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Articles

Music, competition and the *Art de seconde rhétorique*: The youthful chansons of Gilles Mureau and Philippe Basiron

Peter Woetmann Christoffersen

Excellency in creating and understanding poetry – or at least some skill – was highly regarded in fifteenth-century France. The cultivation of poetry in aristocratic and royal circles has been interpreted by modern research as a sort of pastime or courtly parlour games, which occasionally involved virtual or staged *cours d'Amour.* Lately these activities and the production of poems in *formes fixes* have come to be regarded more as vital and competitive elements in the participants' social interaction, as vehicles of meanings derived from rich literary traditions and contexts, and as dialogues on esthetical and social convictions; in short, poetic endeavours were tools for securing positions in a closed cultural field, where everyone were guarding their cultural investments. Poems are preserved in prestigious presentation manuscripts containing works by single authors, and they appear in miscellaneous collections, where the most diverse texts interact and invite the informed reader to explore his expertise of literary canons and traditions in order to participate in this poetic universe.

The two well-known poets from the middle of the century, Charles d'Orléans and François Villon, may stand as representatives of opposite poles within this culture. Charles d'Orléans, a duke, father of the future king Louis XII, ranked third in the kingdom, and he was the most accomplished aristocratic poet, a self-assured and demanding *primus inter pares* in his circle of peers and servants. Villon was a professional poet, a clerk of unknown origins, and just as virtuosic in exploring the play with traditions and genres, but far more provoking and subversive in his stimulation of the reader's imagination. In spite of the near total obscurity of his life, art made him a guest and occasional participant in the duke's poetic circle.[1] The dynamic of this cultural field spilled over into the slightly less elevated social circles of rich merchants and well-educated groups of lawyers and clerks who were poised to achieve noble status by purchase or through the offices as royal notaries and secretaries. For these people shouldering much of the responsibilities of running the economy and the administration it was important to be able to participate in this field and gain the resultant prestige.

1 This interpretation of French poetry is based on a recent book by Jane H.M. Taylor, *The Making of Poetry. Late-Medieval French Poetic Anthologies* (Turnhout, 2007), in which the author convincingly (and quite discreetly) adopts the terminology of Pierre Bourdieu to describe the interactions of poets and poetry; and as regards Villon, see the same author's readings of his works in the book *The Poetry of François Villon. Text and Context* (Cambridge, 2001).

In addition to an institutional education and private teachers an upcoming versifier could get help from manuals of writing poetry. Such books circulated throughout the century under titles like *Rhétorique*, or more precisely, *L'Art de seconde rhétorique* – the first art being the art of writing prose.[2] Inspiration could also be found in less ambitious anthologies of poems, where the reader furthermore could gather information on the behaviour and vocabulary expected in courtly circles. Many of these collections included texts that had become widely known through musical settings, which to some degree made them stand out as memorable.[3] Music for poems in *formes fixes* is preserved in a group of small format polyphonic song collections known as the 'Loire Valley' chansonniers, which were produced in Central France in the years around 1470.[4] Owners and purchasers of such luxury items, in which poems, music, careful layout and nice illuminations seem to create an imaginary world of noble living, were indeed, as demonstrated by Jane Alden, to be found among the new nobility, among secretaries and notaries amassing wealth and influence.[5]

That the fascination with formal poetry was not just a short-lived trend can be ascertained by the successful commercial venture of the Parisian publisher, Antoine Vérard, who in 1501 printed and marketed the enormous anthology of the then quite old-fashioned poems in *Le Jardin de plaisance et fleur de Rhetoricque*.[6] The editor of the collection supplied as a preamble a versified treatise titled *L'Instructif de seconde rhétorique*, a manual of the making and discussion of poems. Jane H.M. Taylor points out that this arrangement fulfils an '... important role as a guide to reception, to the decoding which provides an upwardly mobile audience with a set of cognitive rules which

2 The main fifteenth-century manuals of the craft of poetry were published by Ernest Langlois in *Recueil d'arts de seconde rhétorique* (Paris, 1902).

3 Three such manuscripts and a print, Vérard's *Le Jardin de plaisance* of 1501, are carefully analysed in Kathleen Frances Sewright, *Poetic Anthologies of Fifteenth-Century France and Their Relationship to Collections of the French Secular Polyphonic Chanson*, Ph.D.-diss. (University of North Carolina, 2008; available at https://cdr.lib.unc.edu/indexablecontent/uuid:a6618879-5105-4de2-bdc6-d2147522157d).

4 The literature on these manuscripts is voluminous. The most important recent discussions are found in the dissertation by Paula Higgins, *Antoine Busnois and Musical Culture in Late Fifteenth-Century France and Burgundy* (Princeton, 1987), and in Jane Alden's book, *Songs, Scribes, and Society. The History and Reception of the Loire Valley Chansonniers* (New York, 2010). The group of manuscripts consists of the following: Copenhagen, The Royal Library, MS Thott 291 8° (Copenhagen); Dijon, Bibliothèque Municipale, MS 517 (Dijon); Washington D.C., Library of Congress, MS M2.1 L25 Case (Laborde Chansonnier – Laborde); Paris, Bibliothèque nationale, Rés. Vmc. ms. 57 (Chansonnier Nivelle de la Chaussée – Nivelle); Wolfenbüttel, Herzog August Bibliothek, Codex Guelf. 287 Extravag. (Wolfenbüttel). I have published Copenhagen and parts of the other chansonniers online in commented editions in *An Open Access Edition of the Copenhagen Chansonnier and the Related 'Loire Valley' Chansonniers* (at http://chansonniers.pwch.dk/).

5 Alden, *Songs, Scribes*, 178–214.

6 Cf. Eugénie Droz and Arthur Piaget (eds.), *Le Jardin de Plaisance et Fleur de Rhétorique. Reproduction en fac-simile de l'édition publiée par Antoine Verard vers 1501* (Paris, 1910–14; the facsimile volume (1910) is now made available online at http://archive.org/details/lejardindeplaisaoovera).

govern the process of reading and which therefore give it the tools to judge the success or failure of any particular poem.'[7] Analogous to this, the musical Dijon chansonnier begins by offering the reader a basic introduction to the understanding of note values and ligatures, 'S'ensuit La declaration des valeurs des notes ligaturees de chansons …' (fos. 5–6).[8] It simply helps the users of the chansonnier to avoid the most obvious traps when discussing music in contemporary mensural notation. These two instances of taking the reader by the hand give us a hint of how important it was to be competent in deliberations on poetry and music in order to secure one's position in the leading circles.

My aim in the following is to raise the question if a similar competitive urgency and wish to participate in the greater cultural field were part of the driving forces behind the composing of polyphonic chansons. Internal competition and spectacular use of material lifted from the production of other musicians are well-known phenomena in the period around 1470 – one can just think of the boom in polyphonic masses. However, emulation and borrowing were also emerging in the secular music.[9] With the intention of keeping this question apart from the expectations that a musician could be met with when working for a secular court, I shall discuss solely chansons preserved from the hands of musicians who as far as we know spent their entire working life in the service of the church during the relevant period. I also disregard the musical dominant figures of the time, personified in Du Fay, Ockeghem and Busnoys, whose music has been intensely researched, whose learning was undisputed, and whose standings in society ended up secure, probably by means of their musical prominence alone. The few secular songs by Gilles Mureau and Philippe Basiron have never enjoyed the same attention. They were rather young composers when the repertory in the 'Loire Valley' chansonniers was collected, and it has been important to chart their careers to throw light on the dating of these chansonniers.[10] Both spent much of their time teaching choirboys in their *maîtrises*, both probably composed chansons during their youth only, and their chansons disclose interesting intertextualities and tendencies concerning musical innovation and the cultivation of poems that exhibit a bit more literary ambition than usual. I have published online all the songs mentioned in the following along with detailed commentaries.[11]

7 Taylor, *The Making*, 259–60.

8 See also Alden, *Songs, Scribes*, 160–61 and 239.

9 See, for example, Howard Mayer Brown, 'Emulation, Competition and Homage: Imitation and Theories of Imitation in the Renaissance', *Journal of the American Musicological Society,* 35 (1982), 1–48, and the volume edited by Honey Meconi, *Early Musical Borrowing* (New York & London, 2004).

10 Cf. Paula Higgins in her introduction 'The Origins of the Manuscript' to the facsimile edition, *Chansonnier Nivelle de la Chaussée (Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris, Rés. Vmc. ms. 57, ca. 1460)* (Geneva, 1984), x; and Alden, *Songs, Scribes*, 120–21 and 126. A detailed discussion can be found online in Peter Woetmann Christoffersen, *The chansons of Basiron's youth and the dating of the 'Loire Valley' chansonniers* (at http://chansonniers.pwch.dk/NOTES/BasironYouth.html – html- and PDF-versions).

11 See Peter Woetmann Christoffersen, *The Complete Works of Gilles Mureau (c1442–1512) – poet-musician*

Gilles Mureau

None of the chansons by Mureau can be found in the 'Loire Valley' chansonniers. The three songs that I will look at are preserved, two of them uniquely, in a small paper chansonnier, Florence, Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale, MS Magl.xix.176, which was copied by a Florentine scribe around 1480.[12] This Italian scribe apparently had access to French exemplars that must have been practically contemporary with the 'Loire Valley' chansonniers. He copied the music of his exemplars accurately enough, but he did not understand French at all, and consequently his poetic texts are either missing, fragmentary or consisting in incipits only, and he did not supply any composer names. A later scribe has added the index, foliation, composer attributions and other completions. This user had an intimate knowledge of French music, and especially of music in the royal lands in Central France, and he identified three songs as being by 'muream'. It is worth mentioning that he recognized the music of composers hardly ever mentioned in other musical sources, names such as Mureau, Raoullin, Tinctoris and Fedé – it looks as if his view of contemporary France was shaped by a recent stay in Orléans, Blois or Tours.[13] For Mureau's chansons, it is in all cases possible to recover the missing texts with the help of other French musical or poetical sources. This is a lucky situation, because the poems hold the key to much of the distinguishing traits of Mureau.

Gilles Mureau (*c.*1442–1512) spent his long career in the service of the Notre Dame cathedral of Chartres. The cathedral, a royal institution situated in a region that since the thirteenth century had belonged to the crown and had close connections to the Orléans region, was served by one of the big musical organizations in France. The confraternity of *horarii et matutinarii Ecclesiae Carnotensis* (called the *heuriers*) was a body of 24 professional singers performing plainchant as well as polyphony, which can be compared to the *petit vicaires* at the Cambrai Cathedral.[14]

Mureau probably started as a choirboy, and in 1462 he was mentioned as a *heurier*, in 1467 he was appointed *maître de grammaire* at the cathedral's *maîtrise*, and before

of Chartres (at http://chansonniers.pwch.dk/Mureau/01Start.html), and *The chansons of Basiron's youth*. For detailed lists of sources etc., see also the entries in David Fallows' indispensable *A Catalogue of Polyphonic Songs, 1415–1480* (Oxford, 1999).

12 In the following I use the abbreviation Florence 176; further abbreviations include (in addition to those mentioned in note 4): Florence 2794 – Florence, Biblioteca Riccardiana, MS 2794; Florence 229 – Florence, Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale, MS Banco Rari 229; Mellon – New Haven, Yale University, Beineke Library, MS 91 (Mellon Chansonnier); Seville 5-I-43 – Seville, Biblioteca Capitular y Colombina, MS 5-1-43; Le Jardin 1501 – Antoine Vérard, *Le Jardin de plaisance et fleur de Rhetoricque* (Paris, [1501]).

13 For a more detailed description, see Christoffersen, *The Complete Works of Gilles Mureau*, at http://chansonniers.pwch.dk/Mureau/03Work.html.

14 Cf. Nicole Goldine, 'Les heuriers-matiniers de la cathédrale de Chartres jusqu'au XVI^{e} siècle. Organisation liturgique et musicale', *Revue de Musicologie,* 54 (1968), 161–75.

1472 he was installed as a canon.[15] He kept these posts for the remainder of his life, occasionally sharing the teaching of the boys with other musicians and for short periods functioning as the cathedral's organist, but his role as administrator of the *maîtrise* seems to have been permanent. His position in the clerical world was apparently very secure. At an early date he appears to have become quite affluent with land holdings in the areas near Blois and Bourges. An additional source of income was that he took in sons of noblemen to board and look after in order to teach them grammar and the art of performing polyphonic music, 'et aussi les enseigner et monstrer dechant aux mieulx qu'il pourra', all agreed to in written contracts with the fathers.[16] The prosperity resulting from his many activities made it possible for him to embark on two major journeys. From March to October 1483 he visited Jerusalem, and again the following year he was away for half a year on a pilgrimage to Santiago di Compostella.

This busy life did not offer much incentive to compose new music after the early years of his career – for example, no sacred music is preserved from his hand – and music formed only a part of his professional life. His talents apparently unfolded just as much in the arts of language and words and in connection with his administrative capacities as a canon of the cathedral. The main threads through his life were the roles of singer (*heurier*) and teacher (*maistre de grammaire*). He built his career on an early success in these roles, and his four surviving ascribed secular compositions can with great probability be placed during his formative years, before his position as canon became secure. And we have to ask if the texts and music of his songs were designed as efforts to acquire approval (cultural standing) as well as attracting paying pupils among the nobility and bourgeoisie of the city.

The texts of his chansons show him as a competent follower of the literary *l'art de rhétorique*, of the skills of poetic role-play and of complicated rules of versification cultivated in courtly circles. Let us start with *Grace actendant,* in which the text as well as the ascription in Florence 176 gives evidence to Mureau's authorship. The initial letters of the lines in the poem, a bergerette with a four-line refrain, form the acrostic GILLES MUREAU; the rhyme syllables are in the first section (refrain and *tierce*) '-mes/ -mais' and '-usé' in the pattern ABBA, while the contrasting second section (*couplets*) uses '-oureux' and '-ame', CDCD.[17] These rhymes combined with the acrostic place the

15 All information concerning the biography of Mureau comes from André Pirro, 'Gilles Mureau, chanoine de Chartres', in W. Lott, H. Osthoff and W. Wolffheim (eds.), *Musikwissenschaftliche Beiträge, Festschrift für Johannes Wolf zu seinem sechzigsten Geburtstage* (Berlin, 1929), 163–67.

16 A contract dated 1471 between 'Robert de Garenne, seigneur de Saugis' and 'Gilles Mureau, maistre des enfants du cueur de l'Église de Chartres' is reprinted in Abbé A. Clerval, *Les écoles de Chartres au moyen du V^e au XV^e siècles*. (Mémoires de la Société archéologique d'Eure-et-Loir, Tome XI; Chartres, 1895), 428–29.

17 Exactly the stringent formation of the rhymes permits the reconstruction of the original appearance of the poem. It survived to be printed in Le Jardin 1501, fo. 96, where the last lines of the tierce (lines 11–12) have been exchanged and revised: 'Viengne qui peut, je vivray desormais / En non chaloir,

poem securely in the literary sphere. While most of the poems used for music depend on perfectly satisfactory rhymes (*rimes suffisantes*), a *rhétoriqueur* prefers *rimes riches,* which can be graded from *rimes léonines* to a still higher complexity in diverse forms of *rimes équivoques*.[18] Mureau's rhymes in this poem belong to the *léonines* by showing identity in three elements each. This fashionable love complaint has everything one might expect from a *maître de grammaire* in charge of the children of the nobility – a veritable visiting card of a poet-musician:

Grace actendant ou la mort pour tous mes	Waiting for grace or death as my reward
J'ay trop esté d'esperance abusé,	I have too often been abused by hope,
Labuer en vain j'ay mon temps en usé,	on labour in vain have I used my time,
L'eure maldis que tant ame jamays.	miserable ever to love so much.
En grant peril est ung povre amoureux	An unlucky lover is in great peril
S'il se submet au danger de tel dame:	if he submits to the danger of such a lady:
Mourir pourroit chetif et langoureux	He may die frail and longing
Vingt foiz et plus sans que pitié l'entame.	twenty times or more without her being bothered by pity.
Riens n'y vault sens ne servir d'entremes,	Nothing, neither wisdom nor being amusing,
Estre subtil ne faire le rusé	nor cunning nor guile
A non chaloir, car g'y ay trop musé.	makes any difference, for I have wasted enough time on this.
Viengne qui peut, je vivray desormais	Whatever happens, I shall live hereafter
grace actendant *ou la mort pour tous mes.*	waiting for grace or death as my reward.

(Florence 176, fos. 46^{v}–48, and Le Jardin 1501, fo. 96)

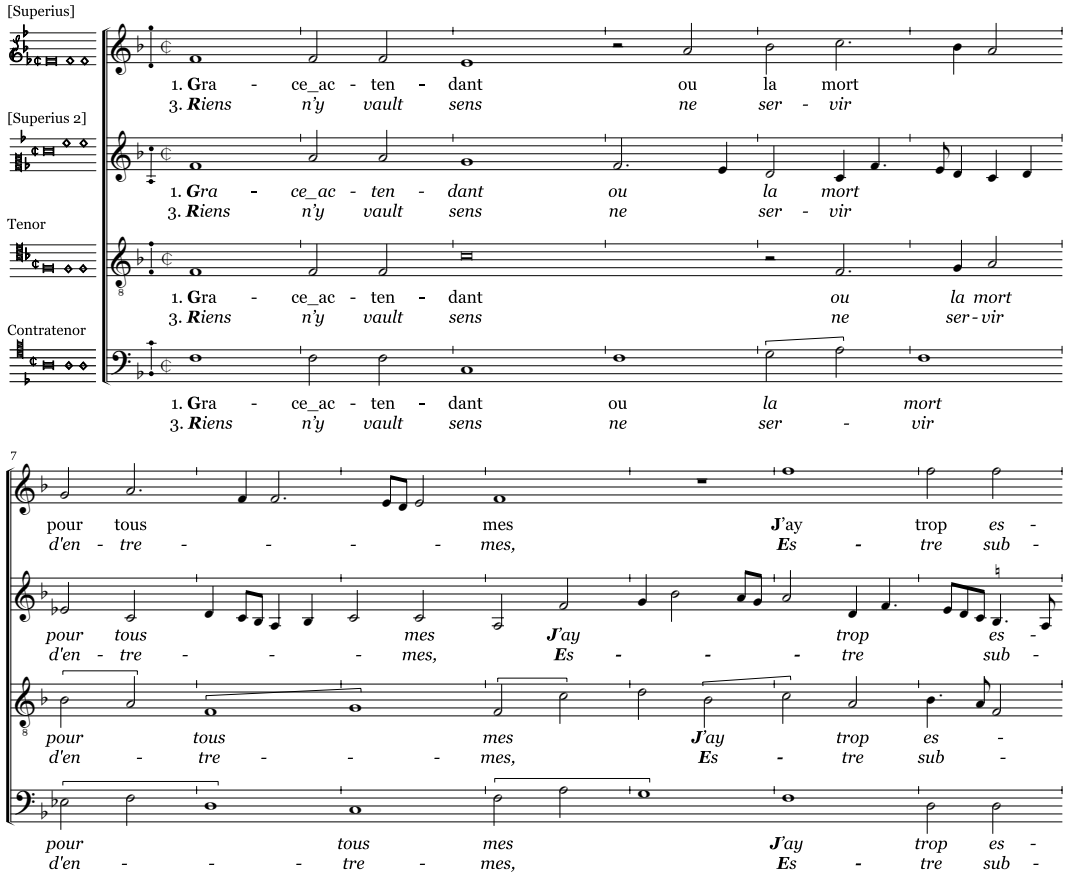
Acrostic GILLES MUREAU

The music of *Grace actendant* is for sure Mureau's most ambitious effort. The song is composed for four voices in the first section, for two high voices, a tenor and a low contratenor, and for three high voices in the second section (see exx. 1a–b). This layout is an original working out of the principle of contrast characteristic of the bergerette.[19] Here the contrast is not brought about by a change of mensuration, rhythmical ductus or modal colouring, but by vocal instrumentation. Two worlds of sound are juxtaposed, both quite new in the secular music of the 1460s: a four-part voice disposition (a group

car g'y ay trop musé', which produces a misleading acrostic: GILLES MUREUE; cf. the faulty edition of the song in E. Droz et G. Thibault, *Poètes et musiciens de xve siècle* (Paris, 1924), 43–48.

18 See for example the lists under the heading 'Et premièrement une règle de moz léonines et plains sonans et esquivoques et presonans' in the anonymous treatise *Les Règles de la Seconde Rhétorique* from the early fifteenth century in Langlois, *Recueil*, 15.

19 It is not a three-part song with a 'fragmentary added 4th voice' as stated by Richard Freedman in 'Mureau, Gilles' in *Grove Music Online* (accessed May 2011).



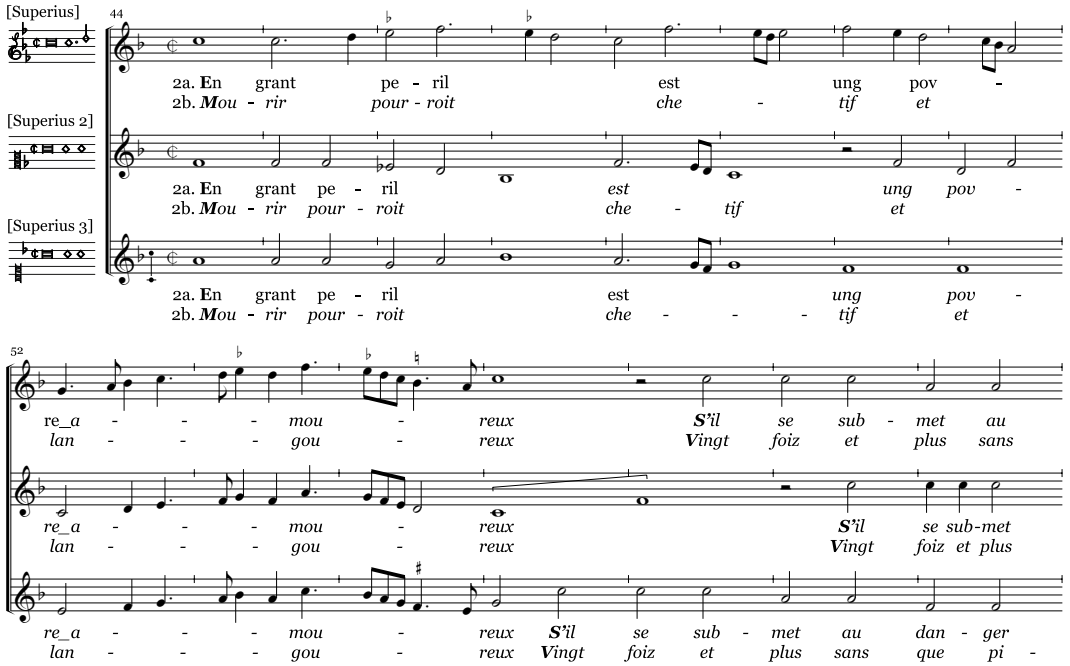
Ex. 1a, Gilles Mureau, *Grace actendant* (**Florence 176**, fos. 46ᵛ–48), bb. 1–13.

of boys on the upper parts and two grown-up singers) contrasting with three equal high parts (three boys solo?).

The boys of the *maîtrise* were in demand as musical performers outside the cathedral, not only in religious institutions but in noble houses as well; *Grace actendant* could very well be composed for some noble entertainment. The gifts that the boys received in recompenses for their performances had, according to the decision of the chapter, to be shared between the master of music and the master of grammar, the latter being responsible for the boys' expenses.[20]

Grace actendant is composed with careful regard to the words in all four voices. It is easy to place the text in such a way that the words either are pronounced simultaneously or in turn in the parts without disturbing the clarity too much, and the composing with four parts is handled very skilfully (ex. 1a). In the bergerette's second section, the tenor and contratenor drop out, and a new, third superius part enters. The second superius

20 Clerval, *Les écoles,* 430.



Ex. 1b, Gilles Mureau, *Grace actendant* (Florence 176, fos. 46v–48), bb. 44–58.

takes over the tenor functions, while the new voice is placed between the first and the second. This brings along some *fauxbourdon*-like passages, especially in bars 52–55, which form a nice contrast to the sound of the first section, and in bars 55–60 all three participate in a free unison canon on a triadic motive – the second superius speeding up the activity (ex. 1b).

Poems intended for musical setting were traditionally made in such a way that it seemed natural in the rondeau to repeat the first half of the refrain after the short *couplet* and the complete refrain after the *tierce*, and likewise the complete first section at the end of the bergerette. When these forms became popular as poetry for reading or reciting without music during the fifteemth century (Christine de Pisan, Charles d'Orléans and others), repeats were often reduced to a single line or the first words (*rentrement*) only, which had to be integrated into the discourse of the preceding formal section; accordingly, Charles d'Orléans distinguished between *rondeaux* and *chansons* (rondeaux made for music).[21] The literary ambitions of Mureau are clearly in evidence – he did work and experiment with the form. In *Tant fort me tarde* (see below) the sense of the refrain does not permit a repeat of the first three lines as a unit, while the first line alone constitutes a satisfactory 'short refrain' after the *couplet*; nothing hinders a complete repeat of the refrain at the end of the song. Conversely, in *Grace actendant* it is the

21 Cf. Daniel Calvez, 'La Structure du rondeau: mise au point', *The French Review,* 55 (1982), 461–70.

music that resists a repeat of the complete first section at the bergerette's end, because this would result in a quite implausible ending on the mode's fifth degree and with a third in the final chord. The solution is again the 'short refrain' of the first line only, that is to say, that the refrain has to stop in bar 10 on the word 'mes' on the mode's finalis with the fifth sounding in the second superius. This brings a natural completion to the music as well as to the sense of the poem (cf. ex. 1a).

The artful constructed poem, the use of contrasts by vocal instrumentation and the ingenious use of a 'short refrain' at the end of the song are not the only ambitious traits in *Grace actendant.* The song may, just like *Je ne fais plus* (see below), have left the composer's hand notated in *fa*-clefs, that is, notated without letter-clefs, but in formations of *fa*-signs (or flats) alone – three or two flats to each voice are typical. This means that the songs were notated not at a fixed pitch, but could be performed at any convenient pitch. The *fa*-clef notation seems to have been used by composers around Binchois and in Central France in the 1450s and the early 1460s (Ockeghem, Barbingant, Le Rouge). Knowledge of the notation soon faded away, and the songs were then in later sources transmitted in fixed-pitch notation.[22] This suggests that Mureau in these high-range songs made use of a notational praxis, which was relatively well known in his region, in order to make the songs performable for other singers than groups with boys. Of course, another possibility could be that he imitated the notation of songs by older composers, which at that time circulated in fixed notation including 'superfluous' flats, in order to gain some additional status. In short, it looks as if Mureau with *Grace actendant* pulled all stops to show off his credentials.

The two other poems in the same vein, *Tant fort me tarde* and *Je ne fais plus*, take the art of the *rhétoriqueurs* a step further as they both use *rimes équivoques*, artful rhymes where the same words or syllables are repeated as rhyme words, looking or sounding alike, but with different meanings. Characteristic of this are the rhymes of *Je ne fais plus*, in which the first set of rhyme words sounds: 'escris / escris / descris / et cris / acris / escris / precris / qu'Antecrix', while the second rhyme says alone: 'plains / plains …' – a quite virtuosic performance. In addition, this song is cast in the rather uncommon form of a *rondeau tercet layé* with only five lines in its refrain – usually short lines are interpolated into the four or five lines of the refrain, but here we find only three long lines, handled by a very sure poetic hand. The poem can be retrieved from a contemporary, or even slightly older, French source, Florence 2794, where the song appears anonymously, but with a complete text. The utterly desolate content of the poem matches the rather pretentious formal layout. Its focus is on the act of writing poetry itself, from which the author now will abstain, and it might be written in a female voice. But who is the man to whom the author wishes to complain 'il est a naistre, cil a qui je m'en plains' – he is

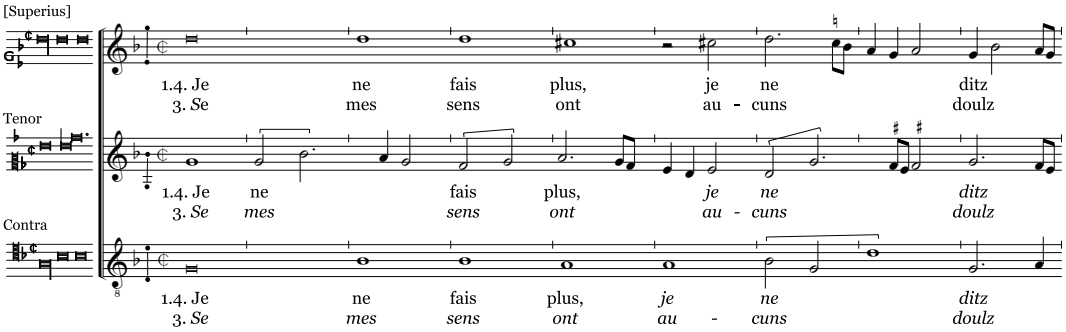
22 Cf. my article '*Prenez sur moi vostre exemple*: The 'clefless' notation or the use of *fa*-clefs in chansons of the fifteenth century by Binchois, Barbingant, Ockeghem and Josquin', *Danish Yearbook of Musicology*, 37 (2009), 13–38, and the detailed commentaries to the edition of Mureau's chansons.

not yet born? Probably just a piece of literary artifice evoking the Second Coming of Christ as an antithesis to those 'more treacherous than Antichrist':

Je ne fais plus, je ne dis ne escris, en mes escris l'en trouvera mes regretz et mes plains de larmes plains, Ou, le moins mal que je puis, les descris.	I do nothing more, I do not speak nor write, in my writings you will find my regrets and complaints filled with tears, or I, the least poorly I can, describe them.
Toute ma joye est de souppirs et cris en dueil acris; il est a naistre, cil a qui je m'en plains.	All my joy has by sighs and cries grown into pain; he is still to be born, he to whom I will complain.
Je ne fais plus, je ne dis ne escris, *en mes escris* *l'en trouvera mes regretz et mes plains.*	I do nothing more, I do not speak nor write, in my writings you will find my regrets and complaints.
Se mes sens ont aucuns doulz motz escris, il[s] sont prescris; je passe temps par desers et par plains, et la me plains d'aucunes gens plus traittres qu'Antecrix.	If my mind ever did write any sweet words, they are damned; I pass time in abandonment and grievance, and there I grieve that some people are more treacherous than Antichrist.
Je ne fais plus, *je ne dis ne escris,* *en mes escris* *l'en trouvera mes regretz et mes plains* *de larmes plains,* *Ou, le moins mal que je puis, les descris.*	I do nothing more, I do not speak nor write, in my writings you will find my regrets and complaints filled with tears, or I, the least poorly I can, describe them.

(Florence 2794, fos. 50^{v}–51)

Je ne fais plus was Mureau's only international *hit* song. It appears in ten French and Italian musical sources dated before *c.*1500, and in at least seven sources from the sixteenth century. After around 1490 the scribes began to attribute this highly successful song to composers of greater fame as Antoine Busnoys and Loyset Compere, probably mainly because Mureau at that time was forgotten as a composer. The lyrical musical setting adheres closely to the text. It is varied with a declamatory first section and a more animated second. The tessitura is high with the tenor occasionally crossing above the superius. It is perfect for boys' voices, but it was like *Grace actendant* probably originally notated in *fa*-clefs making it performable at any pitch. A characteristic trait of Mureau's music is his ability to make the upper voice seemingly 'float' upon the web of the lower voices. *Je ne fais plus* is a particularly successful example of this, and it may be one of the reasons for the song's lasting popularity. This furthermore calls attention to a musical trait, to which he apparently resorted quite often, namely to exploit the



Ex. 2, Gilles Mureau, *Je ne fais plus* (Florence 2794, fos. 50ᵛ–51), bb. 1–9.

driving force of the traditional cadence configuration with suspension and resolution in order to set off or animate a melodic development long before the arrival of the phrase's ending. The memorable opening of *Je ne fais plus* can stand as a sort of paradigm of this technique, and already in bars 6–7 on it is used to energize the flow after the calm beginning (see ex. 2).

Mureau's rondeau cinquain *Tant fort me tarde ta venue* appears uniquely in Florence 176 under his name and has text incipits only for the song's two sections (fos. 71ᵛ–73). However, as these incipits are in complete agreement with the setting by Philippe Basiron in the Laborde chansonnier (fos. 34ᵛ–35), which has the complete poem, it is easy to restore Mureau's song. Notwithstanding that Mureau's setting is preserved exclusively in an Italian source, which must be dated later than the 'Loire Valley' group of chansonniers, it is most likely the original setting. The music is quite ordinary in the style of the 1460s. It may be an early work, while *Grace actendant* and *Je ne fais rien* probably date from around 1470, just a bit too late to be included in the repertory of the 'Loire Valley' chansonniers. It is in a 'normal' tessitura (*B–c″*) with tenor and contratenor in the same range, and the contratenor often crosses above the tenor and takes the fifth at several cadences. The sound of the setting is quite old-fashioned, even if the upper voices abound in parallel thirds and sixths. All three voices relate to the text, and the setting is varied with alternating declamatory and melismatic passages involving sequences in canonic imitation; it ends in a *fauxbourdon* cadence.

Tant fort me tarde ta venue
pour compter ma desconvenue,
mon plus qu'ame, que sur mon ame
je ne prens plaisir en nul ame
qui soit aujourduy soubz la nue.

De joye mon plaisir se desnue,
si douleur t'est puis souvenue;
mille foiz le jour te reclame:

Tant fort me tarde *ta venue.*

Your appearance so strongly holds me back
from explaining my disappointment,
my more than beloved, that by my soul
I do not get pleasure from any love
that today might be found under the sky.

My pleasure strips off any joy,
if you still bring back the pain;
thousand times a day I cry to you:

Your appearance so strongly holds me back.

Or est ma sante certes nue,	Certainly my sanity is gone,
je ne scay quel est devenue,	I do not know what has happened to it,
desconfort m'assault que point n'ame	worry assaults me that (he) does not at all love (me)
et me veult mectre soubz la lame;	and will put me below the tombstone;
je suis mort, s'il me continue.	I shall die, if this continues for me.
Tant fort *me tarde ta venue*	Your appearance so strongly holds me back
pour compter ma desconvenue,	from explaining my disappointment,
mon plus qu'ame, que sur mon ame	my more than beloved, that by my soul
je ne prens plaisir en nul ame	I do not get pleasure from any love
qui soit aujourduy soubz la nue.	that today might be found under the sky.

(Laborde, fos. 34^{v}–35)

It is most likely that Mureau is the author of this artful poem. In some ways, for example in the theme of keeping back what one really wants to say, it appears like a preparation for the much more concentrated poem in *Je ne fais plus*. It is clearly in a female voice, and its tone is intimate, addresses a male of equal social standing by the use of 'ta (tu)' and 'mon plus qu'ame'. It is in *rimes équivoque* with the rhyme words '(-)nue' and '(-)ame', and its construction demands a one-line refrain following the *couplet,* not the half refrain as is usual in poems made for music. The sense does not permit a stop in the refrain after three lines. In the musical setting, the first line alone with its cadence to the mode's fifth degree makes a fine, varied bridge to the *tierce.*

It is noteworthy that the later user of the MS Florence 176 recognized the music and added Mureau's name, when he looked at three settings of poems, which were more ambitious literarily than the usual run of polyphonic chansons. If he had not remembered them, two of the three would have remained anonymous in the repertory. Maybe the text incipits triggered his memory, and the ascriptions relate to the poems as well as the music.

I am well aware that my interpretation of the achievements of Gilles Mureau includes several improvable assumptions. The sources keep quiet about many circumstances. As it is well-known, the identification of the composer of a given song often depends on sheer luck as in the case of Mureau, and information on the authors of the poems is even more difficult to unearth. Here I confidently assume that Mureau wrote the poems as well as the music, because the story to tell would not be much different if I am wrong about this. If he simply set music to poems obtained from others or delivered from patrons, his knowledge of and involvement with contemporary poetic practice would make a just as interesting story. And, with a look forward, if Basiron did not know of Mureau's setting of *Tant fort me tarde*, then his two reworkings of the topic, and the radical different result he ended up with, would again be just as interesting as in my story.

The double role of poet and composer matches the impression of an industrious young man eager to advance his prospects inside the church by impressing the secular powers active in the cathedral's surroundings. In Mureau's music, it is remarkable that three of his songs use a very high tessitura as if they were explicitly destined for boys' voices.[23] This seems relevant considering Mureau's occupation as a teacher and performer with the boys at the Chartres *maîtrise*. Still more characteristic is his tendency to declaim the words clearly in tranquil note values for longer stretches and preferably in more than one voice at the same time. His concern for the intelligibility of the words in performance and his interest in the use of sound as a compositional tool seem modern and forward-looking on the background of contemporary tendencies and may have influenced younger chanson composers. However, this is to some degree contradicted by such old-fashioned traits as his use of a high contratenor crossing above the tenor at cadences, and the tendency to parallelism between voices, or passages in *fauxbourdon*-style.

Philippe Basiron

Gilles Mureau was on the fast career track to a secure position in the clerical hierarchy, and he may have appeared as a role model for a striving young *magister puerum*. Philippe Basiron (*c.*1448–1491) was a few years younger than Mureau and had a career parallel to his, but probably not as successful. Philippe Basiron was in October 1458 admitted as a choirboy in the ducal chapel in Bourges along with his younger brother Pierron (d. 1529).[24] The Sainte-Chapelle of the Bourges Palace was constructed between 1392 and 1405 as the private chapel of Duke Jean de Berry. Its personnel included 13 canons, headed by the treasurer and the cantor, 13 chaplains, 13 vicars, and 6 choirboys. This quite tight organization had according to its statutes wide-ranging musical duties in performing polyphony on a daily basis, with important roles bestowed on the organ and the organist. The reception at the same time of two talented choirboys, who probably had begun their education in another institution, must have been an event of some importance to the daily musical work. The chapter bought a keyboard instrument, a *manichordum*, in 1463 for Philippe, still a choirboy, in order to further his studies of counterpoint and his ability to play the organ; this occurred shortly after the composer Guillaume Faugues' three-months stint in 1462 as master of the choirboys. Starting in 1464 Basiron began to assist in the teaching of the younger choirboys, and gradually he took over a greater share of the master's duties. He obtained the rank of *vicarius* in 1467, and finally, after some complications he was in 1469 elected to the position of *magister puerum*, which the chapter had promised him at an earlier date. In January 1474 a new *magister puerum* was installed. Lack of sources prevents us from knowing anything of

23 In addition to the two already mentioned, also the rondeau quatrain *Pensez y se le povez faire.*

24 All information concerning the biography of Basiron comes from Paula Higgins, 'Tracing the Careers of Late Medieval Composers. The Case of Philippe Basiron of Bourges', *Acta musicologica,* 62 (1990), 1–28.

Basiron's whereabouts and activities during the years between 1474 and *c.*1487. At the end of the 1480s Basiron appears as occupying a house and garden in Bourges, which he possessed as part of his vicariate in the church Saint-Pierre-le-Guillard, a position affiliated with the Sainte-Chapelle. He died just before the end of May 1491, and his position and house was transferred to his younger brother Johannes, *capellanus* at the Sainte-Chapelle.

Even if the situation of Basiron does not appear to be flourishing at the end of his life, he does seem to have enjoyed the protection and appreciation from powerful men in his surroundings. When compelling the chapter of the Sainte-Chapelle to fulfil its promises of the post as *magister puerum*, he was able to invoke alternative prospects of entering the service of clericals like the cardinal of Angers, Jean Balue, or the archbishop of Bourges, Jean Coeur, both magnates close to the king; and in another controversy with the chapter over a canonry and prebend in 1471, King Louis XI intervened on the side of Basiron.[25] Exactly during these years Basiron had created a name for himself as a chanson composer. Four of his songs found their way into the original layer of the Laborde chansonnier, and three of them can be found in the Wolfenbüttel chansonnier.

The Wolfenbüttel scribe in fact seems to have had a weak spot for the music of Basiron. In the planning of the chansonnier, he had first to make the initial letters of the first 13 songs (12 plus Frye's 'Ave regina celerum' added as the opening piece) spell out the name of the receiver, a royal secretary, in the form of an acrostic, 'A Estiene Petit'.[26] As soon as he had finished this closely defined job, he entered two songs by Basiron (fos. 13^{v}–17) followed a few pages later on by a third one (fos. 20^{v}–22) – thereby displaying a striking interest in his music. Furthermore, it is conceivable that some of the songs placed in between or after the songs by Basiron might be ascribed to him as well. Basiron's name does not originally appear in the 'Loire Valley' chansonniers. Just like it was the case with Mureau, the three songs under Basiron's name in Laborde would have remained anonymous, if not the so-called 'Index-Scribe II' had recognized them as his works and added his name during the finishing of Laborde in the atelier of the scribe of Florence 2794 and his successors around 1480, a workshop with close connections with the French court chapel.[27] The fourth chanson in Laborde, *Tant fort me tarde*, Basiron's most successful song, surfaces in an Italian source transmission, where

25 Higgins, *Tracing*, 7–11.

26 Cf. David Fallows, '"Trained and immersed in all musical delights": Towards a New Picture of Busnoys', in Paula Higgins (ed.), *Antoine Busnoys. Method, Meaning, and Context in Late Medieval Music* (Oxford, 1999), 21–50 (at 41–43 and 49–50); Alden, *Songs, Scribes*, 188–206; idem, '*Ung Petit cadeau*: Verbal and Visual Play in the Wolfenbüttel Chansonnier', in Fabrice Fitch and Jacobijn Kiel (eds.), *Essays on Renaissance Music in Honour of David Fallows: 'Bon jour, bon mois et bonne estrenne'* (Woodbridge, 2011), 33–43.

27 Cf. Peter Woetmann Christoffersen, 'The French musical manuscript in Florence, Biblioteca Riccardiana, Ms. 2794, and the 'Loire Valley' chansonniers', available at http://chansonniers.pwch.dk/NOTES/Flo2794art.html.

it is ascribed to 'Phelippon' in the slightly later Ferrarese chansonnier, Roma, Biblioteca Casanatense, MS 2856.[28]

On the whole, Basiron gives the impression of being well integrated in a milieu, where it was of value to be able to appreciate and participate in poetry and music. During the years around 1470 he was well regarded by clerical and secular powers, and the scribes of the Wolfenbüttel and Laborde chansonniers assumed that his music was of interest to their patrons – and he was still a very young man, only around twenty years of age. His songs do indeed reflect an attention to artful poetry, and moreover they show an even stronger interest in the music of his older colleagues and in trying to sharpen his own powers on it and in developing the musical material.[29]

'Nul ne l'a telle, sa maistresse' may well be one of his earliest songs, and it can be found in three of the 'Loire Valley' chansonniers. It is a charming bergerette, exuberant in its adoration of the 'maistresse'. Its theme as well as its music has been developed from a direct quote of the widely circulated rondeau *Je ne vis oncques*, which was performed at the famous *Banquet de Faisan* hosted by the Burgundian duke Philippe le Bon in Lille in 1454. *Je ne vis oncques* appears with an ascription to Binchois in the Nivelle chansonnier (anonymous in Laborde and Wolfenbüttel), while it is ascribed to Du Fay in the Italian manuscript, Montecassino, Biblioteca del'Abbazia, MS 871. The ascription to the Burgundian musician Binchois seems most convincing, and it was apparently under his name that the song circulated in the Loire Valley.[30]

The quote of both text and music from Binchois' opening line occurs in the second line of the bergerette's first *couplet* (line 6, see below). The poet moreover carefully paraphrased the first line of Binchois' first *couplet,* which is sung to the same music as the opening line, as his second line in the second *couplet* (line 8). In this way, both times the musical quote is sung, it is with words identical to or very close to the words belonging with Binchois' music (see the lines in bold in the poems below). For the remaining lines in the *couplets* he has found rhymes of the same quality as heard in Binchois, *rime équivoque*, 'me semble / ensemble'; and the same quality is maintained in the refrain and *tierce* with *rimes léonines*. The concept of an 'I' and his heart who together praise

28 Paula Higgins has resolved the questions surrounding different forms of Basiron's name (P. Basiron, Phelippon, Philippon de Bourges) in the sources, cf. Higgins, *Tracing*, 17–21.

29 Typical are his two arrangements or double chansons for four voices based on the superius from the rondeau 'D'un autre amer mon cueur s'abesseroit' by Ockeghem, which appear in a Florentine manuscript from the 1490s, Bologna, Civico Museo Bibliografico Musicale, MS Q17, as part of a series also including an anonymous three-part arrangement of Ockeghem's superius. Also interesting in this respect are the two rondeaux, 'Puis que si bien m'est advenu' and 'De m'esjouir plus n'ay puissance', which stand side by side in Laborde (fos. 20^{v}–21^{v}). Basiron's name appears above the last one only, but they evidently are connected by the use of similar material; see further Christoffersen, *The chansons of Basiron's youth*. Basiron also participated in the highly competitive game of composing cantus firmus masses, among them his *Missa L'homme armé*, probably dating from the early 1470s.

30 Cf. the discussion of the sources at http://chansonniers.pwch.dk/CH/CH189.html.

the lady is clearly adopted from *Je ne vis oncques*. Its tone is possibly a bit more secular than the obvious allusions to the Virgin Mary in Binchois' song; but maybe the musical quote was meant temembrance of the spiritual tone of Binchois' song.

Nul ne l'a telle, sa maistresse,
mon cueur, que vous et moy avons,
se bien considerer savons
les biens dont elle a grant largesse.

Au vray dire ce qu'il me semble,
je ne viz oncquez la pareille.

Tant belle et tant bonne est ensemble
que plus la voiz, plus me merveille.

De son maintien regardons qu'esse,
affin que nous parachevons
cest bruit si grant que nous devons
dire en tous lieux sans point de cesse:

Nul *ne l'a telle, sa maistresse,*
mon cueur, que vous et moy avons,
se bien considerer savons
les biens dont elle a grant largesse.[31]

(Laborde, fos. 13^{v}–15)

Je ne vis oncques la pareille
de vous, ma gracieuse dame,
car vo beaulté est, sur mon ame,
sur toutes aultres nonparaille.

En vous regardant m'esmerveille
et dis: 'Qu'est cecy Nostre Dame?'

Je ne vis *oncques la pareille*
de vous, ma gracieuse dame.

Vostre tresgrant doulceur esveille
mon esperit et mon oeil entame,
mon cueur donc puet dire sans blasme,
puis qu'a vous servir s'apareille.

