____, "The Sun Arises in the East: The Morning Songs for Children, 1837 by B.S. Ingemann and C.E.F. Weyse," *Musik & Forskning* 21 (1996): 49-92.

Jensen, Anne Ørbæk, "Hans Christian Andersen and Music: Agnete's Lullaby," tr. David Hohnen. *Det Kongelige Bibliotek*, 2004; http://www2.kb.dk/elib/noder/hcamusik/vuggevise/index_en.htm

Jensen, Niels Martin. *Den Danske Romance 1800-1850 og dens Musikalske Forudsætninger*. Copenhagen: Gyldendalske Boghandel, 1964.

_____, "Niels W. Gade og den nationale tone: dansk nationalromantik i musikalsk belysning," in *Dansk Identitetshistorie*, ed. Ole Feldbæk, vol. 3, 188-336. Copenhagen: C.A. Reitzels Forlag, 1992.

"Kanon for Musik," ed. Torben Bille, in *Kulturkanon. Kulturkontakten* January 2006, 48-61. Copenhagen: Kulturministeriet, 2006.

Kirnberger, Johann Philipp, "The True Principles for the Practice of Harmony," tr. David W. Beach and Jurgen Thym, *Journal of Music Theory* 23 (1979): 163-225.

Kjerulf, Axel. *Nordens Don Juan: Edouard Du Puy, en livsroman*. Copenhagen: Hassings Forlag, 1952.

Knudsen, Thorkild, "Udgavens principper og melodiernes kompositionssystem/ Editorial Principles and the Compositional System of the Melodies," tr. John Bergsagel, prefatory material to *Danmarks gamle Folkeviser*, vol. 11 [Melodier], *42-*43.

Kongelige Bibliotek, Det, Musik- og Teaterafdeling, "De danske nationalsange," *Det Kongelige Bibliotek*, http://www.kb.dk/kb/dept/nbo/ma/nat/index.htm (updated March 2005).

Kongsted, Ole, "Om Holger Danske og Holder-fejden," in *Bøger, samlinger, historier: En antologi*, ed. Lotte Philipson and John T. Lauridsen, 223-32. Copenhagen: Det Kongelige Bibliotek, 1999.

Krogh, Torben, "Det første forsøg paa at skabe en opera i det danske sprog," *Aarbog for Musik* 1 (1922): 123-58.

_____, "Kong Christian stod ved højen Mast," *Dansk Musiktidsskrift* 17 (1942): 26-32, 70-76.

_____, "Omkring *Elverhøj*-Musikkens Tilblivelse," *Dansk Musiktidsskrift* 17 (1942): 162-76.

_____, *Zur Geschichte des dänischen Singspiels im 18. Jahrhundert*. København: Levin & Munksgaard, 1924.

Kuhlau, Frederik. *Breve*, ed. Gorm Busk. Copenhagen: Engstrøm and Sødring, 1990.

Lacombe, Hervé. *The Keys to French Opera in the Nineteenth Century*, tr. Edward Schneider. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001.

Laub, Thomas, "Studier over vore folkemelodiers oprindelse og musikalske bygning," *Dania* 2 (1892-94): 1-16, 149-79.

Lauring, Palle. *A History of the Kingdom of Denmark*, tr. David Hohnen. Copenhagen: Høst & Søn, 1960.

Lederer, Wolfgang. *The Kiss of the Snow Queen: Hans Christian Andersen and Man's Redemption by Woman*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986.

"The Lily" and "Lay of the Sun": Two mediæval religious poems, ed. and tr. Alan Boucher. [Reykjavík]: Bóksala Stúdenta, 1985.

Lunn, Sven, "Oberons Tryllehorn," *Dansk Musiktidsskrift* 19 (1944): 75-80.

_____, "Omkring Holger Danske," *Dansk Musiktidsskrift* 16 (1941): 27-30.

Malling, Ove, ed., *Store og gode Handlinger af Danske, Norske, og Holstenere*. 1777; rpt. Copenhagen: Gyldendal, 1992.

Marker, Frederick J. *Hans Christian Andersen and the Romantic Theatre: A Study of Stage Practices in the Prenaturalistic Scandinavian Theatre*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1971.

Marker, Frederick J., and Lise-Lone Marker. *The Scandinavian Theatre: A Short History*. Oxford: Blackwell, 1975.

_____. *A History of Scandinavian Theatre*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996.

Martienßen, C.A., "'Holger Danske,' Oper von Fr.L.Ae. Kunzen," *Zeitschrift der Internationalen Musikgesellschaft* 13 (1911-12): 225-32.

Matthiassen, Finn, "Gammeldansk folketonalitet: En introduction til studiet af de tonale forhold i Danmarks gamle folkevisemelodier (DgF XI)," *Cæcilia* 2 (1992-93): 89-162.

Mitchell, P.M. *A History of Danish Literature*. New York: The American-Scandinavian Foundation, 1958.