Je ne vis *oncques la pareille*
de vous, ma gracieuse dame,
car vo beaulté est, sur mon ame,
sur toutes aultres nonparaille.[32]

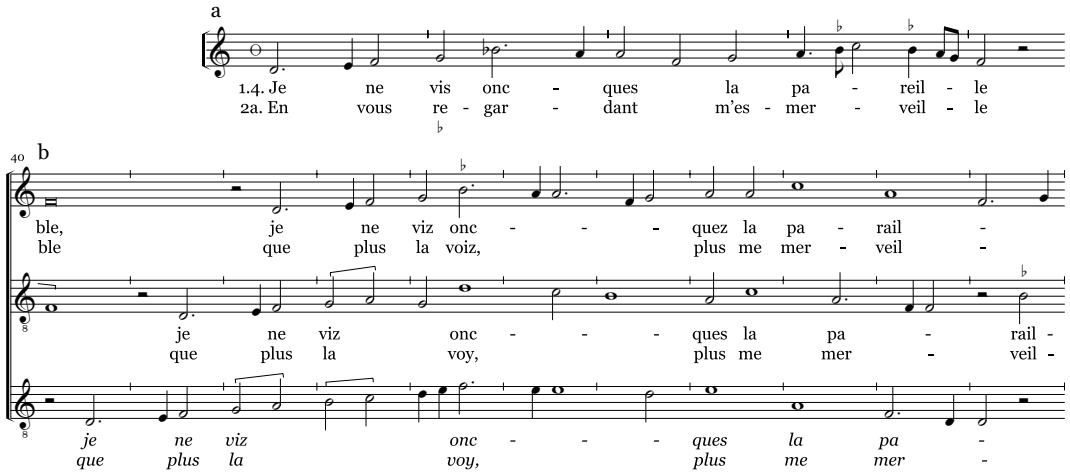
(Nivelle, fos. 51^{v}–52)

There cannot be any doubt that the poem was created by the composer, and that the music already then was at its planning stage. The musical quote is placed with great care in order to give it maximum effect. The *couplets* open in a subdued homorhythmic declamation of 'Au vray dire ce qu'il me semble' (To tell in truth what appears to me), which is brought to a cadence on F (bars 29–40). Here the contratenor drops out and intones Binchois' ear-catching opening line from the note *d*: 'je ne viz oncquez la pareille' (I have never seen her equal), which is then imitated in unison and at the octave by

31 Translation: No one has such a woman, as his mistress, / as you and I have, my heart, / if we know well to consider / the virtues she has in abundance. // To tell in truth what appears to me, / I have never seen her equal. / She is all at once so beautiful and so good / that the more I see her, the more I marvel. // Let us regard her manner as it is, / that we can enhance / her grand reputation, which we ought to / spread everywhere and without cease: // No one has such a woman, as his mistress, / as you and I have, my heart, / if we know well to consider / the virtues she has in abundance.

32 Translation: I have never seen the equal / of you, my gracious lady, / for your beauty is, by my soul, / by all others unrivalled. // When I see you, I wonder / and say: Could this one be Our Lady? / I have never seen the equal / of you, my gracious lady. // Your perfect sweetness rouses / my spirit and blinds my eye, / my heart then can say so without guilt, / because it is ready to serve you. // I have never seen the equal / of you, my gracious lady, / for your beauty is, by my soul, / by all others unrivalled.

tenor and superius – the only three-part imitation in the song (bars 40–44, see ex. 3). The continuation of the musical quote in the upper voice is supported by a *fauxbourdon*-like texture in the tenor and the high contratenor, the last singing in parallel fourths below the superius. This is quickly replaced by staggered descending triads in all voices; as we shall see, this is something of a trademark for Basiron. Otherwise, the setting is varied and with extensive melismas at the end of lines. There is not much further imitation, only a short snatch of octave canon, and *fauxbourdon* progressions seem to be the composer's favourite way of cadencing; accordingly the song's contratenor lies above the tenor in many passages. The song's formal layout conforms perfectly to the conventions of bergerette-settings in the Busnoys generation. It shows the clear contrast between the *refrain/tierce* section and the *couplets* by means of mensuration, *tempus perfectum* followed by *tempus imperfectum diminutum*. Furthermore, the *seconda volta* of the *couplets* ends in a glittering flourish like many other songs of this type from the early 1460s. While the form seems up-to-date, the sound and technique of the song appear a bit dated. In this song, we discover that a young composer in the 1460s still found the techniques of the Binchois generation attractive and useful. However, in comparison with his admired model, his effort fades somewhat; it seems far from Binchois' technical maturity and precision of expression.[33]



Ex. 3a-b, Gilles Binchois, *Je ne vis oncques* (Nivelle, fos. 51ᵛ–52), upper voice, bb. 1–5 (a); Philippe Basiron, *Nul ne l'a telle* (Laborde, fos. 13 ᵛ–15), bb. 40–50 (b).

33 The French-Italian chansonnier Seville, Biblioteca Capitular y Colombina, MS 5-I-43 transmits an anonymous bergerette with text incipits only, 'Le bien fet', which is an exact parallel to *Nul ne l'a telle* as regards the use of a quotation of all three voices from the first line of *Je ne vis oncques* as its second line of music in the couplets (see further http://chansonniers.pwch.dk/CH/CH556.html). This song could be an early attempt at the theme of *Nul ne l'a telle* by Basiron. A more credible explanation may be that the relative success of *Nul ne l'a telle* inspired a colleague to try his hand at something similar.

Mureau's *Tant fort me tarde* apparently stimulated Basiron to try his hand on creating something like it. The result was two chansons with quite different results. The version of the story of their genesis, which to me seems the most plausible, goes as follows: The poetic text of 'Je le scay bien ce qui m'avint', a rondeau quatrain, was created as a response to or a continuation of the rondeau cinquain *Tant fort me tarde*.[34] Both poems use (or try to use) the highly literary form of *rimes équivoques*. *Je le scay bien* not only reuses one of the rhyme words, 'ame', of *Tant fort me tarde* (highlighted in bold in the poems below), the opening words of the first couplet ('De joye'), and the crucial formulations of the *tierce* ('soubz la lame; / je suis mort' – 'car il est mort soubz la lame', all in bold), but it also transforms the other rhyme word 'venue' (accentuated in italics below) into compounds of '-vint' and thereby moves the situation from something happening or about to happen into a contemplation of the past.

Tant fort me tarde ta *venue*
pour compter ma descon*venue*,
mon plus qu'**ame**, que sur mon **ame**
je ne prens plaisir en nul **ame**
qui soit aujourduy soubz *la nue*.

De joye mon plaisir se *desnue*,
si douleur t'est puis sou*venue*;
mille foiz le jour te recl**ame**:

Tant fort me tarde *ta venue*.

Or est ma sante cert*es nue*,
je ne scay quel est de*venue*,
desconfort m'assault que point n'**ame**
et me veult mectre **soubz la lame**;
je suis mort, s'il me con*tinue*.

Tant fort *me tarde ta venue*
pour compter ma desconvenue,
mon plus qu'ame, que sur mon ame
je ne prens plaisir en nul ame
qui soit aujourduy soubz la nue. [35]

(Laborde, fos. 34^{v}–35)

Je le scay bien ce qui m'a*vint*;

dernier jour que vous vy, mad**ame**,
je eu tant de dueil que, par mon **ame**,
je ne sceus que mon cueur de*vint*.

De joye onc puis ne me sou*vint*

et n'ay pas tort, par Nostre D**ame**:

Je le scay bien *ce qui m'avint*
dernier jour que vous vy, madame.

Oncques puis a moy ne re*vint*

se ne l'avez, Dieu en ait l'**ame**,
car **il est mort soubz la lame**,
il estoit bon des ans a *vingt*.

Je le scay bien *ce qui m'avint;*

dernier jour que vous vy, madame,
je eu tant de dueil que, par mon ame,
je ne sceus que mon cueur devint.[36]

(Wolfenbüttel, fos. 20^{v}–22)

34 The relationship between the two poems was first described by Paula Higgins in Higgins, *Tracing*, 18–21.

35 Translation, see above, p. 13.

36 Translation: I know well what happened to me; / the last day I saw you, my lady, / I had such pain that I, by my soul, / did not know what became of my heart. // Never hereafter could I recall any joy, and I am not in the wrong, by Our Lady, / I know well what happened to me / the last day I saw you, my lady. // It will never again come back to me, / if you do not catch it, God help the soul, / for

The poetic voice of *Tant fort me tarde* fears for its mental health, and feels that the beloved will put it 'below the tombstone', that it shall die, if the situation remains unchanged (as far as I can understand this opaque poem). In *Je le scay bien*, the poet's heart is dead and lies 'below the tombstone'; it had only twenty years of good life. Basiron was young when he wrote this poem, but we probably should not put too much weight on the 'twenty years', as the number was produced by the rhyme structure – but it is thought provoking, and fits into the chronology. The connections between the two poems are clear enough, but the differences in attitude are just as striking. The poet of *Tant fort me tarde* is bold, takes on a persona who addresses the beloved as 'ta / tu' and 'mon plus qu'ame', which signals an equal social standing and an intimate relationship, and the persona is *female*. In sharp contrast, the voice of *Je le scay bien* is conventionally *male* and uses the standard courtly addresses of 'vous' and 'madame', and in line 6 slides into the invocation of 'Nostre Dame' (Our Lady – a reminiscence of Binchois' *Je ne vis oncques*?).

The poetic voices we meet in these two poems are clearly different. The *maître de grammaire* from Chartres, Gilles Mureau, is a quite self-assured poet entering into the role-play of ambitious clerks and nobles, while the poet of the traditional love-complaint *Je le scay bien*, who we can be quite sure is the young Basiron, depends heavily on his model in order to produce something workable. Basiron's musical setting of the poem or rather his general style may also show some affinity with Mureau's music. Basiron uses the same disposition of voices and ranges (superius and tenor an octave apart within a range of *Bb–d″*; Mureau: *B–c″*). However, there is no traces of Mureau's trademark, the use of the tension of cadential figuration at the beginning of phrases or along the road to push the music forward, neither do we at any substantial degree meet Mureau's care for adjusting the lower voices to the text. The aesthetic ideals of composing with stretches of canonic imitation and cadences in *fauxbourdon*-style are common to both musicians, but Basiron uses them to expand his phrases over longer stretches. His setting of the fourth line in *Je le scay bien* is characteristic; it goes on for 22 *brevis*-bars in straight octave canon between tenor and superius and really draws out the words. An ear-catching feature is the staggered play with *brevis*-values in triadic formations, which next are elaborated with the help of stepwise motion and differentiated note values, and in the process is chopped up in shorter segments.

Apparently quite satisfied with his efforts of matching Mureau's chanson with his own words and music, Basiron found that the ideas laid down in *Je le scay bien* could be reused to much greater effect in a setting of Mureau's original poem. Basiron's *Tant fort me tarde* uses the same voice disposition and overall range as *Je le scay bien*, but the ranges of the upper voices have been restricted to eight and nine notes respectively,

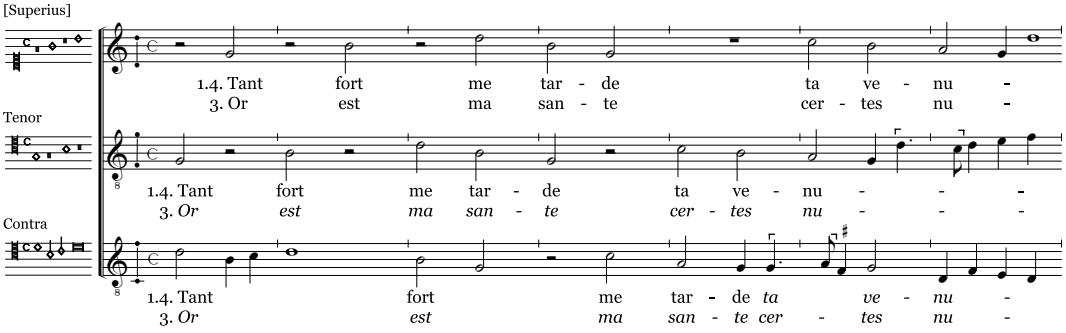
> it lies dead under the tombstone; / it had twenty good years. // I know well what happened to me; the last day I saw you, my lady, / I had such pain that I, by my soul, / did not know what became of my heart.

and the mensuration is now *tempus imperfectum* without diminution. The elements from *Je le scay bien* that he develops are primarily the use of canonic imitation, the passage in staggered descending thirds and fifths, and the drawn out ending in short segments. Basiron has made it possible to respect Mureau's formal layout of the poem and to perform his own setting with a short one-line second *couplet*. But this is as far as his respecting the intended meaning of the poem reaches; his setting seems rather like a travesty of a lovesick courtly song.

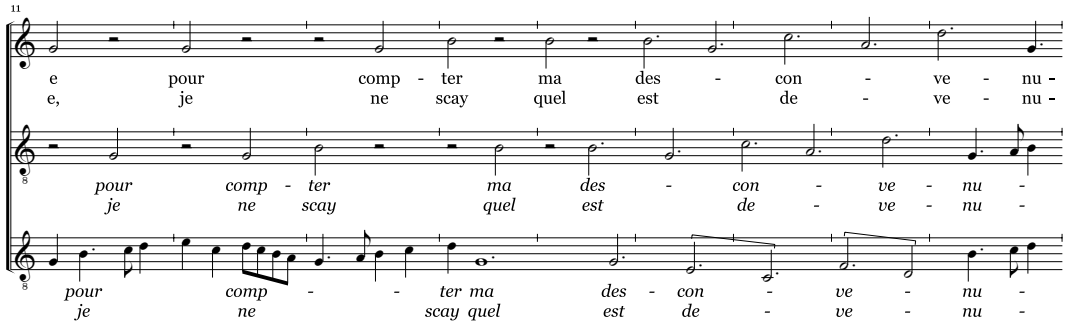
The octave canon between the upper voices is here explored to a much higher degree. It covers most of the song except for the run-ups to the cadences. The canon is flexible, the distance between the voices is fluctuating between a *semibrevis* and a *brevis*. It starts with the tenor in the lead, but this is reversed in the third line, placing the upper voice in the lead until the end. The basic material of the song is presented in the first line: A triad on G is 'chopped up' with rests, and the resulting single notes and short segments sound in alternation or staggered and are followed by conjunct motion up and down (see ex. 4a).

This idea dominates the setting; four out of the five verse lines are set in this 'chopped' fashion. The second line (bars 11–23) starts like the first, but then prolongs the *semibreves* with dots, which have the effect of displacing the feeling of a steady beat. This effect is strongly supported by the contratenor, which enters in *minima*-syncopation already in bar 14 (see ex. 4b). The displacement of the beat and the staggered descending thirds create a floating, 'kaleidoscopic' passage, which is more effective than the corresponding passage in *Je le scay bien*; and it contrasts nicely with the following third verse line – the only one without 'chopping'.

The rondeau's second section starts as a variation of the song's opening, now with the superius in lead. A lively canon in complementary rhythms leads to the fifth and last line, in which the idea of 'chopping' is developed into a sort of antiphony between the upper voices. Here the contratenor has to function as the structural counter voice to the resulting monophony of the upper voices.



Ex. 4a, Philippe Basiron, *Tant fort me tarde* (Laborde, fos. 34^{v}–35), bb. 1–7.



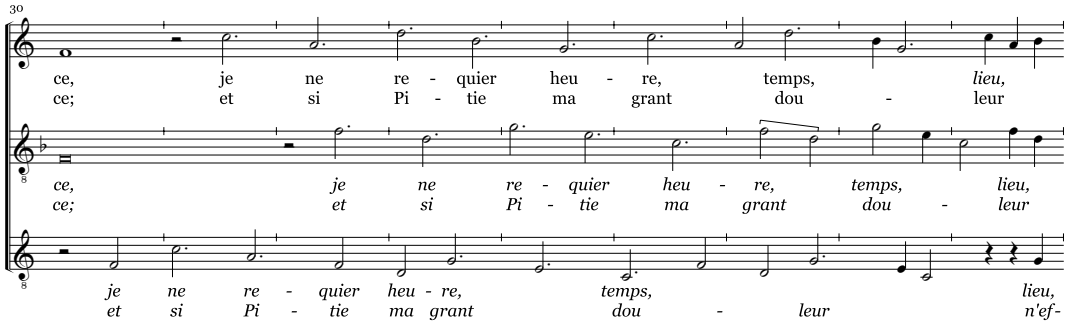
Ex. 4b, Philippe Basiron, *Tant fort me tarde* (Laborde, fos. 34^{v}–35), bb. 11–19.

The canon technique displayed in this setting is extremely simple. Basiron has discovered that everything works out painlessly if he keeps the canonic voices within the range of a fifth (occasionally a sixth) and lets the contratenor take care of everything else below or in between the canonic duet. Passages in *fauxbourdon*-style, which characterized the sound in *Je le scay bien*, are mostly absent. The setting was made with close attention to the text. The 'chopping' patterns are made to fit the words: 'Tant / fort / me tarde' (cf. ex. 4a) or 'pour / compter / ma / desconfort' (ex. 4b) etc. The resulting effect of stammering and word repetitions can only have been designed to make fun of Mureau's sincere love poem, turning it into a travesty of courtly affectation.

Basiron has transformed the poem by Mureau with his music. Mureau's own setting was loyal to the poem, made a sensitive/intimate performance possible, if perhaps a bit conventional. Also Basiron's derived poem in *Je le scay bien* took the meaning of Mureau's poem at face value, even if the music here begins to get the upper hand in long self-growing phrases and canons. In Basiron's setting of *Tant fort me* tarde, one has to take in the words of Mureau differently because of the musical setting, which is flamboyant, ironic and entertaining in a new way, making thoughts about ending 'below the tombstone' appear somewhat stilted or comical. The music has here in a way grabbed the power.[37]

We can now try to track some of the impulses for this change. The stimulus to develop the techniques already explored in *Je le scay bien* was with great probability proffered by a highly successful song by an older composer, namely Caron's famous *Helas, que pourra devenir*, or alternately the impulse was propagated through a song by Johannes Tinctoris, *Helas, le bon temps que j'avoie*.

37 Maybe Basiron's setting gained Mureau's rondeau a place in the popular song repertory. Its refrain is paraphrased in a strophic song, which was printed in two popular song anthologies from the second decade of the fifteenth century. The popular song reuses its first line and many of the original words, but now the female speaker is rather bored with her lover, she cannot be content with only one lover; cf. Brian Jeffery, *Chanson Verse of the Early Renaissance* I–II (London 1971–76), I, 174–75.



Ex. 5, Caron, *Helas m'amour* (Laborde, fos. 12^{v}–13), bb. 30–38.

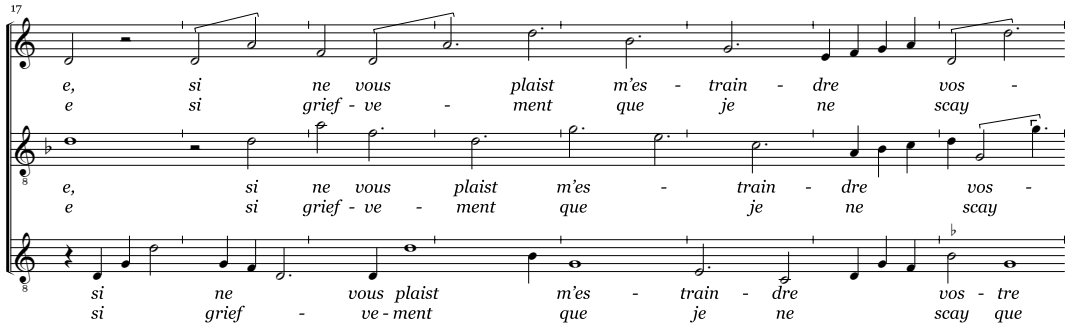
Caron was active during the period 1455–75 in Northern France,[38] and his *Helas* was well known in Basiron's region as is clearly confirmed by its appearance in the Dijon and Wolfenbüttel chansonniers. In Laborde, Caron's setting appears with the rondeau quatrain 'Helas m'amour, ma tresparfaicte amye', which was probably the song's original text.[39] Its presence in these three sources in different versions indicates that the song had been in circulation for some time already in the 1460s. Caron's music demonstrates the same exploration of canon technique as Basiron's and has a spectacular, rhythmically disruptive passage in staggered descending thirds and triads in dotted values sung by all voices (see ex. 5), and Caron's setting might in its own way treat the poem ironically; or maybe we should rather say that Caron was more challenged by the formal layout of the rondeau and by the virtuosity of the free canons than by the words of the poem. In terms of the use of canon at the fifth, rhythmical flexibility and sheer craftsmanship, Caron's song was much more accomplished.

The idea of this ear-catching passage combined with canon could also have reached Basiron with a song by Johannes Tinctoris (*c.*1435–1511), *Helas, le bon temps que j'avoie*, as intermediary. This song is without any doubt modelled on Caron's *Helas*, and it is most probably also composed with the poem 'Helas m'amour, ma tresparfaicte amye' as its original text.[40] Tinctoris here displays his command of the same technical elements as

38 Cf. Rob C. Wegman, 'Fremin le Caron at Amiens: New Documents', in Fitch and Kiel (eds.), *Essays on Renaissance Music*, 10–32.

39 The song is in many sources and appears in several modern editions (cf. Fallows, *A Catalogue*, 181–82, and http://chansonniers.pwch.dk/CH/CH092.html), but only the three 'Loire Valley' chansonniers (Laborde, Dijon and Wolfenbüttel) transmit the complete texts.

40 The earliest source for this song is Seville 5-I-43, which was copied in Italy by a northern scribe around 1480; further on sources and editions, see Fallows, *A Catalogue*, 178, and http://chansonniers.pwch.dk/CH_X/Sev5-I-43_60.html. Nothing speaks against that he composed it during the 1460s, while he worked in the Loire region. It could very well be contemporary with his rondeau, 'Vostre regart si tresfort m'a feru', which the Dijon scribe copied into Dijon and Laborde, in both cases with an ascription to 'Tinctoris', and it seems that the version of Caron's *Helas* that Tinctoris knew was very similar to the version preserved in Laborde.



Ex. 6, Johannes Tinctoris, *Helas le bon temps [Helas m'amour]* (Seville 5-I-43, fos. 44^{v}–45), bb. 17–24.

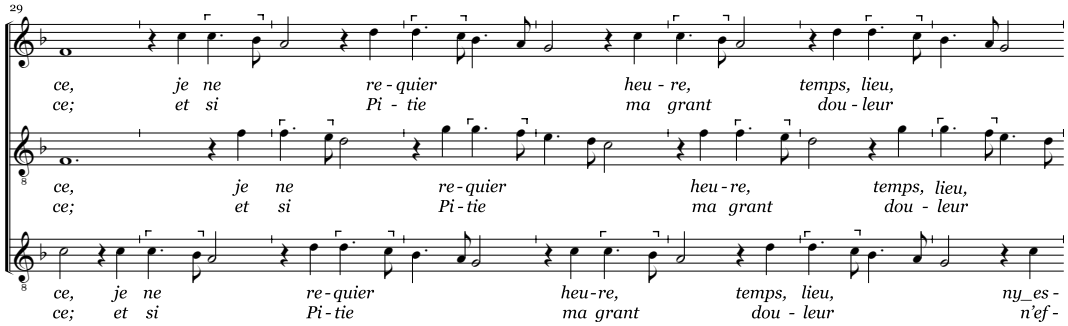
Caron including free canon and the passage in staggered triads in irregular rhythms (see ex. 6; the example shows my reconstruction of the text underlay). Tinctoris was certainly well acquainted with Caron's song. In his *Liber de arte contrapuncti, Liber secundus* of 1477, Capitulum XXXIII, Tinctoris brings a music example from precisely this song.[41]

While the two songs by the older composers, Caron and Tinctoris, are technical complex and skilful, but exhibit a weak coordination between the poetic text and the music, Basiron's simplification of the technical parameters enables him to coordinate the music with the words. This makes it considerably easier to hear what is happening in the song – and why it is funny. An examination of examples 4–6 makes it evident that Basiron and Tinctoris are indebted to Caron who made this effect popular. Of course, the idea of staggered triads are quite obvious in connection with canons in unison or at the octave, and possibly their use was en route to become clichés,[42] but the effective rhythmical disruptions and the placement of the passages in the rondeau form here make the inspirational and competitive threads between the songs and their composers credible.

To continue the discussion of the songs and the reworkings, which Caron's *Helas* inspired, it is interesting to take a look at Heinrich Isaac's interpretation of the song. Isaac (*c.*1452–1517) reworked all the voices of Caron's *Helas*, and moved the music a generation onwards – he too wanted to show off his prowess against this venerated

41 The Latin text can be found at http://boethius.music.indiana.edu/tml/15th/TINCON2; a modern edition in J. Tinctoris, *The Art of Counterpoint (Liber de arte contrapuncti). Translated and edited by Albert Seay* (Musicological Studies and Documents 5, 1961), 130–31. Besides the strong structural similarities and the similar ranges of the voices, the majority of sources for Tinctoris' *Helas* have the same disposition of key signatures, with a flat signature in the tenor only, as in Laborde's version of Caron's *Helas* and in the music example in Tinctoris' *Liber de arte contrapuncti*.

42 Cf. Jenny Hodgson, 'The Illusion of Allusion', in Meconi, *Early Musical Borrowing*, 65–89, and John Milsom, '"*Imitatio*", "Intertextuality", and Early Music', in Suzannah Clark and Elizabeth Eva Leach (eds.), *Citation and Authority in Medieval and Renaissance Musical Culture. Learning from the Learned* (Woodbridge, 2005), 141–51.



Ex. 7, Heinrich Isaac, *Helas que devera [Helas m'amour]* (Florence 229, fos. 5^{v}–6), bb. 29–36.

background. His piece is preserved in five late fifteenth-century sources and in some sixteenth-century MSS and prints as well, among them the Florentine chansonnier, Florence 229, where it appears with the text incipit 'Helas que devera mon cuer' and an ascription to 'Henricus Yzac'; in most sources it has the text incipit 'Helas' only or is without text.[43] Also this composition can in a satisfactory way be combined with the rondeau quatrain, which appears with Caron's song in Laborde; this text transmission apparently was the one known to Isaac as well as to Tinctoris. In a way, Isaac missed the whole point of Caron's rondeau, when he streamlined it into a regular, systematic music typical of a younger generation. Every imitation is now neat and preferably involving all three voices, the intervallic strict canons at the fifth are changed into diatonic canons, and its rhythm is steady without exciting surprises – and the whole is quite elegant. The musical excitement we may experience in Caron's *Helas* – when the staggered descending thirds and triads in dotted values sung by all voices suddenly suspend the steady beat of the preceding long melismas – is here ironed out in favour of clarity and regularity (see ex. 7; the example shows my reconstruction of the text underlay).[44] This simplification of musical expression and its evident kindness to the listener may eventually be seen as a fulfilment of some of the ideas that Basiron was playing with in his *Tant fort me tarde.*

With these last examples we have glimpsed a tendency in which the development of musical ideas has been gaining the upper hand in relation to the texts of the songs. In the case of Basiron (and Isaac to some degree) this has been tempered by a new respect for an intelligible delivery of words. Mureau's care for the words and in some spots for the meaning of the words is only one of the tendencies pointing to the future of the French chanson; another is the extended involvement with imitation and sequences. It is interesting to discover that the two young composers during the years up to and

43 For lists of sources and modern editions, see Howard Mayer Brown, *A Florentine Chansonnier from the Time of Lorenzo the Magnificient. Florence, Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale MS Banco Rari 229* (Monuments of Renaissance Music VII; Chicago, 1983), I, 209.

44 The entire reconstruction can be seen at http://chansonniers.pwch.dk/CH_X/Flo229_006.html.

around 1470 – the preserved material is silent about them composing chansons later on – really took part in developing tendencies, which became of great relevance during the next decades in the music of much more productive composers as Loyset Compere and Alexander Agricola. Another point is that the stylistic foundation for the young composers' working 'at the front of the art' may seem a bit out-dated. They and many of their contemporaries in the same sources used old-fashioned cadences, contratenors above the tenors and passages in *fauxbourdon*-style as valid alternatives to more modern sounding devices as low contratenors, three-part imitation etc. – completely unaware that musicology has classified such traits as stylistic markers of an older generation.

As part of my discussion of the songs of Basiron's youth I have searched for candidates for an attribution to the young Basiron. The search has been directed primarily at the songs that could have been copied along with the ascribed songs from a common exemplar.[45] In Wolfenbüttel between *Nul ne l'a telle*, no. 15 in the manuscript, and no. 18, *Je le scay bien*, both by Basiron, we find two anonymous three-part songs, which are in Laborde and Copenhagen as well, 'Je ne requiers que vostre bien vueillance' and 'Le joli tetin de ma dame'. A study of the sources shows that both of them could have been copied into the three chansonniers along with Basiron's songs by three different scribes using the same or closely related exemplars, and both of them are obvious candidates for an ascription to Basiron. In *Je ne requiers* the composer is experimenting with the musical layout of a rondeau, and in the happy erotic song *Le joli tetin*, the 'chopping up' of melodic lines and the repetition of melodic cells in the final phrase is clearly related to Basiron's *Tant fort me tarde*.[46]

In Laborde four folios have disappeared between folio 21 and folio 22. The careful index to the original contents provided by the Dijon scribe permits us to reconstruct the original sequence of songs: First came Basiron's *De m'esjouir* (fos. 21^{v}–21a), followed by two songs now completely missing, *Ce qu'on fait a catimini* (fos. 21a^{v}–21b) and *Le joli tetin* (fos. 21b^{v}–21d). Everything points at that we must include also *Ce qu'on fait a catimini* among the candidates for an ascription to Basiron, especially as it is present also in Wolfenbüttel (fos. 48^{v}–49).

I think that the song is typical of Basiron and offer it as my last example. If not by Basiron, it still shows the urge to compete with and develop the material in the situation where a composer thinks that he may do better. It is a setting of a macaronic poem, which mixes French with Latin. It is blatantly erotic – and much more cynic than the happy *Le joli tetin*. The poem 'Ce qu'on fait a catimini' was also set by the older composer Gilles Joye (*c.*1425–1483) in a different version. His song is preserved in the Mellon chansonnier, New Haven, Yale University, Beineke Library, MS 91, fos. 10^{v}–11, and in

45 Cf. Christoffersen, *The chansons of Basiron's youth.*

46 See also the editions of the songs at http://chansonniers.pwch.dk/CH/CH015.html and http://chansonniers.pwch.dk/CH/CH017.html.

three later sources.[47] The text in Wolfenbüttel could very well have been revised by the composer with Joye's setting as his model. He has only reworded the lines without Latin words (shown in Italics in the example below), and he reused some words from the older version (shown in bold); all in order to obtain a more effective and rich rhyme word, '-ement' instead of just '-é', and one which contrasts stronger with the first rhyme '-mini'. Not much is changed in the meaning of the poem.

Ce qu'on fait a catimini
touchant multiplicamini,
maiz qu'il soit *fait secretement,*
est ***excuse*** *legerement*
in conspectu Altissimi.

Et pourtant operamini,
mez filles, et letamini,
ce ***n'est*** *que tout esbatement*

ce qu'on fait a catimini
touchant multiplicamini,
maiz qu'il soit fait secretement.

Et se vous ingrossamini,
soit in nomine Domini;
endurez le tout doulcement,
ja n'en perdrez vo saulvement,
maiz que vous confitemini.

Ce qu'on fait a catimini
touchant multiplicamini,
maiz qu'il soit fait secretement,
est excuse legerement
in conspectu Altissimi.[48]

(Wolfenbüttel, fos. 48^{v}–49)

Ce qu'on fait a quatimini
touchant multiplicamini,
mais qu'il soit *bien tenu secre,*
sera tenu pour ***excuse***
in conspectu Altissimi.

Et pourtant operamini,
mes fillez, et letaimini,
car jamais ***n'est*** *revele*

ce qu'on fait a quatimini
touchant multiplicamini,
mais qu'il soit bien tenu secre.

Et se vous ingrossemini,
soit in nomine Domini;
vous aves a proufit ouvre,
qui vous sera tout pardonne,
mais que vous confitemini.

Ce qu'on fait a quatimini
touchant multiplicamini,
mais qu'il soit bien tenu secre,
sera tenu pour excuse
in conspectu Altissimi.

(Mellon, fos. 10^{v}–11)

47 Edited in Leeman L. Perkins and H. Garey (eds.), *The Mellon Chansonnier* I–II (New Haven, 1979), no. 9. The anonymous setting is edited in Martella Gutiérrez-Denhoff (ed.), *Der Wolfenbütteler Chansonnier. Herzog August Bibliothek, Wolfenbüttel, Codex Guelf. 287 Extrav.* (Musikalischer Denkmäler X; Mainz, 1988), no. 39, and at http://chansonniers.pwch.dk/CH/CH237.html.

48 Translation: What you do covertly / concerning 'let us multiply', / as long as it is done secretly, / is easily excused / in the sight of the Most High. // And then, let us do it, / my girls, and enjoy, / it is nothing but good sport / what you do covertly / concerning 'let us multiply', / as long as it is done secretly. // And if your bellies grow, / let it be in the name of the Lord; / endure it all sweetly, / you will not miss your salvation by that, / provided that you confess. // What you do covertly / concerning 'let us multiply', / as long as it is done secretly, / is easily excused / in the sight of the Most High.

The setting is light-hearted and much funnier than the quite pedestrian setting by Joye. It uses a structural duet of superius and tenor an octave apart complemented by a contratenor, which for much of the time keeps below the tenor, but rises above it in the first line. The song opens in what sounds like a three-part imitation; but soon after the entry of the last voice, it turns into an extended passage in *fauxbourdon*-style that underscores the words 'fait a catimini' (do covertly) with striking clarity. The rest of the words are set tongue-in-cheek using flexible canonic imitation on triadic motives and chasing descending thirds with lots of syncopation, which disturbs the steady beat. The second section of the rondeau runs the lines together and accumulates the syncopations, so that the last line of the refrain and of the *tierce* are performed by the upper voice off-beat all the way through: the assurances to young girls, 'in conspectu Altissimi' and 'maiz que vous confitemini', are apparently not quite trustworthy.

The few traces we have of the two young musician's activities as chanson composers can be interpreted as indicators of their efforts to improve their social standings and cultural capital by displaying capabilities in music and poetry. The targets of Basiron's efforts were probably to be found in courtly circles, and Mureau's were his patrons in the Chartres area. They show a competitive edge that may be connected with the nature of their service in the church. Both were choirmasters, *maître d'enfans, maître de grammaire* or *magister puerum*, and thus responsible, wholly or in part, for a musical and educational institution within the church, the *maîtrise*. Tinctoris worked in Orléans as *succentor* at the cathedral and studied canon law at the university in the early 1460s, and according to his own account in *De inventione et usu musicae*, Tinctoris spent some time in the 1460s as teacher of music to the choirboys at the Chartres Cathedral, probably teaching side by side with Mureau.[49]

As Paula Higgins pointed out, the role of the choirmaster became more important during the middle of the century as the education of singers able to master polyphony came in still greater demand.[50] A choirmaster renowned in polyphonic music could add considerably to the prestige of the institution and help to attract gifted pupils and not least rich donations from patrons. Maybe we should understand the choirmaster's endeavours in poetry and song as an artistic bridge to the secular world – a good standing according to the cultural values of this sphere could only be to advantage. Naturally, this increased the demands on the qualifications of the choirmaster, and if wanting, a master was quickly replaced by another. Mureau's lifelong attachment to the *maîtrise* of Chartres may have been something of a record of staying power, but Basiron's more than four

49 Cf. Ronald Woodley, 'Johannes Tinctoris: A Review of the Documentary Biographical Evidence', *Journal of the American Musicological Society,* 34 (1981), 217–48 (at 229), and Tinctoris' text at http://boethius.music.indiana.edu/tml/15th/TININV.

50 Cf. Paula Higgins, 'Musical "Parents" and Their "Progeny": The Discourse of Creative Patriarchy in Early Modern Europe', in J.A. Owens and A. Cummings (eds.), *Music in Renaissance Cities and Courts: Studies in Honor of Lewis Lockwood* (Warren, MI, 1996), 169–86 (at 173 ff.), and *idem,* 'Musical Politics in Late Medieval Poitiers: A Tale of Two Choirmasters', in Higgins, *Antoine Busnoys*, 155–74.

years in Bourges were respectable too. It is highly probable that they all knew each other personally. Not only did choirmasters circulate between positions and therefore kept an eye on open positions, but in this case there are many possibilities for personal meetings with Mureau as the central figure. He was a colleague of Tinctoris in Chartres, maybe he had even studied at the university of Orléans along with Tinctoris to qualify for the post as *maître de grammaire*, and later he held land near Bourges, which strengthened his ties to this area. The upcoming composer Basiron on his side probably did not remain stationary at home. In 1469 he did journey to Paris to be approved in his new position as *magister puerum* by the treasurer of the Sainte-Chapelle who resided in Paris.[51] En route it would be natural to stop over in Orléans or Chartres. To become personally acquainted with his somewhat older colleagues, Mureau and Tinctoris, could evidently mean a lot to the young Basiron. He may have had opportunities to absorb different impulses from them; from Tinctoris the advantages in learning from musical precursors and trying to imitate and surpass them, and from Mureau possibly the power of poetry!

Postscript April 2017

Late in 2014 a small music manuscript was sold at an art sale in Brussels. Shortly afterwards the buyer approached the Alamire Foundation for a musicological evaluation. The manuscript appeared to be a new member of the group of music manuscripts known as the 'Loire Valley' chansonniers from the 1470s. Moreover, it was in pristine condition without losses of folios and in its original binding. In 2016 the manuscript was bought by the King Baudouin Foundation and deposited on permanent loan with the Alamire Foundation in Leuven. It will be presented to the public at an exhibition in New York in July 2017 under its new call name, the *Leuven Chansonnier.*

The songbook contains 50 songs, all for three voices except for one four-part song, and all without composer attributions. The majority of its repertory of French chansons and one small motet belongs to the core repertory of the Loire Valley chansonniers, but it also adds twelve new songs. This 'new' chansonnier on fos. 27^{v}–29 brings the well-known song *Je ne fays plus, je ne dys ne escrips* in the same musical version as it is found in the manuscript Florence 176. In the new source, however, it is accompanied by the complete poem. In this way my statement that 'None of the chansons by Mureau can be found in the "Loire Valley" chansonniers' (p. 6) is proved wrong. The single hit song by Gilles Mureau did in fact make it into the Leuven chansonnier.

51 Higgins, *Tracing*, 7.

Abstract

The cultivation of poetry in fixed forms, known as the *Art de seconde rhétorique,* was important to the leading classes of society in fifteenth-century France. Fluency in composing poems and in conversing on literary subjects was desirable as means to support social advance and recognition – not least among the ambitious strata of clerks, lawyers and merchants. This study wants to raise the question whether a similar desire to participate in the greater cultural field were part of the driving forces behind the composing of polyphonic chansons. The question is reviewed by examining the few preserved chansons from around 1470 by two composers who made their entire careers in the service of the church as singers and choirmasters. Gilles Mureau (*c.*1442–1512) was around 1470 well established in a life-long career at the Chartres cathedral, while the slightly younger Philippe Basiron (*c.*1448–1491) already had reached the pinnacle of his career as *magister puerum* of the Sainte Chappelle in Bourges, a position he apparently left in 1474.

Both musicians presumably composed chansons in their youth only, in their twenties, and they demonstrate an acute awareness of the contemporary poetic scene. We can be quite sure that Mureau wrote his own texts and used the whole range of artful poetic skills, and when composing he had the performances by the choirboys in mind. Basiron reacted in his production to this sort of songs, among them one of Mureau's, by borrowing and rewriting poetry and by transforming musical ideas into his own creations.

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Breakthrough and Collapse in Carl Nielsen's *Sinfonia semplice*

Christopher Tarrant

Discussion of deformational procedures in the large-scale symphonic repertoire has largely ignored Carl Nielsen's music. Such an approach has in the last ten years been applied to the late-eighteenth-century Viennese repertoire, largely owing to the long-awaited publication of Hepokoski's and Darcy's *Elements of Sonata Theory* in 2006. Hepokoski's work on formal deformations, however, can be traced at least as far back as the early 1990s with the publication of *Sibelius Symphony No. 5*, his first attempt at setting out five distinct 'reassessed compositional principles' relating to Sibelius's generation of composers.[1] He wrote that 'The 1889–1914 modernists sought to shape the earlier stages of their careers as individualistic seekers after the musically "new", the bold, the controversial, and the idiosyncratic in structure and colour.'[2] But although in 1993 Hepokoski asserted that Mahler's, Strauss's, and Sibelius's music 'should be considered the principle symphonic representatives of a generation that faced the same kinds of compositional and institutional challenges, however their individual solutions might have differed', an implied second order of composers is tagged onto this assertion: 'doubtless along with Elgar, and *probably* Nielsen and Glazunov as well'.[3] This view, it would seem, is representative of Nielsen's marginal position in 1990s scholarship as an important European symphonist. Such marginalisation is also evident in D. Kern Holoman's edited collection, *The Nineteenth-Century Symphony*, in which the later chapters address composers who were writing symphonies well after 1900, thereby including the members of Hepokoski's '1865 generation' in a 'long' nineteenth century. But while Strauss, Mahler, Sibelius, and Elgar are each treated to a dedicated chapter, Nielsen and Glazunov are given mention only *en passant*.[4] It is surprising, then, that in the intervening years theories of deformation were largely – almost exclusively – directed at a restrictedly Classical instrumental repertoire. The decision that such concepts as 'deformation' and 'rotational form' were fundamental for an understanding of Mozart's

1 James Hepokoski, *Sibelius Symphony No. 5* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 6–7.

2 Ibid. 3.

3 Ibid. 4 (my italics). He later modified his position, stating that 'Notwithstanding the substantial differences among them (including the divergent cultural politics of their music's reception history), all six, probably along with a few others, are best considered as a group facing the same kinds of compositional problems.' James Hepokoski, 'Sibelius', in D. Kern Holoman (ed.), *The Nineteenth-Century Symphony* (New York: Schirmer, 1997), 417.

4 Kern Holoman, *The Nineteenth-Century Symphony*.

and Haydn's music, and that they did not, after all, have anything particularly to do with modernism, represented a major turning point in Hepokoski's theory of form away from the 1865 generation of early modernists and towards a more homogeneous repertoire of Viennese classics. This turn was further magnified by the ongoing battle between Hepokoski who advocated his own Sonata Theory, and Caplin's opposing predilection for formal functionality.[5] Even in this exclusive context, Sibelius's music is discussed once in *Elements of Sonata Theory*, Strauss's twice, Mahler's seven times, but Nielsen's is overlooked altogether. More recently, and since *Elements of Sonata Theory* has had the time to be assimilated into the discipline (to the extent that it now represents a new orthodoxy), Nielsen has begun to emerge as an important sonata-deformation virtuoso.[6] But his place as a contributor to symphonic innovation is far from secure: Julian Horton's 2013 study of 'cyclical tonal schemes of 163 symphonies composed between 1800 and 1911' fails to mention Nielsen's first three contributions, although his contemporaries Stanford, Elgar, Mahler, and Glazunov all enjoy pride of place.[7]

There still remains a great deal of untapped analytical potential in Nielsen's symphonic sonata forms, not least in his sixth and final symphony which has suffered so much over the decades from sustained criticism from analysts and commentators for its supposed ill-conception and flawed structures. In this article I will argue that Carl Nielsen's *Sinfonia semplice* (1925) contains examples of a particular formal deformation – the 'failed breakthrough' – which generates some unusual narrative implications. Adorno's three 'essential genres' in Mahler's music ('breakthrough', 'suspension', and 'fulfilment') provide a useful point of orientation when discussing symphonic music around 1900. But whereas the breakthrough in Mahler's music is usually understood as an emancipatory agency, in Carl Nielsen's Sixth Symphony the trajectory towards fulfilment is repeatedly undermined. It is not my intention to give a full account of the symphony, but rather to nuance and contextualise our current understanding of it as an important contribution to the early modernism of 'the 1865 generation' identified by Hepokoski. With reference to recent critical responses by Monahan and Almén to Northrop Frye's narrative archetypes, the terms of which I will explain below, I argue that these collapsing passages result in effects of pathos in the first movement, and bathos in the finale. While musicologists and critics have historically expressed a dissatisfaction with these passages, deriding them as weak or anti-climactic, this article attempts analytically to situate them as important examples of expressive deformations.

5 See William E. Caplin, *Classical Form* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), and Pieter Bergé (ed.), *Musical Form, Forms, & Formenlehre* (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 2010).

6 See Daniel M. Grimley, *Carl Nielsen and the Idea of Modernism* (Woolbridge: The Boydell Press, 2010), 96–131.

7 Julian Horton, 'Tonal strategies in the nineteenth-century symphony', in Julian Horton (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to the Symphony* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 252–59.

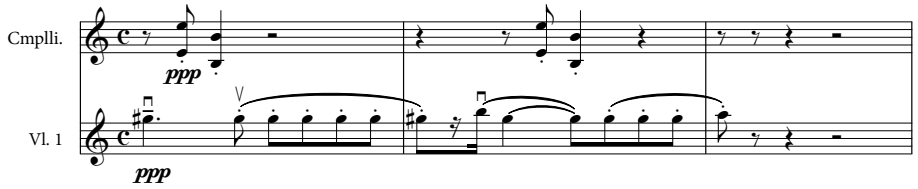
While it is hoped that this article will help to enrich the theoretical and analytical debates and recent controversies surrounding large-scale sonata composition in the twentieth century by claiming a more central place for Carl Nielsen's music in those debates, it is also hoped, conversely, that a discussion involving sonata form theory, voice leading, and narrative theory will engage and contribute to current trends and agendas in Nielsen scholarship. Principal among these for the present article is the notion of a late style in Nielsen's music that began to emerge during the First World War, and of which the Sixth Symphony is an important example. This can be broadly identified in structural and technical features such as a return to formal concision, an emphasis on contrapuntal textures (especially fugue), more soloistic use of orchestral forces, and an increasingly ambitious treatment of dissonance at different levels in the structure, among others. Such examples of late style might also include the *Chaconne*, Op. 32 (1917), the *Theme and Variations*, Op. 40 (1917), the Wind Quintet, Op. 43 (1922), the Fifth Symphony, Op. 50 (1922), the Clarinet Concerto, Op. 57 (1928), and the *Three Motets*, Op. 55 (1929).

First, though, I would like to situate Nielsen's engagement with the breakthrough in context. While Arnold Whittall is, perhaps, right to say that Carl Nielsen was 'in various productive respects, independent of the German late romantic symphonic mainstream, culminating in Mahler,' the breakthrough which is typically attributed to Mahler's music, especially after Adorno, is the subject of an innovative reinterpretation by Nielsen.[8] The orthodox view of the breakthrough as an emancipatory musical agency rings true in many cases in Mahler, especially in his First Symphony, but also in the music of Sibelius: the breakthrough in the Fifth Symphony is probably the most famous example, and in such cases it typically has the effect of hastening tonal closure. For Mahler, in the first movement of his First Symphony the breakthrough comes at the moment of recapitulation, but what follows, as Adorno observed, functions more as a coda than an orthodox recapitulation.[9] In Sibelius's Fifth Symphony the breakthrough emerges in the slow, meandering first movement, propelling the music directly into the contrasting Scherzo, which is far more tonally directionalised. For Nielsen, however, the effect is far less clear. Some elements of the Mahlerian breakthrough are conserved in the first movement of the *Sinfonia semplice*: notably, the premonition, which occurs near the beginning of the development section (b. 129), ex. 1a, and which recurs at the moment of breakthrough just before the recapitulation (b. 171), ex. 1b.[10]

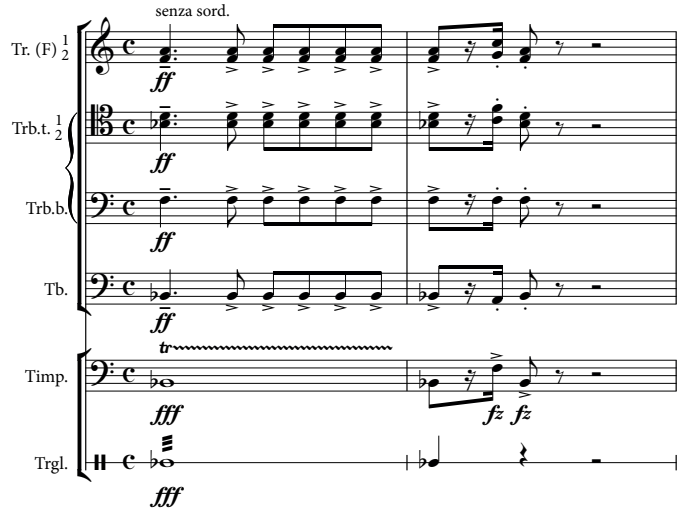
8 Arnold Whittall, *Musical Composition in the Twentieth Century* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 52.

9 Theodor W. Adorno, *Mahler: A Musical Physiognomy*, transl. Edmund Jephcott (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992), 13.

10 The full score is available as PDF in the critical edition of Carl Nielsen Works, vol. II/6, at http://www.kb.dk/en/nb/dcm/cnu/download.html



Ex. 1a, Premonition, the new theme, *Sinfonia semplice*, I, bb. 129–31.



Ex. 1b, Breakthrough, *Sinfonia semplice*, I, bb. 171–72.

In Mahler's case, this premonition is originally heard quietly as a horn fanfare – a sonority that, as Scheinbaum has observed, is inextricably linked with the breakthrough topic:

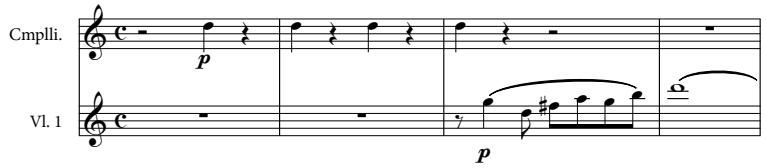
> Adorno consistently locates a breakthrough when a movement seems intruded upon by massed brass instruments playing fanfare figures and chorale-like melodies; these topics and their sudden harmonic swerves are set with an instrumentation that is more or less fixed.[11]

In the *Sinfonia semplice* the premonition is heard as a new theme delicately scored for strings (ex. 1a). It is here that we can detect some of the innocence that David Fanning has identified, which he argues is to be lost or corrupted later in the movement.[12] Where

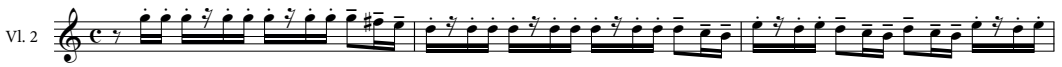
11 J. J. Scheinbaum, 'Adorno's Mahler and the Timbral Outsider', *Journal of the Royal Musical Association*, 131/1 (2006), 49.

12 'The quality of brutalisation seems to arise from a combination of melodic, dynamic and timbral intensification, while rhythmic identity is preserved … In the Sixth Symphony brutalization is elevated to a structural and expressive principle, compensating for downgraded harmonic means of intensification and conveying an underlying message of corrupted simplicity.' David Fanning, 'Progressive Thematicism in Nielsen's Symphonies', in Mina Miller (ed.), *The Nielsen Companion* (London: Faber, 1994), 196–200.

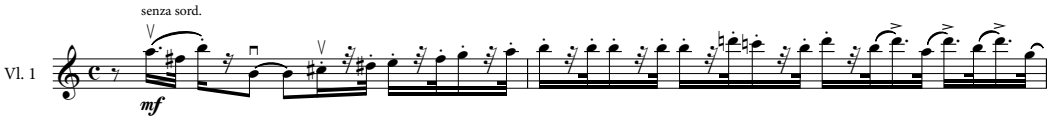
these two examples differ is at the moment of breakthrough itself. In Mahler's case, it brings with it the triumphant return of the tonic, and the bypass of the symmetrical recapitulation. In Nielsen's Sixth Symphony we are presented with the opposite, a collapse followed by a recapitulation that is barred from reattaining the tonic.



Ex. 2a, Lyrical theme, *Sinfonia semplice*, I, bb. 1–4.



Ex. 2b, March, *Sinfonia semplice*, I, bb. 8–10.



Ex. 2c, Fugue theme, *Sinfonia semplice*, I, bb. 54–55.

The symphony begins in G major with a lyrical theme (ex. 2a) that could be an example of the 'narrator frame', somewhat redolent of other 'semplice' symphonies in the same key, notably Dvořák's Eighth and Mahler's Fourth. Adorno's observation that, in Mahler's G major Symphony, 'everything is composed within quotation marks – because the music says: Once upon a time there was a sonata', could be equally applicable to Nielsen's music.[13] The 'new theme' (ex. 1a) which emerges near the beginning of the development section presents one of the few relatively uncomplicated musical statements in the movement – a period of respite E major. This, in my view, is an example of the 'hypothetical music' that Seth Monahan has referred to in Mahler's symphonies.[14] It is presented as an idealised and childlike proposition, bracketed off from the brutal present tense of the fugue. It proposes a situation in the sonata process where such an ideal state might be presented in the tonic. When this new theme reemerges later in the movement at b. 171, however, its role is reversed as it shatters the thematic framework of the movement, and is presented in B flat, a tritone away from its original appearance, and mirroring E major from the other side of the original tonic of the piece, G.

13 Adorno, *Mahler*, 96.

14 Seth Monahan, *Mahler's Symphonic Sonatas* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2015), 26.

Adorno's and Hepokoski's characterisations of the breakthrough hold true, in my view, for Nielsen's Sixth: Adorno wrote that the breakthrough, 'shatter[s] the walls of the securely constructed form', and Hepokoski has written that it, 'radically redefines the character and course of the movement … typically render[ing] a normative, largely symmetrical recapitulation invalid.'[15] But in this work it is enacted in a radically different way. In terms of narrative trajectories, the first movement of Sibelius's Fifth charts a path from the difficult, dark, cadenceless opening to the energetic, directionalised Scherzo. In the case of Nielsen's Sixth, the opposite is the case as the movement seems to have been barred from reattaining either the uncomplicated G major tonality or the child-like march (ex. 2b) with which it began, and eventually is compelled to settle on a degraded A flat. This invites some speculation as to whether the breakthrough itself, in its original, positive sense as it has been directed at the music of Mahler and Sibelius, may not be the focus here. Rather, it may be advantageous to consider Adorno's lesser-known category of 'collapse', since this is what the music does after its bungled breakthrough attempt, and which can be traced to a particular harmony on which the music comes to rest (b. 185) – a harmony which contains all the notes of E major, looking back to the innocence of the premonition, and all the notes of the enharmonic equivalent of A flat major, the remote destination of the movement (see Fig. 1).[16] Rather than breaking out into a new, more fulfilling and emancipatory musical form, the collapse disables the movement from attaining its proper tonal goal. This is clearly audible on the surface of the music as the 'new theme', now presented as a brass bombardment, tumbles into a complex harmony which, when thinned out, comes to rest on a bare semitone between B and C at b. 187. Furthermore, the combination of E major and A flat major is a collision of two tonal stations which are then forcibly torn apart, leading to the abandonment of the childlike innocence of E, buoyed up by its four sharps, and the eventual acceptance of the rather more experienced A flat, heavily laden with its four flats.[17]

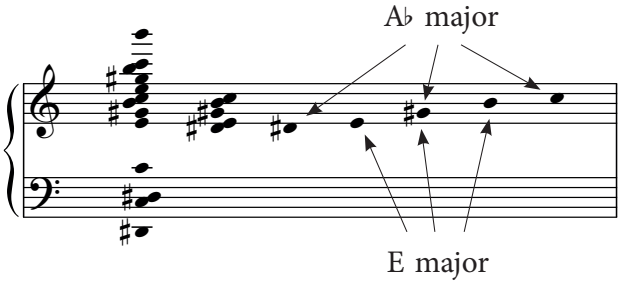


Figure 1. The 'collapse' chord which appears at b. 185 in its original orchestral spacing and in a reduced form showing its pitch content.

15 Hepokoski, *Sibelius*, 6.

16 See Adorno, *Mahler*, 44–46.

17 My sincere thanks go to Julian Horton for his help in making this observation.

It is possible here to identify an ironic response to the nineteenth-century symphonic inheritance, and to Nielsen's own earlier work. The trend in his pre-war symphonies (by which I mean Nos. 1–4, and not the Fifth) is to set a 'problem' in the exposition which inevitably is solved. The Sixth Symphony is different because of the collapse which permanently shatters the movement's form, as well as the tonal symmetry of the symphony as a whole. Although directional tonality, as Krebs and others have pointed out, is a commonplace in Nielsen's music, it is typically treated as a positive musical narrative, often outlining the interval of a fifth. This is the case, for example, in both outer movements of the *Sinfonia Espansiva*, which trace a path from D to A – an aspirational gesture in line with much of Nielsen's early and mature music. The first movement of the *Semplice*, which rises by a semitone between beginning and end, is a different beast entirely.[18] Although A flat minor is converted to A flat major at the very end, there is a particular sense of irony in its conclusion as the two contrapuntal bassoon parts come to rest on the Neapolitan, A flat, in the final bars of the movement.

This begs a comparison with the narratives generated in some of Hans Christian Andersen's stories, which finish on a darkly moralistic note and with a kind of double result – the story reaches a conclusion, but not the happy ending we may have anticipated. The action comes to rest, but in an unexpected place owing to circumstances beyond the characters' control. The adventure has changed the complexion of the protagonist's worldview, and disturbed their previously innocent existence. An example of this can be found in the case of the toy sweethearts, the Top and the Ball, who, when reunited, find that their child-like love has faded. The story concludes: 'And the Top went back to the living room and was made much of, but nothing was heard of the Ball, and the Top never mentioned his old love again. Love dies when your sweetheart has lain soaking in the gutter for five years – in fact, you take care not to recognize her again when you meet her in the dustbin.'[19] The End. Colin Roth has argued for a fairytale reading of the symphony, noting, importantly, that the Danish word for fairy tale, *eventyr*, stands between such an incomplete translation and the modern English word 'adventure'.[20] H. C. Andersen is notoriously cruel to his characters. If we are to accept, as Susan McClary suggested, that sonata form after around 1800 is an unfolding tonal drama negotiated by an implied subject, and that this still holds true in Nielsen's music, then I would suggest that the events of the first movement's sonata form are readily compa-

18 Krebs writes that 'The last two symphonies … move beyond late nineteenth-century tonal practice … the Sixth in particular, might well repay investigation from analytical vantage points other than those employed in Simpson's book and in this [Krebs's] chapter.' Harald Krebs, 'Tonal Structure in Nielsen's Symphonies: Some Addenda to Robert Simpson's Analyses', in Miller (ed.), *The Nielsen Companion*, 247.

19 Hans Christian Andersen, *Fairy tales: A Selection*, trans. L. W. Kingsland (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1959, reissued 2009), 213.

20 Colin Roth, 'Carl Nielsen and the Danish Tradition of Story-Telling', *Carl Nielsen Studies*, 4 (2009), 172.

rable with common tropes found in fairytales.[21] These include narrative ideas such as the ostracised protagonist (The Old House, Thumbelina, The Ugly Duckling), topical ideas such as tin soldiers (The Steadfast Tin Soldier, The Old House), and especially the brutally desolate conclusion (The Little Match Girl, The Top and the Ball, The Flying Trunk). The first movement of the *semplice* exhibits all three of these: the tin soldiers hardly require explanation, but the idea of the ostracised protagonist and the pathetic conclusion (marooned on the Neapolitan) I hope will become clearer as a result of the analysis presented below.

It is instructive to consider where this form sits in relation to Northrop Frye's four narrative archetypes. Studies of musical narrative fell into decline from around the mid-1990s, largely, according to Byron Almén's account, owing to the influential critiques of Carolyn Abbate and Jean-Jacques Nattiez.[22] In the last decade, however, narrative seems to have undergone a musicological renaissance and has in some cases become an important condition for theory and analysis, not least in Hepokoski's and Darcy's *Elements Sonata Theory* where they state that 'Metaphors of narrativity are not inevitably implied – the external narrator and the tale told – but in some cases they can spring to mind and appear to be hermeneutically relevant.'[23]

For now, though, I draw more specifically on Seth Monahan's employment of Frye in his work on Mahler's sonata narratives, partially refracted through Byron Almén's critical responses which paved the way for specifically musical narrative approaches during the 2000s. Since musical narratives tend to be more 'slippery' than literary ones, it will be useful briefly to rehearse the terms of Frye's narrative archetypes before attempting to employ them. There are two axes that we must first consider, and through whose combination Frye produced the four basic narrative types. The first axis concerns the presence of an order (social, cultural, political, musical) on the one hand, and a disruptive agency (however defined) on the other. The second axis concerns the focalisation of the narrative, i.e., with whom the reader is invited to sympathise. So, if the reader's sympathies lie with the order which is being put in jeopardy by a disruptive external agency then this results in a romantic narrative (should the order prevail) or an ironic one (if the order is defeated). On the other hand, if the reader sympathises with the disruption in the face, perhaps, of an evil or oppressive status quo, then a comic narrative is produced (if the disruption succeeds in reforming or overturning the order) or a tragic one (if the emancipatory agency is defeated by the order). Almén reproduces these four narrative types in short form as follows:

21 See Susan McClary, 'Constructions of Subjectivity in Schubert's Music', in Philip Brett, Gary Thomas, and Elizabeth Wood (eds.), *Queering the Pitch: The New Gay and Lesbian Musicology* (London: Routledge, 1994), 205–34.

22 See Byron Almén, 'Narrative Archetypes: A Critique, Theory, and Method of Narrative Analysis', *Journal of Music Theory*, 47/1 (2003), 1.

23 James Hepokoski and Warren Darcy, *Elements of Sonata Theory* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 305.

Emphasis on victory:
Comedy – victory of transgression over order
Romance – victory of order over transgression

Emphasis on defeat:
Irony/satire – defeat of order by transgression
Tragedy – defeat of transgression by order[24]

This is all well and good at the level of broad strokes, even for complex symphonic sonata forms such as those that Monahan analyses in *Mahler's Symphonic Sonatas*.[25] A textbook major-mode sonata, for example, in which the secondary theme in the (transgressive) dominant is brought into the tonic order in the recapitulation seems to be an uncontroversially romantic narrative (assuming that the listener does not have a perverse desire for the dominant to prevail at the end). Examples of particular narratives do not have to become particularly nuanced before the situation becomes considerably more difficult to navigate, though. Frye noted that *The Merchant of Venice* 'seems almost an experiment in coming as close as possible to upsetting the comic balance … If the dramatic role of Shylock is ever so slightly exaggerated … it is upset, and the play becomes the tragedy of the Jew of Venice with a comic epilogue.'[26] This is to say, oftentimes productions will invite us to sympathise with Shylock and therefore radically reshape our experience of narrative in the play.

Carl Nielsen's music continued to engage the basic points of semiotic reference that prevailed in the nineteenth century. The minor mode, for instance, was still something that a piece of music could aim to 'overcome', or, in the tragic narrative, be overcome by.[27] Nielsen continued to rely on important moments of structural closure and confirmation to underwrite these points of reference, and therefore their presence on the one hand, or conspicuous absence or failure to materialise on the other, continue to be important considerations for a close reading of his music. However, at a deeper level of structure, considerable care and nuance is required in order to comprehend the complex musical narratives that are in evidence in his symphonies. These questions of narrative are the result of a collection of innovations and aspects of Nielsen's idiolect which are too numerous for an exhaustive discussion here. I will, however, discuss those that I consider to impact most profoundly on what we hear in Nielsen's music and, just as importantly in such a discussion of musical narrative, how Nielsen invites us to hear it.

24 Almén, 'Narrative Archetypes', 18.
25 Monaghan, *Mahler's Symphonic Sonatas*.
26 Northrop Frye, *Anatomy of Criticism* (Princeton University Press, 1957), 165.
27 Hepokoski and Darcy, *Elements*, 306, argue this in the context of the late-eighteenth-century sonata.

The treatment of tonality in the Sixth Symphony is quite unlike the kind of directional tonality we find in Schubert, Bruckner, Wagner, or Mahler, in that the two keys are not treated as a single tonal focus. But nor is it similar to Elgar's treatment as Paul Harper-Scott has observed in the First Symphony, in which an overarching 'immuring' tonic (i.e., one that frames another key area, thereby 'imprisoning' it) is returned to after most of the action has taken place in the orbit of an 'immured' tonic (i.e., the 'imprisoned' key area which is closely associated with the desire to break free). Like Elgar's music, Nielsen's is not conventionally tonal, but nevertheless relies on many inherited conventions of tonality, and in my view demands an adapted form of Schenkerian theory in which different forms of the *Ursatz* are operative in different parts of the movement, not least because of the key structures in operation: although tonal unity has been demonstrated in pieces which modulate from beginning to end between keys related by consonant intervals, this has not yet been demonstrated in a piece, such as the first movement of Nielsen's Sixth, which modulates through a dissonant interval such as a semitone. It is therefore important to consider some of the challenges that such a structure poses for a voice-leading analysis. Grimley has noted that in Nielsen's idiolect, from at least as early as the Third Symphony, there is some kind of rupture in the middle-ground and that 'chromatic progressions ... cannot ultimately be heard as diminutions of underlying diatonic structures, and it is difficult to construct models of voice-leading that demonstrate complete coherence between foreground and upper middleground levels.'[28] While this may be one of the main analytical challenges of the *Espansiva*, in the context of the *semplice* it presents an analytical opportunity, since, as I shall argue below, the first movement is largely *about* a broken structural order.

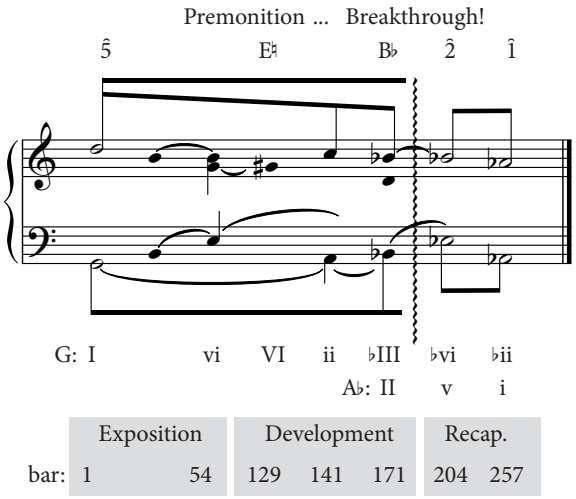


Figure 2. A Schenkerian reduction of the first movement.

28 Grimley, *Carl Nielsen*, 101.

The graph in Figure 2 shows that in the first place, G major is prolonged, with the secondary zone outlining E minor. E continues to be prolonged into the development section, after which we begin to see further elaboration of a stepwise ascent to the dominant. At the halfway point, however, the elaboration of G major collapses into G minor as B flat is reached. This is the moment of the breakthrough, and accompanying collapse, which is the catalyst for the abandonment of the *Ursatz* and the defection to a new one which elaborates the final tonal station, A flat minor. This involves the radical and catastrophic reinterpretation of B flat from functioning as the flattened mediant of G major to the supertonic of A flat minor, and which underpins the sense of abandonment and rupture which is often attributed to the piece. Also of interest here, taking Adorno's Mahlerian categories even further, is the immediate fallout of the breakthrough which could be an example of a suspension field. Although considerably shorter than those found in the first movements of Mahler's Sixth and Seventh symphonies, the passage beginning at b. 187 which rests on the bare semitone between B and C creates a strange stasis, after which the tonal argument, beginning with the recapitulation in E flat minor, never recovers. While Mahler's categories of breakthrough, suspension, and fulfilment were intended for a particular repertoire of symphonic music, they were used, at least by Adorno himself, as a means of discussing separate, however interrelated, features in Mahler's symphonies. Monahan and others have drawn extensively on these topics in their discussion of Mahler's symphonies, especially in terms of musical narrative, but Nielsen presents us with a new problem to address. An understanding of narrative in nineteenth-century sonata forms will generally rely on fixed points of tonal and structural reference. If, for example, the oppressive minor mode is not escaped, we might interpret the structure as a tragic narrative (i.e. a failure), but the rules of the sonata game are essentially still observed. The extra layer of failure in Nielsen's Sixth Symphony is a symptom of the fact that the emphasis on defeat penetrates through the organising structures of tonality: the very fabric of tonal syntax (not normally in question in nineteenth-century tragic and ironic sonata narratives) is undermined, and the guarantees of tonal resolution and formal coherence are no longer reliable. This therefore begs the question: what are the ramifications of a narrative that stages the overturning of a set of musical conditions which do not simply define the environment or status quo within the music itself (as in nineteenth-century symphonic practice), but the very fabric of its symbolic order?

Section	Bar	Theme	Key
Exposition	1	Lyrical Theme (P)	G major
	8	March (P)	G major
	33	March (P)	E flat major
	54	Fugue (S)	E minor
	81	Discursive Codetta (C)	
Development	110	Lyrical Theme (P)	F sharp major
	129	PREMONITION ('New Theme')	E major
	141	Fugue (S)	A minor
	152	Lyrical Theme + March (developmental)	
	171	BREAKTHROUGH ('New Theme')	B flat major
	185	Collapse Chord	E major/A flat major
	187	Retransition, energy loss	
Recapitulation	204	Lyrical Theme (P)	E flat minor
	237	Fugue (S)	F minor
Coda	257	Lyrical theme (P)	A flat minor/major

Table 1. A table showing the first movement's sonata form.

This is a challenge to the analyst owing to the extreme complexity of the music. In Almén's 2003 article, the case study that he used to illustrate an application of narrative archetypes was the C minor *Prèlude* from Chopin's Op. 28 – a conveniently brief example, and considerably less complex than a symphonic movement.[29] Monahan suggested some potential ways of reading sonata form along these lines in *Mahler's Symphonic Sonatas*, but the rules of engagement in this case are far from set, and demand some creativity and poetic imagination on the part of the reader. I must therefore invite you to share my view of what, in Nielsen's Sixth Symphony, comprises an order and a transgression, and from which perspective we might experience he narrative.

At the beginning of the first movement, G major is presented as a happy home for the march theme, although our suspicions might be raised by its inability to sustain the key for more than six bars. Although we might hear the fugal theme at b. 54 as a transgressive intrusion, it does not produce the main structural moment of antagonism that is arrived at in b. 171. The breakthrough is the result of the formerly harmless 'new theme' that was heard earlier in the development section. We therefore might hear this theme, rather than something that has been 'corrupted' as Kramer argued, or had

29 Almén, 'Narrative Archetypes'.

its innocence taken away, as the music that *does the corrupting*.[30] This, arguably, is the source of the narrative downfall in the movement. The theme is focalised early in the development: we, as listeners, are invited to 'take the side of' this theme when we first hear it nestle subdominantly into E major at b. 129, to hear it from its own perspective, to sympathise with it. It is only later in the development that it reveals itself to be a wolf in sheep's clothing, or, to continue Frye's Blakean analogy, a tiger in lamb's clothing. The theme, initially endearing us to sympathise with it, later emerges as the music of the breakthrough – a malevolent or repellant agency – causing the listener to reverse their perspective. This tipping point in the narrative, at which sympathy with the new theme is rendered no longer tenable, results in a combinatory effect regarding Frye's archetypes. There is a kind of double-failure. The narrative is not merely 'tragic' because the governing order, one might say, is at least partially brought down in the course of the movement (the tonal language prevails to the end but is somehow 'damaged' and unable to reattain the tonic key). But it is not merely 'ironic' either: in such a case, a transgressive agency would have to be seen to prevail and, moreover, the undoing of the order would ordinarily come from within (and it would be difficult to hear the E major theme as coming 'from within', especially in the way Nielsen presents it). While much of this movement (and the rest of the symphony) does seem to show elements of Frye's conception of the ironic mythos 'as a parody of romance: the application of romantic mythical forms to a more realistic content', this alone cannot account for the important tragic motion of the movement.[31] It may be advantageous, therefore, to read the movement as an example of a 'double failure' or 'failed tragedy', i.e., the order is defeated by a disruption with which we can no longer sympathise. The movement can therefore be heard as an important and unusual example of narrative hybridity, and specifically an example of narrative *pathos*, i.e., a combination of elements of tragedy and irony.

Humoreske and Proposta Seria

The 'toy music' and 'twilight music' of the inner movements are also instructive from a narrative perspective. Grimley argues that Nielsen's 'description of the *Humoresque* in particular becomes a *Petrushka*-esque ballet sequence or pantomime, a carnivalesque procession.'[32] The Scherzo has largely been seen as Nielsen antagonising the then-established Schoenberg generation of self-styled Austro-German high modernists. My impression is that it is an example of toy music, and that, rather like a pixar film such

30 'The process of destruction of innocence, of loss of (rather than just contrast to) simplicity, is the essence of this fundamentally dark work.' Jonathan D. Kramer, 'Unity and Disunity in Nielsen's Sixth Symphony', in Miller (ed.), *The Nielsen Companion*, 322.

31 Frye, *Anatomy of Criticism*, 223.

32 Grimley, *Carl Nielsen*, 252.

as *The Incredibles* or *Wall-E*, the narrative counterpoint between the adult story of irony, pathos, bathos, and so on and so forth, and the children's one of toy music, sensory experience, fun tunes, surprises, and so on, is one of its most simultaneously charming and pathetic features. This is especially the case as we hear it as an 'escape' into a simpler mode of being immediately after the tragic-ironic 'reality' of the first movement.

Nielsen's music can often be heard in terms of its polarisation of mood (for example, the utter darkness of the *Andante malincolico* from the Second Symphony followed immediately by the brightness and optimism of the *Allegro sanguineo*) as a symptom of the Nordic condition. Peter Davidson has argued as much in his analysis of painting and literature from the region, with the contention that extremes of light and dark as a result of the region's proximity to the arctic circle has had a profound and demonstrable effect on creative activity from at least as long ago as the early nineteenth century.[33] Just as important to the Nordic experience are the marginal spaces of the varying gradations of twilight – civil, nautical, and astronomical – which have been the setting for a considerable amount of Nordic and Scottish painting in the second half of the nineteenth and the first half of the twentieth centuries. Davidson, however, downplays important musical examples of this phenomenon, one of which occurs in the third movement of Nielsen's Sixth.

As with visual depictions, it is also difficult to distinguish between evening twilight (the period between sunset and dusk) and morning twilight (the period between dawn and sunrise) in musical ones. In some cases this may seem an arbitrary distinction to make, especially in instances where certain geographical and seasonal conditions mean that twilight never fully cedes to daylight (in winter) or night (in summer). However, there are some important metaphorical considerations which demand attention – sunset with its predominantly negative connotations of decay, the unknown, and the sense of time running out, and morning twilight which is associated with the positive connotations of rebirth and renewal. My own view is that the Proposta seria is an example of dawn music, something along the lines of the opening of the *Helios* overture. The use of the horns is a clear signal for this, along with the quartile harmonies resulting in a building up of minor 7th sonorities. There is also a narrative context for this: the previous movement could be (and, I think, should be) read as a whimsical portrayal of 'bedtime' music – the toys are getting tired, hence the yawning trombone, and eventually nod off at the end of the movement, which peters out quite unceremoniously. Moreover, much of the Proposta Seria up to this point is not dissimilar in instrumental colour and harmonic flavour to much of Bartok's so-called night music: the textures are generated from a continuous knit of chromatic figurations in the strings with a restricted compass and an irregular rhythmic profile. The sunrise is followed, at the end of the movement, with the broad daylight of the finale which is sparked into life by a fanfare in the woodwinds: the sun is up and the carnival may begin.

33 Peter Davidson, *The Last of the Light: About Twilight* (London: Reaktion Books, 2015).

Grimley has written widely on music and landscape, and his approach is a compelling one.[34] But just as important as the landscape that is being depicted – here a specifically Danish one, flat, expansive, still, peaceful, and largely deserted – is the nature of its illumination: the rays of sunlight gradually escaping over the horizon, and the spectrum of colours that is produced, from deep indigo through purples, greens, yellows, and oranges, until the clear blue and white of the day sky can be seen. Of course, unlike the *Helios* overture, Nielsen's Proposta Seria never reaches this point, which is deferred to the following movement, conditionalising the movement's meaning as a self-contained structure, with its last note (moving from a settled D flat to a disruptive C in the bass) calling its sincerity into question.

Tema og Variationer

The theme-and-variations finale also contains a breakthrough, which Jonathan Kramer has described as 'a fanfare worthy of Hollywood' and an 'incredible non sequitur', which occurs at b. 325, just before the final variation.[35] Again, this movement buys into a strong tradition of variation-form finales which find their roots in Haydn, but whose main exemplars are the finales of Beethoven's third, Brahms's fourth, and Dvorak's eighth symphonies. The movement takes a similar shape to these earlier models, opening with a fanfare before presenting a low-intensity theme which is progressively intensified before a central lull. This is then sparked back into life with a high-intensity ending. In Nielsen's case, this is the moment of the breakthrough, announced by a customary fanfare and an electrifying passage for violins and side drum which introduces, finally, the full version of the theme. It is, however, doomed to failure. We are promised here a eucatastrophic ending (i.e., one which turns decisively toward something happier, or freer, or even utopian)[36] which is soon rendered impossible by an allusion to the breakthrough chord from the first movement, derailing the music and leading to yet another collapse. This time, however, the collapse is of an even more complicated and conditional nature: the theme is presented by the horns, significantly in A flat minor (the resting place of the first movement) and gets to about its halfway point before completely disintegrating, rendering any triumphant eucatastrophe beyond its reach. After the return of the collapse sonority (b. 361) there is a move from the sublime to the ridiculous as we are presented with a sort of polka theme which dies away, even presenting the wrong harmony with the accompanying bass line at the end, before, out

34 See Grimley, *Carl Nielsen*, esp. chapter 5, 'Funen Dreams', 132–77; *Grieg: Music, Landscape, and Norwegian Identity* (Woolbridge: Boydell & Brewer, 2006); 'Music, Landscape, Attunement: Listening to Sibelius's *Tapiola*', *Journal of the American Musicological Society*, 64/2 (2011), 394–98; 'The tone poems: genre, landscape and structural perspective', in Daniel M. Grimley (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Sibelius* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 95–116.

35 Kramer, 'Unity and Disunity', 340.

36 See J.P.E. Harper-Scott, *Edward Elgar, Modernist* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 179.

of the rubble, the music builds back up to an aspirational but ultimately flawed ending with the bassoons having the final say on their bottom note.

The effect here, in my view, both contrasts and complements that generated in the first movement. Perhaps, in terms of the Danish story-telling tradition, the 'sardonic humour' that Simpson referred to is comparable with the sort found in stories such as Little Claus and Big Claus, or The Emperor's New Clothes.[37] The A flat tonality is transformed from its resigned, alienated state to a show of defiance, and the collapsing passage is humorous rather than pathetic. But, I would argue, the effect is yet more complex. Neither movement concludes entirely positively or entirely negatively: there is a conditionality to their respective conclusions. Truly dyscatastrophic finales are relatively uncommon: rare examples can be found in the sixth symphonies of Mahler, Tchaikovsky, and Sibelius. There is no eucatastrophe in Nielsen's Sixth, but dyscatastrophe does not satisfactorily characterise the effects of the outer movements. The reality is messier, and might be better understood as comic irony or *bathos*, especially when understanding the first movement's narrative as tragic irony or *pathos*. The common ironic tropes identified by Almén abound in this movement. These include 'fragmentary or chaotic' music;[38] 'distortions of musical convention'; and 'Romantic musical gestures unsupported by tonal structures'.[39] To add to this, the target has been lowered from the initial G major to the 'second best' B flat major, and even the attainment of this modest goal is in question until only a few bars from the end of the work. But it is remiss to ignore the essentially positive motion of the movement, in which Nielsen's glass is always half full, from small beginnings (the unaccompanied bassoon theme) through struggle (the lamenting Variation 8 and the 'Dead March' of Variation 9) toward a new and more desirable condition, albeit a clownish one.[40] It is as if the subject of comedy itself is being treated ironically here, and the guarantees of tonal coherence that were removed in the first movement are not fully reinstated, even at the very end.

Returning to the current standing of Nielsen scholarship as we inherit it from a revived Anglo-American tradition of *Formenlehre*, I am sure that Hepokoski was right

37 See Robert Simpson, *Carl Nielsen: Symphonist*, 1st edn. (London: The Temple Press, 1952); rev. edn. (London: Kahn & Averill, 1979), 122. Grimley has written that 'the Sixth … assumes a peculiarly mythic quality, to which the key lies in its forcefully comic vision.' Grimley, *Carl Nielsen*, 288.

38 Kramer has written of the finale variations that 'Their timing and their order of succession give the music coherence but little consistency', Kramer, 'Unity and Disunity', 336. Roth has similarly argued, 'Rather than follow the route laid out by Brahms in his fourth symphony's "Passacaglia", which aims to develop a fully coherent symphonic argument while also tying itself to a continually repeating ground bass, Nielsen seems to me to be seeing how far he can get from his theme, how wildly he can extend the emotional and textural range of the movement and still keep it together', Roth, 'Carl Nielsen and the Danish Tradition', 184. This finds a precedent in Beethoven's Third and Dvořak's Eighth, but in Nielsen's case it does seem especially to lend itself to the ironic mythos.

39 Almén, 'Narrative Archetypes', 30.

40 Grimley, *Carl Nielsen*, 280.

in the 1990s to declare that the 1865 generation of self-styled early modernists, which included Mahler, Strauss, Sibelius, Elgar, Glazunov, and Nielsen, did share common institutional and compositional problems, to which they each responded with different solutions. But it is inadequate to make this declaration only then to focus on the solutions of two or three of them. To my mind, Glazunov remains the most neglected of all six (at least the six that Hepokoski drew our attention to), and it will be up to Glazunov scholars to nuance our understanding of his contribution to the survival of the symphony into the twentieth century. Nielsen's impact on the history of the genre is far from representative if we are to take the anglophone scholarship of the past thirty years as a measure, and his solutions to the compositional problems that Hepokoski referred to appear, at least in the Sixth Symphony and probably elsewhere, to be strikingly different from the ones pioneered by Sibelius, Mahler, and Strauss.[41] It may even be possible to position Nielsen's as an opposing voice to the 'nature mysticism' of Sibelius's late style, in which he achieves an uncanny tonal stasis in works such as *Tapiola* and *The Swan of Tuonela*.[42] The suspension of tonal guarantees in Nielsen's *Sinfonia semplice* stands as evidence of the way in which Nielsen used tonality as a genuine tool for modernism, and the denial of straightforwardly comic or tragic narrative trajectories in this work, I argue, offers further insight into the contribution to interwar modernism that can be found in his late style.

41 The important exceptions to this trend include (but are not limited to) David Fanning's *Nielsen Symphony No. 5* (Cambridge University Press, 1997), Grimley's *Carl Nielsen and the Idea of Modernism*, and the individual contributions to Mina Miller (ed.), *The Nielsen Companion*.

42 See Hepokoski, 'Sibelius', 417–49.

Abstract

The tension between Carl Nielsen's status as a modernist and his engagement with symphonic form has been a point of sustained scholarly interest in recent years. His *Sinfonia semplice* (1925) has posed some of the most searching questions for musicologists, formal as well as hermeneutic. Although the work's title alludes to its straightforwardly conventional layout in four movements and its sometimes childlike thematic materials, the events that occur in the course of the symphony, formal, tonal, and narrative, are far from simple. This article offers a reading of the *Sinfonia semplice* which draws on Adorno's categories of 'breakthrough' and 'collapse', Sonata Theory, and Northrop Frye's theory of narrative. The denial of straightforwardly heroic or tragic narrative trajectories, I argue, offers further insight into the contribution to interwar modernism that can be found in late Nielsen.

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Carl Nielsen, *Saul and David* and the Symbolist Movement: Cultural-Historical Perspectives

Marie-Louise Zervides

In his biography, *Carl Nielsen – Danskeren* (*Carl Nielsen – The Dane*) from 1991, the Danish theologian and literary critic Jørgen I. Jensen argued the importance of symbolism in Carl Nielsen's artistic development. He stated: 'Carl Nielsen's art originates in short from a symbolist culture; it is musical symbolism.'[1] Nielsen never publicly associated himself with the term, in fact, he was resistant to it;[2] however, as we shall see, Nielsen was deeply involved in the symbolist milieu of the 1890s and shared many of the same ideas and artistic techniques as the symbolists of his time. In this study, I will explore the concept of symbolism and the artistic environment around Nielsen in the 1890s, including Nielsen's own encounters and early engagement with art – both in Denmark and on his travels to Europe – to discuss how, where and if it is possible to construct a symbolist reading of Nielsen's first opera, *Saul and David* (1898-1901).

Nielsen's *Saul and David* has only rarely been addressed by the scholarly community, or produced in the opera houses. In the few existing studies of the opera, *Saul and David* has been understood as a tragedy, as well as significantly Danish; it has been compared to Wagnerian music dramas, and the libretto to the biblical story.[3] However, never before has *Saul and David* been explored within a symbolist context. In doing precisely this, this study aims to offer a deeper understanding of both the opera and Carl Nielsen in a cultural-historical – and broader European – context around the turn of the century. It is not my intention, though, to draw a conclusion that tells us if the opera is or is not symbolist. Instead, the study aims to explain how the work might have elements that can make it possible to understand it as a symbolist opera.

1 Jørgen I. Jensen, *Carl Nielsen. Danskeren* (Copenhagen: Gyldendal, 1991), 92: 'Carl Nielsens kunst udgår kort og godt fra en symbolistisk kultur; den er musikalsk symbolisme'.

2 In a letter to Danish writer Gustav Wied (John Fellow (ed.), *Carl Nielsen Brevudgaven* [=*CNB*], 12 vols. (Copenhagen: Multivers, 2005–15), vol. 1, 500f., letter 622, 18.4.1897), Nielsen criticises writer Holger Drachmann for shouting: 'Listen Carl Nielsen, us youths, us symbolists!' ('hør Carl Nielsen, vi Unge vi Symbolister!') Nielsen underscores his deep irritation towards Drachmann and concludes: 'That symbolist nonsense! Don't you agree?' ('Det symbolistvrøvl! Ikke sandt?')

3 Anne-Marie Reynolds, 'Nielsen's *Saul and David* as Tragedy: The Dialectics of Fate and Freedom in Drama and Music', *Carl Nielsen Studies*, 5 (2012), 236–57; Jørgen I. Jensen: 'Carl Nielsens Saul og David: ambivalensen i den danske sjæl', in Jørgen I. Jensen (ed.), *Mødepunkter, Teologi–kultur–musik* (Copenhagen, 2004), 125–28; Patrick McCreless, 'Strange Bedfellows: The Hebrew Bible and Wagner, in *Saul and David*', *Carl Nielsen Studies*, 4 (2009), 107–44.

We will first consider the background to the rise of the symbolist movement of the 1890s and explore the symbolist turn both in and outside Denmark. This will help us understand the cultural-historical context around Nielsen and his contemporaries before studying the composer's own encounters with art, artists, and ideas leading up to *Saul and David* – the latter having recently been made possible with the 2015 publication of Nielsen's complete letters and diary entries in the 12-volume Carl Nielsen Letters Edition.[4]

When analysing symbolism in Nielsen's opera, it is essential to be able to locate the specific elements that invite such a reading. This is not an easy task, as the concept of symbolism is complex and the styles of symbolist art are varied. Furthermore, the task of analysing symbolism in *Saul and David* becomes even more complex as the art form of opera inevitably is created out of a literary text, a dramatic stage performance, and music. Therefore, when looking for symbolism in *Saul and David*, it will be necessary to draw from theory on symbolist art in various forms, including painting, literature, music, and drama.

Emerging modernism

During the nineteenth century, artists and thinkers were responding to the increasingly uncertain and complex modern world. The scientific revolution had created a modern, rational approach to the natural world and to a growing faith in the scientific method and technological progress. Cities were growing as a result of a population shift from rural to urban areas. Furthermore, the discoveries of the biology of man, Charles Darwin's theories of evolution, and the growing amount of bible critique made the nineteenth century an age of increasing secularisation.

In Denmark, the literary critic Georg Brandes (1842–1927) was welcoming the profound cultural changes and, with his lectures at Copenhagen University from 1871 and the 1883 publication of his critical essays, *Men of the Modern Breakthrough*, he was reacting against romanticism in the arts, and introducing Scandinavian writers such as Henrik Ibsen, August Strindberg and J.P. Jacobsen. Brandes called for a progressive, naturalistic art where artists would engage themselves in social issues and the concrete reality of the world. His lectures and essays were instantly translated into several languages and would not only, according to Danish writer Johannes Jørgensen in 1905, make Danish art 'aware of its own modernism' but also place Scandinavia as a starting point for a wave of modernism across Europe.[5]

According to Michael Fjeldsøe, the period of the 1870s and 1880s was one of optimism in relation to the early ideas of Brandes. By the end of the 1880s, however, a

4 *CNB*, cf. fn. 2.

5 Daniel M. Grimley, *Carl Nielsen and the Idea of Modernism* (Woolbridge: Boydell Press, 2010), 26, quoting Johannes Jørgensen, 'Romantikken i moderne dansk Literatur', *Tilskueren*, 22 (1905), 98.

sense of pessimism started to emerge as Brandes's discoveries of the writings of Friedrich Nietzsche led to a series of lectures in 1888, named 'aristocratic radicalism', in which Brandes would be the first in Europe to present Nietzsche's ideas to the modern world.[6] Through Nietzsche's *Zarathustra*, Brandes proclaimed 'the death of God' and a revaluation of man's moral values. The biological nature of man meant there was no metaphysical shield against man's inevitable death and this called for liberation in life, and for 'free spirits' ('frie Aander') to control one's own destiny and individuality in modern society.[7] According to the Danish literary critic Henrik Wivel, Brandes' introduction to Nietzsche would lead to enormous cultural change across the arts over the following ten years, which would position Scandinavia as the epicentre of the 1890s symbolist movement.[8]

A new cultural atmosphere was emerging by the 1890s. A whole generation of young intellectuals, poets, painters, and musicians were responding to this realist and naturalist vision and against the rational, 'dispirited' materialism of the science-dominated world.[9] Some felt a spiritual loss in modern society and wished to regain a metaphysical dimension in the arts. Artists were therefore starting to turn away from the naturalist, objective representation of the external world and instead turned inward to illuminate facets of subjective experience.[10] The symbolist movement is one of the most important examples of this revaluation in the arts. It started as a literary movement in France with Jean Moréas' Symbolist manifesto in *Le Figaro* (1886). Rejecting naturalism and materialism in the arts, including the 'scientifically' investigative novels of Emile Zola, Moréas proclaimed the 'validity of pure subjectivity and the expression of an idea over a realist description of the natural world'.[11] Though it began as a French literary concept, symbolism soon developed into a cultural movement across the arts and quickly spread to the rest of Europe.

Many symbolists were expressing the same *fin-de-siècle* feelings of alienation, anxiety, and emotional crisis toward modern life – a cultivation of Nietzsche's metaphorical night-side in *Zarathura*'s 'Midnight Song', the dark side of the German philosopher on the brink of mental breakdown.[12] This led to a strongly subjective artistic approach with intensely personal emotion and expression. Edvard Munch's *The Scream* of 1893

6 Michael Fjeldsøe, *Kulturradikalismens musik* (Copenhagen: Museum Tusculanum Press, 2013), 61.

7 Henrik Wivel, 'Det sjælelige gennembrud – dekadence, idealisme og vitalisme i 1890ernes kultur', in Lise Busk Jensen (ed.), *Dansk Litteraturs Historie*, vol. 3: *1870–1920* (Copenhagen: Gyldendal, 2009), 269; Grimley, *Carl Nielsen and the Idea of Modernism*, 29–31.

8 Wivel, 'Det sjælelige gennembrud', 266.

9 Fjeldsøe, *Kulturradikalismens musik*, 62–64.

10 Nicole Myers, 'Symbolism', in *Heilbrunn Timeline of Art History* (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2007), 1.

11 Ibid.

12 Jens Brincker, Finn Gravesen, Carsten E. Hatting, and Niels Krabbe, 'Fremtidstro og pessimisme', in Knud Ketting (ed.), *Den europæiske musikkulturs historie 1740-1914* (Gyldendals Musikhistorie vol. 2; Copenhagen: Gyldendal, 1990), 287.

exemplifies these torn feelings of isolation, disillusionment, and psychological anguish with its distorted forms and expressive colours.[13]

Young artists from Denmark, including painters J.F. Willumsen (1863–1958), Mogens Ballin (1871–1914), Agnes Slott-Møller (1862–1937), Harald Slott-Møller (1864–1937), and poet Sophus Claussen (1865–1931), were travelling to Paris to follow the latest innovations in modern art and literature. Many would find inspiration in the French artistic environment and the symbolist movement was quickly growing in Denmark as both an alternative to and a continuation of Brandes's progressive modernist project. Sophus Claussen spoke of a 'significant difference between the young generation of today and the realist writers who followed Brandes' in an interview published in the avant-garde periodical *Taarnet* in 1894:

> Who believes now that a poet should represent the elements that anyone can see and hear every day? … Our time – our youth – has returned to the ancient idea that a poet should be spiritual [*beaandet*], an advocate of the obscure, strange relation of things.[14]

The Danish writer and founder of *Taarnet*, Johannes Jørgensen (1866–1956), was writing in a similar manner in his Danish symbolist manifesto 'Symbolisme' (1893) in which he proclaimed:

> All genuine art is and becomes symbolic. Throughout our great masters, one finds Nature conceived as an outer sign of inner spiritual life. Therefore, many of their products appear dark and obscure: their works are like those painted window panes with which Goethe compares his poetry: they must be seen from inside.[15]

Quoting from Nietzsche's *Zarathustra*, Jørgensen concluded: 'It is my firm conviction that a true view of the world must necessarily be mystic. The world is deep. And only the shallow minds fail to perceive that.'[16]

13 Julius Kaplan, 'Symbolism', *Oxford Art Online*; and Myers: 'Symbolism', 2.

14 Sophus Claussen (1894) in Wivel, 'Det sjælelige gennembrud', 287: 'Der er – ser jeg nu – alligevel en dyb Forskel paa Nutidens Unge og paa de realistiske Skribenter, som fulgte Georg Brandes. Hvem tror vel nu mere, at det for Digteren gælder om at efterligne, genfortælle de Ting, som Hvermand hver Dag kan se og høre? … Vor Tid – de unge – er vendt tilbage til den ældgamle Opfattelse, at en Digter helst bør være beaandet, en Forkynder af Tingenes dunkle og forunderlige Sammenhæng.'