Mulvad, Johannes, "Omkring udgivelsen af *Balders Død*," *Dansk Årbog for Musikforskning* 10 (1979): 67-126.

Neiiendam, Robert. *Ungdom og Galskab: Princesse Charlotte Frederikke og Edouard Du Puy*. Copenhagen: V. Pios Boghandel, 1923.

Nielsen, Carl. *Carl Nielsen til sin Samtid*, ed. John Fellow, 2 vols. Copenhagen: Gyldendal, 1999.

Nielsen, H. Grüner, "Danske folkemelodier: Litteratur- og Haandskriftfortegnelse," *Aarbog for Musik* 2 (1923): 64-93.

Oehlenschläger, Adam. *Digterværker og Prosaiske Skrifter*, 26 vols. Copenhagen: Andr. Fred. Høsts Forlag, 1852.

_____. *Poetiske Skrifter*, ed. H. Topsøe-Jensen, 5 vols. Copenhagen: J. Jørgensen & Co., 1926.

Plantinga, Leon. *Romantic Music: A History of Musical Style in Nineteenth-Century Europe*. New York: W.W. Norton, 1984.

Schiørring, Nils. *Musikkens historie i Danmark*, 3 vols. København: Politiken, 1978.

Schumann, Robert, "Dänische Oper: *Ravnen*," *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik*, 12 August 1840 (no. 13): 49-51.

Schumann, Robert. *The Musical World of Robert Schumann: A Selection From His Own Writings*, ed. and tr. Henry Pleasants. London: V. Gollancz, 1965.

Schwab, Heinrich W. *Friedrich Ludwig Aemilius Kunzen (1761-1817): Stationen seines Lebens und Wirkens*. Heide in Holstein: Westholsteinische Verlagsanstalt Boyens & Co., 1995.

_____, "'Høit staaer Kunzen blandt Nutidens Sangcomponister…' (1817): Bericht über Forschungsinitiativen zu Leben und Werk des Friedrich Ludwig Aemilius Kunzen (1761-1817)," *Dansk Årbog for Musikforskning* 22 (1994): 27-56.

_____, "'A work of art that is a credit to poet and composer alike': Notes on the opera *Holger Danske*," notes to F.L.Æ. Kunzen, *Holger Danske* (DaCapo 8.224036-37, 1997), 17-22.

A Second Book of Danish Verse, ed. and tr. Charles Wharton Stork. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1947.

Seiffert, Max, "J.A.P. Schulz' 'dänische' Oper," *Archiv für Musikwissenschaft* 1 (1919): 422-31.

Senelick, Laurence. *National Theatre in Northern and Eastern Europe, 1746-1900*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991.

Stanton, Stephen S., introduction to *Camille, and Other Plays,* ed. Stephen S. Stanton, vii-xxxix. New York: Hill and Wang, 1957.

Steenstrup, Johannes C.H.R. *The Medieval Popular Ballad*, tr. Edward Godfrey Cox. Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1914.

Sterne, Laurence. *A Sentimental Journey* and *Journal to Eliza*. New York: New American Library, 1964.

Sørensen, Inger. *Hartmann: Et dansk komponistdynasti*. Copenhagen: Gyldendal, 1999.

Sørensen, Søren, "En Dansk Guldalder-opera: Den Musikalske Karakteristik i Hartmanns *Liden Kirsten*," in *Guldalder Studier: Festskrift til Gustav Albeck den 5. Juni 1966* (Aarhus, Denmark: Universitetsforlaget i Aarhus, 1966): 219-33.

Thaarup, Thomas. *Høst-gildet* og *Digte i Udvalg*, ed. J.V. Østerberg. Copenhagen: P. Hauberg og Jul. Gjellerup [1888].

Thrane, Carl, "Sarti in Kopenhagen," *Sammelbände der Internationalen Musikgesellschaft* 3 (1901-02): 528-38.

Troels-Lund, Tr. Fr. *Dagligt Liv i Norden i det Sekstende Aarhundrede*. Copenhagen: Gyldendalske Boghandel, 1914.

Tusa, Michael. Euryanthe *and Carl Maria von Weber's Dramaturgy of German Opera*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991.

Warrack, John. *German Opera: From the Beginnings to Wagner*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001.

Weitemeyer, Harald. *Denmark: Its History and Topography, Language, Literature, Fine-Arts, Social Life and Finance*. London: William Heinimann, 1891.

Wessel, J.H. *Samlede Digte*, ed. J. Levin. Copenhagen: Gyldendalske Boghandels Forlag, 1901.

Weyse, C.E.F. *Breve*, ed. Sven Lunn and Erik Reitzel-Nielsen. Copenhagen: Munksgaard, 1964.

Østergaard, Vilhelm, *Illustreret dansk Literaturhistorie: Danske Digtere i det 19de Aarhundrede*. Copenhagen: Gyldendalske Boghandel, 1907.