15 Johannes Jørgensen, 'Symbolisme' (Nov. 1893), in *Taarnet: En Antologi af Tekster*, ed. Carl Bergstrøm Nielsen (Copenhagen: Gyldendal, 1966), 58: 'Al ægte Kunst er og bliver symbolsk. Overalt hos de store Mestre finder man Naturen opfattet som et ydre Tegn paa et indre sjæleligt Liv. Derfor synes saa mange af deres Frembringelser den Udenforstaaende dunkle og ufattelige; deres Værker er som hine gemalte Fensterscheiben, hvormed Goethe lignede sine Digte: de maa ses indenfra.'

16 Ibid. 59: 'Det er tilmed min faste Overbevisning, at en sand Verdensanskuelse nødvendigt maa være mystisk. Verden er dyb. Og kun de flade Aander fatter det ikke.'

Nielsen's artistic milieu in the 1890s

It is unclear whether Carl Nielsen himself was attending Brandes's lectures. However, Emilie Demant Hatt[17] recalled in her memoirs of the composer how Nielsen and his circle of friends from the conservatory in the late 1880s actively discussed the critical topics of the time: 'They read both old and new literature. They were all musical. They interested themselves in art, philosophy and religion. They practiced 'free thinking' in all domains.'[18] Furthermore, Nielsen would be conversing with Brandes in the 1890s. In a dairy entry from 1893, for example, we read that Nielsen visited Brandes, talking 'for a long time about Napoleon, Voltaire, Christ and the Inner Mission.'[19]

However, it was clear that the young Nielsen might have been more sceptical about the technological progress of the time, stating, just two months before: 'Inventions and discoveries do not bring man's spiritual development one bit forward.'[20] This statement was written during his visits at the *Free Exhibition* in Copenhagen in 1893, an annual exhibition of art works by modern Danish and international artists, including Paul Gauguin and Vincent van Gogh. The *Free Exhibition* was arranged by Danish painters Johan Rohde, Vilhelm Hammershøi, J.F. Willumsen, Agnes and Harald Slott-Møller, as well as Nielsen's own wife, the sculptor Anne-Marie Carl-Nielsen.

Agnes and Harald Slott-Møller, as well as J.F. Willumsen, are seen by many scholars as key figures of the symbolist movement in Denmark and would share life-long friendships – and, arguably, mutual artistic inspiration – with Carl Nielsen and his wife. Harald Slott-Møller painted several portraits of Anne Marie, one of them exhibited at the *Free Exhibition* in 1891, which was greatly inspired by medieval art and symbolism through its simplified representation and intense colours.[21]

Carl Nielsen's deep interest in art began at a young age and was partly influenced by his teachers Niels W. Gade and Orla Rosenhoff who, during his conservatory years

17 Painter, writer and anthropologist, Emilie Demant Hatt (1873–1958). Nielsen met the 14-year-old Emilie Demant Hansen (married: Hatt) in 1887 just after graduating at the conservatory when he was 22 years old. The two began a romantic relationship which lasted three years.

18 Emilie Demant Hatt, *Forårsbølger: erindringer om Carl Nielsen* (Spring Torrents: remembrances of Carl Nielsen), ed. John Fellow (Copenhagen, 2002), 84: 'Der læste man baade gammel og nyt Litteratur. Der var alle musikalske. Der interesserede man sig for Kunst, Filosofi og Religion. Der praktiseredes "fri Tænkning" paa alle Omraader.' Nielsen's conservatory friends included Margrete Rosenberg and (cousins of Brandes) the brothers Albert and Emil B. Sachs; Grimley, *Carl Nielsen and the Idea of Modernism*, 48.

19 *CNB* 1, 297, diary entry 413 (28.5.1893): 'Vi talte længe sammen om Napoleon, Voltaire[,] Christus og den Indre Mission.'

20 *CNB* 1, 295, diary entry 406 (31.3.1893): 'Opfindelser og Opdagelser bringer ikke Menneskenes aandelige Udvikling et eneste Gran fremad.'

21 Harald Slott-Møller: *Anne Marie Brodersen* (1891), painting at the Carl Nielsen Museum, Odense, Denmark. Claudine Stensgaard Nielsen: 'Harald Slott-Møller', *Den Store Danske,* downloaded 11 June 2015 from www.denstoredanske.dk/Kunst_og_kultur/Billedkunst/Danmark_1850-1910/Harald_Slott-M%C3%B8ller.

in 1884–86, had encouraged him to seek out a wider artistic experience than purely a musical one.[22] His interest became especially clear during his long study tours in Europe in the 1890s, firstly in 1890–91 when he visited major artistic centres in Europe, including Dresden, Berlin, Leipzig, Paris, Milan, Florence, Rome, and Venice; and secondly, on his second extended tour in 1894 when he visited Berlin, Leipzig, Nuremberg, Munich, Salzburg, and Vienna. His diary entries and letters are full of lengthy descriptions of the pictures and sculptures he would encounter, as well as the many artists he would meet.

During his stay in Berlin in 1890, Nielsen wrote a remarkable letter to his old friend Emil B. Sachs (1855–1920):

> The old paintings suffer more than the modern from being reproduced in photogravures and woodcuts, I think; perhaps that is because their spiritual content is somewhat foreign to us; they are not our feelings and thoughts that the pictures are an expression of, not our ideal which is portrayed; but the way in which it is done is, I think, exactly the same.[23]

In this letter, Nielsen describes the idea of a 'spiritual' dimension in an artwork, as well as the feelings expressed and ideals portrayed in art. A month later, he considered whether music could be composed like the modern impressionist paintings – swimming in clouds of mood [*Stemningstaage*].[24] As I shall discuss below, the merging of 'moods' and emotional expression, as well as the idea of a spiritual dimension in art, were defining features of symbolism during this decade.

Nielsen would often write in a far more detailed and positive manner on the subject of painting and sculpture than he would about music. A clue to this might be found in a letter from Carl Nielsen to his wife, while in Berlin in 1894:

> It is like my soul's pores are open when I am travelling. It isn't true with music, though. There I am always sceptical and rather cold and feel no enrichment, because I always feel that I can both conduct and compose better than these people.

22 Colin Roth, 'Carl Nielsen's Cultural Self-Education. His Early Engagement with Fine Arts and Ideas and the Path towards Hymnus Amoris', *Carl Nielsen Studies*, 5 (2012), 302–4.

23 *CNB* 1, 138f., letter 109 to Emil B. Sachs from Berlin (30.10.1890): 'De gamle Malere taaler mindre end de moderne at gjengives i Fotogravueres og Træsnit, synes jeg; maaske har det sin Grund deri, at deres aandelige Indhold er os noget fremmed; det er ikke vore Følelser og Tanker de Billeder ere et Udslag af, ikke vort Ideal som bliver fremstillet; men Maaden det er gjort paa synes jeg er akkurat den samme.'

24 *CNB* 1, 159, diary entry 145 (Berlin, 30.11.1890): 'Mon der ikke kunde tænkes en Musik der havde Lighed med impressionistiske Malerier; hvor Conturerne svømmer ud i Stemningstaage?'

> The gallery had acquired two new Italian pictures by an old artist whose name I cannot remember. They were very strange and had their own personality behind them. He lived before Raphael. Tomorrow I will go back again.[25]

In this letter, we find Nielsen's interest in an Italian artist who 'lived before Raphael'. In fact, we repeatedly read in his letters and diary entries of his interest in the old masters of early renaissance art, the ancient classics, and medieval art.[26] As we shall see, this interest in archaism was shared by many symbolists during this decade, including Agnes and Harald Slott Møller, as well as the Pre-Raphaelites before them. Furthermore, Nielsen's fascination in antiquity was a part of the broader Hellenic movement in late-nineteenth-century Europe with a rebirth of ancient Greek ideals in modern life and art.[27]

Carl Nielsen was also fascinated by the modern art of his contemporaries, including the works of Vincent van Gogh, Max Klinger, Auguste Rodin, and Paul Gauguin.[28] Although the artists Nielsen engaged with on a personal level were mostly Danish, scholars have noted Nielsen's encounter with Edvard Munch in Berlin in 1894.[29] Four years later, Munch would exhibit four artworks at the *Free Exhibition* in Copenhagen. However, there are no records of Nielsen visiting the exhibition in 1898, nor experiencing Munch's work at any other occasion during this decade.

Of modern writers, we read of Nielsen's fascination with the French symbolist writer Maurice Maeterlinck during his trip to Paris in 1891, in particular the work *Les Aveugles*

25 *CNB* 1, 338f., letter 479 to Anne Marie Carl-Nielsen (Berlin, 14.10.1894): 'Det er ligesom alle min Sjæls Porer er aabne, naar jeg er paa Rejse. Det gjælder dog ikke overfor Musik. Der er jeg altid skeptisk og temmelig kold og føler ingen Berigelse, fordi jeg føler bestandig at jeg kan baade dirige[re] og componere bedre end disse Folk. Galleriet har erhvervet to nye italienske Billeder af en gammel Kunstner hvis Navn jeg ikke husker. De var meget ejendommelige og havde sin egen Personlighed bagved. Han levede før Raphael. Imorgen skal jeg atter derhen.'

26 *CNB* 1, 345, letter 483 to Anne Marie Carl-Nielsen (Berlin, 19.10.1894): 'Jeg gaar hver Dag i Gallerierne. Idag har jeg atter været i den italienske Afdeling og i den gamle tyske; men det var mest Skulptur idag. Tingene fra Pergamon blev grundigt gjennemgaaet. Naturligvis er det godt; men bagefter var jeg ovre i Skuret og saa "Olympiafundene"!! Hvad er dog det! Hvilken Magt og Storhed!'

27 On the Hellenic movement in Denmark, cf. Gertrud Hvidberg-Hansen, 'Hellas under Northern Skies', in Gertrud Hvidberg-Hansen and Gertrud Oelsner (eds.), *The Spirit of Vitalism: Health, Beauty and Streng in Danish Art 1890-1940* (Fuglsang Kunstmuseum & Odense Bys Museer / Copenhagen: Museum Tuscalanum Press, 2011), 58–87.

28 *CNB* 1, 214, dairy entry 253 (Paris, 7.3.1891): 'saa Billeder af Gauguin og Rodin, som synes at være vor Tids Mestre'; *CNB* 1, 215, dairy entry 255 (Paris, 8.3.1891): 'Saa for første Gang Billede af Vincent (van Gocken) [van Gogh] der gjorde det stærkeste Indtryk paa mig'; *CNB* 1, 394, letter 523 to Georg Brandes (19.11.1894): 'har bl.A. været i Leipzig hvor jeg saa et plastisk Arbejde, Salome, af Max Klinger, som interesserede mig i høj Grad.'

29 *CNB* 1, 343–45, diary entry 482 (19.10.1894): 'Vi traf dèr den norske Maler Munck [Edvard Munch] som jeg spillede Billard med.'

(1890) which 'in all its simplicity left a strong impression' on Nielsen.[30] During Nielsen's stay in Paris, he met several Danish artists who were studying modern art, including J.F. Willumsen, Mogens Ballin, and his future wife, Anne-Marie Brodersen. In 1895, we read of Nielsen's interest in the Danish writer Viggo Stuckenberg and his *Romerske Scener*.[31] Stuckenberg broke from realism with the drama *Den vilde Jæger* (1894), of which the first scene was included in *Taarnet* with the title 'Medieval' ('Middelalder').[32] Stuckenberg would become a part of Nielsen's circle of friends and acquaintances during the 1890s, along with many young symbolist artists and critics associated with *Taarnet*, including Johannes Jørgensen, Sophus Claussen, Sophus Michaëlis, Mogens Ballin, as well as J.F. Willumsen. According to Willumsen's memoirs, the three men, Carl Nielsen, Sophus Claussen, and J.F. Willumsen, supposedly enacted Claussen's comic play *Frøken Regnvejr (Miss Rainy Weather*) as a private puppet theatre performance in 1894, which suggests the trio must have been very close indeed.[33] Although Nielsen never actually set Claussen's poetry to music, he did collaborate with other symbolist writers, including Johannes Jørgensen on the cantata *Søvnen* (*The Sleep*) in 1903, as well as Sophus Michaëlis on the cantata *Hymne til Livet* (*Hymn to Life*) in 1921 and the play *Amor og Digteren* (*Cupid and the Poet*) in 1930.

We have established that Carl Nielsen was an integral part of the Copenhagen avant-garde scene, actively engaging with the circle of painters, writers, and academics associated with the *Free Exhibition* and *Taarnet* with whom he would discuss art and share many of the same ideas and interests. Furthermore, Nielsen would seek wider artistic inspiration on his study travels to Europe at a time when symbolism was dominating modern art and ideas. In the next chapter we will explore how Nielsen might have been inspired by the symbolist movement in his own work as we consider his first opera *Saul and David* in a symbolist context.

Symbolism in Saul and David

Nielsen began to plan an opera by the end of 1896 when he had just finished the choral work *Hymnus Amoris*.[34] His choice to compose an operatic work was not surprising; Nielsen showed a great interest in opera during his European travels in the 1890s, and

30 *CNB* 1, 216, dairy entry 259 (Paris, 12.3.1891): 'Læste "Les Aveugles" af [Maurice Maeterlinck] færdig. Denne mærkelig, uhyggelige Bog gjør i al sin Simpelhed et stort Indtryk.'

31 *CNB* 1, 427, letter 551 to Viggo Stuckenberg (28.12.1895): 'Efter at have læst "Romerske Scener" maa jeg sige Dem at jeg var forbavset over at finde saa megen Evne og Villie og en saadan prægnant og sluttet Gjennemførelse hos en ung dansk Forfatter, og jeg tror ikke at nogen anden af vores Forfattere er istand til at skabe Karakterer af et saa tungt og stærkt Stof.'

32 Ursula Fugmann, 'Viggo Stuckenberg', in *Den Store Danske* (downloaded 11 June 2015 from www.denstoredanske.dk/Kunst_og_kultur/Litteratur/Dansk_litteratur/1870-1900/Viggo_Stuckenberg).

33 Jens Ferdinand Willumsen, *Mine erindringer fortalt til Ernst Mentze* (Copenhagen: Berlingske, 1953), 108.

34 Niels Bo Foltmann, Peter Hauge, and Niels Krabbe, 'Preface', in Carl Nielsen, *Saul og David, Opera in four acts* (The Carl Nielsen Edition, I/4; Copenhagen, 2002), xi.

was especially fascinated by the music dramas of Richard Wagner.[35] Furthermore, he would become familiar with a wide range of operas in the orchestral pit of the Royal Danish Theatre where he had been employed as a violinist since 1889. During 1898, Nielsen agreed to collaborate with Danish librettist Einar Christiansen on an opera following the Old Testament narrative of Saul and David. Christiansen was an experienced man of the theatre, both as a dramatist and opera librettist, collaborating with P.E. Lange-Müller[36] on the opera *Vikingeblod* [Viking Blood] from 1900 and translating many operas into Danish. At the time, Christiansen was also the editor of the magazine *Illustreret Tidende* and would become the artistic director of the Royal Danish Theatre in 1899. As a writer, Christiansen broke from realism in the 1890s into a more introverted and intimate style in his dramatic works.[37]

Christiansen's libretto of *Saul and David* was created in January 1899 and the opera composed over the following two years. It was composed both in Denmark and during Nielsen's six-month stay in Rome between December 1899 and June 1900. Like many Danish artists and scholars, Nielsen's wife was studying art in the ancient capital as part of the archaic revivalism of the time.[38] Nielsen finalised the composition of his *Saul and David* in Copenhagen in April 1901 and the opera premièred at the Royal Danish Theatre in November 1902.

Choice of subject matter

In an interview for *Berlingske Tidende* in 1929, Nielsen recalled the following incident in connection to the choice of the opera's literary subject:

35 Nielsen was deeply interested in Wagner's works on his first Europe trip in 1890–91: 'Studying "Siegfried" every day and admiring Wagner more and more for each day, if it is even possible to admire as much as I do.' ('Studèrer hver Dag "Siegfried" og beundrer Wagner mere Dag for Dag, hvis det overhovedet er muligt at beundre i højere Grad end jeg gjør.'), *CNB* 1, 194, dairy entry 219 (Leipzig, 3.2.1891). On his second Europe trip in 1894, however, we read of Nielsen's first critique of Wagner's abilities as a music dramatist: 'As a dramatic poet he is nothing and as a dramatic composer likewise nothing. When he tries to force life and passionate movement, it becomes bad.' ('Som dramatisk Digter er han intet og som dramatisk Componist heller ikke[,] saasnart han forsøger at fremtvinge Liv og lidenskabelig Bevægelse, bliver det skidt.') *CNB* 1, 384f., dairy entry 513 (Vienna, 9.11.1894). Nielsen does have a lifelong fascination with Wagner, as he continues to comment on his works, both negatively and positively.

36 Danish composer P.E. Lange-Müller (1850–1925) composed music to many symbolist dramatic works, including Drachmann's *Middelalderlig* (Medieval, 1896) and *Renaissance* (1901).

37 These works include *Cosmus* (1897), *Fædreland* (1910) and *Thronfølger* (1913); Uffe Andreasen and Hans Strange, 'Einar Christiansen', *Dansk Biografisk Leksikon*, third edn. (1979–84).

38 Anne Marie was studying with the French sculptor Victor Ségoffin while Nielsen was working on his opera. Other Danish artists and scholars living in Rome at the time included Vilhelm Wancher, Hans Nikolaj Hansen, and Thomas Laub (*CNB* 2, 10). Nielsen composed large parts of Act Two during this stay.

> Out in the lobby, when [Einar Christiansen] was putting on his coat, he suddenly turned to me and exclaimed: 'Well, what do you think of my old idea "Saul and David"?' In a flash, I then experienced the Bible story of my childhood and was gripped by its Old Testament mood. The sublime in it, all that was so far from 'reality' and everyday life, captivated me in a special way. Yet neither was it so unfamiliar for me to give it expression; in *Hymnus Amoris* I had just been enthralled by something of a similar vein.[39]

Although we must be cautious of holding onto a quotation uttered 30 years after the opera was composed, it is indeed a remarkable one when reading it within a symbolist context. As we have seen, Nielsen's fascination with 'all that was so far from "reality" and everyday life' was a crucial part of 1890s symbolist thought, shared by many artists at the time who were distancing themselves from realist art. The symbolists often found their imagery in mythical figures from biblical stories, Greek mythology, and the Middle Ages to create works with themes far from reality and to imbue their works with spiritual value.[40] According to Jørgen I. Jensen, Johannes Jørgensen referred to how the symbolists found inspiration in old expressions and forms without, however, moving away from the artwork's connection with its own age.[41] Agnes Slott-Møller's paintings of medieval pages, Sophus Claussen's Hellenic hexametric poems, and J.F. Willumsen's Egyptian ceramics, as well as Oscar Wilde's tragedy of Salome, are just some examples of the symbolists' archaic interests. As we have seen, Carl Nielsen was greatly interested in this archaic subject matter and in the artworks of the old masters. He even used archaic elements in his own compositions. The music and choice of text of his Opus 4, *Music to Five Poems by J.P. Jacobsen* (1892), for example, was strongly inspired by medieval motifs which are likewise present on the title page: a copy of the gobelin tapestry *The Lady and the Unicorn* (La Dame á la licorn) which Nielsen and his wife had encountered in Paris at the museum of medieval art, *Musée de Cluny* in 1891.[42]

The choice of an ancient biblical story was therefore not surprising when considering the archaic tendencies in the arts of the time. Furthermore, Nielsen had often been drawn

39 'Carl Nielsen om "Saul og David"' (*Berlingske Tidende*, 26.2.1929), in John Fellow (ed.), *Carl Nielsen til sin samtid*, vol. 2: *1926-1931* (Copenhagen: Gyldendal, 1999), 518: 'Da han ude i Entréen var ved at tage Frakken paa, vender han sig rask imod mig og udbryder: "Naa, hvad mener De saa om min gamle idé 'Saul og David'?" Som i et Lyn oplevede jeg da min Barndoms Biblehistorie og følte mig grebet af dens gammeltestamentlige Stemning. Det ophøjede deri, alt det, der var saa langt borte fra "Virkeligheden" og Hverdagen, fængslede mig paa en særlig Maade. Og heller ikke stod jeg helt fremmed over for at udtrykke det; i "Hymnus Amoris" havde jeg nyligt været optaget af noget lignende.'

40 Myers, 'Symbolism', 1.

41 Jørgen I. Jensen, 'Carl Nielsen: Artistic Milieu and Tradition: Cultural-Historical Perspectives', in Mina Miller (ed.), *The Nielsen Companion* (London: Faber & Faber, 1994), 60–61.

42 The two works of art are *Carl Nielsen Opus 4: Music to Five Poems by J. P. Jacobsen* (1892), title page, at the Carl Nielsen Museum, Odense; and *The Lady and the Unicorn*, c. 1480 (unknown artist), gobelin, wool and silk at the Musée de Cluny, Paris. They are compared in Anne Christiansen: *Anne Marie Carl-Nielsen – født Brodersen* (Odense: Odense Bys Museer, 2013), 62–63.

to the mystical mood of the biblical stories. In 1892, for example, he wrote to Anne-Marie of his experience of the beginning of the Gospel of John, comparing it to the mystery of the Early Renaissance painting *Primavera* (1482) by Sandro Botticelli (1445–1510):

> Do you not think it is remarkably deep and mystical? Just the first verses. I am especially fond of this: 'And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not.' But there is overall a strange dim mystery over it. It reminded me of the forest in Botticelli's *Primavera*. The trees are half plant half human and when they speak together, it sounds like a mixture of wind and human voice.[43]

But why, then, were Christiansen and Nielsen especially drawn to the Old Testament story of Saul and David? We cannot know for sure, as there are no existing correspondences between Nielsen and Christiansen. However, there are many reasons why they might have been drawn to this subject in particular. Firstly, they might have been intrigued to write an opera on Saul and David to continue the project of Hans Christian Andersen and the Danish composer J.P Hartmann who were writing a *Saul* opera in 1864–66 but, to the great regret of Andersen, would never finish it.[44] There is no evidence of Nielsen knowing about Hartmann's opera project; however, Nielsen did attend a dinner party with Hartmann in 1897 at the time when he was looking for a suitable subject for an opera.[45] Christiansen, on the other hand, must have known about Andersen's opera libretto as his choice of episodes from the biblical account very closely reflects Andersen's text.[46] Secondly, Nielsen might have remembered his deep fascination with an Italian painting of David and Goliath that he had encountered in Berlin in 1894.[47] In addition, as we shall see below, the characters, themes, and situations of this story in particular reflect some of the predilections of the symbolist movement.

43 *CNB* 1, 263, letter 345 to Anne Marie Carl-Nielsen (27.8.1892): 'Synes Du ikke det er forunderlig dybt og mystisk? Blot de første Vers. Især synes jeg om det: Og Lyset skinnede i Mørket. Mørket begreb det ikke. Men der er i det Hele taget en sær dæmpet Mystik over det Altsammen. Jeg kom til at tænke på Skoven i Bottichellis Foraaret. Træerne ere halvt Mennesker halvt Planter og naar de taler sammen lyder det som en Blanding af Susen og Menneskerøster.'

44 Foltmann, Hauge, and Krabbe, 'Preface', xiii.

45 Ibid.

46 Ibid.

47 *CNB* 1, 340, diary entry 480 (Berlin, 16.10.1894): 'Men især husker jeg et Billede af en Maler jeg slet ikke kjender noget til forud, nemlig Piero Pollajuolo. Det er en David som har fældet Goliat. Kompositionen er saa enkel som muligt. David staar ret op og ned skrævende lidt ud med Benene og den ene Haand i Siden, omtrent som Verocchios bekjendte Broncestatue. Hans Holdning er ungdommelig, kjæk og sejersstolt. Mellem hans Ben på Jorden ligger Goliats afhuggede Hoved. Baggrunden er ènsfarvet, saavidt jeg kunde sè var det en Slags Mur af Farve nærmest sortegrøn.' The work is the *Antonio del Pollaiuolo*, David Victorious (*c.*1472), Gemäldegalerie, Berlin.

The pained king and a joyous nature boy

The libretto adheres relatively closely to the Biblical account although the character of Saul is more prominent than David in the libretto than in the Bible.[48] We follow King Saul's despair and inner turmoil from his disobedience to God and conflicts with the young David to his moral collapse and lonely suicide on Mount Gilboa. David is less emotionally complex. He is described as a beautiful, young shepherd boy, loved by the Israelite people and especially Saul's young daughter, Michal. David's character is more boyish and untroubled than in the Bible with added traits from the male lover in the Song of Solomon. He lives harmoniously with God, life, and nature. Saul's character, however, is darker than in the Bible and is reminiscent of the brooding figure of Job. He is implacable towards God, is constantly conscious of his own death and feels that his suffering is unjustified.[49]

It is the emotionally complex psychological characterisation of Saul which leads the drama in Einar Christiansen's libretto. Saul's demise frames the drama – from his impatience and sinful offerings to his death – and the drama progresses in tandem with his psychological reactions (*see Figure 1*):

ACT 1: Saul's disobedience (→ *offerings* → *1st prophecy*) → Saul's defiance (→ *David's comforting song*) → Saul's contentment (→ *love duet of David and Michal*)

ACT 2: Saul's dreariness (→ *Michal awaiting David who is fighting Goliath* → *David's victory*) → Saul's joy (→ *praise from the people*) → Saul's jealousy and anger

ACT 3: Saul's remorse (→ *reconciliation of Saul and David* → *2nd prophecy*) → Saul's anger

ACT 4: Saul's irresolution (→ *consulting the Witch of Endor* → *3rd prophecy*) → Saul's downfall and suicide (→ *David's mourning and the people hailing David as their King*)

Fig. 1: Summary of Einar Christiansen's *Saul and David* libretto with an emphasis on Saul's psychological state.

The pessimistic *fin-de-siècle* feeling of alienation and anxiety is clearly depicted in the tragic figure of Saul. This psychological characterisation might not only have been of deep interest for Einar Christiansen – as well as many other young artists of the time

48 For a direct comparison of the libretto and its Biblical source, see Patrick McCreless, 'Strange Bedfellows', 122–27.

49 Bodil Ejrnæs has contributed to this reading of the relationship with the Biblical account in her talk at the Saul and David seminar on 15 April 2015, The Royal Danish Library, Copenhagen: 'Einar Christiansens libretto og Det gamle Testamente'.

– but also for Nielsen, who led an emotionally turbulent life and was often concerned with the inner world of man. We often read of Nielsen's sufferings in his letters and diary entries. In 1889, for example, the young Nielsen writes to Emilie Demant Hansen of his painful condition, explaining his flaws, emotional swings and unbalanced state of mind which he connects to being a real artist.[50] Nielsen even plans to commit suicide, writing in his farewell letter to her: 'I suffer so much but now I must end it. – If I cannot die spiritually, I must kill my body.' [51] According to John Fellow, 'Nielsen's old crisis was always just around the corner and his longing for death never far away.'[52] Art historian Herschel Chipp suggests that many young artists of the 1890s 'turned away from the exterior world and inward to their own feelings for their subject matter' which might explain Nielsen's interest in this story and in Saul in particular.[53]

According to art historian Michelle Facos, symbolism enabled artists to confront the increasingly uncertain modern world, to which pessimists responded with themes of decadence and degeneration and optimists with idealism and reform.[54] I would argue that both pessimism and optimism, decadence and idealism – the decay of the pained king and the beauty of the joyous nature boy – are indeed present in the story of Saul and David, both in the biblical account and in Christiansen's and Nielsen's dramatic and musical interpretation of the story.

The mythic figure of the mentally unstable king has been used many times in the arts, from Richard Wagner's wounded Amfortas in *Parsifal* (1882) to Johannes V. Jensen's irresolute Christian II in *Kongens Fald* (1901). The Danish symbolist poet Sophus Claussen was also drawn to the figure of Saul and the king's encounter with the Witch of Endor in the decadent poem *Hos Hexen i Endor* (1898) from his 1904 collection *Djævlerier*.[55] It is highly possible that Claussen, who was a part of Nielsen's circle of close friends, might have been inspired by Nielsen's choice of subject matter. In Claussen's version, the witch is a sinful temptress, leading the decadent Saul in to a bed 'made of [her] flowing hair'.[56] Claussen often depicted women as liberated *femme fatales* – in the style of Charles Baudelaire, J.K. Huysman, Paul Verlaine, and many other decadent symbolists – destroying men with their dangerous sexuality.[57] Nielsen's Witch, however,

50 *CNB* 1, 75–79, 90–96, letters 16 (17.1.1889) and 25–28 (23.10.1889 and Nov. 1889) to Emilie Demant Hansen.

51 *CNB* 1, 92, letter 26 to Emilie Demant Hansen (Nov. 1889). However, his attempt is foiled at the last minute after meeting an old friend.

52 John Fellow, 'Carl Nielsen – The Human Crisis, Then and Now', *Carl Nielsens Studies*, 5 (2012), 54.

53 Herschel B. Chipp, *Theories of Modern Art: A Source Book by Artists and Critics* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1968), 48.

54 Michelle Facos, *Symbolist art in context* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2009), 5.

55 Sophus Claussen, *Hos Hexen i Endor* (1889), in Sophus Claussen, *Djævlerier* (København og Kristiania: Gyldendalske Boghandel Nordisk Forlag, 1904), 123–24.

56 Ibid., verse 23–24: 'Hør Hex, jeg er søvnig, red mig en Seng i dine udslagne Lokker!'

57 Wivel, 'Det sjælelige gennembrud', 277–79.

is mild and kind, helping Saul to communicate with the deceased Samuel. The women in *Saul and David* – the Witch and Michal – are pure and virgin-like. They are counter-images to the decadents' females, in the style of the Pre-Raphaelites and their successors – including symbolists Agnes and Harald Slott-Møller – greatly inspired by the figures of courtly love poems and medieval ballads. The characters of the pure, young lovers, David and Michal, could also be seen in this light.

Symbolist strategies

Until now, we have explored Nielsen's choice of subject matter and analysed some chosen characters in the libretto in connection to symbolism and the general artistic interests and tendencies of his time. However, as we are exploring an opera, it is also important to consider how both the dramatic and musical elements can be understood in terms of symbolism.

Mood

In his tribute to *The Cambridge Companion to Twentieth-Century Opera* from 2005, British musicologist Philip Weller discusses symbolist opera around the turn of the century, especially drawing on Claude Debussy's *Pelléas et Mélisande* (1898), based on the symbolist play by Maeterlinck. Weller argues that symbolist opera composers could convey human content 'more directly and authentically, with greater subtlety and complexity, by ignoring the lure of realism and illusionism and concentrating instead on finding a language of atmosphere and evocation'.[58] It is noteworthy that Nielsen expressed his interest in the operatic subject of Saul and David specifically in terms of its 'Old Testament' *mood*, i.e. atmosphere. In 1911, Nielsen also refers to his use of mood as a vital compositional strategy in opera:

> You put the text forward and read it carefully. Then you navigate; choose your direction. From here to there, you must be within *one* mood [*Stemning*]; then, it must be succeeded by one more. In the first act of *Maskarade*, I let the disgruntled bassoons portray the dark, muggy room until Leander opens the shutters and the light pours through and makes the music bright as day.[59]

58 Weller, 'Symbolist opera', 62.

59 'Regnormen' (interviewer) and Carl Nielsen (interviewee), 'Hos "Maskarades" Komponist' (*Riget*, 18.1.1911), in Fellow (ed.), *Carl Nielsen til sin Samtid*, 156–59: 'Man tager en Tekst for sig og læser den grundigt igennem. Saa navigerer man, tager sit bestik. Herfra og dertil maa man være inden for én Stemning, dér skal den afløses af en ny. I "Maskerade"s første Akt lader jeg gnavne Fagotter skildre den mærke, lumre Stue, indtil Leander aabner Skodderne og Lyset strømmer ind og gør Musikken dagklar.'

According to Danish musicologist Esben Tange, symbolist works of music 'find expression in moods [*Stemninger*],' the musical 'mood' being the 'perceivable symbols'.[60] Therefore, these works are also often characterised by 'violation of the traditional logic of musical development … leading to essentially different stylistic modes of expression'.[61] This way of composing is clearly present in *Saul and David* which indeed incorporates a mixture of musical styles and moods. The music of the opera transforms the moment-to-moment psychological action into free musical form, continuously unfolding, following the characters, emotions and situations on stage. This becomes especially clear in the contrasting characterisations of Saul and David. The musical mood around David is lyrical, pure, and bright, whereas Saul's music is clearly darker and more complex. Another clear example of Nielsen's musical characterisation is found at Saul's and Samuel's initial meeting in Act 1 (see Ex. 1). Here, the contrast between Saul's complex and unstable mind and the strong, authoritative stature of the Prophet Samuel is clearly underscored musically, both in the accompaniment and vocal lines. A sense of unease is present in Saul's music, both harmonically and melodically, with unstable chromatic language and anxious sixteenth-note rhythms. Samuel's music, on the other hand, is characterised by strict diatonicism, stable metre, and shrill tritones (bb. 316–17), underscoring his dispassionate and stable mind.[62]

Stylisation

Weller speaks of the symbolist's use of 'continuous unfolding of orchestral materials', enabling a 'rapidity and responsiveness to nuance in the psychological texture of the piece which stands at the heart of both the symbolist and expressionist vision.'[63] Although the orchestra plays continuously from scene to scene in *Saul and David*, Nielsen distils any excessive orchestral substance, contrasting the 'hyper-sensuous' timbre and texture of the 'endless melody' of Wagnerian music dramas, as McCreless points out in his analysis of the opera.[64]

According to Weller, this reduction of orchestral and dramatic excess is indeed characteristic of symbolist opera – a form of *stylisation*, one of the other main artistic techniques the symbolist artists used to express a subjective vision through a simplified and non-naturalistic style. Through stylisation, the artist simplifies the symbolist work of art with physical characteristics treated selectively and in greater isolation than within a fuller, more cluttered realist context. In this way, there is an intensity of focus on the important themes and images.[65] Paul Gauguin's works, with their pure, vibrant colours applied in broad flat surfaces, are an example of this technique.

60 Esben Tange, 'Musikalsk symbolisme', *Danish Yearbook of Musicology*, 29 (2001), 56.

61 Ibid.

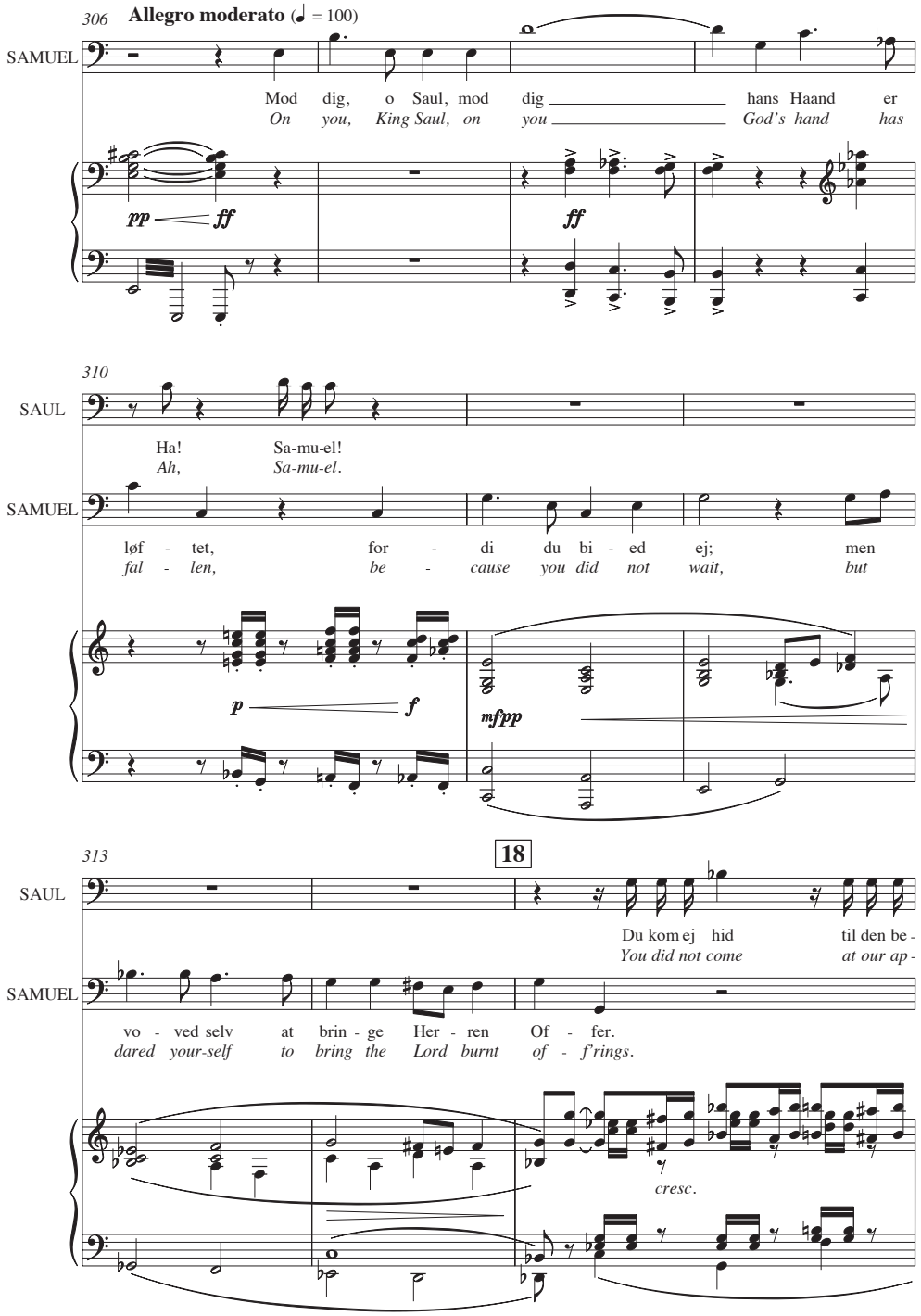
62 Saul's music is heard at bb. 310, 315–16 and 320–25 and Samuel's music at bb. 307–9, 311–14 and 317–320.

63 Weller, 'Symbolist opera', 75.

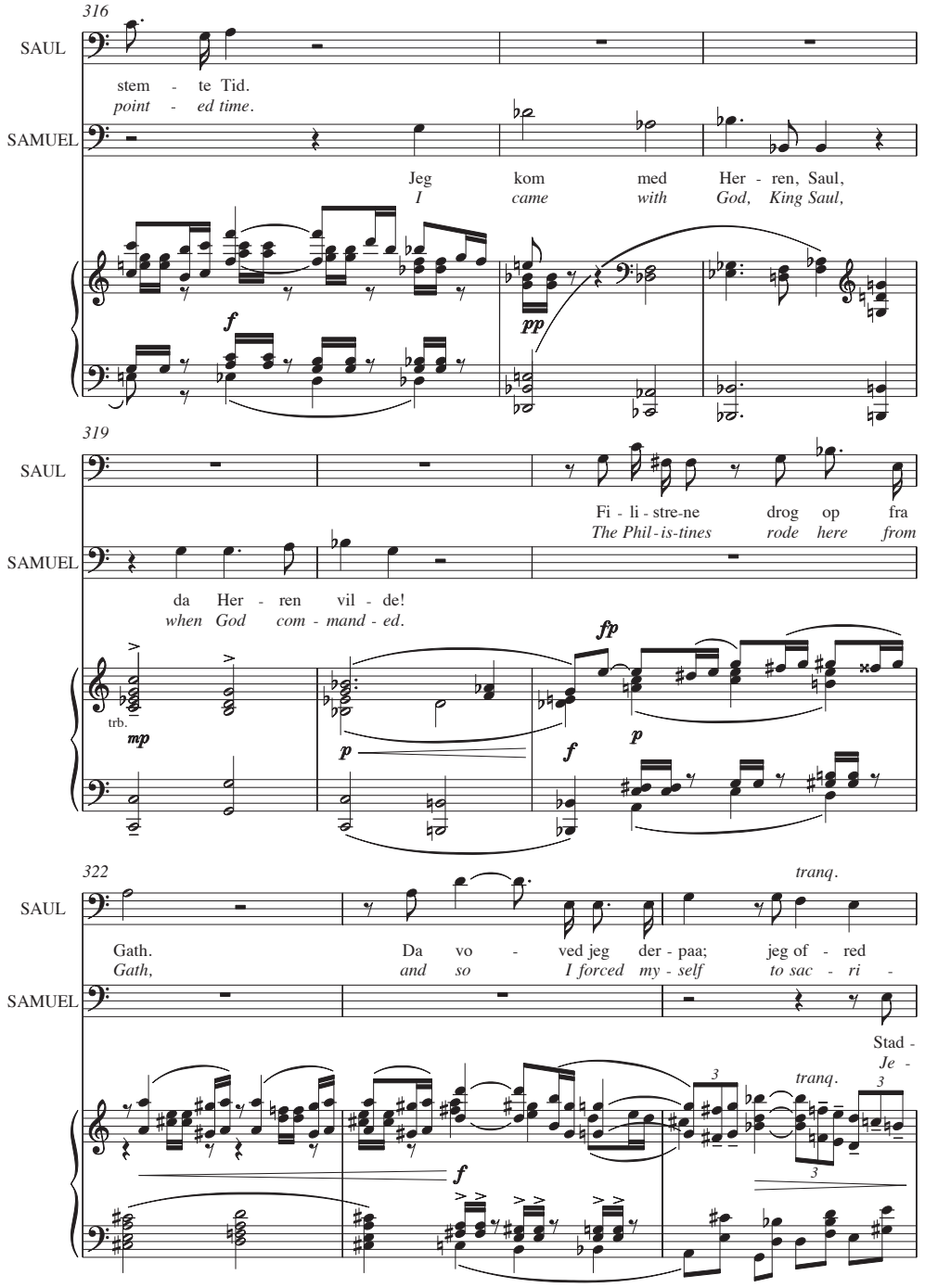
64 McCreless, 'Strange Bedfellows', 142.

65 Weller, 'Symbolist opera', 70, 72, 79.

Ex. 1, Carl Nielsen, *Saul and David*, Act 1, bb. 306–24.



(Ex. 1 continued)



This stylised technique is not only present in the music of *Saul and David*, but also dramatically. The opera lasts just two hours and the action unfolds quickly. Christiansen creates a shortened and simplified version of the biblical story with clearer characters, themes, and situations which are underscored musically by Nielsen.

Archaism

Previously, we have looked at archaism in connection to subject matter, namely the symbolists' inspiration from ancient tropes and myths as well as Nielsen's choice of the Old Testament story for his opera. We will now consider how archaic elements might similarly be present in the music and drama of *Saul and David*.

When considering the dramaturgical methods and character choices of Christiansen, it is clear that archaism is present in the drama of *Saul and David* when noting its affinities with the tragedies of ancient Greece. Anne-Marie Reynolds has identified Nielsen's opera as a tragedy against Aristotelian criteria.[66] Reynolds not only makes the suggestion that Christiansen changed the biblical story to highlight its tragic elements, but also demonstrates that Nielsen underscores Saul's demise and torment musically.

I would furthermore argue that a shared trait between this opera and the ancient dramas is clearly found in the large chorus parts which enact the vital role of the Israelite people. Just as the choruses of the Greek tragedies comment on the events of the plot, the chorus in the opera comments with a collective voice on the drama on stage. In addition, the Biblical story of Saul can be traced back further to the Homeric poems. In a mythological comparison of the Odyssey and Bible, Saul's consultation with the Witch of Endor to raise the deceased Samuel, for example, clearly parallels Odysseus's consultation with Circe to raise the deceased Teiresias.[67] Shortly after the turn of the century, Nielsen's interest in Hellenism grew considerably to engage ancient Greek music, which resulted in his *Helios* overture composed in Greece in 1903 and a lecture on the subject at the Greek Society in Copenhagen in 1907.[68] Given Christiansen's and Nielsen's interest of Hellenism, it is highly probable these connections to Greek tradition would not have been lost on them.

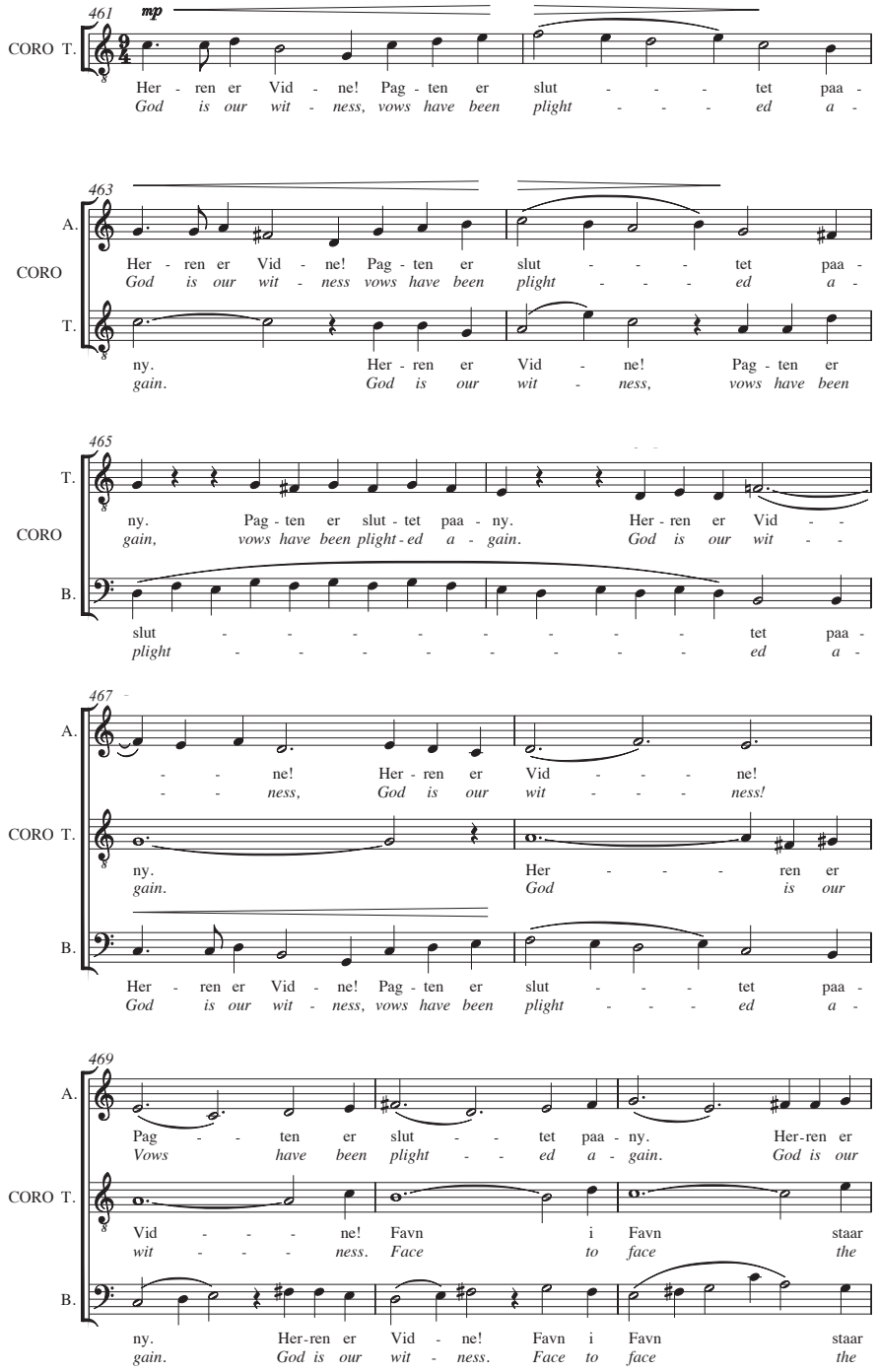
Nielsen's use of archaic techniques is also clearly present in *Saul and David*. One of the clearest examples is found in the choral celebration of Saul and David's momentary reconciliation in Act 3 (see Ex. 2).

66 Reynolds, 'Nielsen's *Saul and David* as Tragedy', 236–39.

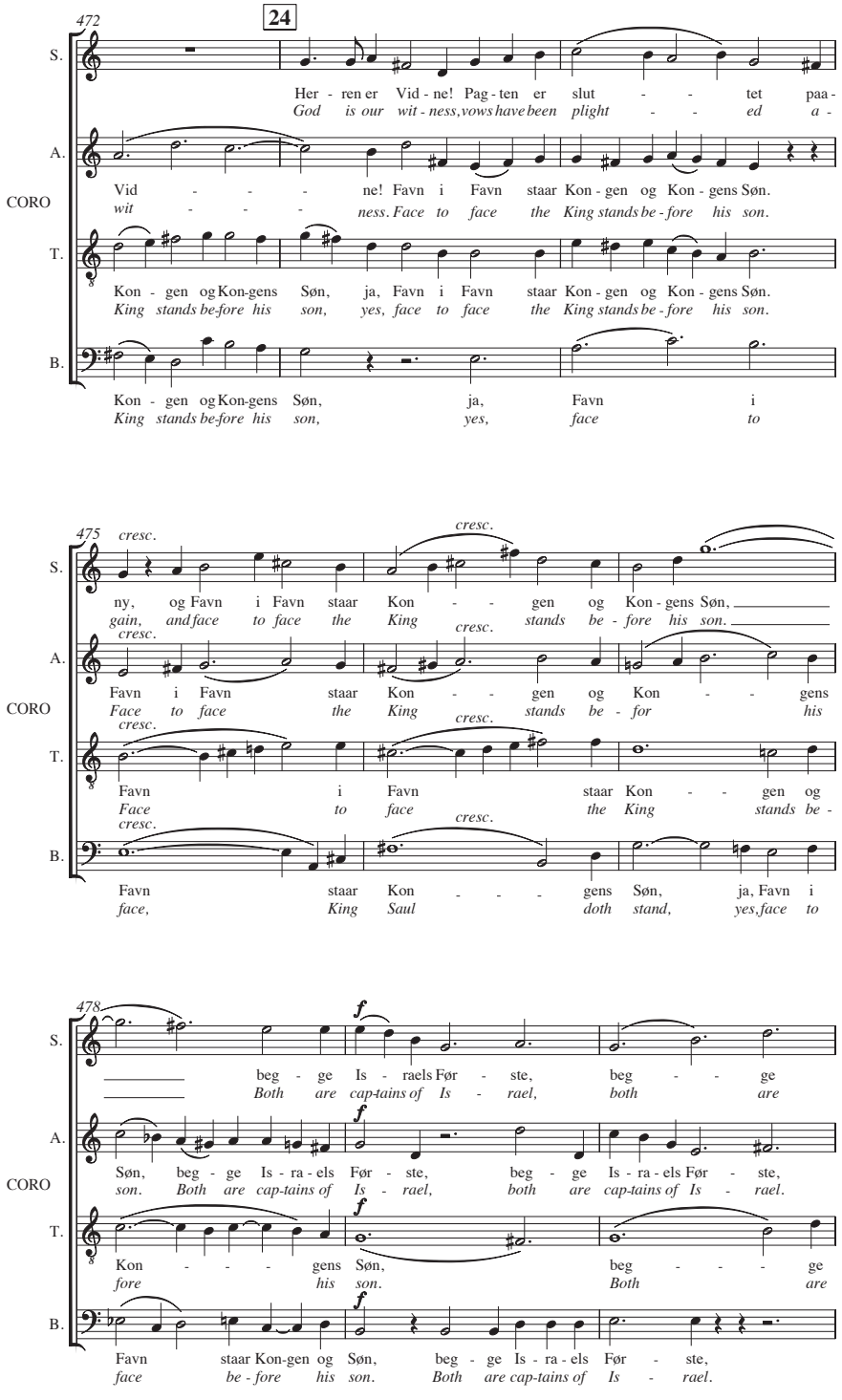
67 Teresa Carp, 'Teiresias, Samuel, and the Way Home', *California Studies in Classical Antiquity*, 12 (1979), 65–76.

68 Thomas Michelsen, 'Carl Nielsen og den græske musik – nogle kilder til belysning af den musikæstetiske konflikt mellem komponisten og hans samtidig i begyndelsen af århundredet', *Fund og Forskning*, 37 (1998), 231.

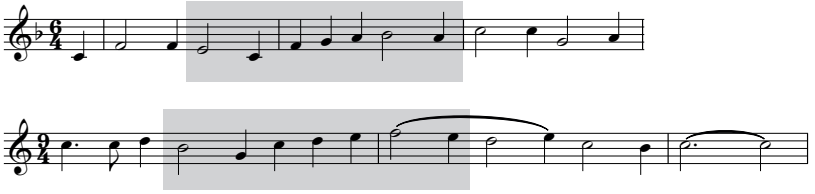
Ex. 2, Carl Nielsen, *Saul and David*, Act 3, 'Herren er Vidne', bb. 461–76 (choral part only).



(Ex. 2 continued)



The musical celebration is composed as a fugue. The melody itself is reminiscent of the Danish composer Thomas Laub's (1852–1927) vast output of hymns in the old Reformation style and triple time, specifically the hymn 'Alt, hvad som fuglevinger fik' (1915) in which the melody follows Nielsen's theme with astonishing similarity (see ex. 3). Nielsen met Laub during his stay in Italy in 1899 and would later collaborate with him on a selection of Danish songs in the beginning of the twentieth century.[69]



Ex. 3, Comparison of Thomas Laub, 'Alt, hvad som fuglevinger fik' (1915), bb. 1–3 (above) and Carl Nielsen, *Saul and David*, Act 3, 'Herren er Vidne' (1901), tenor part, bb. 461–63 (below).

Nielsen's revival of old contrapuntal forms clearly resonates with Tange's characterisation of musical symbolism. 'In musical symbolism', he suggests, 'stylistic permutation occurs when various stylistic expressions – often from different historical periods – are combined in one musical composition.'[70] Although most of the music in *Saul and David* is largely contemporary, including the extensive use of diminished-seventh chords and other means of expression typical of the time, there are clear examples of archaism in the opera. Nielsen's use of these compositional techniques, furthermore, clearly emphasises his vision of an archaic 'Old Testament' mood.

A European Symbolist Work

I have aimed in this article to offer a deeper understanding of both Carl Nielsen and his first much-neglected opera *Saul and David* in a wider cultural-historical and pan-European context.

The idea of Nielsen's 'Danishness' – a film all too often wrapped around the composer – has been challenged by treating Nielsen and his works as inherently European.[71] The vast treasure trove of Nielsen's diary entries and letters has shown us that he was deeply inspired by the artistic developments in modern Europe, having travelled extensively

69 *En Snes danske viser I* and *II* (1915 and 1917) and *Folkehøjskolens Melodibog* (1922). Carl Nielsen and Thomas Laub would begin their collaboration in the autumn of 1914. See Birgit Bjørnum & Klaus Møllerhøj, *Carl Nielsens Samling. Katalog over komponistens musikhåndskrifter i Det Kongelige Bibliotek* (Copenhagen: Det Kongelige Bibliotek and Museum Tusculanums Forlag, 1992), 289.

70 Tange, 'Musikalsk symbolisme', 47.

71 Daniel Grimley offers an insightful discussion of Nielsen's Danishness in Grimley, *Carl Nielsen and the Idea of Modernism*, 10–21.

and engaged himself in art and with artists at the time. Nielsen travelled throughout Europe at a time when symbolism was dominating the modern art scene. In Copenhagen, he actively met with symbolist artists, writers, and thinkers associated with the *Free Exhibition* and *Taarnet.* It is also evident that Nielsen shared many of the same ideas and artistic interests as his circle of symbolist acquaintances in and outside Denmark.

In my analysis of *Saul and David*, I presented elements in Nielsen's work that correspond to different ideas of symbolism – both in terms of the opera's literary subject, the dramaturgical elements, and the musical composition. Just as the symbolists of his time, Nielsen concentrated on creating a language of mood, in expressing a subjective vision through simplified and non-naturalistic styles, and in a fusion of archaic materials and forms with contemporary musical techniques. Given these considerations, I would argue that is it instructive to view *Saul and David* through a symbolist lens, and as an important product of the symbolist movement.

This has been the first symbolist reading of *Saul and David* so far, and one of the few symbolist readings on Nielsen's works in general.[72] However, I hope I have shown that such a reading is indeed fruitful and could be considered as a research strategy when dealing with Nielsen's compositions from the 1880s to the turn of the century.

72 Grimley discusses Nielsen's symbolism with readings of 'Har Dagen sanket al sin Sorg' (1892) from *Musik til fem Digte af J. P. Jacobsen*, op. 4/5, 'Genrebillede' (1893) from *Viser og Vers af J. P. Jacobsen*, opus 6/1 and 'Arabesk', *Fem Klaverstykker* (*Five Piano Pieces*), op. 3/3. See Grimley, chap. 'Carl Nielsen: Symbolist', in *Carl Nielsen and the Idea of Modernism*, 25–47.

Abstract

This article explores the position of the Danish composer Carl Nielsen (1865–1931) and his first opera Saul and David (1898–1901) in the European symbolist movement of the 1890s. Through a study of Nielsen's published letters and diary entries from the period, it is possible to present the composer's wide interest in art and engagement with artists – both in Denmark and on his extensive European travels – at a time when symbolism was dominating the modern art scene. Furthermore, one can trace artistic strategies in Nielsen's early work – in this case, the opera *Saul and David* – that correspond to different ideas of symbolism. This includes combining archaic materials with contemporary techniques, as well as creating a subjective expression through mood and simplified, non-naturalistic styles.

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Nielsen's *Saul and David* and Italian opera

Paolo Muntoni

The popular image of Carl Nielsen is more strongly associated with his symphonies and songs than with the theatre, even though he wrote two operas that are among the finest Danish examples of their kind. If *Maskarade* has always been regarded as a success, and has recently begun to attract international reappraisal, however, *Saul and David* has remained in the shadow of its younger sister. The 'great and strange material' that Nielsen chose as the basis for his work became an overwhelmingly difficult and absorbing task.[1] And yet, he later stated that he would not wish to change anything in his first opera, unlike his other compositions (including *Maskarade)*:

> Isn't it strange … that when *Maskarade*, my later opera, recently came forward again, I would have thought of various passages differently and concede to both displacements and cuts, but for what concerns *Saul and David,* I basically wouldn't like to change anything at all. And the reason must be that when you are merry, you don't take it so neatly, but when it is about the tragic and elevated – as it is the case here – you must have thought a big deal about it *before.*[2]

The destiny of *Saul and David* was in fact similar to that of many other operas from the period which were not based upon a realistic subject. After winning favour in France and later Italy, *verismo* or naturalistic opera marked the final phase of an operatic genre that had been in crisis across the whole continent. The situation was particularly critical in Italy, where the long tradition of Italian opera, predominant for three centuries, was in its twilight, forcing composers to look elsewhere for suitable models. It is therefore

1 'This great, strange material … captivated me and pursued me, so that for long periods I was totally unable to be free of it', quoted in Niels Bo Foltmann, Peter Hauge, and Niels Krabbe, 'Preface', in Carl Nielsen, *Saul og David* (The Carl Nielsen Edition, I/4; Copenhagen, 2002), xiv. The full interview, 'Før Slaget', by Hugo Seligmann, for Danish newspaper *Politiken* (26 February 1929) can be found in John Fellow (ed.), *Carl Nielsen til sin samtid. Artikler, foredrag, interview, presseindlæg, værknoter og manuskripter* (Copenhagen: Gyldendal, 1999), 519–20.

2 'Er det … ikke mærkeligt, at mens jeg, da *Mascarade,* min senere Opera, for nylig kom frem igen, udmærket godt kunde tænke mig adskilligt anderledes og gaa med til baade Forskydninger og Forkortninger, saa kan jeg i Grunden slet ikke tænke mig nogen son helst Forandring i *Saul og David.* Og det ligger vel i, at naar man er lystig, saa tager man det ikke saa nøje, men naar det som her drejer sig om det tragisk-ophøjede, saa *har* man tænkt sig om og set sig for', ibid. 519. All translations, unless otherwise stated, by the author.

surprising that Nielsen chose to work in Italy while composing part of *Saul and David.* Applying for a sabbatical in Rome, he claimed:

> It is my intention, in the case I am awarded such a major travel grant, to take one year's residency in Italy, partly in order to study the art of singing, partly, at the same time, in order to plan and compose an opera, *Saul and David,* for which Mr. Einar Christiansen has provided me with the text.[3]

In this essay, I will focus on the music cultural context in which *Saul and David* was composed, as Nielsen approached opera for the first time. This will cast new light on his independence and originality, but also offer the possibility for some seemingly unlikely comparisons, revealing that the work is more tightly integrated with Nielsen's broader European musical experience than has previously seemed – especially as an alternative to naturalism. I will therefore consider the Italian context before, during and after the rise of *verismo*, focusing particularly on the anti-naturalism debate, to which *Saul and David* also belongs. Nielsen's work follows a path that parallels the shift from the so-called noir dramas ('melodramma nero') of the 1880s, which will be briefly presented later, to the work of Ildebrando Pizzetti, via the almost completely unknown operas of Antonio Smareglia. Unusual as it may be, I believe that this comparison will support the idea of a composer who, while working in the genre of musical drama, was in constant dialogue with his European contemporaries.

I will start by presenting the challenges faced by composers in writing an opera in the late nineteenth century, and then reflect upon the musical and dramatic quality of *Saul and David.* I will argue that Nielsen was able to enhance his drama by providing it with a highly original musical characterisation and by alternating moments of stasis to moments of action. The most important element in this respect was his use of the chorus, which led some commentators to suggest similarities with oratorio. This fact, together with Nielsen's interest in Renaissance polyphony, suggests a comparison with Italian contemporary composer Lorenzo Perosi, whom Nielsen met while in Rome. Subsequently, by viewing *Saul and David* as an anti-naturalistic tragedy,[4] I will discuss how it anticipates some of the future tendencies of Italian opera, as expressed first by Busoni, who saw the necessity of a new anti-naturalistic musical theatre, and then by the composers of the so-called 'generation of the 1880s'. One of them in particular, Ildebrando Pizzetti, can be related to Nielsen in terms of aesthetic principles. Finally, I will reflect on the similarities based on the choice of topic and in the shape of the drama between *Saul and David* and Pizzetti's *Débora e Jaèle*, the only biblical opera written by an Italian composer in the first part of the twentieth century.

3 Letter from Carl Nielsen to the Ministry of Church and Education, 29 March 1899, in John Fellow (ed.), *Carl Nielsen Brevudgaven* [=*CNB*], 12 vols. (Copenhagen: Multivers, 2005–15, vol. 2, 100–1.

4 Anne-Marie Reynolds, 'Nielsen's *Saul and David* as Tragedy: The Dialectics of Fate and Freedom in Drama and Music', *Carl Nielsen Studies*, 5 (2012), 236–57.

With these comparisons, I do not presume any direct influence on Nielsen's work (or vice versa). I simply suggest some similarities of a musical, dramatic, and structural nature, in order to reflect on two aspects: the broad common currency of operatic language at the turn of the century, and Nielsen's versatility and receptivity toward his cultural and musical environment. The fact that *Saul and David* is in many respects an unusual and peculiar work, which reveals very little trace of influence or derivation, does not mean it should be regarded as an isolated phenomenon; on the contrary, I believe that considering it within its contemporary cultural context only enriches our understanding of the work, as well as enhancing our appreciation of Nielsen's ability to capture and synthesize diverse aesthetic impulses, ultimately producing something highly personal. It is this eclecticism that, allied with his deeply individual poetics, became one of the most characteristic elements of the composer's mature work from the *Fourth Symphony* onward.

1880s and 1890s Italian opera between anti-naturalism and verismo

Previous commentators have generally placed *Saul and David* far from either Wagner or Italian opera, even though echoes of both worlds can be identified.[5] We know of very few statements about Italian opera from Nielsen himself,[6] but the fact that he chose to work

5 Balzer compares Iago's monologue in Verdi's *Otello* to Saul's defiance of God in the first act of Nielsen's opera, Jürgen Balzer, 'The Dramatic Music', in Jürgen Balzer (ed.), *Carl Nielsen. Centenary Essays* (Copenhagen: Nyt Nordisk Forlag, 1965), 81–82. Saul's monologue is again called Iago-like in Reynolds, 'Nielsen's *Saul and David* as Tragedy', 253–54, as well as in Roger Noel Clegg, *The writing of Carl Nielsen's Saul og David* (MA-Thesis; University of Leeds, 1989), 10–13. Recently, Patrick McCreless has also reflected on the 'unlikely' match Nielsen – Wagner in Patrick McCreless, 'Strange Bedfellows. The Hebrew Bible and Wagner in "Saul and David"', *Carl Nielsen Studies*, 4 (2009), 107–44, while Nielsen's use of the half diminished chord (also known as Tristan chord, and as such the bearer of associations with the Wagnerian musical world) has also been examined in Reynolds, 'Nielsen's *Saul and David* as Tragedy', 244–53. Even though Nielsen almost ignored Verdi – he mentioned him very seldom in the available written sources – *Otello* was performed in Copenhagen while the composer was a member of the second violins section of the Royal Orchestra. According to Clegg's list of the operas that were played at the Royal Theatre in Copenhagen between 1883 and 1903, *Otello* was premiered in Denmark 20 April 1898 and was also repeated in the following season 1899–1900, Clegg, *The writing,* 135–36. Cf. also Balzer, 'The Dramatic Music', 78.

6 The only witness of Nielsen attending a performance of a local opera in Italy can be found in his correspondence from the 1891 trip: 'I have heard "Cavaliere Rusticana" [sic]: absolutely nothing new in that music, but well made!', letter from Carl Nielsen, Florence, to Hother Ploug, Copenhagen, 22 May 1891, *CNB* 1, 229–30. That Nielsen didn't appreciate Verdi's operas from his 'middle period' is evident from these words: 'The dominating Italian opera style was organized first of all with the purpose of giving the singers an occasion to shine with all the possible singing techniques, no matter if they were appropriate to the dramatic situation or not. You will still be able to experience rehearsals of this insane nonsense when you go to the Royal Theatre for *Trovatore* or *Traviata*', Carl Nielsen, '[Gluck, Haydn og Mozart]' (1905), in Fellow (ed.), *Carl Nielsen til sin samtid,* I, 65. The composer praised on the contrary Verdi's last work, *Falstaff*, as it is reported by his son-in-law Telmányi: 'We

in Italy during the composition of *Saul and David* can arguably be seen as an indirect reflection of his attitude towards Wagner. Nielsen might have been indifferent towards Italian music theatre, but he had pretty strong opinions about Wagnerian music drama.[7] Italy allowed him to distance himself from Wagner, not least since Danish composers traditionally gravitated to Germany because of geographical and cultural proximity.

There is no reason to doubt Nielsen's claims that he had much to learn from the Italian tradition, especially regarding vocal scoring and technique, even though the presence of his wife Anne-Marie in Rome must have contributed to his application.[8] What is unclear is whether he was referring to an older or a newer tradition, especially given his inclination towards Palestrina and his fondness for polyphonic passages, particularly in choral writing. Moreover, this was exactly the period when Palestrina had become an almost mythical figure in the history of counterpoint, a topic to which we will return later in the essay.

At the same time, however, contemporary Italian opera was struggling. Though the sudden success of Mascagni's *Cavalleria Rusticana*, and the rising popularity of Puccini would assure a prominent place for Italian opera in Europe and beyond for decades, there is little evidence of a distinctively Italian approach to the genre in the work of the 'Giovine Scuola'.[9] In other words, it was much easier for Nielsen to rely on a highly

got caught by a brilliant performance with amazing singing displays … Carl Nielsen was so captivated by the first two acts that he poked me. He eventually wanted to greet the maestro [Toscanini]', Emil Telmányi, *Af en musikers billedbog* (Copenhagen: Nyt Nordisk Forlag Arnold Busck, 1978), 175.

7 After an initial infatuation during his Grand Tour to Germany in 1890, Nielsen started to get tired (after only a few days, as Clegg observes) of Wagner and especially of his use of the leitmotif technique: 'I admire Wagner and find that he is the greatest spirit in our century; but I do not like the way he spoon-feeds his audience. Every time a name is mentioned, even though its bearer has been dead and buried for many years, we are given his leitmotif. I find this highly naïve and it arouses a comical effect in me', Clegg's translation in Clegg, *The writing,* 13, cf. Nielsen's diary, Dresden, 15 September 1890, *CNB* 1, 117. Four years later, after a performance of *Tristan*, Nielsen wrote highly appraising the first act and the first part of the second one, but adding these words: 'as an entity I am … a long way from being carried away by Wagner; I find such a quantity of bad taste and hollow effect in this as in all his next operas – perhaps excepting *Meistersinger* – that I can find it impossible not to be offended by it', Clegg's translation in Clegg, *The writing*, 13, cf. Nielsen's diary, Vienna, 9 November 1894, *CNB* 1, 383. This is however not the place to discuss Nielsen's relationship with Wagner. Moreover, as already mentioned, the topic is covered exhaustively in McCreless, 'Strange Bedfellows'.

8 Anne-Marie had already been granted a scholarship and the possibility to study with one of the leading French sculptors of his generation, Hugo Segoffin, at that time based in Rome.

9 This was the name given by scholars to most of the Italian composers that were contemporary to Nielsen. Sometimes the adjective 'verista' is added at the end, so that musicians like Pietro Mascagni, Ruggiero Leoncavallo, Umberto Giordano, Francesco Cilea and, though with some caveat, Giacomo Puccini – and to a lesser extent Antonio Smareglia, Alfredo Catalani and Lorenzo Perosi, sometimes joined by Franco Alfano – are said to belong to the 'giovine scuola verista'. But it would be appropriate to avoid the adjective 'verista', firstly because some of these composers were only remotely influenced by *verismo*; secondly because even composers like Mascagni and company experimented with a variety of subjects, which sometimes brought them far from the realistic world, which the most famous of their operas depicted.

established tradition – polyphonic vocal writing from the Renaissance – and to reinterpret it within his own musical world, than to approach the very eclectic and uncertain field of Italian contemporary opera.

Verdi's mature works, which had already incorporated elements from other traditions, especially French Grand Opera,[10] suggest an unprecedented balance between vocal and orchestral textures, as well as the almost entire abolition of closed forms, even though lyrical singing is still present. This was a consequence of the rising popularity of Wagnerian music drama, with its complete synthesis of music and dramatic action. Before becoming influential in matters of musical character, however, Wagner gained popularity among a group of intellectuals, artists and writers known as the 'Scapigliati', literally meaning 'dishevelled'. One of the artists who was associated with the 'Scapigliatura' was Arrigo Boito, composer and poet, author of the opera *Mefistofele*.[11] The movement influenced many opera composers especially during the 1880s, with its post-romantic propensity for the fantastic and the supernatural, and its predilection for the magic element, especially black magic: this decade's operatic plots and librettos are often set in Nordic environments or taken from the realm of myth and legend. The musical theatre that was later called 'melodramma nero'[12] is exemplified by works such as *La Fata del Nord* (1884) by Guglielmo Zuelli, Puccini's first two operas, *Le Villi* (1884) and *Edgar* (1889), *Flora Mirabilis* (1886) by Spiros Samara, *Asrael* by Alberto Franchetti (1888), and Alfredo Catalani's *Loreley* (1890), a revision of the earlier *Elda* (1880).

The first anti-naturalistic phase of Italian opera, however, proved to be very short: Mascagni's great success with *Cavalleria Rusticana* (1890) imposed *verismo* as the new dominant genre and prompted many turn-of-the-century-composers to choose realistic subjects in order to achieve a similar fortune. Some of the works that followed *Cavalleria* have actually little to do with the *verista* paradigm, as they are set in urban environments, while the origin of *verismo*, as a literary movement, was rural. Historical dramas, Traviata-like love stories and vernacular tales imbued with exoticism, are unified only by the common naturalistic frame. For this reason many scholars prefer the term urban naturalism for most of the works of the 'Giovine Scuola', leaving the *verista* label only to dramas set in the countryside. Besides being justified by its broad spectrum, the variety of the subjects inside the naturalistic genre hides an anxiety, which is evident in composers' ceaseless search for suitable subjects. Whether we use the terms *verismo*

10 Guido Salvetti, 'Dal Verdi della maturità a Giacomo Puccini', in Alberto Basso (ed.), *Musica in scena – Storia dello spettacolo musicale* (II, Gli italiani all'estero – L'opera in Italia e in Francia; Torino: UTET, 1996), 385.

11 Boito was particularly influential in Italy, while abroad he was probably best known for writing the libretto for Verdi's *Otello*. His first opera, *Mefistofele,* had a curious history: its première in 1868 was a failure. After two revisions (first in 1875 and then again in 1876), however, the work gained a fair amount of success, leading opera composers to new paths in terms of subject choice.

12 Rodolfo Celletti, *Storia dell'opera italiana* (Milano: Garzanti, 2000), 521.

or urban naturalism, the choice of a realistic plot was in fact no guarantee of success: among the composers usually associated to the 'Giovine Scuola', only Puccini managed to achieve lasting and prosperous fortune, while Mascagni, Leoncavallo, and to a lesser extent Umberto Giordano and Francesco Cilea, only experienced real and enduring success with one opera each.[13]

This desperate search for a suitable subject, combined with the fear of failure, haunted also those composers who did not work best in naturalistic dramas (such as Catalani and Smareglia), but who nevertheless tried their hand in the genre. It is these composers who presented a valid alternative to *verismo* in the twenty years around the turn of the century: the realistic frame that surrounds the story in *La Wally,* for example, cannot be compared to that of other *verista* composers, which justifies the claim that the opera 'creates a balance between dream and reality'.[14] Even less naturalistic are some of Smareglia's operas, particularly *La Falena* (1897), *Oceána* (1903) and *Abisso* (1914), which represent the products of the collaboration between the composer and the poet Silvio Benco. Particularly significant in this respect is *La Falena,* which, despite its evident Wagnerian influence in the musical language, anticipates some of the future tendencies of anti-naturalistic theatre, while the element of black magic is reminiscent of the noir dramas of the 1880s. The opera's thin plot (not much more than a parable), undefined settings, and evanescent characters (not much more than allegories) are all elements that portrait it as a part of the symbolist world that can be connected to Gabriele D'Annunzio, one of the main representatives of the European decadence. The author of influential literary works as well as of several opera librettos, D'Annunzio would become a constant reference for composers of tragic operas in the first two decades of the twentieth century, a point we will come back to later in the essay.

The legend created by Benco in *La Falena,* which by his own admission can be summarized as 'an idyll overturned into tragedy',[15] also stands out for another reason, notably its absence of lightness or irony. This is even more striking in relation to the dominating trends dictated by *verismo* composers, who merged high and low, elevated and plebeian, tragic and comic registers, according to a recipe that was reminiscent of early 1800's opera semiseria. Even in the most tragic of the *verista* operas there is place for light and cheerful moments, as in the first acts of *Tosca* and *Madama Butterfly.*[16] These characteristics make *La Falena* the linking point between melodramma nero and decadent tragedy, which would gradually distance itself from the Wagnerian influence to acquire a more specific musical identity, particularly with the works of Zandonai

13 Respectively with *Cavalleria Rusticana* (1890), *Pagliacci* (1892), *Andrea Chénier* (1896), and *Adriana Lecouvreur* (1902). The rest of the four composers' work are hardly represented nowadays.

14 Salvetti, 'Dal Verdi della maturità a Giacomo Puccini', 401.

15 See for example Guido Salvetti, *La nascita del Novecento* (Torino: EDT, 1991), 243.

16 In both the operas the germs of an imminent tragedy manifested themselves at the end of the first act, while the beginning of it is occupied by more trivial matters. It is the second act's role to unveil the tragedy and the third one's to bring it to a dramatic climax.

and Pizzetti. At the same time and despite the substantial aesthetic differences between the two composers, we can identify some similarities between Smareglia's opera and *Saul and David*. The thoroughly tragic sense, the element of black magic (limited to a few scenes in Nielsen's opera,[17] more pervasive in *La Falena)*, and the sense of indefiniteness and atemporality are connected to the out-of-this-world-quality both works express.

Musical characters and dramatic choruses: Nielsen's individual touch

The 'globalisation' of opera at the turn of the century was responsible for important changes, and its consequence was the gradual abandonment of the principles that had made Italian opera during the eighteenth century, namely the use of closed numbers (and the separation between action and reflection); the supremacy of vocal melody; and the social and musical distinction between opera buffa and opera seria (and between high and low genres).[18] As a result of this, the need to maintain dramatic cohesion without giving up lyrical singing became a problem of major importance for opera composers. In order to do so, the transition from recitative to closed numbers had to become smoother, hence the more frequent use of the recitativo arioso. Another major preoccupation was to avoid unnecessary pauses in the action; for this reason, closed numbers were placed either at the beginning or at the end of the act, or, in some cases, took the form of musical episodes of diegetic character.

In *Saul and David* Nielsen makes extensive use of some of these devices. The most striking example of music perceived diegetically occurs at the beginning of the second act, after the prelude, when David sings for the sick King Saul.[19] The episode is notable because of the clarity with which Nielsen outlines two musical planes: David's performance is accompanied by the harp, an instrument strongly associated with the act of singing, while the orchestra, representing the plane of the dramatic action, interrupts his song and eventually stops it. Later in the act David sings again and is once more interrupted. But even in the first act, he is associated with singing as a therapeutic means of soothing Saul's troubled mind – although we initially do not hear the harp, the stage indications reveal that David is actually singing and is accompanied by the

17 *Saul and David,* even being far from this symbolist realm, maintains a loose relationship with the narrative devices of noir dramas, both in the king's curse operated by Samuel, which is responsible for Saul's mind to be controlled by an evil spirit, and especially in the last act's opening's scene, when the prophet's spirit is evocated by the witch of Endor.

18 Although there are many examples of opera semiseria, where both tragic and comic elements and characters from high and low classes were mixed, the distinction between opera buffa and opera seria stands until *verismo*.

19 The 'meta musical' quality in David is also noted by McCreless, with a reference to 'what Carolyn Abbate calls "phenomenal performance" – music "that the onstage audience can *hear as music*"', Mc Creless, 'Strange Bedfellows', 131.

instrument,[20] while Saul's reactions to the young man's appearance also point to his song (cf. example 2).[21] The end of the first act is also a perfect example of Nielsen exploiting a natural break in the action in order to create a musical opportunity. The love duet between David and Mikal takes place immediately after everybody has been called to war. A similar device is used to situate the duet between brother and sister, Jonathan and Mikal, at the beginning of Act 3, in a way that does not interfere with the rest of the action.

While the elements presented above show Nielsen operating in a way that is in line with most of his contemporaries, there are aspects of his musical and dramatic shaping of the work that justify the independence of thought and originality for which *Saul and David* has so often been praised. An example of this can be found in the second act, where Nielsen incorporated the song of a thrush he heard in the garden of Villa Medici in the orchestral score of *Saul and David.*[22] What had the potential to become an impressionistic touch – a common practice in many works of the period – was handled by Nielsen in a totally different manner: had he been a *verista* composer, he would have reported the song verbatim, to add a touch of reality to his work. Instead, he incorporates it into the score in a way that makes it almost impossible to recognize the original melody. Similarly, he incorporated in the musical discourse elements from musical traditions other than the operatic, such as popular song and Renaissance sacred polyphony.

Another original feature of Nielsen's musical discourse in the opera is the prevalence of the diatonic element over the chromatic. While both the anti-naturalist and the *verismo* composers shared a post-romantic aesthetic, inclined towards the chromatic regions, Nielsen, in contrast, preferred a personal and idiosyncratic diatonicism, which is sometimes pushed to an extreme, when the independence of the single voices results in dissonances in a way that resembles Busoni's concept of a fully developed polyphony.[23] Nielsen does employ chromaticism in the opera, but its function is more illustrative of the action or of a particular character (notably Saul), which is to say that chromaticism

20 Nielsen, *Saul og David*, Act 1, bb. 643ff. (rehersal number 37): [David] 'steps forward a bit and sings to the harp'. The harp is though silent until bb. 692ff. (reharsal number 40), when David intonates a psalm. He will be doing the same, again accompanied by the harp, in the already mentioned episode at the beginning of the second act. The full score from the Carl Nielsen Edition is available at www.kb.dk/en/nb/dcm/cnu/download.html.

21 Saul: 'Who's there? Who's singing there?' ('Hvad nu? Hvo synger her?'), ibid., Act 1, bb. 664–65; Saul: 'Sing on! Sing on! Now all is peace and quiet!' ('Ja, syng! Ja, syng! Nu blev her lyst og stille'), ibid. bb. 681–84.

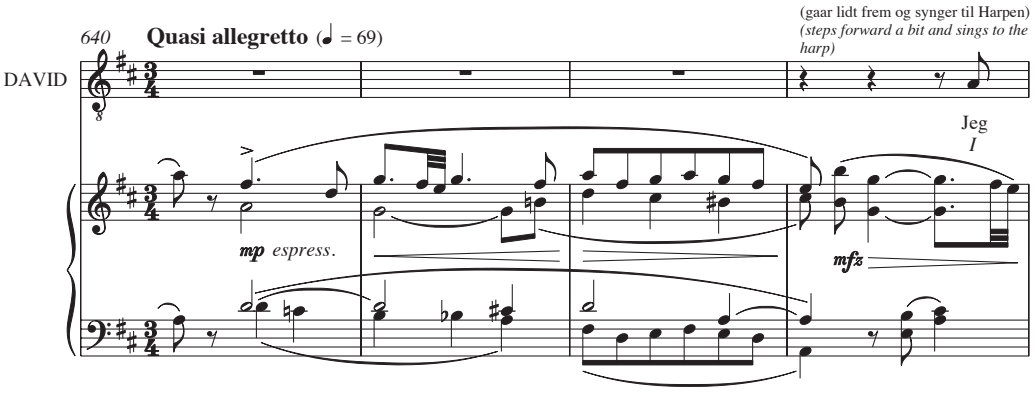
22 Cf. Torben Meyer and Frede Schandorf Petersen, *Carl Nielsen – Kunstner og Mennesket: En biografi*, (Copenhagen: Nyt Nordisk Forlag Arnold Busck, 1947–48), I, 177 and *CNB* 2, 183. Both sources reproduce a facsimile from Nielsen's diary, dated Villa Medici 18 April 1900, 5:30 am.

23 Michael Fjeldsøe, *Den fortrængte modernisme – den ny musik i dansk musikliv (1920-1940)* (PhD diss., University of Copenhagen, 1999), 143–47.

is used in a manner close to that in pre-classical music, where it was the bearer of a specific extra-musical meaning.

If Saul's at times chromatic singing is a key to understand him as a character, it is not an isolated attempt of musical characterisation. On the contrary, the creation of musical types revealing a perfect cohesion with their respective dramatic role is one of the most notable features in *Saul and David*.[24] Being the motor of the opera's plot, Saul is given an aria that forms the dramatic climax of the first act; almost all of its musical weight, however, is carried in the orchestra, with no extended lyrical passages for the singer. The traditional balance of the aria is hence transformed into something new.[25] The rest of Saul's arioso passages are similarly brief, including the first section of the two-part aria before his suicide. Such type casting, however, is not limited to Saul alone. David is a warrior, a shepherd and a king-in-waiting, but he is first of all a musician, hence offering the composer the perfect opportunity for lyrical expansiveness. His first appearance in the opera is perfectly in line with this characterisation: his *aria di sortita* (ex. 1) is cleverly disguised as a song (as we have seen when speaking of diegetic musical episodes), of the same kind as that in Mascagni's *Cavalleria,* where Lola's first lines are the verses of a Sicilian stornello (ex. 2). Having established himself this way, David retains his role even when he is not singing diegetically, as in his love duet with Mikal. Nielsen thus intensifies the first of the symbolic contrasts upon which the opera is built: Saul as the personification of drama, and David as the personification of music.

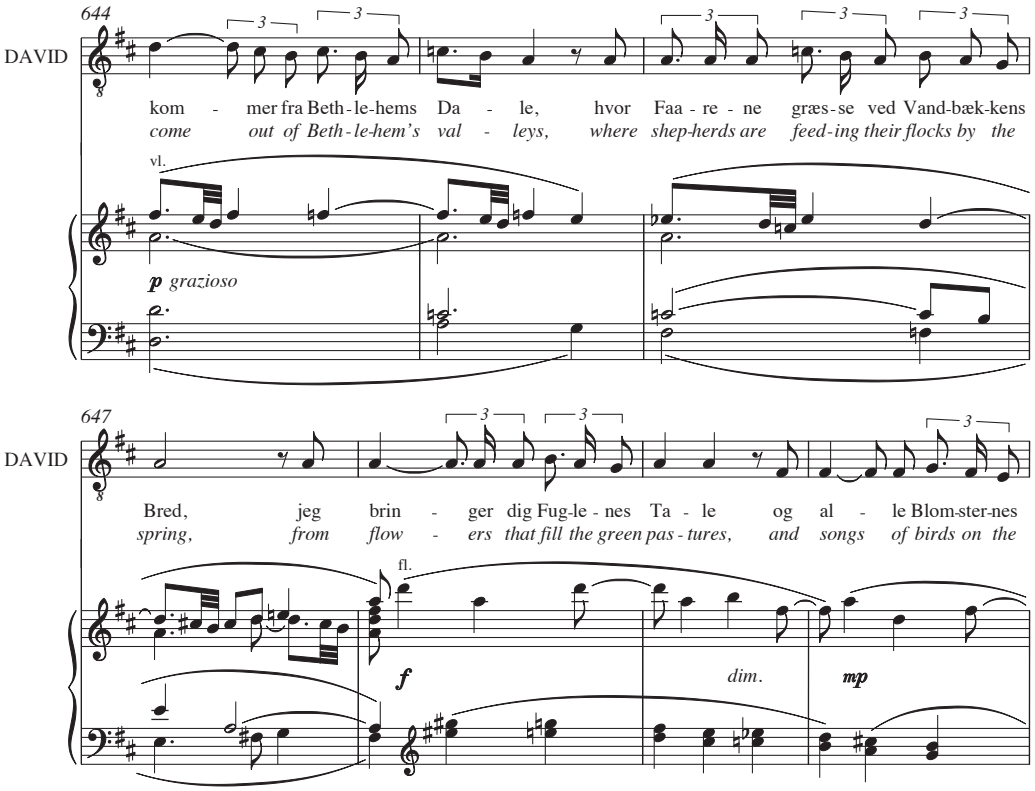
Example 1, Carl Nielsen, *Saul and David*, David's entrance, Act 1, bb. 640–50.



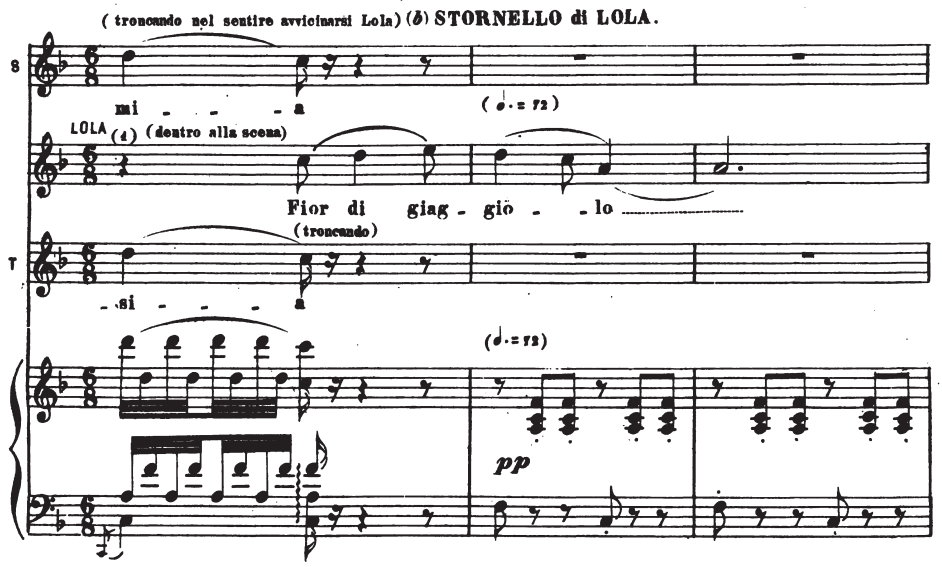
24 The use of musical characters in *Saul and David* is also discussed in Ludvig Dolleris, *Carl Nielsen – En musikografi* (Odense: Fyns Boghandels Forlag, 1949), 72–73.

25 Even more than in Iago's monologue with which the Israeli king's so often has been compared: in the passage from *Otello* Verdi does provide the orchestra with a prominent role, but Iago's vocal part maintains a typical Verdian melodic quality.

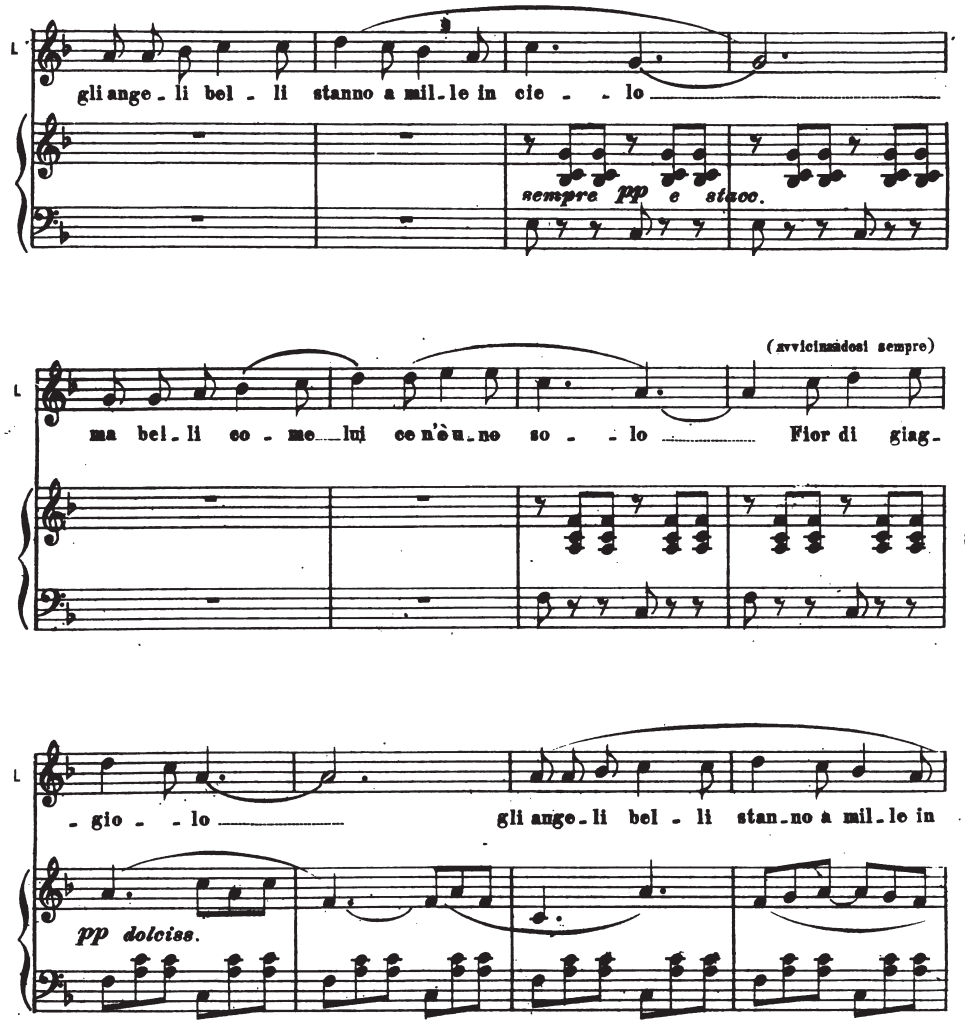
(Ex. 1 continued)



Example 2, Pietro Mascagni, *Cavalleria rusticana*, 'Stornello di Lola', piano reduction (Sonzogno, 1891), pp. 91–92.



(Ex. 2 continued)

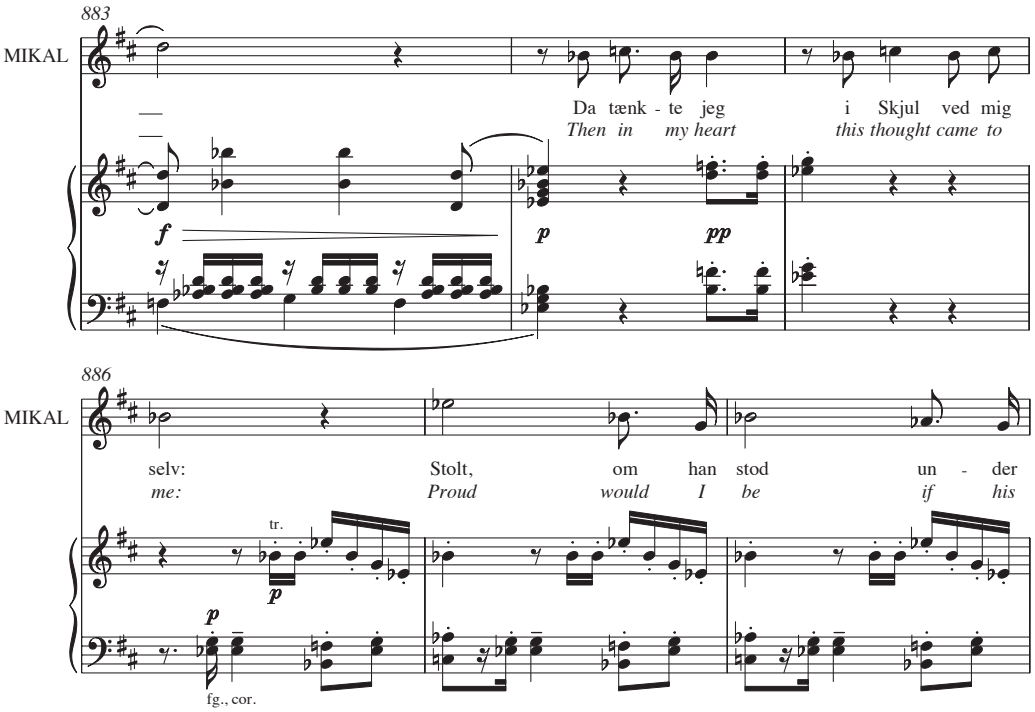


This characterization by musical types is supported by the other characters: Abner rarely abandons dry recitative, almost constantly accompanied by militaristic trumpets; Samuel's succession of declamation and psalmody, which by no means lacks lyricism, is neatly aligned with his dramatic role as the servant of God (and, as Patrick McCreless observes in his already mentioned essay, as his deputy).

One role in particular illustrates both Nielsen's approach to characterization and also why he may have referred to a specific Italian vocality when he applied to study in the country. The fiery quality of characters such as Turiddu in *Cavalleria Rusticana*, Canio in *Pagliacci,* Michele in *Tabarro,* and Tosca in Puccini's eponymous work all reflect archetypical, sometimes even stereotypical, representations of an 'Italian temperament'.

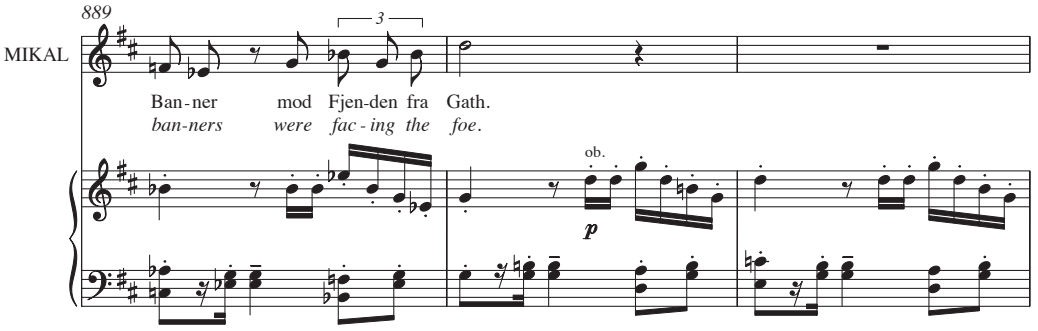
This idea of a fiery personality also describes Mikal, Saul's daughter, who, according to Torben Schousboe, demands a typically Italian vocal style.[26] And it is true that her music is more passionate than lyrical, and exhibits some of the traits that characterize *verista* vocal writings, especially the use of wide intervals, the passages when she sings in a quasi *declamato* style, and her sudden dynamic changes (ex. 3). These are evident both in the second act, where she's waiting, together with her maids, for news from the battle between David and Goliath, as well as in the third, when she openly stands in the way of her father, defending David and then escaping with him. But already in the first act's love duet it is clear that it is David, and not Mikal, who will be responsible for the scene's lyricism, with his lover instead displaying strong and even martial traits. Her temperament is announced even in the first measures by a change in tempo (marked *agitato*), while later, imagining David as a victorious warrior, she is accompanied by trumpets, an instrument that in *Saul and David* always recalls war. The trumpet motif is then taken over by the oboe, which represents David's pastoral nature and introduces a new lyrical phase, once again for the male character.

Example 3a, Carl Nielsen, *Saul and David*, Mikal's vocal line, Act 1, bb. 883–91.

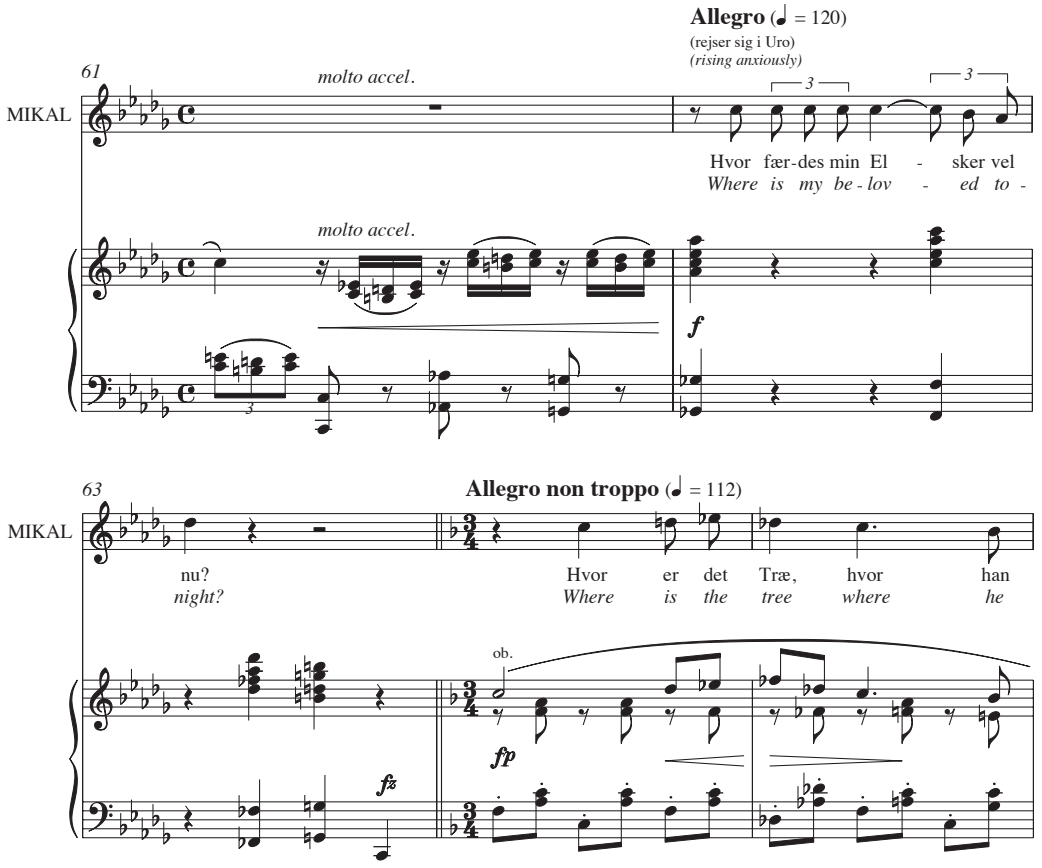


26 Cf. Torben Schousboe's introductory commentary to the recording *Carl Nielsen. Operas. Maskarade – Saul & David* (The historic Carl Nielsen collection, vol. 3), Danacord Records, DACOCD 357–59, as well as Jürgen Balzer's statement, 'Michal has revealed the essential sides of her temperament in this duet', Balzer, 'The Dramatic Music', 86.

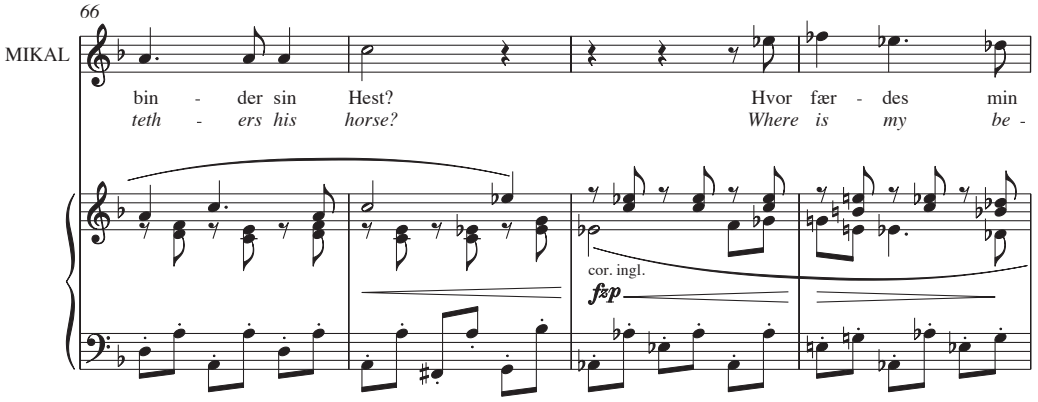
(Ex. 3a continued)



Example 3b, Carl Nielsen, *Saul and David*, Mikal's vocal line, Act 3, bb. 61–69.



(Ex. 3b continued)



Nielsen most probably wrote the scene from the second act during his stay in Italy, whereas there are contradictory statements regarding the composition of the love duet in the first.[27] The nocturne that opens the third act, one of the most poetic moments in the score, was written in Denmark, but is still perfectly in line with Mikal's character: here it is Jonathan, rather than her, who sings lyrically, while her part is notable for its sudden changes of tempo and dynamics as she worries about David's whereabouts. A sudden dynamic change (*molto accelerando*) from Andante con moto to Allegro and then Allegro non troppo introduces her singing, while her vocal line is fragmented and more notable for its dramatic quality then for its melody.

All three passages (where Mikal has a major role) were added by Christiansen and Nielsen to give the opera's leading female character greater prominence than she has in the biblical account, where her importance is limited to the act of saving David once. Although Nielsen and Christiansen maintain her alliance with David, they also allow her to defy Saul openly at the end of the third act. The editors of the Carl Nielsen Edition agree that 'the biggest departure from the Bible story is the character of Michal'.[28] They

27 Art historian Vilhelm Wanscher, one of Nielsen's friends, states that Nielsen was composing part of the first act while in Rome: 'The old-fashioned traffic in the street did not bother the composer, who worked on the first act of his opera "Saul and David"'. From the text it appears that Nielsen was composing specifically the love duet: 'He thought only of David and Michal', Vilhelm Wanscher, 'Erindringer om Carl Nielsen', *Politiken*, 8 June 1935, quoted in Foltmann, Hauge, and Krabbe, 'Preface', xiv–xv. According to the editors, Nielsen 'composed large parts of Act Two in Italy', ibid. xv. Meyer, on the other hand, states that only the celebration scene after David's victory was composed in Italy, cf. Meyer and Schandorf Petersen, *Carl Nielsen*, I, 175–77. It is tempting to believe that from the end of the first act to the celebration scene (the part of the opera where Mikal is almost constantly on scene) the opera was in fact composed in Italy. If we accept this hypothesis we would have to contradict Meyer, but we could accept both Wanscher's and the editors of the Carl Nielsen Edition's claims.

28 Foltmann, Hauge, and Krabbe, 'Preface', xxv.

also suggest in the preface to the score the possibility of Christiansen knowing a libretto by Hans Christian Andersen:

> It is difficult to imagine that Einar Christiansen knew nothing of Hans Christian Andersen's opera libretto *King Saul* when he wrote his libretto for Carl Nielsen's opera. Einar Christiansen's plot, the selection of episodes from the Old Testament and a number of the respects in which the text differs from the Biblical account very accurately reflect Andersen's text.[29]

But there are also evident similarities with the 1784 tragedy *Saul* by the Italian poet Vittorio Alfieri. In this work Mikal (here called Micol) is similarly provided with a significant role, and also appears together with Jonathan (Giònata in the Italian), where brother and sister are awake during the night and Mikal wonders about David, comparable with the scene that opens Nielsen's third act.[30]

It is not possible to verify whether Nielsen was influenced by Italian vocality when he wrote Mikal's part, in the absence of any explicit commentary on *verista* operas; it is nevertheless true, that she is the closest character to the Italian *soprano drammatico* that dominated the musical scene of early twentieth-century Italy, and supports Nielsen's statement that 'especially as regards singing and vocal scoring there is much to be learnt here'.[31]

The use of the choir is the element with which Nielsen most definitely departs from the paradigm of contemporary Italian opera. This has less to do with the fact that Italian fin-de-siècle opera never provided the choir with such a leading role as in *Saul and David,*[32] than with the position of the choruses within the structure of the work and

29 Ibid. xiii.

30 The nocturne scene in the Italian tragedy can be found in the third scene from the first act, Vittorio Alfieri, *Saul* (Torino: Lattes, 1954), 23–24. It is not possible to verify that Christiansen knew the play, but it is compelling to believe so, otherwise we would have to speak of a striking coincidence. Also the character of David is, like in the opera, depicted without the flaws he has in the biblical account, fact that gives him less dramatic weight and concentrate the whole attention on Saul. Alfieri was also conscious of the musicality of the subject: in the fourth scene of the third act, David is provided with an interlude, where the actor is instructed to either recite or sing the verses, accompanied by an instrument (ibid., 52–58). It is also interesting that, as in the opera, David's singing is preceded by Giònata's words: 'move your voice so he can calmly recompose himself, o brother. In sweet obliance already many times you brought him with celestial chants' ('la tua voce, a ricomporlo in calma, muovi, o fratello. In dolce oblìo l' hai ratto già tante volte coi celesti carmi'), ibid. 52. These words are quite similar to Jonathan's in *Saul and David:* 'Sing to him, David, often your singing has conforted me' ('Leg paa din Harpe; trøst ham som ofte du trøstede mig'), Nielsen, *Saul and David*, Act 1, bb. 632–35; and 'So take your harp and sing him to rest' ('Tag Harpen frem og syng ham til Ro'), ibid. Act 2, bb. 944–46.

31 From Nielsen's application to extend his Roman residency, letter from Carl Nielsen to the Ministry of Church and Education, 9 March 1900, *CNB* 2, 172.

32 Maybe with the exception of Mascagni's *Iris*, whose highlight is the initial Hymne to the sun.

with their musical character. The most striking thing about the choral parts in Nielsen's opera is their musical significance. Each act has at least one big chorus: the two-part offertory scene in the first (divided into male and female choir); another two-part chorus ('Hallelujah' followed by 'Frydesang Paukesang'), preceded by a scene where Mikal sings with a choir of maids in the second; the third act has only one chorus, but it is the most majestic in the whole opera and probably its highlight; the fourth also has a single chorus, but it is similarly of large proportions, and it has the 'responsibility' of closing the work. Patrick McCreless has reflected on the role the choir, as an ensemble, has in *Saul and David,* where it impersonates the community of the Israelites, and argues that this is one of the reasons why the opera should not be confused with an oratorio, where the chorus serves a contemplative or illustrating functions rather than a dramatic one.[33] In this respect Nielsen's work can be compared with Verdi's *Nabucco*, another opera where the Israelites' destiny was at stake, and where the People's actions and perspective are reflected in the choruses.

The position of the choruses is often significant. As we have seen Nielsen was careful to place the opera's 'closed' numbers of the opera either at the end or at the beginning of the acts, in order to allow the action to flow freely (Saul's monologue is only a partial exception because it doesn't have the characteristics of a traditional aria). The choruses in the second and third acts, however, are precisely in the middle of each section, and although they are dramatic (celebrating David's victory in Act 2, and Saul and David's reconciliation in Act 3), their weight and length is such that the action *is* stopped. Moreover, with its strict counterpoint writing, 'Herren er vidne' (God is our witness), draws attention as a musical rather than a dramatic number. The only reason Nielsen would have wanted to create a pause in the action was for dramatic purposes, and the temporary break accentuates the sudden turning point both in the second act (when Saul's illness returns and he tries to hit David with a spear) and in the third (when the appearance of Samuel turns out to be the real crux in the second part of the opera).

For this reason, we find ourselves in front of a musical drama that is more based on the contrast between action and stasis than on a sense of continuity. The fluidity of action that Nielsen is perfectly capable of creating is deliberately interrupted. The opera has on various occasions been criticized rightly because of this, commentators regarding the lengthy choruses as an unnecessary moment of stasis. And it is interesting that *Saul and David* can be perceived as lacking in drama, while several of Nielsen's orchestral work (particularly his last three symphonies and the two concertos for flute and for clarinet) are often praised for their dramatic quality. It appears, however, that in *Saul and David* the way he animates his drama is consistent with one of the most important elements in his music, namely the conflict – or contrast – between two opposed forces. The dualism between stasis and action can be added to many others in the opera: the characters of Saul and David, with their contrasting temperaments and personifications

33 McCreless, 'Strange Bedfellows', 113–15.

of drama and music; Saul and God (as proposed by McCreless); David and Mikal (as lyrical character versus passionate), and so forth. For this reason it is clear that in *Saul and David* Nielsen was already working along a path he would pursue throughout his whole career.

Nielsen, Perosi, Busoni and Pizzetti

The choruses are in fact the key to fully understand the originality of Nielsen's opera. Their counterpoint – in a 1900 opera – was something of a sensation, revealing at the same time the composer's interest into Italy's polyphonic tradition, especially Palestrina. Nielsen had previously been inspired by Palestrina's style in *Hymnus Amoris,* his first great choral piece. According to Torben Meyer, the Dane studied the Italian master's technique during the work's gestation,[34] something he would return to later in his life during the composition of the *Three Motets op. 55*. The choice of Palestrina as a model is not surprising, given his almost legendary status in the nineteenth century. The rising of the Cecilian movement in several parts of Europe, beginning with Germany,[35] had emphasized the need for clarity and simplicity in music, principles that Nielsen himself held dear.

During his stay in Rome Nielsen and his friend Thomas Laub, who had similar aesthetic beliefs and with whom he would later work on Danish popular song, met Lorenzo Perosi, the composer who was then hailed as the new Palestrina. The author of many masses and much other sacred music, Perosi became a real phenomenon in the final years of the nineteenth century, and his oratorios enjoyed particular success both in Italy and abroad. Perosi's works, according to the most positive reviews, revealed genuine emotion and affinity with the sacred word, while at the same time maintaining a stylistic balance of modern tonal techniques, modality and Gregorian chant.[36]

In reality, his oratorios use Palestrina only as a reference, instead adopting a musical language that was entirely post-Romantic, in line with contemporary operatic trends. Even though he never composed an opera, Perosi was often associated with the 'Giovine Scuola', because of the highly affective and often dramatic quality of his works;

34 Meyer and Schandorf Petersen, *Carl Nielsen*, I, 132.

35 The Cecilian movement was an attempt to renew church music, by pursuing values such as objectivity, intelligibility of the sacred word, collectivity against individualism, sobriety and simplicity. As a means to purify church music, it addresses attention towards the need for composers to look back to the music of the past, especially the music of the great polyphonic masters from 1500. The movement was initiated by the German composers based in Regensburg, especially Haberl and Haller. Cf. Arcangelo Paglialunga, *Lorenzo Perosi* (Roma: Paoline, 1952), 25, 53. In Denmark a Cecilian association was founded in 1851 by Henrik Rung, cf. Niels Martin Jensen, 'Denmark', in Stanley Sadie (ed.), *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians* (London: Macmillam, 2001), vol. 7, 207.

36 This point of view can be found particularly in Adelmo Damerini, *Lorenzo Perosi* (Milano: Bietti, 1953), as well as in the already mentioned Paglialunga, *Perosi*.

the comparison was often meant as a criticism, alongside the sentimental tendency of *verismo* operas.[37] This was also Laub's opinion, who attended a performance of one of Perosi's works and found it deeply annoying.[38] It is not clear whether this happened before or after his meeting with the composer in Rome, but it is clear that he wasn't enthusiastic. We don't know of Nielsen's opinion, but it is hard to imagine that Perosi's blend of mysticism and devotion would have appealed to the much worldlier Dane. The only point where the two composers converged was in their use of Palestrina, a model that in both cases was filtered through their own musical personalities: Perosi owed much to Wagner, whereas Nielsen sought liberation in objectivity, simplicity and clarity.

After his sudden success, Perosi became a rather obscure figure; in retrospect, his importance for early twentieth-century Italian music lay in drawing attention to vocal music of the pre-classical era.[39] This element proved crucial for later composers such as Pizzetti, Respighi, Malipiero, Casella and Zandonai. That is not to regard Perosi as a precursor to the so-called 'generation of the 1880s', to which all the composers named above are associated. Unified not only by similar stylistic traits and aesthetic beliefs, but also by the common intent of liberating contemporary music from Romanticism, they had a real spiritual father in Ferruccio Busoni, rather than in Perosi.

Only one year younger than Nielsen, Busoni grew up, like the Dane, in the Romantic era: in Nielsen's early compositions the post-Romantic influence is obvious, and only later, convincingly and steadily, he began to distance himself from Romanticism. Busoni, meanwhile, immediately reacted against it and developed the concept of Junge Klassizität, whose chief characteristics have several parallels with Nielsen's aesthetics:

> With Young Classicism I include the definite departure from what is thematic and the return to melody again as the ruler of all voices and all emotions (not in the sense of a pleasing motive) and as the bearer of the idea and the begetter of harmony, in short, the most highly developed (not the most complicated) polyphony.[40]

The influence Busoni could exercise upon Italian composers was limited both because of his decision to live and work outside Italy and also because of his choice of German for

37 Paglialunga, *Perosi,* 198.

38 'An oratorio of the new Italian Lorenzo Perosi, "of whom it is said that he resurrected the old music" annoyed him strongly: "modern bang effects mixed together with some quite pretty, strongly old-fashioned, not exceptional things"'. Povl Hamburger, *Thomas Laub – Hans Liv og Gerning* (Copenhagen: Aschehoug Dansk Forlag, 1942), 75.

39 'Perosi can in this sense be considered as the joining link between the auric Italin polyphonic tradition and the modern revival of the Pizzettian choir', Damerini, *Perosi*, 54.

40 Letter from Busoni to Paul Bekker, in Ferruccio Busoni, *The essence of music and other papers*, transl. Rosamond Ley (New York: Philosophical Library, 1957), 21.

his opera librettos (with the exception of *Arlecchino*). But inevitably works such as his satirical musical comedy *Arlecchino* and his musical fable *Turandot* (both premiered in 1917) anticipate the new wave of anti-naturalistic operas that would characterize Italian music in the 1910s and 1920s.

Besides comedy and musical fable, the other important genre at the beginning of the twentieth century was decadent tragedy, represented by operas such as Franchetti's *La figlia di Iorio* (1906), Mascagni's *Parisina* (1913), Zandonai's *Francesca da Rimini* (1914), Pizzetti's *Fedra* (1915), and Italo Montenezzi' *La nave* (1918). Their librettos were all written by the already mentioned Gabriele D'Annunzio. These works, which, as we have seen, had a precedent in Smareglia's *La Falena* (it is not a case that the librettist of *La Falena,* 21 years old Silvio Benco, was a great admirer of D'Annunzio), aspired to literary richness, and evocated atemporality or temporal remoteness (notably the ancient or medieval world).

With Ildebrando Pizzetti's *Fedra* in particular, we are in front of a composer who, while embracing the refinement of decadent aesthetic and its dramatic *topoi* – here the reference is to Greek tragedy – did not indulge in extreme aestheticism. His writing, in contrast with the poetic text, was severe and controlled: the musical restraint in *Fedra* was inversely proportional to the quality of the libretto, and was necessary to avoid verbosity. Already with his first opera Pizzetti demonstrated a special affinity with tragedy; this genre became for him the most powerful way to express his theatrical ideas, which echo Busoni's but are also strikingly similar to some of Nielsen's thoughts about the relationship between words and music. According to Pizzetti's point of view, opera is first of all a musical drama, that is to say the representation of activity and not contemplation: therefore it has to avoid unnecessary lyrical pauses. It is therefore necessary for composers to create a dramatic musical language, in which words don't obey to any musical necessity, but only to the requirements of the drama they create.[41] Regarding the relationship between poetry and music, Pizzetti believed that the former provided ideological characterization, while the latter was able to enhance this characterization from a spiritual point of view, since music is able to reach the audience in a way that goes beyond the merely linguistic level. Poetry, however, has to be granted major prominence, otherwise dramatic music would risk to appear as a body without a skeleton.[42]

The following commentary by Nielsen can also be related to this aesthetic belief, which is once again perfectly in line with Pizzetti's ideas about musical theatre:

> What is the relation of music to words? We have to admit that it is a purely decorative relation; not, it is true, in the generally accepted sense of the word decorative, but in the sense of the sun's relation to things, illumining and colouring them,

41 Franco Abbiati, *Storia della musica – Il Novecento* (Milano: Garzanti, 1953), 126.
42 Ibid. 129–30.

> radiating and imparting lustre to them, besides warming and vitalizing them, so every potentiality can develop … Hence it is nothing degrading for music to regard itself as decorative and to serve humbly.[43]

Besides being inspired by the spirit of Greek tragedy, Pizzetti tried to capture it musically by studying the Greek modal scales. But his success in this field was doubtful: Greek scales and modes still remain unclear, and were even more so at the beginning of the twentieth century, when they nevertheless constituted an object of great interest among musicians. Nielsen himself gave a public lecture on Greek music[44] and was a member of the 'Græsk Selskab' (founded in 1905 by himself, J.L. Heiberg, A.B. Drachmann, Harald Høffding and Georg Brandes). But Nielsen and many other composers resorted to the better known modal language of the Latin church, with the aim of achieving 'an integration between the liturgical gravity in the melodic design, the archaic harmonic colour and the personal means proper of the artist, filtered through a balanced modernity'.[45]

Saul and David *versus* Débora e Jaèle

By viewing *Saul and David* as a tragedy, as Anne Marie Reynolds has suggested,[46] it is hence possible to compare it both with opera seria, with its elevated tone, and with Pizzetti's music dramas. It is clear that the choice of an elevated style and subject, and the absence of any light-hearted or comic element (which in Pizzetti's case was consistent with his choice of Gabriele D'Annunzio as a librettist) was an anti-*verista* move, which suited the aesthetic beliefs of the 1880s generation, who favoured a return to the schemes of early opera.

In this sense Nielsen's choice of subject, besides being in line with Busoni's thought,[47] is therefore more closely aligned with the future of Italian opera than with its present. The same is true of his biblical setting, something highly unusual in fin-de-siècle opera. Verdi's two 'biblical' operas, *Nabucco* and *Aida,* for example, owe little to the Scriptures other than Old Testament atmosphere. It is therefore worth noting that the only early twentieth-century biblical opera by an Italian composer was written by Pizzetti. *Débora e Jaèle*, his second major opera (premiered in 1922), is usually recognised as his best.

43 Carl Nielsen, 'Words, Music and Programme Music', in Carl Nielsen, *Living Music*, transl. Reginald Spink (London: Hutchinson, 1953), 31–32.

44 The lecture was held on 22 October 1907, Carl Nielsen, 'Græsk Musik', in Fellow (ed.), *Carl Nielsen til sin samtid*, 99–110.

45 The comment is expressed by musicologist Cesari and reported in Abbiati, *Storia della Musica*, 125.

46 Reynolds, 'Nielsen's *Saul and David* as Tragedy'.

47 We know of their friendship and their similar view on many musical matters from their correspondence, published in Michael Fjeldsøe, 'Ferruccio Busoni og Carl Nielsen: brevveksling gennem tre årtier', *Musik & Forskning,* 25 (1999–2000), 18–40, and from Fjeldsøe, *Den fortrængte modernisme*, 143–47.

While maintaining the dramatic principles and musical qualities that had characterized *Fedra*, the new work reveals a renewed freedom in the relationship between text and music, caused by the fact that Pizzetti himself wrote the libretto, loosely based on Chapters 4 and 5 of the *Book of Judges*.

It is of course tempting to compare the narrative and musical strategies the two composers used in the construction of an opera based on a biblical subject, especially given their aesthetic similarities. But the operas are relatively far apart chronologically, since *Saul and David* predates *Débora e Jaèle* (composed 1917–21) by 20 years. For this reason, Pizzetti's modally coloured diatonicism is more far-reaching than Nielsen's. In the choice of topic and in the shape of the drama, however, the two works display striking similarities. In this respect it should be noted that Christiansen's plot was closer to the Scriptures than Pizzetti's. Even though he altered some characters, displaced some episodes, and cut other passages, the core of Christiansen's story in *Saul and David* is faithful to the biblical narrative: the contrast between an old and a new order, represented by Saul and David respectively, and the tension between human and divine law, represented by Saul and Samuel. Pizzetti had to work on much slenderer material both in terms of plot and characters: in the Bible, Déborah and Jaèle are both depicted as strong women, with little difference between them in terms of personality. To create a suitably dramatic work, Pizzetti therefore had to intervene more drastically, and reinterpreted Jaèle's character from scratch. He also made Sisera, that in the Bible had a minor weight, the third main character of the drama, and invented a love story between him and Jaèle. Like her counterpart in the Bible, she eventually kills him, but does so out of mercy, in order to save him from the Israelites, and only after she realized that her previous attempts, discovered by Débora, had been in vain.

With these changes Pizzetti created a story which, like *Saul and David*, was centred on the contrast between divine and human law, with Samuel and Débora (as prophets of God) as representative for the former, and Saul and Jaèle for the latter. The contrast is between an infallible order and one that contemplates the possibility of change, mistake, freedom, forgiveness, elements that stand in conflict with the necessity, impassiveness and immutability represented by the Prophets and divine rule. The sense of Jaèle's rebellion, prompted by love, can thus be compared to that of Saul, prompted by his freedom of will, which simply doesn't fit within the system. And even though Nielsen's opera is titled *Saul and David* and not 'Saul and Samuel', as McCreless notes, its real tension is between Saul and God (with Samuel as his messenger).[48] Both dramas are hence based on the interplay between three main characters: a divine representative (Samuel / Débora) and two human beings, whose relationship is doomed to failure, even in an antithetical way: David, called to be Saul's servant but who ultimately becomes his enemy, and Sisera, supposedly Jaèle's enemy, with whom she falls in love and eventually kills.

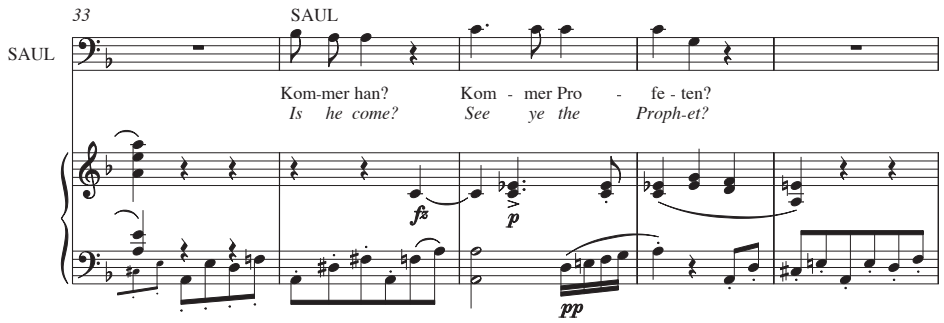
48 McCreless, 'Strange Bedfellows', 110.

If *Saul and David* is the tragedy of a single man, however, *Débora e Jaèle* is the tragedy of a man and a woman, victims of a rigid and severe order that does not contemplate forgiveness. Both Jaèle and Sisera express their humanity in contrast to the indifference of God: when the heroin is asked by Débora in the final moments of the opera, after she has reluctantly killed her lover: 'Have you heard the Lord's voice?', she answers: 'Not of your God, of another one you don't know',[49] and Sisera, finding himself lost before he can enter Jaèle's tent, cries out: 'Invisible inimical God, I call on you, I call on you and defy you!'[50] Nielsen's character expresses similar defiance from which he retreats both in his Act 1 monologue 'Kunde jeg rejse mig mod dig' and especially in his final words:

> My Lord and my tempter, forever thou mockest in heaven! Thou hast racked me with endless disasters that thou hast prepared for my soul! Thou grim old mocker, that taunteth my afflictions! Lo, I spatter my blood on Thy heaven! Wash Thy self clean of my sin, if Thou canst![51]

The opening pages of the two operas are also similar: in Nielsen's work, Saul and the people await the arrival of Samuel and the King's question 'Kommer han?' ('Is he coming?') is immediately repeated by the people (ex. 4). Pizzetti generates a similar feeling of anxious agitation: the Israelites await the arrival of their prophetess Débora. At first her arrival is questioned by two of the characters (the Blindman and Scillem, ex. 5a), and then is invoked by the people, who have in the meantime entered the scene (ex. 5b).This emphasis on the people, whose destiny is at stake because of the war, is given appropriate musical support by the choir, who gain prominent roles in both operas.

Example 4, Carl Nielsen, *Saul and David*, Waiting for Samuel, Act 1, bb. 33–41.

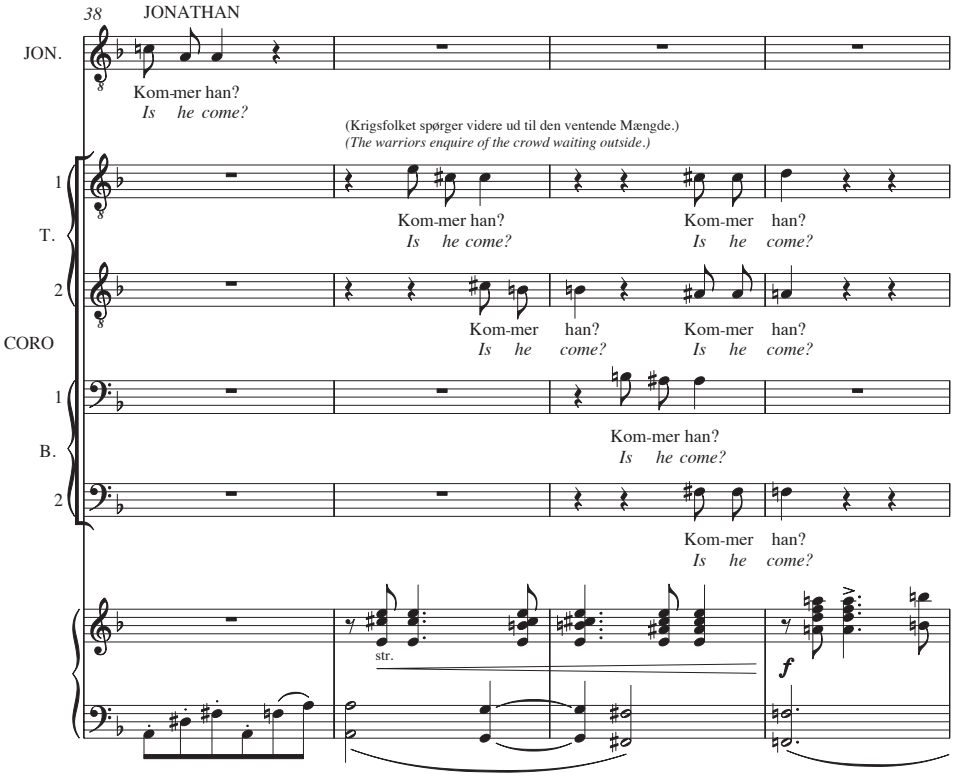


49 Ildebrando Pizzetti, *Débora e Jaèle*, rehersal score (Milano: Ricordi, 1922), 463.

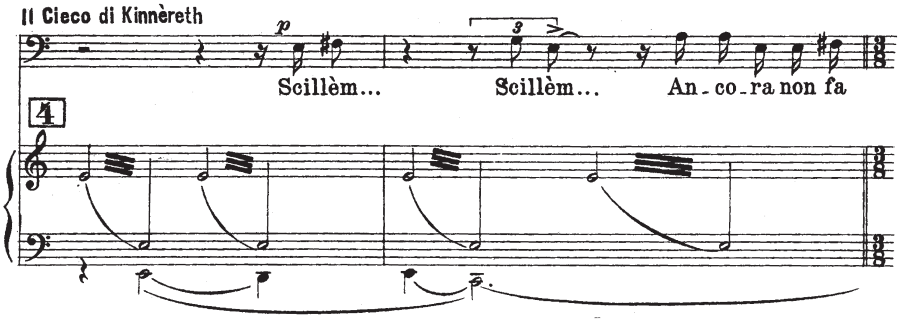
50 Ibid. 386–87.

51 'Min Herre og Frister! Du evige Spotter deroppe! Du har pint mig med evige Kvaler, du selv har din Skabning beredt! Du gamle Spotter, der ler ad mine Kvaler! Se, nu sprøjter mit Blod mod din Himmel! Tvæt dig da ren for min Synd, om du kan!', Nielsen, *Saul and David*, Act 4, bb. 572–94.

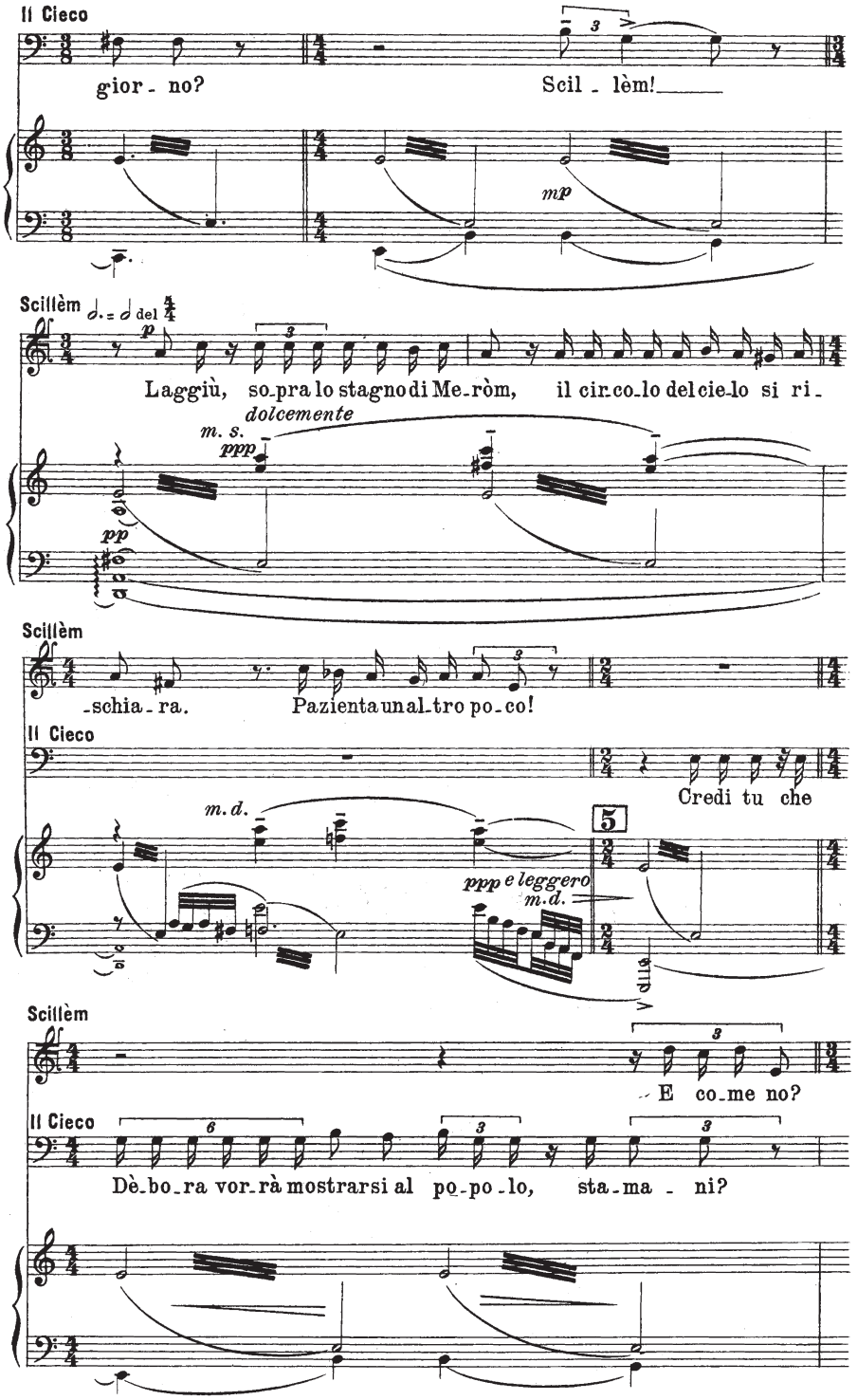
(Ex. 4 continued)



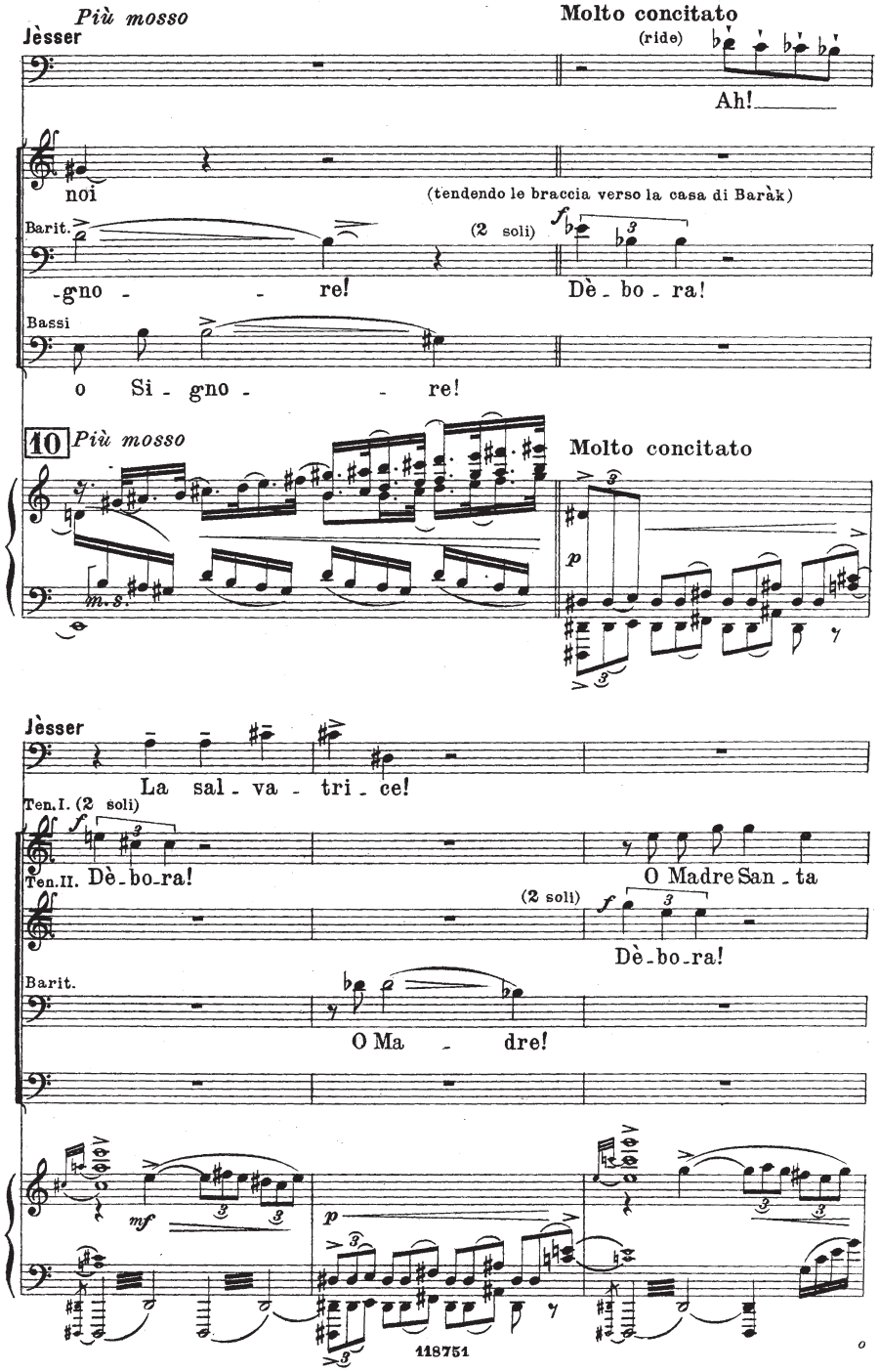
Example 5a, Pizzetti, *Débora e Jaèle*, Waiting for Débora, the Blindman and Scillem (rehersal score, Ricordi, pp. 5-6). © Casa Ricordi, Milano, 1922. Reproduced with kind permission from Casa Ricordi.



(Ex. 5a continued)



Example 5b, Pizzetti, *Débora e Jaèle*, Waiting for Débora, the People's invocation (rehersal score, Ricordi, p. 15). © Casa Ricordi, Milano, 1922. Reproduced with kind permission from Casa Ricordi.



Similarities between the two works can also be identified in their final acts: both start with an orchestral prelude (very short in Pizzetti's opera) recalling a storm; and both close with a celebratory chorus, alternating homophonic and polyphonic textures, a characteristic that received considerable attention from their reviewers.[52]

According to the available source material, Nielsen and Pizzetti never met. Their personalities were very different: Pizzetti, like his dramas, was thoroughly serious, while Nielsen had a flair for humour, evident both in his letters and his music. But at least in *Saul and David*, this lightness is totally absent, so that Nielsen here, like Smareglia in *La Falena*, anticipated what Salvetti called 'the tragic hieraticness of Ildebrando da Parma'.[53] Nielsen's initial intentions to 'learn from Italians' did not prevent him from thinking outside the box and creating a work that, without being directly influenced by local composers, parallels the line that runs from the noir dramas of the 1880s and 1890s through *La Falena*, the tragic and larger-than-life story portrayed in *Débora e Jaèle*. And while in other respects the similarities exist only in the conception of a 'tragic drama' and the occasional use of modal colour, we can reasonably maintain that Nielsen anticipated some of the aesthetic tendencies and musical characteristics that would later be fully expressed in Pizzetti's work.

It is tempting to imagine Nielsen working on a similar opera in the 1920s, the period of his stylistic maturity. But it is difficult to believe he would have chosen another tragic subject, given the success of his comic opera, *Maskarade,* and the direction the rest of his music took from the *Wind Quintet* onwards. Most of his works from the 1920's are notable for expressing a special kind of musical humour, alternating with more 'serious episodes'. That is particularly the case in the Sixth Symphony, where the title of the third movement, 'Proposta seria' might equally well apply to the first, whereas that of the second, 'Humoreske', could also refer to the fourth movement. It is true that after the drama and gravitas of the Nielsen's Fifth Symphony, the irony expressed by the Sixth, sometimes caustic and sometimes more cheerful, led to a new type of composition in which the tragic (or better, the serious) and the comic exist side by side. The duality expressed by the Fifth–Sixth symphony pairing is in this sense the same as that between *Saul and David* and *Maskarade*, whose comedy offers food for thought on more than one occasion.[54] It is easier to imagine another opera of this kind than a larger-than-life drama such as *Saul and David*.

52 The high level of Pizzetti's choirs is also documented by Waterhouse and Gatti: 'An outstanding feature of most Pizzetti operas (and the main saving grace of some of the weaker ones) is his richly imaginative, often highly dramatic choral writing', John C. G. Waterhouse and G. M. Gatti, 'Pizzetti, Ildebrando', in Sadie (ed.), *The New Grove*, vol. 19, 819.

53 Salvetti, 'Dal Verdi della maturità a Giacomo Puccini', 463.

54 See for example Daniel Grimley, *Carl Nielsen and the idea of Modernism* (Oxford: Boydell, 2010), 260–63, 280–93.

Looking at Nielsen's opera production, we confront two totally different works, which offer the image of a composer who remained extremely receptive to the stylistic and aesthetic environment in spite of his musical independence. For this reason, different as they may be, the two works are both expressions of that eclecticism which was a substantial part of Nielsen's poetic thought, and which aligned him with his contemporary European experiences in a way that goes beyond local or national traditions, and which demonstrates that even in an era of ideological nationalism, European musical language was assuming an increasingly global character. Nielsen's *Saul and David* can be seen as the first, monumental example of this utterly personal and individual musical syncretism.

Abstract

In this essay, I will focus on the music cultural context in which Carl Nielsen's *Saul and David* (1899–1901) was composed, as Nielsen approached opera for the first time. This will cast new light on his independence and originality, but also offer the possibility for some seemingly unlikely comparisons, revealing that the work is more tightly integrated with Nielsen's broader European musical experience than has previously seemed – especially as an alternative to naturalism. I will therefore consider the Italian context before, during and after the rise of *verismo*, focusing particularly on the anti-naturalism debate, to which *Saul and David* also belongs. Nielsen's work follows a path that parallels the shift from the so-called noir dramas of the 1880s to the work of Ildebrando Pizzetti, via the almost completely unknown operas of Antonio Smareglia. Unusual as it may be, I believe that this comparison will support the idea of a composer who, while working in the genre of musical drama, was in constant dialogue with his European contemporaries.

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The Nielsen Project
North American Reception of Carl Nielsen's Symphonies

Regitze Ida Tetzlaff

The Nielsen reception in USA, including concerts and recordings, has been crucial to the composer's international reputation since the 1960s. As part of The Nielsen Project, which was a collaboration between the Danish record label Dacapo and the New York Philharmonic Orchestra, all Nielsen's symphonies and concertos were recently performed and recorded in the new DXD format and released as a CD box set celebrating the composer's 150th anniversary in 2015.[1] This article, which is based on visiting New York, conducting interviews with the leaders of the project, and carrying out research in North American archives, presents an investigation of how the new project relates to the North American reception of earlier decades. The article investigates how views on Nielsen as a composer, and in particular his symphonies, have changed in reception of Nielsen in the USA. To examine the reception, it is necessary to go back to the first performance of the composer with the New York Philharmonic and create an overview of other American orchestras that have played Nielsen's symphonies. It is the first presentation of such a mapping on Nielsen performances in USA.[2]

Mapping

In order to examine how The Nielsen Project relates to broader Nielsen reception in the United States, it is crucial to have an understanding of how prominent Nielsen's symphonies have been in the concert hall. As The Nielsen Project has its main emphasis on Nielsen's symphonies, the research has been focused on the reception of these works. During the archival research, I came across material on his operas, songs, and concertos; these will be included when relevant to the research on the symphonies.

By studying the material at the New York Philharmonic archive and the New York Public Library of the Performing Arts, it has been possible to establish an overall picture of the performances of Nielsen's symphonies in the United States from 1951 to 2014.

1 In 2008, the Danish record label Dacapo and The New York Philharmonic agreed to collaborate and record three of Nielsen's six symphonies. Later it was agreed to record all of Nielsen's symphonies and concertos as part of The Nielsen Project; cf. http://www.dacapo-records.dk/udgivelser/nielsen-symfonier-og-koncerter.

2 The present article is based on research presented in my MA thesis 'The Nielsen Project. Amerikanske forestillinger om Carl Nielsen og hans symfonier' (University of Copenhagen, 2014).

In addition, also information obtained from the Carl Nielsen Company archive, the archives of the Cleveland Orchestra, and the Detroit Symphony Orchestra is included. Appendix 1 contains a full list including all the concert performances evident in the archival material. In all, there are 126 performances with various US orchestras. A summary of the information from the list is presented below. Table 1 shows the number of performances of the six symphonies as well as period. The orchestras that do not appear in this table may be found in Appendix 1. It must be kept in mind that the material available for the study does not necessarily include all performances of Nielsen's symphonies.

Work	Number of performances	Period
Symphony No. 1	8	1967–2014
Symphony No. 2, 'The Four Temperaments'	19	1965–2014
Symphony No. 3, 'Espansiva'	19	1964–2013
Symphony No. 4, ' The Inextinguishable'	38	1952–2014
Symphony No. 5	36	1951–2014
Symphony No. 6, 'Sinfonia Semplice'	6	1965–2014

Table 1. Performances of Nielsen's symphonies in the USA.

Table 1, which sums up the US performances of Nielsen's symphonies, shows that the Fifth Symphony has been performed 36 times (according to my research), the most recent entry in 2014 being Alan Gilbert conducting the work as part of The Nielsen Project. The table also reveals that four of Nielsen's symphonies (Nos. 2, 3, 4, and 5) appear regularly, and are represented in the concert repertoire in roughly equal measure with Nos. 4 and 5 as the most popular. However, there are two symphonies that have not received much attention: Symphonies Nos. 1 and 6. According to the archival material, the First Symphony has only been performed once by the New York Philharmonic – this took place quite recently, during The Nielsen Project's recordings in March 2014; the same applies to the Sixth Symphony which has only been performed during The Nielsen Project in October 2014.

In the 1960s, North American audiences could for the first time hear the New York Philharmonic perform Nielsen's music and all of their live performances of Nielsen may be found in the orchestra's online archive.[3] The archive reveals that on 5 April, 1962, the chief conductor Leonard Bernstein introduced Nielsen's music with a performance

3 See http://archives.nyphil.org/index.php.

of the Fifth Symphony: The performance in Carnegie Hall in New York was Nielsen's first real breakthrough in the United States. Since then, the New York Philharmonic has performed the work on five occasions. As Nielsen's symphonies at the time had not been played much outside of Europe, it was Bernstein who placed Nielsen on the American music scene. Bernstein's enthusiasm for Nielsen led him to record some of his symphonies: the Second Symphony in February 1973, the Third Symphony in September/October 1965, the Fourth in January/February 1970, and the Fifth in April 1962; thus not all six works were recorded. Despite Bernstein's work and passion for Nielsen's symphonies, he did not make them an integral part of the New York Philharmonic's regular repertoire.

The New York Philharmonic concert programme from 1962, when Bernstein conducted Nielsen's Fifth Symphony, explains that 'The United States première was given by the National Symphony of Washington DC under the guidance of Danish Erik Tuxen on January 3rd 1951.'[4] The work, then, had its première in the United States long before Bernstein took up the challenge in April 1962.

Nielsen's Sixth Symphony has suffered a poor reception during the twentieth century. In 1952, Robert Simpson published his first edition of *Carl Nielsen. Symphonist,* in which he reviewed and analysed all Nielsen's symphonies. He criticized the Sixth Symphony, especially the final three movements, for being only 'a kind of appendix in which Nielsen descends from objectivity to subjectivity: none of it has either the stature or the power of organisation of the first movement'.[5] Simpson also claimed that Nielsen 'fell into a low state, physically and mentally' while writing on his composition;[6] these are very critical statements. Since Robert Simpson was an important promoter of Nielsen reception in the UK, his views might have affected the fate of the symphony. For English readers, few texts on Nielsen were available until the 1980s. Simpson published a second edition of his book in 1979 in which he retracted his judgement of the work. In the introduction, Simpson writes: 'The chief alteration is a radically new analysis of the Sixth Symphony, which I had seriously misjudged in 1952. The impression I had formed then (from score reading only) was disappointing and has been justly criticised in the intervening years';[7] and later in his chapter about the symphony he writes that

> My first impressions of No. 6, based only on score-reading (at that time I had not heard it played), were regretfully (and regrettably) set out in the first edition of this book. The disappointment conveyed there persisted even after many hearings of

4 Edward Downes, 'Notes on the programs', 3, in the programme for the concerts on 5, 6 and 8 April 1962, available at http://archives.nyphil.org/index.php.

5 Robert Simpson, *Carl Nielsen. Symphonist* (London: J.M. Dent & Sons Ltd., 1952), 115.

6 Ibid.

7 Robert Simpson, *Carl Nielsen. Symphonist*, 2nd rev. edn. (New York: Taplinger, 1979), 12–13.

> the symphony, but gradually this feeling evaporated as the music became increasingly convincing and impressive and ceased to appear to embody a descent from objectivity to unworthy subjectivity.[8]

An interesting piece of information appeared while I was working with archival material at the New York Public Library of the Performing Arts. I discovered that Nielsen's *Prelude, Theme and Variations* for violin was performed at the Town Hall in New York in February 1924.[9] The performance is the earliest I have been able to find, and, although I am primarily focused on Nielsen's symphonies, it is relevant to know of other such performances as these may also have influenced Nielsen's reception. It was Nielsen's son-in-law, Emil Telmányi, who performed the work at the Town Hall, though the archives of the New York Public Library of Performing Arts do not confirm this.[10] Material at the New York Public Library of the Performing Arts also shows that Nielsen's other works, for example the Clarinet Concerto, the Violin Concerto, and the *Helios* and *Masquerade* overtures, were played frequently during the 1960s. This may be because Nielsen's music first began to engage the American audience in relation to Bernstein as well as the New York Philharmonic's performances and recordings. An awareness of and curiosity towards Nielsen's music was the result.

We know that Nielsen's symphonies have been on the concert repertoire in the United States since 1951 – well over ten years before Bernstein conducted them with the New York Philharmonic. It is no surprise, however, that the New York Philharmonic is well represented in this study, both because of Bernstein's work with Nielsen's music, and because New York is and always has been a multicultural centre where foreign artists have had a greater chance of a breakthrough. It is surprising that Nielsen's symphonies have been played as much as the above table indicates. In particular, it is notable that so many different orchestras have worked with Danish compositions. Although each piece has not been played often, there is a good geographical spread (Nielsen's symphonies have been performed in San Francisco, New York, Washington, Iowa, Minnesota, Cleveland, Detroit, North Carolina, Buffalo, Houston, Boston, Philadelphia, Utah, Chicago, Oregon, and Atlanta) and with a good representation across his symphonic output. Nielsen's Fourth and Fifth Symphonies are doubtlessly the most popular, though all his symphonies are represented and have been played in North America since 1951. A single university orchestra is also represented in the material that was available. The University of Iowa Symphony Orchestra played Nielsen's Second Symphony in 2008 – an event which is important to acknowledge, first of all in order to give the most complete

8 Ibid. 113.

9 From records at The New York Public Library of the Performing Arts. According to the *Catalogue of Carl Nielsen's Works*, it was performed in New York on 28 February 1924, see http://www.kb.dk/dcm/cnw/navigation.xq.

10 *Carl Nielsen Works*, vol. II/10, *Chamber Music 1*, p. xviii.

overview of the performances as possible; secondly, because it demonstrates a diversity in interest when a university orchestra performs Nielsen's music. Thus, knowledge of Nielsen has reached a layer deeper when it comes to the American classical music scene. Now it is not only an exclusive inner circle that is exposed to Nielsen and his symphonies, but a wider (and especially younger) audience. Obviously, this does not per se establish Nielsen's status in the USA, but it may be regarded as an important step for Nielsen and Danish music. It is likely that other university orchestras may have done the same as in Iowa. Based on the material to which I had access, the Iowa performance was the only of its kind.

Analysis

The mapping helped us understand how much and where Nielsen's symphonies have been performed in the USA; however, it does not help us to an understanding of how Nielsen's symphonies are being perceived. In order to understand how Nielsen's symphonies are received and examine how The Nielsen Project is placed in the American reception it is crucial to study the discourses used in the material shelved in the archives of The New York Philharmonic, of other American orchestras and in the New York Public Library of the Performing Arts. The archival material of the mentioned institutions, which previously has never been gathered and compared, provides the primary foundation for the analysis presented below. In addition, the primary material incorporates reviews from the 1960s and 1970s when Bernstein conducted the New York Philharmonic performing Nielsen's works, as well as articles about Nielsen in programme notes from every decade including The Nielsen Project in the 2010s. Based on the collected material, the analysis provides insight into the North American conceptions and characterizations of Nielsen and his symphonies, and how new ways of articulating these ideas have been introduced over time. While working on the analysis, a great variety of terms occurred as part of the discourse. In order to navigate, the analysis is divided into smaller parts based on the main focus or words used to form the terms of reference. The division reveals certain trends in American notions of Nielsen and his symphonies.

The terms are placed in a Venn diagram (see Figure 1) which helps to demonstrate how Nielsen and his symphonies were received in USA, and on which narratives the reception was built. Such discourses are present in promotional material, pre-concert talks, programme notes, reviews, and popular and scholarly literature, all of which form a complex body of interdependent texts. I introduce five main categories which are outlined below.

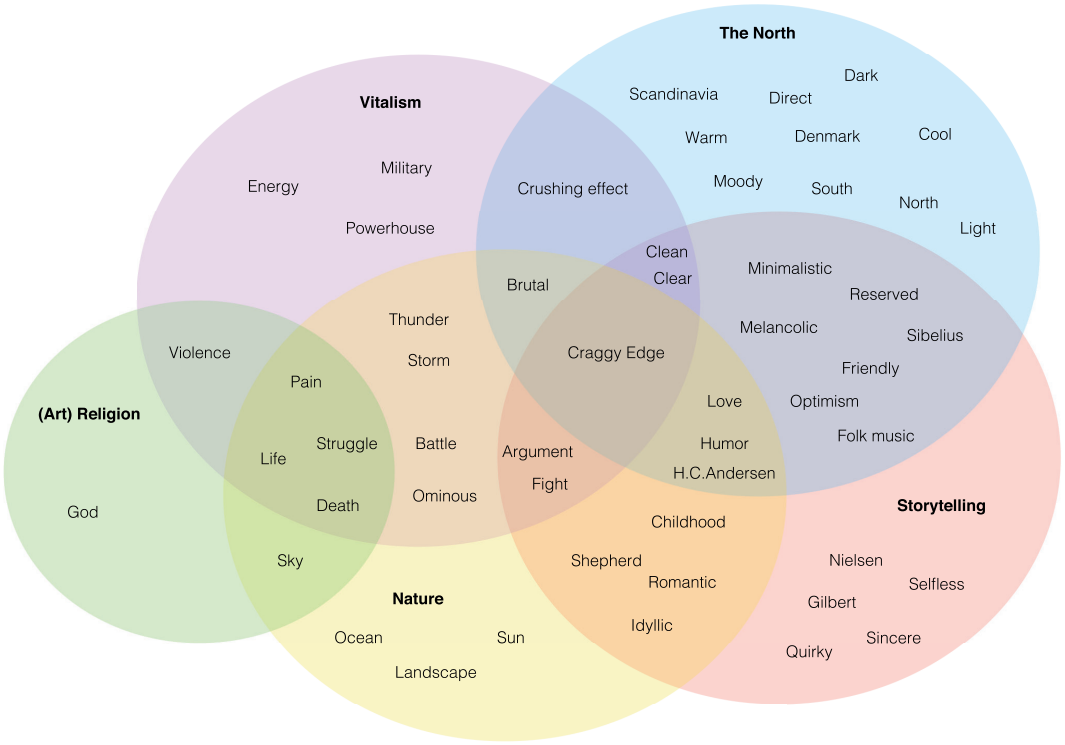

Figure 1. Discourses in the reception of Carl Nielsen in USA.

The North

The reviewers and music critics in the USA hold a general perception of Nielsen inasmuch as they all state that he is a remarkable and underrated composer. Though he took a traditional approach to the symphonic form, the works possess unique qualities that lend him a distinctive compositional voice. These qualities vary from reviewer to reviewer, but often Nielsen is seen to embody exotic characteristics (i.e., something especially Danish or Nordic). There is no logical pattern in the way the authors differentiate between descriptors such as 'Danish', 'Scandinavian', or 'Nordic' in their conceptions of Nielsen. The three terms are used interchangeably and often mixed together without a proper distinction between their particular characteristics. Words with connections to this category include *dark, moody, minimalistic, friendly, light, cool, brutal, colourful, sincere,* and *selfless.*

When discussing Nielsen's 'Nordicness', it is important to mention the Nordic Cool festival in Washington in 2013, which took place prior to the grand finale of The Nielsen Project in 2014. Nordic Cool was a month-long festival focusing on theatre, music, literature, design, film, and gastronomy from Finland, Norway, Sweden, Iceland, and Denmark (including the Faroe Islands and Greenland). Everything Nordic was and is still popular in the US, and the festival might have affected the perception of the Nordic countries

and culture. By branding it as something 'cool', an American audience is likely to sympathize with this way of thinking. Denmark was, furthermore, proclaimed the happiest country in the world in 2012 and 2013 by the United Nations Sustainable Development Solutions Network. The nomination might appeal to the American public in combination with festival. It may be argued that the Nordic Cool wave helped Nielsen's image and reputation. Many Americans may not have noticed or known much about Nielsen. However, providing a context, in which he may be perceived as something cool or from a country that had been flourishing, seems to have worked. The Nordic Cool wave could also be one of the reasons why the distinctions between terms such as Danish, Nordic, or Scandinavian are blurred. All Nordic countries appeared in a mix-and-match set-up and this may have made it difficult for Americans to separate one from another.

Nature

References to nature are present in virtually all the reviews in one form or another, and the term is still used in the press material from The Nielsen Project. However, it is used differently from review to review. Nature describes the *quiet*, *idyllic* image of Nielsen but is also employed for the *cool* and *reserved* part of both Nielsen and the symphonies. It is not without reason that nature is very important in Nielsen reception since he said that he found great inspiration for his compositions by listening to nature.[11] References to nature are not a new way of describing Nielsen. In review from 1962 Irving Kolodin (*The New York Times*) writes about Nielsen's Fifth Symphony arguing that 'its thematic seeds are nurtured into orchestral growth of radiance and power. It proceeds from movement to movement with a sure sense of direction.'[12] Kolodin uses a reference to nature when describing how Nielsen's thematic material is like a seed being planted – growing big and strong. The idea of nature's role and its connection to Nielsen's symphonies is a common and recurring theme in the US Nielsen reception. In Kolodin's rhetoric, everything beautiful and natural becomes directly equated to Nielsen's Fifth Symphony which, according to Kolodin, is otherwise not very accessible to an untrained listener but 'highly performable'.[13] His descriptions indicate a strangeness in Nielsen's musical language that can be difficult to understand for listeners unfamiliar with it. However, it does not preclude enjoying the music: similar to the planted seeds, the symphony grows and gets bigger.

Musicologist and music critic Edward Downes described in 1962 Nielsen's poor childhood in the countryside on the island of Funen where he was forced to work as a shepherd.[14] Downes's description appears in one of the few articles in which the story of

11 Lewis Rowell, 'Carl Nielsen's Homespun Philosophy of Music', in Mina Miller (ed.), *The Nielsen Companion* (London: Faber & Faber, 1994), 41.

12 Irving Kolodin, 'Music To My Ears. Bernstein Conducts Nielsen, Gould Plays Brahms', *New York Times*, 7 April 1962.

13 Kolodin, 'Music to My Ears'.

14 Downes, 'Notes on the programs', 2.

Nielsen's upbringing is allowed to take up column space, and this could be explained by the fact that it constitutes one of the earliest performances of Nielsen's symphonies in the United States. The 1962 concert was the New York Philharmonic's first encounter with Nielsen's music, and it is therefore not surprising that Downes highlighted the story of Nielsen's upbringing and childhood in the concert programme. It should also be mentioned that in 1962 not much English literature existed on Nielsen, with the exception of a translation of Nielsen's autobiographical *My Childhood on Funen* which may also explain why the childhood story on Funen occupies so much space. Downes's article focuses on Nielsen's Danish roots and they are reflected through his rural childhood and descriptions of nature. The references to nature continue to be present throughout the US reception of Nielsen.

Vitalism

The Nielsen Project contributes to a new way of describing and perceiving Nielsen, namely in terms of vitalism, which is interesting because it forms very strong images. Music critic David Hurwitz states that 'The New York Philharmonic is a powerhouse orchestra, Nielsen is a powerhouse symphonist, and Alan Gilbert revels in the music's energy and dynamism';[15] and musician and blogger Phil Catelinet describes Nielsen's Fourth Symphony as 'crisp and stormy, with the winds and brass completely on point with short, loud blasts.'[16] The terms *stormy, crisp* and *powerhouse* contribute strongly to the identity of Nielsen and Scandinavia. Kolodin's description of nature as seeds that grow into larger organisms also acts as a vitalistic description of growth conveying an idea of strength and a will to live which are basic ideas of vitalism. Kolodin is therefore represented in both categories. It may also be argued that the vitalistic descriptions of Nielsen are complementary to the naturalistic images discussed above. The vitalistic terms focus on the powerful passages in Nielsen's compositions where brass and drums add to a dramatic feeling, and those natural references are articulated in the form of nature's harsh forces such as *thunderstorm*, *energy* and *strength.* Michael Fjeldsøe's article of 2009, discussing the vitalistic trends in fine arts of the late nineteenth century, is an important contribution to this field of study. Also in his article 'Vitalism in the music of Carl Nielsen' (2010), Fjeldsøe introduces and argues for the idea of a vitalistic reading of Nielsen's music.[17] Indeed, Nielsen's Fourth Symphony, with the motto 'Music is life', contains important vitalistic elements as does his Third and Fifth Symphonies; it is argued that the two latter bear the trappings of vitalism, not only by Fjeldsøe but also by reviewers of The Nielsen Project.

15 David Hurwitz, 'The Nielsen You Need', *Listen,* Winter issue, 2012.

16 Phil Catelinet, blogpost 'Beethoven, Sibelius, and Nielsen: "New" music at the New York Philharmonic', *Phil's Occasional Musings*, 29 January 2011.

17 Michael Fjeldsøe, 'Carl Nielsen and the Current of Vitalism in Art', *Carl Nielsen Studies*, 4 (2009), 26–42; and Fjeldsøe, 'Vitalisme i Carl Nielsens musik', *Danish Musicology Online*, 1 (2010), 33–55.

Storytelling

The analysis reveals furthermore the importance of the conductor in the reviews. The description of Bernstein's and Gilbert's commitment to and enthusiasm for Nielsen characterizes the reviews; however, in some cases it completely takes the focus away from Nielsen. The reviews reveal a desire for many more Americans to become familiar with his lively and exciting symphonies. In addition, the stories of the conductors – how they are connected to Scandinavia, Denmark, or Nielsen's music – are very prominent in the reviews. Gilbert's connection to Stockholm (Gilbert lived in Stockholm 2000–08 while working as conductor for the Royal Stockholm Philharmonic Orchestra) suggests that he had a personal relationship to Nielsen's works as there are hardly any distinctions between what is Danish and what is Scandinavian. This connection may seem rather tenuous, but it is, nonetheless, highly valued in the US reception. It is interesting to consider why the Nielsen symphonies are only now beginning to emerge in the USA in earnest. First, the large collaborative project between Dacapo Records and the New York Philharmonic and its accompanying press material has made a significant impact on the classical music scene. It is clear that such massive investment in and support for Nielsen would gain great interest among the American media and thereby reach a wider audience than would be the case with a single concert performance. Furthermore, a meeting with the General Consulate of Denmark in New York confirmed that Nordic culture in general is extremely popular in America (especially as it relates to the 'Nordic Cool'). This hype may have affected the terms of The Nielsen Project, and it should not be underestimated how important it may have been for Nielsen's popularity. Although several previous conductors (Leonard Bernstein, Herbert Blomstedt, Sixten Erhling) have made great efforts to promote Nielsen's symphonies and solo concertos, the recent Nielsen Project is unprecedented, and much of the composer's popularity may be due to something as simple as timing. There are of course many other factors at play, but after having delved into the project it is clear how much influence the American press have and how a conversance with Nordic culture is so important for an American audience.

I found that The Nielsen Project built on ideas and stories about Nielsen, which have existed in the US since the 1950s. The reviews do not differ significantly from previous ones, but there are some patterns in the qualities that are highlighted and in the images created. Andrew Mellor provides a reference to Hans Christian Andersen[18] – a reference that has not surfaced in other reviews of The Nielsen Project but, on the contrary, was present in concert programmes from the 1960s and 70s, for example by Edward Downes.[19] At that time, Andersen may have embodied what American audiences perceived as quintessentially Danish, and Downes may have wanted to emphasize Nielsen's Danishness with such a reference. The fact that Mellor employs the same reference is

18 Andrew Mellor, 'Finally everyone's talking about Carl Nielsen', *Gramophone*, Sep. 2012.

19 Edward Downes, 'Concerto for Flute and Orchestra', *Notes on the Program* (New York Philharmonic Orchestra, 1976), 5 Febr. 1976.

interesting as it suggests that the American perception of what 'Danishness' comprises might not have changed significantly over the last thirty years. Initiatives such as Nordic Cool and Andersen's two-hundredth anniversary in 2005 meant that many Americans increased their notion of Denmark and the Nordic countries, though they have an image of Denmark that will take a very long time to change.

(Art) Religion

David Wright, a former reviewer and writer for the New York Philharmonic, articulates many interesting impressions of Nielsen and is the only author who relates Nielsen with the divine. In the New York Philharmonic notes on the programme from 14 December 2002, Wright describes the composition of the Fourth Symphony as traditional in its form and as an image of conflict of life versus death. This struggle between life and death translates into the symphony's first movement, where 'themes of great violence are followed by euphonious passages in thirds ... some do indeed sound here like "a gift from God."'[20] The question of life and death has existed as long as humanity. The wonder of and the fear of what happens to us when we have passed away has always been an important part of the human condition, and out of this wonder and anxiety, religion attempts to explain our existence. Later, science has given us an explanation and shown how our world and the universe are linked. This does not mean, however, that religion has been ousted; on the contrary, in some places it has increased in influence, and there are groups who reject science's explanations. Religion is today extremely important even when talking about art and music. Wright articulates some strong ideas about Nielsen's Fourth Symphony, which contains both 'great violence' and the sound of a 'godsend'. Such a description, deifies Nielsen with a 'God-given theme' from the voice of God. The conflict between the divine and the 'great violence' works well as a view of life and death, where Wright connects the divinity of life and violence with death. Death is not 'merely' unpleasant, but full of physical pain too. The agency behind this violence against human beings is not articulated, though it is explained that God (here the Christian, monotheistic conception of God must be assumed) is the creator behind the beautiful and colourful music. Wright's expressions point in the direction of art religion, the perception being that the artist, through his work, comes closer to God. Wright's description of the divine can also be seen as a way to connect to the Romantic pantheistic conception of God: that God is in everything and therefore also in the music. Nielsen is a descendant of Romanticism and some ideas of that period are not foreign to him despite his conscious rejection of Late Romanticism. Romanticism's strong focus on nature is something Nielsen embraced in his symphonies as he said himself: nature plays a big role.[21]

20 David Wright, 'The making of a Danish symphonist', *Notes on the Program*, 14 December 2002 (New York Philharmonic Orchestra, 2002), 37.

21 Rowell, 'Carl Nielsen's Homespun Philosophy', 41.

At the same time, Wright's ideas can also be combined with the vitalistic reading where conflict between life and death is reflected in the Fourth Symphony's fierce battle between the two sets of timpani. With its motto, 'Music is Life', the work depicts the elementary will to live, suggesting a vitalist aesthetic where the basic principle is that organic life cannot merely be explained through the laws physics and chemistry. It must also involve a non-material, spiritual force of life, and divinity can be a way to understand it. When life is perceived as an autonomous force that exists in nature, and of which man strives to maintain his ownership, Wright's reference to art religion and pantheism adds an interesting view on Nielsen's Fourth Symphony.

The present article has focused on the discourse surrounding some of the main categories of the Nielsen reception. I have proposed five main categories: The North, Nature, Vitalism, Storytelling, and (Art)Religion. It should be emphasized that within each category there are large variances in the usage of associated words. The North, for example, entails on the one side something *moody* and *dark* and on the other words such as *warm* and *friendly*. The meaning of the chain of words associated with each category therefore only forms an opinion when articulated in a specific way in order to avoid contradiction.

Reflections

It is useful to consider the impact of major British contributions on Nielsen on the North American reception. American Mina Miller's work with *The Nielsen Companion* (1994) is a significant contribution to the perception of Nielsen. Most authors in this volume are British or Danish, and it is interesting to see whether these authors' work had an impact on how Nielsen is perceived in USA. Other British studies are also relevant to mention: Robert Simpson's 'Carl Nielsen Now: A Personal View' in *The Nielsen Companion* and the revised edition of his *Carl Nielsen Symphonist* (1979); David Fanning's *Nielsen: Symphony No 5* (1997) and his contribution 'Progressive Thematicism in Nielsen's Symphonies' in the companion; and Daniel Grimley's *Carl Nielsen and the Idea of Modernism* (2014).[22] Since much of the material found on Nielsen in English comes from the UK, British views would have a potential impact in USA. In her 'Prelude', Miller highlights the American professor Lewis Rowell's chapter 'Carl Nielsen's Homespun Philosophy of Music' in which the composer's musical style is characterized as personal, poetic, incisive, naive, unpretentious, easy-going, and exaggerated.[23] Many of these characteristics still appear in the discussion of The Nielsen Project and help to create an image of

22 Simpson, *Carl Nielsen. Symphonist*, 2nd edn.; Robert Simpson, 'Carl Nielsen Now: A Personal View', in Miller (ed.), *The Nielsen Companion*, 78–95; David Fanning, 'Progressive Thematicism in Nielsen's Symphonies', in Miller (ed.), *The Nielsen Companion*, 167–203; David Fanning. *Carl Nielsen. Symphony No. 5* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997); and Daniel M. Grimley, *Carl Nielsen and the Idea of Modernism* (Woolbridge: Boydell Press, 2014).

23 Mina Miller, 'Prelude', in Miller (ed.), *The Nielsen Companion*, 3; cf. Rowell, 'Carl Nielsen's Homespun Philosophy', 31–32.

Nielsen as both credible and approachable. Rowell also stresses Nielsen's *My Childhood on Funen* and presents Funen as 'the gentlest of all Scandinavian nature',[24] which may be a direct spin-off of the Nielsen reception in the UK, presenting an idyllic vision of the landscape as promoted in Grimley's studies. For a long time, the translation of Nielsen's autobiography, *My Childhood on Funen*, was one of the few available books in English in addition to Simpson's *Carl Nielsen: Symphonist*. Thus there is a natural reason for the way in which much early non-Danish interest in Nielsen accentuates his childhood and the idyllic landscape of Funen.

Though university dissertations on Nielsen are being produced both in the UK and USA, one might argue that studies, such as Simpson's, Fanning's, Grimley's, as well as Miller's edited *Nielsen Companion* might indeed encourage a significant development in the foreign Nielsen reception. That having been said, The Nielsen Project holds a special place in the American Nielsen reception. First of all, the recordings with The New York Philharmonic are the first of their kind completing what Bernstein started in the 1960s; secondly, the project fulfilled what it set out to do: to celebrate Nielsen's 150th anniversary in a high-profiled way.

24 Rowell, 'Carl Nielsen's Homespun Philosophy', 33.

Appendix 1. Performances of Nielsen's symphonies in USA.

Work	Orchestra	Year
Symphony No. 1	Houston Symphony	1967
	Cleveland Orchestra	1977
	Knox-Galesburg Symphony	2006
	Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra	2007
	Lake Murray Symphony Orchestra	2008
	Pasadene Community Orchestra	2011
	Utah Symphony Orchestra	2013
	New York Philharmonic	2014
Symphony No. 2	Detroit Symphony Orchestra	1965
	New York Philharmonic	1973
	Spokane Symphony Orchestra	2007
	Sacramento Youth Symphony Premier Orchestra	2007
	New York Repetory Orchestra	2007
	American Symphony Orchestra	2007
	Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra	2008
	The Philadelphia Orchestra	2008
	San Francisco Symphony Orchestra	2008
	University of Iowa Symphony Orchestra	2008
	Utah Symphony Orchestra	2009
	Beachcities Symphony Orchestra	2009
	Loveland Orchestra	2011
	New York Philharmonic	2011
	Dallas Symphony Orchestra	2011
	Champaign-Urbana Symphony Orchestra	2013
	Utah Symphony Orchestra	2013
	Fort Worth Symphony Orchestra	2014
	Elgin Symphony Orchestra	2014
Symphony No. 3	Detroit Symphony Orchestra	1964
	New York Philharmonic	1965
	Detroit Symphony Orchestra	1967
	Cleveland Orchestra	1966
	Cleveland Orchestra	1970
	Detroit Symphony Orchestra	1971
	Cleveland Orchestra	1984
	The Curtis Symphony Orchestra	2008
	San Francisco Symphony Orchestra	2008

Work	Orchestra	Year
(Symphony No. 3)	Mississipi Symphony Orchestra	2009
	MIT Symphony Orchestra	2009
	Minnesota Orchestra	2011
	El Paso Symphony Orchestra	2011
	New York Philharmonic	2012
	Austin Symphony Orchestra	2012
	Cleveland Orchestra	2013
	La Jolla Symphony	2013
	Paducah Symphony Orchestra	2013
	Utah Symphony Orchestra	2013
Symphony No. 4	Danish National Orchestra*	1952
	New York Philharmonic	1965
	Chicago Symphony	1966
	Detroit Symphony	1966
	New York Philharmonic	1970
	Cleveland Orchestra	1972
	Detroit Symphony Orchestra	1972
	Detroit Symphony Orchestra	1973
	Cleveland Orchestra	1974
	Cleveland Orchestra	1975
	New York Philharmonic	1986
	Cleveland Orchestra	1988
	Cleveland Orchestra	1990
	New York Philharmonic	1994
	New York Philharmonic	2002
	Cleveland Orchestra	2003
	Saint Louis Symphony Orchestra	2006
	Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra	2007
	Hilton Head Symphony Orchestra	2007
	Colorado Symphony Orchestra	2008
	Grant Park Orchestra	2008
	Ann Arbor Symphony Orchestra	2008
	Peoria Symphony Orchestra	2008
	Elgin Symphony Orchestra	2009
	New York Repetory Orchestra	2010
	Oregon Symphony	2011
	Nashville Symphony	2011

* Performed at Carnegie Hall, NYC.

Work	Orchestra	Year
(Symphony No. 4)	Cleveland Orchestra	2011
	National Symphony of Washington	2011
	Houston Symphony	2012
	Eastern Connecticut Symphony Orchestra	2013
	Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra	2013
	Utah Symphony Orchestra	2013
	Virginia Symphony Orchestra	2014
	Champaign-Urbaba Symphony Orchestra	2014
	Boise Philharmonic	2014
	New York Philharmonic	2014
Symphony No. 5	National Symphony of Washington	1951
	Cleveland Orchestra	1951
	Philadelphia Orchestra	1951
	Boston Symphony Orchestra	1953
	Houston Symphony	1962
	New York Philharmonic	1962
	Detroit Symphony Orchestra	1964
	Pittsburg Symphony	1965
	National Symphony of Washington	1965
	Cleveland Orchestra	1967
	Boston Symphony Orchestra	1968
	Houston Symphony	1969
	Buffalo Philharmonic	1969
	New York Philharmonic	1969
	Cleveland Orchestra	1969
	Detroit Symphony Orchestra	1971
	New York Philharmonic	1983
	San Francisco Symphony Orchestra	1987
	Cleveland Orchestra	1988
	New York Philharmonic	1992
	Cleveland Orchestra	1999
	New York Philharmonic	2003
	Cleveland Orchestra	2006
	North Carolina Symphony	2007
	Academy Festival Orchestra (Santa Barbara)	2007
	Minnesota Orchestra	2009
	New World Symphony Orchestra	2009
	Oregon Sinfonietta	2010

Work	Orchestra	Year
(Symphony No. 5)	Utah Philharmonia	2011
	National Symphony of Washington	2011
	Atlanta Symphony Orchestra	2012
	San Diego Symphony Orchestra	2013
	Chicago Symphony	2013
	San Francisco Symphony Orchestra	2013
	Utah Symphony Orchestra	2014
	New York Philharmonic	2014
Symphony No. 6	Philadelphia Orchestra	1965
	Detroit Symphony Orchestra	1967
	Cleveland Orchestra	1977
	Oregon Symphony Orchestra	2011
	Utah Symphony Orchestra	2014
	New York Philharmonic	2014

Abstract

North American Nielsen reception including concerts and recordings has been crucial to the international reputation of Nielsen since the 1960s. Recently The Nielsen Project, a collaboration between the Danish record label Dacapo and the New York Philharmonic Orchestra, has performed and recorded all of Nielsen's symphonies and the concertos in the new DXD format, released as a CD box set in 2015. As part of my research for my MA thesis I have visited New York and conducted interviews with the protagonists of this project and done research in American archives. The purpose was to conduct an investigation of how this new project related to American Nielsen reception of earlier decades in order to establish a notion of how views on Carl Nielsen as a composer and of his symphonies have been changing in American reception history.

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2

Reviews

Märta Ramsten
Kungl. Musikaliska akademien och folkmusiken. En musiketnologisk undersökning
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Hvilke værdikriterier ligger til grund for synet på folkemusik? Hvor i det musikalske hierarki befinder folkemusikken sig? Disse spørgsmål stiller Märta Ramsten i sin gennemgang og analyse af folkemusikkens position i det svenske Musikaliska akademiens virke fra 1771 til 2016. Ved at sætte akademiet ind i en kulturel kontekst får vi ikke alene et indblik i konsekvenserne af akademiets skiftende syn på og vurderinger af folkelige musiktraditionerik, men også indblik i tidens strømninger. Bogen er relevant for såvel svenske som danske (folke)musikforskere og -studerende og andre der interesserer sig for folkemusikkens værdikriterie-historie.

Musikaliska akademien blev grundlagt i 1771 med det formål at uddanne professionelle sangere og instrumentalister til operaen og koncertvirksomheden og dermed skabe et professionelt svensk musikliv på højde med det franske, tyske og italienske. To hundrede år senere overgår uddannelsesopgaven til det der senere bliver til Kungl. Musikhögskolan i Stockholm. Akademiets opgave i dag er, i korte vendinger, at fremme kunst og videnskab på musikkens område. Med dette bredere formål har folkemusikken fået en mere markant placering i akademiets arbejde.

Gennem 16 korte og klart formulerede kapitler bliver vi med Ramstens usvigelige grundighed og store viden og indsigt præsenteret for tematikker og personer der på forskellig vis har haft betydning for akademiet vedrørende indsamling, forskning, udgivelser og værdisætningen af folkemusikken. Hvert kapitel har nyttige referencer til faglitteratur og kilder. Den detaljerede gennemgang af personer kan være mere aktuel for en svensk læserskare end en dansk. Men hold ud og hold øje med problemstillingerne, tematikkerne og Ramstens funderinger. De har lige stor relevans i begge lande og flere til.

Vi følger hvorledes akademiet i de tidligste år betragter de gamle folkeviser med rødder tilbage til middelalderen som *fortidsminder*, og ikke som en del af en musikkultur. Hvordan interessen for folkemelodierne opstår et stykke ind i 1800-tallet fordi de kunne tilpasses og indgå i kunstmusikalske værker – og endda betragtes som et grundlag for svensk tonekunst; melodierne har i denne kontekst *ingen egenværdi*. Hvordan folkemusik

anerkendes som en *genre* i 1900-tallet, og en folkemusiker bliver medlem af akademiet for første gang. Til i dag hvor *genreopdelingen udfordres og er under opløsning*. En proces der svarer til forløbet i Danmark. Det er udviklingen og forandringerne imellem disse hovedpunkter som Ramsten finder interessant at følge. Hun har et fint blik, ikke kun for akademiets interesser, men også dens 'uinteresser' – herunder de gamle folkeviser og i det hele taget folkemusikken i de tidlige år. Ramsten holder både en forstående og kritisk tilgang til akademiets arbejde i live bogen igennem.

Et uundgåeligt spørgsmål er definitionen af begrebet folkemusik, hvortil der, i følge Ramsten og andre forskere, ikke findes ét tilfredsstillende svar. Senest har en blanding af sociologiske, funktionelle og musikalsk-stilistiske aspekter været knyttet til begrebet. Ramsten udfolder spørgsmålet hen over knap tre sider med inddragelse og diskussion af begreber som folkemusikalsk kanon. Eksempelvis baserede repertoiret i den svenske folkemusikbølge i 1970'erne sig i væsentlig grad på de melodier og tekster som indsamlere og udgivere i 1800-tallet havde udvalgt. De danner således en folkemusikalsk kulturarv eller kanon som ikke nødvendigvis repræsenterer det som folk faktisk sang eller spillede eller holdt mest af. At folkemusikken i løbet af 1900-tallet gradvis flyttes fra hverdagssituation til en musikscene, gør også en funktionel definition vanskelig. Vi kan afslutte diskussionen her med Ramstens indledning til kapitlet hvor hun citerer musiketnolog Owe Ronström: "Vad är folkmusik? Svar: En dårligt formulerad fråga" (s.13).

I det sammenfattende kapitel samler Ramsten op på de hovedtematikker hun har trukket frem og diskuteret: Ideologisk interesse og nationale symboler, kunstmusikalske normer og folkemusik, 1900-tallets revitalisering af folkemusikken, forskningen, fokus på traditionsbærerne og uddannelse af folkemusikere.

Med sit mangeårige felt- og formidlingsarbejde, sin forskning, sine artikler og bøger, og som tidligere leder af Svenskt visarkiv og nuværende medlem af Musikaliska akademien har Märta Ramsten alle forudsætninger for at skrive denne bog. Og det lykkes. Hun fremhæver ikke selv alle sine faglige kompetencer, men nævner interessant nok i forordet at det som frem for alt har motiveret hende til at skrive dette bidrag til Musikaliska akademiens historie er mødet med "musiska människor som fått en annan skolning än den akademiska och som gett mig starka musikaliska upplevelser" (s. 8). Måske derfor fungerer sammenvævningen mellem mennesker, musik og ideer som et bærende element i bogen, uanset hvem der skrives om.

Lene Halskov Hansen

Forfatteren:

Lene Halskov Hansen, arkivar, mag.art., Dansk Folkemindesamling ved Det Kgl. Bibliotek, Søren Kierkegaards Plads 1, DK-1221 København K · lehh@kb.dk

Lene Halskov Hansen
Balladesang og kædedans.
To aspekter af dansk folkevisekultur
København: Museum Tusculanums forlag, 2015
373 pp., illus, music exx., incl. 1 CD
ISBN 978-87-635-4331-6
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Det finns ett foto i boken som visar den 18-åriga Julie Petersen och hennes syster Anna, taget 1919 när de är på väg till Jylland för att bli tjänsteflickor på en gård. De är uppklädda i finkappor och hattar. Det som fascinerar läsaren är deras ögon. Blicken är klar, stark, nyfiken och självmedveten, nästan lite stolt – två unga kvinnor på väg ut i livet. Med i bagaget har Julie sin handskrivna visbok, fylld av texter om både riddare och "svinedrenger", visor som den sångglada Julie brukat sjunga tillsammans med sin mor. Drygt 40 år senare kom Julies visor att bli inspelade av den danske musiketnologen Thorkild Knudsen och hamnade därmed i Dansk Folkemindesamlings arkiv. Julie Petersen är en av de fyra kvinnor och en man vars vissjungande Lene Halskov Hansen utgår från i sin bok *Balladesang og Kædedans.*

Som bokens titel anger behandlas två sidor av den folkliga vokala traditionen i Danmark, balladsången, alltså framförandet av de äldre berättande formelbundna visor som visforskare kallar ballader, och kedjedanser, dvs. danser med sång. Båda hör till Halskov Hansens personliga intressesfär.

Lene Halskov Hansen är forskare vid Dansk Folkemindesamling (en del av Det Kongelige Bibliotek), men är dessutom själv utövande sångare och dansare, vilket förklarar hennes intresse för kombinationen sång och dans i den folkliga traditionen. Utövarna, deras miljöer, sången och dansen i deras vardagsliv, deras framförandesätt står i fokus. När det gäller vissången är det alltså inte själva balladerna, deras texter och melodier, som behandlas, utan människorna som sjunger, hur de tillägnat sig balladerna och lämnat dem vidare. Framför allt gäller det sånguttrycket i deras framföranden.

Författaren har ett rikt källmaterial att ösa ur: Dansk Folkemindesamlings stora samlingar av 1800-talsuppteckningar och det senare århundradets ljud- och videoinspelningar, vilka redogörs för i inledningen till boken. Från 1970-talet och framåt har hon också själv träffat, lyssnat till och även intervjuat flera av de personer som är hennes huvudkällor.

Boken är uppdelad i två avdelningar med rubrikerna *Balladesang som fortællende sang* och *Kædedans.* I bokens första del, som är den största och omfattar 12 kapitel,

ställer Halskov Hansen de grundläggande frågorna: Vad utmärker folklig vissång? Vad är sånglig tradition? Författarens ambition är här att analysera och beskriva det personliga förhållandet till visorna, framför allt sångsättet eller den sångliga berättarkonsten så som vi möter den i dokumentära traditionsinspelningar. Författaren introducerar begreppet "det fortællende sangudtryk". I begreppet innefattas också sångarnas personliga inlevelse i och förståelse av visorna.

Den muntliga traderingen av visorna, i det här fallet ballader, är huvudtemat i kapitlen 2-5. Hur och när lär man sig visorna och formar sin "repertoar"? Hur kommer det sig att vissa visor "fastnar", andra glöms bort eller väljs bort av den enskilde sångaren? Hur upplever man visornas berättelser och vilken betydelse har de för den enskilde sångaren? Författaren exemplifierar med två familjer där flera generationer familjemedlemmars visor har dokumenterats i uppteckningar och inspelningar. Slående är den förteckning över dokumenterade ballader hos fem familjemedlemmar Jensen – Jensdatter – Povlsen som finns i bokens bilaga 1. Det rör sig om repertoarer mellan 25 och 60 ballader hos de enskilda familjemedlemmarna, något som är sällsynt i nordisk tradition. Annars är Ingeborg Munch och hennes familj den mest kända av de sångare som framträder i boken. Genom skivutgivning och presentationer av olika slag har Ingeborg Munchs vissång blivit känd långt utanför Danmarks gränser. Det är ett väl känt faktum att den folkliga sångtraditionen varit särskilt stark i vissa familjer – det finns omvittnat i såväl övriga Skandinavien som de Brittiska öarna. Här möter vi ytterligare exempel på detta.

I kapitel 6 diskuterar Halskov Jensen mer i detalj folkligt sångsätt och det "fortællende sangudtryk". Detta vidareutvecklas sedan i kapitlen 7-12 där författaren har valt att i detalj granska en balladinspelning av vardera fem sångare. De ger sammantaget en variationsrik bild av sångarnas uttryck när det gäller alla tänkbara musikaliska och textliga parametrar. Genom att följa sångarnas uttryck i de olika stroferna framträder konstnärligt medvetna uttryck för att föra handlingen framåt. Det som för ett ovant öra kan låta ensartat, blir med hjälp av den noggranna analysen, tillsammans med cd-inspelningen, en hel värld av små musikaliska och textliga variationer i uttrycket.

Det är ingen tvekan om att Halskov Hansen i denna avdelning om ballader som berättande sång har gjort ett stort och grundläggande men också inkännande arbete när det gäller visornas liv i den folkliga traditionen, med fokus på sångarna och deras uttryckssätt.

Bokens andra del, *Kædedansen*, omfattar sju kapitel, som alla är en kritisk genomgång av källor till kedje- och ringdanser främst i Danmark, men också med europeiska utblickar. Det gäller danser med enbart sång, oftast skämtvisor, men också med instrumentalt ackompanjemang. Bland annat beskrivs de märkliga danstraditionerna på Mandø som var i bruk intill sekelskiftet 1900 och som kunnat dokumenteras vid flera tillfällen under 1900-talet. När det gäller källorna nystar sig författaren bakåt i tiden ända till 1100-talet i den sammanfattning av källäget som hon ger i kapitel 20.

Framför allt är författaren intresserad av huruvida det finns en tradition i Skandinavien med dans till ballader, liknande den man möter i kvaddanserna på Färöarna. Detta ämne har diskuterats länge bland både fackfolk och amatörer. Under hela 1900-talet och inpå vårt eget århundrade har olika vågor av intresse för balladdans blommat upp och sedan 1970-talets folkmusikvåg har det runt om i Skandinavien hållits kurser i balladdans. Liksom de flesta forskare av facket kommer Halskov Hansen fram till att källäget är alldeles för tunt för att man ska våga dra några bestämda slutsatser om balladdans i Danmark och det gäller även Skandinavien som helhet. Men som den inkännande forskare som Halskov Hansen är avslutar hon sin framställning med att framhålla balladdansens musikaliska och sociala betydelse för många nutida utövare, vare sig det är fråga om återupplivande av en äldre tradition eller en nyuppfunnen sådan.

Boken som helhet är utomordentligt välskriven och lättläst utan att ge avkall på de vetenskapliga aspekterna. Lene Halskov Hansen har med denna studie försett den musiketnologiska facklitteraturen med en ny och inträngande syn på det mänskligt sångliga.

Märta Ramsten

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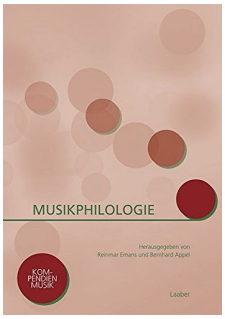

Bernhard R. Appel und Reinmar Emans (eds.)
Musikphilologie. Grundlagen – Methoden – Praxis
Kompendien Musik, 3
Laaber: Laaber-Verlag, 2017
325 pp., illus., music exx.
ISBN 987-3-89007-723-9
EUR 32,80

Allgemeine Einführungen in die Musikphilologie und die musikalische Editionstechnik erscheinen nicht gerade häufig. Umso erfreulicher ist es deshalb, dass der Laaber-Verlag den *Kompendien Musik* auch einen Band mit dem Titel *Musikphilologie* anreiht. Mit den *Kompendien Musik* hat sich der Verlag zur Aufgabe gestellt, "einer breiten Öffentlichkeit die verschiedenen Teildisziplinen der Musikwissenschaft, die aktuellen Fragestellungen und methodischen Ansätze in allgemeinverständlicher Form vorzustellen". Die Kompendien werden als einführende Darstellungen beschrieben, die sich mit ihrem "starken Praxisbezug" in erster Linie "an Studenten, darüber hinaus jedoch ebenso an Lehrkräfte, Musiker und Musikinteressierte" richten.[1] Damit ist der Grundton des Buches schon sehr präzise erfasst.

Der 325 Seiten starke Band ist, wie der Reihentitel bereits besagt, als Kompendium konzipiert, und zwar im besten Sinne des Wortes: Im Gegensatz zu einer Anthologie freier Beiträge wurde hier der gesamte Fachbereich systematisch aufgeteilt und die einzelnen Themen unterschiedlichen Verfassern anvertraut, so dass jedes Teilgebiet von einem erfahrenen Spezialisten abgehandelt werden konnte. Das Buch beschreibt dadurch insgesamt so gut wie alle Aspekte der musikalischen Editionsphilologie und -Praxis äußerst solide. Allein die Liste der knapp 20 Autoren ist beeindruckend, die Summe der vertretenen Fachkompetenz beachtlich.

Das Buch ist in sechs Hauptkapitel gegliedert, deren Überschriften den Inhalt schon in etwa zusammenfassen: "Editionstypen" (Martin Albrecht-Hohmaier, Ulrich Krämer, Joachim Veit), "Quellen" (Julia Ronge, Jens Dufner, Susanne Popp), "Das musikalische Werk" (Daniela Philippi), "Das musikalische Werk und seine Überlieferung" (Helga Lühning, Thomas Hochradner, Michael Struck), "Grundfragen der musikalischen Textkritik" (Walter Dürr, Bernhard R. Appel) und "Editionspraxis" (Ulrich Scheideler, Ulrich Leisinger, Egon Voss, Petra Weber, Daniela Philippi, Sonja Tröster, Ute Poetzsch, Christoph Flamm).

1 http://www.laaber-verlag.wslv.de/index.php?m=5&n=5&ID_Liste=144

Dass die Kapitel bzw. Abschnitte unterschiedlichen Autoren anvertraut wurden, führt zwar fast unvermeidlich zu manchen Überschneidungen und teilweise auch Widersprüchen, erlaubt es aber andererseits, die Beiträge weitgehend auch als eigenständige Abhandlungen über Teilaspekte der editorischen Grundlagen und Techniken zu lesen. Zu den Widersprüchen zählt z.B. die berechtigte Warnung vor dem unscharfen Begriff *Originalausgabe* (S. 78), der anderswo dennoch ohne Weiteres verwendet wird (S. 97, 151, 163). Wie stark die Herausgeber in solchen Fällen in die Texte bzw. die Autonomie der Autoren eingreifen sollten, lässt sich freilich diskutieren. Den unbestreitbaren Wert des Buches schmälern solch kleine Unstimmigkeiten allerdings kaum.

Zu begrüßen ist vor allem, dass die systematische Einführung in die einzelnen Teilbereiche, beispielsweise die Quellentypen oder die Rolle der Kopisten, stets in ihren historischen Entwicklungen dargestellt werden und die sich für die Editionstechnik daraus ergebenden Verschiebungen der Schwerpunkte je nach zeit- oder komponistspezifischen Umständen immer vor Auge gehalten werden, z.B. für die Quellenbewertung. Zusammen mit den zahlreichen, stets anschaulichen Beispielen laden die meisten Kapitel zu geradezu genüsslicher Lektüre ein. Der Informationswert ist generell sehr hoch, mitunter sogar hervorragend. So sind etwa die Beiträge über die Skizzenedition (Ulrich Krämer, Kap. 1.2), die Merkmale der Handschrift (Helga Lühning, Kap. 4.2) und Kopisten (Thomas Hochradner, Kap. 4.2) höchst empfehlenswert, um nur einige Beispiele zu nennen.

Lediglich zwei Beiträge scheinen etwas aus dem Rahmen zu fallen. Ein Kapitel will sich der Systematik des Buches nicht fügen und beschäftigt sich ausschließlich mit dem "Beispiel Brahms" (Kap. 4.3); die dortigen Erläuterungen und Beispiele hätten durchaus sinnvoll in anderen Kapiteln Aufnahme finden können. Rudimentär mutet das Kapitel "Edition von Vokalmusik" (Kap. 6.4) an. Die über Neumen- und Mensuralnotation weit ausholende, jedoch weder der angekündigten "allgemeinverständlichen Form" noch dem "starken Praxisbezug" des Buches entsprechende Einleitung des Kapitels mündet überraschenderweise nur in die Besprechung eines einzigen Aspektes der Vokalmusikedition, und zwar Probleme der Prosodie bzw. Unstimmigkeiten der Textunterlegung, die z.B. bei Übersetzungen des Vokaltexts entstehen können. Dass neben diesem eher als Spezialfall anzusehenden Problem – das in der Edition, wie die Autorin bemerkt, ohnehin kaum zu lösen ist – grundlegende Fragen der Vokalmusikedition wie etwa das Verhältnis zwischen den mitunter divergierenden Autorintentionen von Komponist und Textverfasser oder die Rolle z.B. einer Textvorlage in der Quellenhierarchie einer Notenedition nicht diskutiert werden, mag verwundern. Auch Fragen der orthografischen Vereinheitlichung und Modernisierung, darunter inwiefern diese mit musikalischen Parallelstellen bzw. der Modernisierung der Notation vergleichbar sind, werden nicht beantwortet.

Der schwerwiegendere Einwand jedoch ist der überall vorherrschende deskriptive Ansatz des Buches, der zwar der Zielsetzung der *Kompendien Musik* entspricht, zumindest im Bereich der Musikphilologie jedoch bedenklich stimmt. Das Buch bietet in der Tat

"einen umfassenden Einblick in den aktuellen Stand der traditionsreichen Musikphilologie", wie auf dem Rückseitentext versprochen wird, zumindest soweit "Musikphilologie" sich als die überwiegend deutsche Editionspraxis versteht. Die konkreten Sachverhalte werden stets mit vorbildlicher Behutsamkeit und großem Nuancenreichtum behandelt. Die theoretische Grundlage der zahlreichen Empfehlungen dagegen wird nicht diskutiert; das historisch-kritische Bewusstsein richtet sich allgemein auf das zu behandelnde Material, teilweise auch auf den Zweck der Edition, kaum aber auf die Voraussetzungen dieses Bewusstseins.

Als Beispiel sei die Autorintention genannt, die einen festen Orientierungspunkt der beschriebenen Praxis darstellt. Ulrich Scheidelers Feststellung etwa, es bestehe "heute meist darüber Einvernehmen, dass das wesentliche Ziel einer historisch-kritischen Edition eines Werkes darin bestehen muss, die Autorintention zu ermitteln und so genau wie möglich wiederzugeben" (S. 177) entspricht zwar ohne Zweifel den Realitäten, kaschiert aber die Tatsache, dass das Konzept der Autorintention bisweilen auch stark angefochten wurde. Hier fehlt der Hinweis zu z.B. James Grier, mit seinem Buch *The Critical Editing of Music* (Cambridge 1996) der vermutlich prominenteste Gegner der Autorintention in der musikalischen Editionspraxis. Begriffe wie *copy text* oder *critique génétique*, die in der philologischen Grundlagendiskussion sowie auch in der Praxis jedenfalls außerhalb des deutschen Sprachraums eine Rolle spielen, werden nicht zur Kenntnis gebracht; Theoretiker werden kaum erwähnt. Wenigstens Hinweise auf die wichtigsten Positionen, Namen und Texte – auch aus der Textphilologie – wären wohl selbst der "breiten Öffentlichkeit" zuzumuten.

Die Beschränkung des Blickwinkels gilt ebenso im Detail, d.h. auf der editionspraktischen Ebene, wo durchaus diskutable Verfahren wie etwa die Verwendung diakritischer Zeichen im edierten Notentext (S. 169, 215ff.) nicht weiter problematisiert werden.

In der Einführung fassen die Herausgeber den Zweck des Buches wie folgt zusammen: "Neben terminologischen Erörterungen wird in diesem Band das praktische Handwerkszeug der Editionsphilologie beschrieben und nachvollziehbar gemacht" (S. 12). Aus dieser eher handwerklich-instruktiven Ausgangsposition – es soll erörtert, beschrieben und nachvollziehbar gemacht, nicht aber diskutiert oder problematisiert werden – erklärt sich der scheinbare Mangel freilich, und insofern hält das Buch durchaus, was es verspricht. Bei aller sachlichen Gründlichkeit der Beiträge vermittelt das Buch insgesamt jedoch den Eindruck, die musikalische Editionspraxis sei ein zwar höchst spezialisiertes, aber relativ unstrittiges, nahezu theoriefreies Handwerk. Gerade weil sich das Buch als Lehrbuch versteht, ist Vorsicht geboten. Für textphilologisch geschulte Umsteiger oder als vertiefende Lektüre für bereits ausgebildete Editoren mag es genügen; im Unterricht z.B. an Universitäten und Musikhochschulen darf es nicht alleinstehen.

Die fehlende Darlegung der theoretischen Grundlage hat weiterhin zur Konsequenz, dass dem Buch der Brückenschlag zwischen vor allem deutsch- und englischsprachigen Editionstraditionen nicht gelingt bzw. gar nicht erst versucht wird. Auf die von einer

Einführung in den Fachbereich zu erwartende Darstellung der international vorherrschenden Positionen und Richtungen muss die Musikphilologie folglich weiterhin warten. Die Wirkung der Neuerscheinung wird deshalb voraussichtlich – nicht nur der Sprache wegen – auf den deutschen Sprachraum begrenzt bleiben. Dass die aktuelle musikphilologische Praxis anhaltende, theoretische Auseinandersetzungen spiegelt – vor allem auf dem Gebiet der Textkritik, und von dort aus (meist mit Verspätung) auf die Musikphilologie ausstrahlend – wird außerhalb des engeren Fachbereichs nicht immer wahrgenommen bzw. anerkannt. Gerade in einer Zeit der internationalen Kooperationen sowie des fortwährenden Zweifels an der "Wissenschaftlichkeit" musikalischer Edition und dem daraus folgenden ständigen Kampf um die Berechtigung kostspieliger Editionsprojekte wäre eine Diskussion der nunmehr nur impliziten Grundannahmen des Buches zu begrüßen gewesen.

Axel Teich Geertinger

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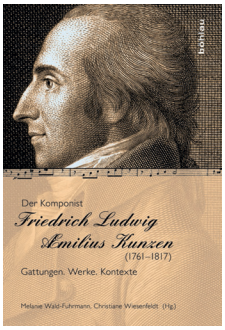

Melanie Wald-Fuhrmann and Christiane Wiesenfeldt (eds.)
Der Komponist Friedrich Ludwig Æmilius Kunzen (1761–1817). Gattungen. Werke. Kontexte
Köln: Böhlau Verlag, 2015
331 pp., illus., music exx.
ISBN 978-3-412-22275-8
EUR 44.90

Friedrich Ludwig Æmilius Kunzen was born in Lübeck 1761 into a musical family. In 1784 he was encouraged by J.A.P. Schulz, the future *Kapellmeister* in Copenhagen, to move to the Danish capital to pursue a musical career. Kunzen composed music to Jens Baggesen's opera libretto *Holger Danske*, which was premiered at the Royal Theatre in 1789. Strong opinions on the text caused a literary feud known as *Holgerfejden*, and shortly afterwards Kunzen left Denmark. During the following six years he worked as opera director, among other places in Frankfurt a. M. and Prague where he staged operas by for instance W.A. Mozart. In 1795, he returned to Copenhagen succeeding Schulz as director of the Royal Orchestra – a position he held until his death in 1817. He was productive and versatile: more than 400 works (to judge from the work list pp. 268–320), his oeuvre comprising orchestral works, stage works, vocal works and various instrumental works.

The book contains eleven interesting and original studies on this central figure of North German and Danish music history. Nine papers are concerned with various perspectives on the aesthetics of his compositions, whereas the remaining two deal with the reception of his works. One of the dominating themes that a number of the papers are concerned with is the aesthetics of genre, as is obvious from the title of the book. They discuss aspects of how Kunzen mixed genres in this period of Western music history when stylistic changes were taking place. The book is as much an isolated study of the works of this specific composer as it is a contribution to general discussions on aesthetics of music around 1800.

After his death, Kunzen and his works were almost entirely forgotten, and during most of the twentieth century he was a neglected figure in music history. The life and works of Kunzen were revived in the 1990s, primarily due to the untiring efforts of Heinrich W. Schwab (prof. em. at the University of Copenhagen). In 2006 *Holger Danske* was included in the *Kulturkanon*, a national canon consisting of 108 works of 'cultural excellence' presented by the Danish Ministry of Culture. In her paper Christiane Wiesenfeldt discusses reasons why the works of Kunzen were forgotten in the beginning of the

twentieth century (pp. 255–67). One of her strong points is that his music was distant to the aesthetical discussion of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. That Kunzen is not dealt with in modern writings on music history implies that he is marginalized, at least in studies taking their point of departure from a European perspective.

Siegfried Oechsle's paper (pp. 28–65) takes off from a similar point, criticizing studies on symphonic works around 1800 which tend to focus on the 'heroes', often those active in certain European cities such as Vienna, Paris and Milan. Kunzen's symphony in G minor is an example of a neglected work. Based on a study of the compositional potentials of the mythical key of G minor in the symphonic works of Kunzen, A. Rosetti and L. Koželuh, Oechsle argues that Kunzen's symphony is a composition that reflects aesthetical problems of contemporary symphonies. Stefan Keym, too, is engaged with discussions on the aesthetics of keys. In his paper (pp. 66–89) he demonstrates the presence of 'Dur-Moll-Dramaturgie', harmonic shifts between major and minor, in Kunzen's symphony and in *Holger Danske* as well as other works. With such a harmonic means, Kunzen drew on tendencies popular in Paris and Vienna in the 1780s.

Basing his discussion on Kunzen's work *Opstandelsen* (Die Auferstehung), Schwab deals with the sacred works of Kunzen (pp. 90–129). He demonstrates how Kunzen mixed elements from sacred genres such as *cantata* and *oratorio*. Furthermore Schwab argues that in *Opstandelsen* Kunzen made use of musical gestures inspired by dramatic works, for instance in the instrumental depiction of the earthquake occurring after the resurrection of Jesus. In addition, Kunzen's incidental music forms an interesting case of genre. Jens Hesselager defines these works as a rather heterogeneous group of compositions (pp. 142–65). Some works consist of only few movements, with a single or even no musical sources. Other compositions were thoroughly worked out in extensive scores. Hesselager discusses Kunzen's music for the plays *Eropolis* (1803), *Stærkodder* (1812) and *Korsridderne* (1815), pointing at interesting details on their aesthetical backgrounds. *Stærkodder* represents, Hesselager argues, 'an aesthetic of anti-virtuosity' (p. 154), as a contrast to *Eropolis*, which 'takes delight in exploring and exposing musical virtuosity' (p. 150).

Kunzen composed approximately forty occasional works, many of which resulted from his position as *Kapellmeister*. Joachim Kremer (pp. 130–41) is concerned with *Afskedssang til Aarhundredet* composed on the occasion of the new century 1800/1801. The interest in occasional works declined during the eighteenth century, and Kremer demonstrates how Kunzen participated in re-defining the genre based on a profound mentality change. The new type of *Kasualmusik* was characterized by being 'Gedenksmusik für überpersonliche Ideen und Werte' (p. 135).

Arnfried Edler (pp. 9–27) is concerned with the keyboard music by Kunzen, who had a reputation as virtuosic keyboard player. Despite this, these works were not distributed widely. While Michala Kaufmann (pp. 166–88) discusses Kunzen's Singspiel *Die Weinlese* (or *Das Fest der Winzer*), which was one of his most popular works, Melanie

Wald-Fuhrmann (pp. 189–212) gives a systematic overview of Kunzen's songs in general. She traces his 'Wille zur Modernität, Mut zum und Lust an ästhetischen Experimente' (p. 190). One of the few papers to go across genres, is one by Wolfgang Fuhrmann (pp. 213–44), who investigates four publications by Kunzen 'for the beautiful sex' (für das schöne Geschlecht). They were issued between 1795 and *c.* 1809 containing piano works and songs with piano accompaniment. Based on a discussion of 'Damenmusik' as a phenomenon around 1800, Fuhrmann traces Kunzen's idea of 'musikalische Weiblichkeit' in his works.

An appendix (pp. 268–320) contains an overview of Kunzen's works. The list is a thematic catalogue based on three categories: A. vocal music, B. stage music, C. instrumental music. Each category is divided into sections, for instance *A. III. Kantaten*, which has four further subsections (for instance *Geistliche Kantaten* and *Kantaten für das dänische Königshaus*). Unfortunately, the contents of the sections seem inconsistent. The present reviewer is puzzled by the work *A.III.10 Choraler, Chore og Cantate (Musik zur Krönung von König Friedrich VI. und Königin Marie Sophie)*, which is listed under *Geistliche Kantaten* rather than under *Kantaten für das dänische Königshaus*. The work *Hymne auf Gott* is listed under *Kantaten*, whereas *Skabningens Halleluja*, which is described as 'Hymne/Oratorium', is to be found under *Hymnen* rather than under *Oratorium*. No explanations are given, but surely the difficulties handling these genre categories derive from Kunzen's experimental attitude towards genre, as is evident from the book's chapters.

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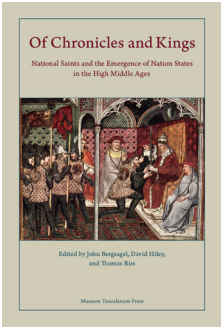

John Bergsagel, David Hiley and Thomas Riis (eds.)
Of Chronicles and Kings. National Saints and the Emergence of Nation States in the High Middle Ages
Danish Humanist Texts and Studies, 52
Copenhagen: Museum Tusculanum Press, 2016
336 pp., illus., music exx.
ISBN 978-87-635-4260-9
DKK 398, € 54

This is a collection of papers read during a symposium at The Royal Library in Copenhagen in October 2012, which has been turned into print by a highly competent group of editors and beautifully presented as a book by the publishers. I participated as a passive and silent member who was fascinated by the story collectively drawn up by the papers, but somewhat overwhelmed by the amount of details presented in oral form. With the book at hand, I am able to argue why its theme has such great importance to musicology, even if the majority of its articles do not concern music at all.

The occasion of the symposium was the recent publication of the manuscript in the Kiel University Library, MS S.H. 8 A.8°, in facsimile as well as in an edition of the music by John Bergsagel.[1] The manuscript contains the complete offices and masses for the liturgy of St *Kanutus dux et martyr* along with the earliest text of the Roskilde Chronicle.

The Danish duke Knud Lavard was killed in Haraldsted Woods near Ringsted on 7 January, 1131. According to contemporary chronicles representing the winning side in the ensuing civil war, his death was a treacherous murder instigated by his cousin Magnus, son of the ruling king, Niels. The star of Knud Lavard was in ascendance at the time, and he was son of Erik I the Good, the predecessor as king and brother of the ageing Niels, and therefore a dangerous competitor for the Danish throne. The son of Knud Lavard, Valdemar I the Great (king 1157–1182), campaigned to get his father canonized as a Christian martyr, and succeeded in 1170, when a great church festival in Ringsted celebrated his *translatio* on 25 June.

The main question of the symposium was how to view the creation of a royal saint. Was it primarily a question of politics, where the papal endorsement, the creation of a liturgy with its texts and music and its institution of feast days in dependent areas all participated in a process of bolstering a family's or clan's grasp on the power? Was it a demonstration of how important it was to have a saint of royal blood in your lineage, or even better a succession of saints? And among saints a martyr seems to trump the lesser ranks. Or did the church have deeper motives for its involvement in the recently

1 See my review in *Danish Yearbook of Musicology,* 38 (2010/11), 89–92.

Christianized Scandinavia? The process of creating saints with all their paraphernalia could be a medium of state building, of organizing public discussions and of domination of the spirituality of an extended area, of a kingdom.

Reading the book cover to cover is as exiting as following the unfolding of evidence in a court case. The questions concerning the precise circumstances of the killing itself are of course not possible to answer as the sources transmit the views of the victorious side only. The sources and their different interpretations are carefully and clearly presented in order to obtain a deeper understanding of the interplay between religion, politics, liturgy, poetry and music.

Eric Christiansen opens with a discussion of the idea of a *patria*, a mother country, in the writing of history in chronicles of the 12th century. He finds that the idea had a weaker position than it had in the Roman history writing of Antiquity. The interest in describing regions, dynasties, rulers and heroes competed strongly with the *patria*, and so did the wish to write general history in support of the Christian faith. However, through the century we can trace a tendency to describe a homeland in order to legitimize the ruling power, and the history of the *patria* could be held up as moral mirror for future rulers. Also the church had an interest in creating national saints in support of a Christian nation. Saxo's *Gesta danorum* (written during the decades around 1200) became a paradigm of this type of writing, which much later evolved into nationalistic history.

The writing of history concerning the life and death of Knud Lavard in connection with the process of his canonization is examined by John Bergsagel. Much has disappeared, but the many readings incorporated in his Offices may constitute excerpts of a legend, which insists on his death being martyrdom, not just an accidental murder of a powerful man. Arguments in this vein must in the end have swayed the pope. The 12th century was dominated by the idea of crusading. A long row of kings was canonized as crusader saints, some of them living before the first crusade, but showing the desired crusading spirit, and older saints were re-interpreted as protectors of crusading. Kurt Villads Jensen demonstrates how the life and deeds of Knud Lavard during the period after his death was interpreted in the light of the crusading spirit to fit into this pattern, completely in accord with the expansionist political agenda of his son, King Valdemar I.

Thomas Riis and John H. Lind further explore the political scene around the canonization of St Kanutus. Lind concentrates on the role of Knud Lavard as *knes* (or king) of the Abodrites, a Slavic people inhabiting the shores of the Baltic Sea between Schleswig and Poland. He even ventures upon a piece of contrafactual history in order to show that if he had survived, and Magnus had followed his father as king, Knud Lavard would still have a strong political base as a Danish duke and a vassal of the German empire. The civil war resulting from his death forced the Danish kingdom to acknowledge the sovereignty of the emperor.

The strong political impetus for his canonization is obvious in the liturgical texts of his office. Nils Holger Petersen's reading of them maintains this aspect of the image of

the saint as a Christian hero, which survived into later centuries. But he underscores that Knud Lavard is depicted as in possession of the qualities of humility as a leader that made him a saint acceptable for all fractions of the Danish society. A different reading of the liturgy by Sigbjørn Olsen Sønnesyn argues that it was not that easy to harness the church to political agendas. The facts and legends surrounding Knud Lavard was used by the universal church to include all participating in the liturgy in the search for salvation in complete accordance with 12th century theology, and it created a saint with whom it was easy for the people of the newly Christianized northern region to identify.

The creation of a liturgy to celebrate a new saint demanded a high level of expertise and probably put the transnational machinery of the church at work. Local talent wrote the proses and poems necessitating knowledge of the stories and legends surrounding the saint and probably collaborated with foreign experts. The rich repertory of liturgies for similar saints in other regions were mined for fitting songs, which could be adapted and transformed to serve new purposes – and, of course, new songs were composed in the style of the period.

In his introduction to and comments on the edition of the complete Knud Lavard liturgy John Bergsagel has already discussed the strong (Northern) English influence on its texts and music. The second half of the present book charts its contexts by presenting other royal liturgies, some of them influencing the Knud Lavard songs.

Roman Hankeln examines the liturgy of St *Kanutus rex et martyr*, the uncle of Knud Lavard. This saint, King Knud IV, was killed by his enemies before the altar in St Alban in Odense in 1086, and he was canonized in 1100 after pressure from his brother, King Erik I, the father of Knud Lavard. A group of monks from Evesham Abbey was fetched to Odense to make the creation of the liturgy possible. Hankeln proposes a reconstruction of the original monastic service by sifting through the repertories of printed breviaries and missals from around 1500; in this project he builds on and augments a study by Bergsagel published in 1980.[2] Until recently the little music known for this liturgy could be found only by relating its texts with known songs from the standard repertory. A newly discovered fragment of a noted antiphoner from the 15th century gives a welcome first-hand glimpse of its music. Hankeln analyses the most extensive preserved song, the Magnificat antiphon 'Ossibus egregiis' and finds that it is typical for antiphons of the late 12th century – he includes very useful complete colour facsimiles of the fragments.

The offices of other saints are carefully treated including discussions of generous music examples by Ann-Marie Nilsson (St Erik), David Hiley (St Oswin) and John Caldwell (St Mildred). John Toy surveys the fast dissemination of the celebration of St Thomas of Canterbury in Scandinavia during the last decades of the 12th century. Finally, Owain Tudor Edwards describes the strange fate of St David ending up as the national saint of Wales, as a secular symbol of Welsh patriotism.

2 John Bergsagel, 'Songs for St. Knud the King', *Musik & Forskning*, 6 (1980), 152–66.

I can detect a single shortfall of this book only. It misses an index of its wealth of names, sources, titles of songs and texts mentioned, literature etc. The high level of learning and attention to details, which characterize the book, would be very much easier to put in use with the help of an index. But, as I started by saying, reading straight through can be recommended. This imparts lots of new information on a crucial period in Danish history and insights into a process of incorporation of the region into an early European community.

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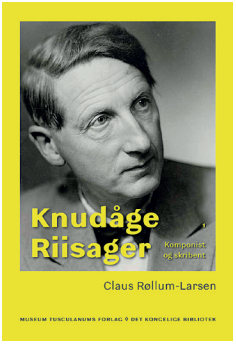

Claus Røllum-Larsen
Knudåge Riisager. Komponist og skribent
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Claus Røllum-Larsen har adskillige gange forfattet omfattende bidrag til dansk musiks historie – her tænkes særligt på hans bog om musikken i det danske kongehus (1990) samt tobindsværket, ph.d.-afhandlingen *Impulser i Københavns koncertrepertoire 1900-1935* (2002) – og med hans store værk om Knudåge Riisager (1897-1974) har Røllum-Larsen leveret endnu et væsentligt kapitel til 'musikkens historie i Danmark', for nu at genbruge titlen fra Nils Schiørrings fremstilling fra 1970'erne.

Indledningsvist bør det nævnes, at nærværende anmelder ikke er ekspert i nyere dansk kompositionsmusik, heller ikke i Riisagers omfattende produktion. Kvalificeret stillingtagen til Røllum-Larsens analyser af Riisagers musik og dens stilistiske kendetegn må derfor overlades til andre. Det følgende vil indskrænke sig til en mere overordnet vurdering af karakteren af Røllum-Larsens bog samt dens dispositionsmæssige udformning, vægtninger, referencemæssige apparat og lignende. Og i den forbindelse er bogens forord og indledning uundværlige pejlemærker, som her sammenfattes i tre fikspunkter.

For det første er bogen resultatet af mange års arbejde, og dens kildegrundlag er baseret på materiale fra en lang række institutioner samt nær kontakt til bl.a. Riisagers familie og hermed en stor mængde privat materiale. For det andet er bogen ikke en biografi om Riisager, men "et bud på" at skrive om Riisagers musik – også så "den ikke musikteoretisk skolede læser … vil få udbytte af værkbeskrivelserne" – med den hensigt "at give et indblik i den udvikling, Knudåge Riisagers musik gennemløb i lidt over 60 år samt at give en karakteristik af Riisager som skribent" (s. 19). For det tredje er der tale om en "i et vist omfang systematisk … gennemgang og behandling af Riisagers virke", dvs. "den omfangsrige produktion på omkring 300 musikværker, som alle er blevet undersøgt eller analyseret", samt inddragelse af de "lidt over 500 … essays, kronikker, artikler og debatindlæg" som "bliver dokumenteret gennem en række uddrag fra hans skriftlige produktion" – "til tider [i form af] lange citater" (s. 12, 19f.).

Vedrørende det første punkt om bogens omfang, kildegrundlag mm., så er fremstillingens i alt godt og vel 800 sider fordelt på 11 kapitler samt – foruden de indledende

sider – omkring 100 sider med forskellige oversigter mv. Disse afsluttende sider dokumenterer et meget omfattende, dybt kvalificeret og akribisk arbejde. Den komplette oversigt over Riisagers kompositioner tæller 275 daterede værker, omfatter 50 sider og er et mønstereksempel på overlegen struktur og systematik. I betragtning af, at Røllum-Larsen andetsteds oplyser, at en del af Riisagers værker efterhånden er blevet indspillet på cd, ville det dog have været relevant at tilføje disse oplysninger til det enkelte værks øvrige data. Afsnittet 'Anvendt materiale' omfatter knap 25 sider og registrerer det enorme kildemateriale af meget forskellig art, som Røllum-Larsen har lokaliseret og trukket på. Oplistningen af anvendt litteratur er lang, blandt andet fordi Riisagers egne skriftlige bidrag er inkorporeret. I betragtning af, at Røllum-Larsen har medtaget 174 (!) af disse – og heldigvis inddrager dem i stort omfang – så burde de have været samlet i deres egen fortegnelse, også selv om en sådan ikke ville kunne udgøre en til kompositionsoversigten svarende komplet sådan.

Det bemærkes, at publikationens opdeling i to bind ikke kan være foretaget af indholdsmæssige men udelukkende af omfangsmæssige hensyn, hvilket forekommer uhensigtsmæssigt. Fx skal der ved læsning af bind 1 uafladeligt slås op i bind 2, hvis faktuelle oplysninger ønskes uddybet. Her ville det have været mere læsevenligt at samle hele fremstillingen i ét bind eller at udskille alt det faktuelle i et særskilt supplementsbind. Et sådant bind kunne med fordel også have indeholdt større uddrag af Riisagers kompositioner end inkorporeringen af nodeeksempler i den løbende tekst naturligt nok har tilladt.

Bogen er vedlagt to cd'er, som giver et fint og varieret indblik i Riisagers musik. Desværre knytter der sig til de to cd'er en vis ærgrelse. Fremstillingens generelle grundighed taget i betragtning er det uforståeligt, hvorfor der fra teksten og analyserne af de enkelte værker ikke henvises til indspilningerne på de to cd'er, til hvilke en indholdsoversigt dog findes s. 797. Med en enkelt undtagelse mangler desværre også datering af indspilningerne.

Vedrørende det andet punkt om bogen som 'ikke-biografi', men med Riisagers musik og skribentvirksomhed i centrum, så forsømmes levnedsskildringen på ingen måde. Heldigvis. Bogens mest entydigt biografiske del er forståeligt nok de to første kapitler om barndoms-, gymnasie- og studieårene, dvs. frem til omkring 1920. Det er også her, at bogens mange flotte illustrationer findes i størst antal. Hverken denne eller de senere perioder i Riisagers liv samt hans overordentlig vidtfavnende engagementer indenfor dansk musikkultur skal her refereres. I et konstant, jævnt lag igennem bogen følger Røllum-Larsen disse aspekter helt til døre. De fortjener at blive læst på egne præmisser, og som et nyttigt supplement findes en oversigt over de vigtigste begivenheder i Riisagers liv i en afrundende 'Tidslinje' (s. 719-23). Den egentlige afslutning på Røllum-Larsens samlede fremstilling findes i et kort sidste kapitel (s. 693-703), hvor forfatteren opsummerer "(musik-)mennesket" Riisager. Med sin causerende karakter kan det anbefales at starte læsning af hele værket her.

Et væsentligt aspekt ved hele Riisagers livsforløb skal dog omtales. I perioden 1916-1921 studerede Riisager statsvidenskab ved Københavns Universitet, og det er vigtigt at understrege, at hans egentlige embedsmæssige virke entydigt lå i forlængelse heraf. Hans

længste og afsluttende ansættelse (1927-1950) var således i Finansministeriet, hvor han opnåede stilling som kontorchef (jf. s. 191, 361, 503). I dette lys fremtræder Riisagers meget omfattende produktion af musik og tekster endnu mere imponerende. Om dette udtalte Riisager blandt andet, at "når jeg så kom hjem [fra jobbet], så gik jeg simpelt hen i seng og sov et par timer, og når jeg så havde tilendebragt min middagsmad, ja så havde jeg næsten hele natten for mig, frisk og udhvilet" (s. 192).

Når man som Røllum-Larsen trænger så bredt og dybt ned i en enkeltpersons liv og virke, kan det være svært ikke at falde for fristelsen til at dokumentere, hvor omfattende en viden, man har kunnet skrabe sammen, og hvor langt ned i detaljen, denne viden giver forfatteren mulighed for at gå. Især i fremstillingens første kapitler overskrider detaljerne om blandt andet slægtshistorien grænsen for, hvor relevante disse faktisk er i en 'ikke-biografisk' sammenhæng, fx når det meddeles, at "lyslevende i Riisagers erindring stod livet igennem denne have, som bl.a. rummede et træ med 'mærkeligt duftende' bergamottepærer – muligvis den rigt bærende rød bergamotte" (s. 36) – værs'go og spis! Men ellers finder Røllum-Larsen i det store og hele en fin balance, hvad dette aspekt angår.

Indledningens tredje fikspunkt er også det vigtigste, nemlig de omkring 300 musikalske værker, der som nævnt 'alle er blevet undersøgt eller analyseret' af Røllum-Larsen. En overvældende stor opgave. Der er ikke tale om et lille, overskueligt, ensartet *oeuvre*, som holder sig inden for homogene formmæssige, stilistiske, instrumentationsmæssige og andre rammer, men derimod om en stor værkproduktion, som udvikler sig fra et 'klassisk', dansk, senromantisk efterslæb til en imponerende vifte af værker, der både sammenfletter sig med og som klart finder sin egen dialekt mellem det 20. århundredes mange stemmer – danske som udenlandske – inden for ny kompositionsmusik.

Har det været umagen værd? Ethvert forsøg på systematisk at dechifrere og analysere et så stort undersøgelsesmateriale aftvinger respekt – og øjeblikkelig skepsis. Er det en relevant tilgangsvinkel? Røllum-Larsens beslutning er resulteret i en fortløbende, kronologisk fremadskridende præsentation af alle Riisagers værker, og en indlysende fordel er, at en sådan håndtering er nem at sammenkoble med en kronologisk fremadskridende redegørelse for Riisagers liv og gøremål, mens den indlysende ulempe er, at det er svært at etablere et sammenhængende overblik over fx væsentlige stilistiske udviklingstræk, de være sig af fx harmonisk, strukturel, instrumentationsmæssig eller genremæssig karakter. Og det bærer Røllum-Larsens fremstilling præg af.

Bogen er således på den ene side et overflødighedshorn af mange interessante præsentationer og analyser af Riisagers værker. Igennem bogen etableres der en god og solid værkmæssig sammenhæng med hensyn til inspirationskilder, stilistik, karakteristik m.v., og det er et kvalitetsstempel, at der før-under-efter gennemgang af et værk ofte zoomes ud, fx i form af en bred orientering om relaterede værker, såvel inden for Riisagers eget *oeuvre* som udadtil i forhold til andre komponister (fx s. 522).

På den anden side indtræder der undervejs i de 600 sider en træghed netop på grund af, at alle værker *skal* omtales og dette kronologisk. Og man spørger uvilkårligt sig selv,

om ikke det havde været mere relevant – og bedre formidling – at foretage en anden disponering, fx så værkerne blev samlet i grupper, og udviklingen af stilistiske kendetegn blev beskrevet mere overordnet. Dette ville også give plads til større og mere tilbundsgående analyser af udvalgte enkeltværker. Et oplagt eksempel ville være sonatesatsformen, som Røllum-Larsen igen og igen fremdrager som noget væsentligt i mange af Riisagers værker. Det kunne være endog meget interessant at få samling på det, forfatteren udnævner til at være "Riisagers opgør med sonatesatsformen" (s. 555). Og har Riisager selv udtalt sig om denne formmæsige problemstilling? Et andet kompositorisk kendetegn, som Røllum-Larsen påpeger væsentligheden af, er Riisagers interesse for og jævnlige inddragelse af børnesange i sine kompositioner. At hævde at en sådan inddragelse tilmed er en "original tanke" (s. 222), er derimod at pryde Riisager med lånte fjer. Et utal af komponister har tidligere gjort brug af denne praksis. Også inspirationen fra Erik Satie, som er et gennemgående element i analyserne, kunne det være interessant at få samling på.

Man undrer sig endvidere over jævnligt forekommende ubalancer mellem den tekstbaserede analyse, nodeeksemplerne og cd'erne. Hvis man som eksempel tager balletten *Etudes* (1947), så anfører Røllum-Larsen, at "Musikken til *Etudes* indtager en særstilling i Knudåge Riisagers produktion … Det var ganske enkelt *Etudes*, der gav ham det internationale gennembrud, han som komponist havde ønsket sig" (s. 538, 540). Derfor er det forståeligt, at bogens mest omfangsrige omtale/analyse på mere end 20 sider (s. 520-541) tildeles dette værk, men uforståeligt hvorfor der ikke findes klingende uddrag på cd'erne. Måske skyldes det formelle forhindringer? I så fald ville man som læser gerne informeres i en fodnote.

Hvad angår balancen mellem tekst og noder, så kan den tippe begge veje. Bogens mest omfangsrige nodeeksempel – Eks. 4.3, over tre sider – kommenteres på blot syv linjer (s. 206), mens Eks. 6.3 – over to sider – kun tildeles tre linjer (s. 385). Helt i den modsatte grøft befinder læseren sig, når der analyseres i detaljer – dvs. helt ned på takt- og enkelttone-niveau – *uden* at man har et nodebillede at forholde sig til. Dette forekommer jævnligt i Røllum-Larsens gennemgang af Riisagers værker, og ofte i længere tekstafsnit. Redegørelserne for *Capriccio* fra op. 11 (s. 128), Symfoni nr. 1 (s. 210ff.), Symfoni nr. 2 (s. 254f.) og *Sinfonia Caia* (s. 434f.) er eksempler herpå.

Hvad angår bogens nodeeksempler, så tæller det til den positive side, at de er talrige og sat op i en klar, læsbar og nydelig nodesats. Desuden fungerer tekstens henvisninger til eksemplerne fint. At det ved hvert eksempel så ikke er anført, hvilket værk det pågældende udsnit stammer fra, er ærgerligt, især når alle bogens øvrige illustrationer er forsynet med gode, oplysende billedtekster. Til den negative side tæller, at der i ingen af nodeeksemplerne er foretaget nogen som helst markeringer af de større eller mindre detaljer, som teksten udpeger og analyserer. Med en analysetung tekstlig fremstilling, som selvfølgelig udpeger stort og småt i et nodebillede, bør der i hvert fald nogle gange følge en pegefinger med over i nodebilledet. Alt andet sender læseren på helt unødvendige ekskursioner, og samtidig uden sikkerhed for at træffe på det rigtige tiøre-fald.

Et eksempel på, hvad der kan lede til misforståelser, er den første af de *4 Sange*, som i 1915 blev udgivet som Riisagers første værk. I teksten benævnes den 'Søvnens Engler', men i Eks. 2.1 (s. 90) begynder verset ikke med disse ord. Et kig i værkfortegnelsen (s. 727) forsikrer dog om, at der er tale om en og samme sang, men det ville unægteligt have været fint, hvis titlen var meddelt ved eksemplet. Analysen lyder som følger: "I det lille forspil ligger vægten på tre betonede dissonerende klange i t. 3, 4 og 5, som opløses på toslaget til ufuldkomne kvintaltererede dominantnoneakkorder (i Es-dur), men i den tredje er nonen sænket, hvorved der på etslaget fremkommer en H-durklang, der er accentueret med *mf* og varsler den tilsvarende H-durklang i t. 20 kort før melodiens kulmination" (s. 89). I dette – vel at mærke meget lille – eksempel bør læseren hjælpes på vej i noden. Ellers forudsætter Røllum-Larsen, at læseren dels kan se og dels være enig i, at bassens nedadgående bevægelse fra es til d er en opløsning (frem for et forslag eller starten på en drejenode), at treklangen d-fis-c er en ufuldkommen kvintaltereret dominantnoneakkord (altså en Bb9#5 uden b og as), at det er en 'opløsning' til denne dissonerende akkordtype, som er takternes væsentligste indhold, og at det altså ikke i stedet for er de to første dissonerende klanges – herunder den ufuldkomne kvintaltererede dominantnoneakkord – perfekte opløsning til en Es-dur-akkord på takternes 3-slag, der er det centrale. Det er muligt, endda meget sandsynligt, at Røllum-Larsens iagttagelser og tolkninger både er relevante og rigtige, men det er meget svært at følge med, og om 'den ikke musikteoretisk skolede læser … vil få udbytte af værkbeskrivelserne' kan der nok sættes spørgsmålstegn ved.

Eks. 3.5 (s. 131) er et enkeltstående bud på en decideret funktionsharmonisk analyse af et værk, i dette tilfælde 17 takter fra sidetemadelen af 3. strygekvartet, op. 3. Selv når den musikteoretisk skolede læser udviser sin bedste vilje og udfolder sine bedste evner er eksemplet ufremkommeligt. Allerede i fjerde takt hopper kæden af og resten er uforståeligt. Det er derfor ikke muligt at erklære sig enig eller uenig i anvendelsen af ret specielle, analytiske funktionsbetegnelser som fx 'SSS', 'SSp' og 'SSd', men mere end muligt at stille spørgsmålstegn ved dem: hvad fortæller de overhovedet om Riisagers harmonik?

Til slut en kommentar til de uddrag fra Riisagers skriftlige produktion, som pladsmæssigt udgør en stor del af den samlede fremstilling. At komponisten også var en fremragende og meget produktiv skribent, hersker der ingen tvivl om. Riisager begik sig uden problemer inden for mange typer af skriftlig fremstilling, og det både relevant og interessant, skarpt og causerende, og ikke mindst meget læseværdigt.

Denne side af Riisagers virke tildeles derfor en væsentlig plads i Røllum-Larsens fremstilling. Men en så massiv produktion kan for en forfatter – det være sig en biograf eller en analytiker – nemt udgøre både 'a blessing and a curse'. Og Røllum-Larsen har ikke kunnet stå for fristelsen til ikke bare at give eksempler på Riisagers essays, kronikker, artikler og debatindlæg, men har anvendt dem i så overvældende grad og citeret dem i så lange uddrag, at de mange steder bliver det bærende i fremstillingen. Eksemplerne herpå er legio, men et par skal dog anføres. Det relativt korte afsnit 'Arnold Schönberg endnu engang og lidt lysere udsigter for Københavns koncertliv' (s. 287-91)

indeholder 7-8 længere citater, mens afsnittet 'Politiske skygger over musikfesten i Palermo 1949' (s. 583-86), som i alt andrager tre sider, indeholder fem, hvilket levner ca. en side til Røllum-Larsens egen tekst. Riisagers artikel '… dansk musik – i dag' blev publiceret på fire sider i tidsskriftet *Forum* i 1941, og gennemgangen fylder tilsvarende fire sider (s. 471-75). Mindre end en halv side er skrevet af forfatteren, resten er citater. Hvorfor så ikke bringe hele artiklen, fx i form af et bilag?

Flere steder inddrager Røllum-Larsen dog arbejder fra Riisagers skriftlige produktion, som ikke er publicerede, og som i visse tilfælde tillige kun præsenterer sig ved den i realiteten intetsigende standard-reference "Privateje". Et interessant eksempel herpå er et 70 sider langt manuskript med titlen *Musikalsk Decadence. Et essay om tonekunsten i vore dage* fra 1919, som på trods af bl.a. en anbefaling fra Angul Hammerich ikke blev publiceret. At Røllum-Larsen i netop dette tilfælde vælger at lade langt størsteparten af sin redegørelse (s. 78-84) udgøre af citater, er mere forståeligt, men samtidig ville en placering af evt. større udvalgte afsnit som et bilag måske have været en bedre løsning.

Det er tydeligt, at Røllum-Larsen har gjort sig store anstrengelser for at opspore anmeldelser af opførelserne af Riisagers værker – og fortjener ros herfor. Uden at forklejne denne indsats, lægger man dog også her mærke til, at en vis automatik indfinder sig, idet redegørelsen for et enkelt værk ofte efterfølges af opremsninger fra en mængde anmeldelsesuddrag.

Et helt andet aspekt vedrørende bogens inddragelse af citater er, at de så at sige opsluges i den løbende tekst. Det er helt almindelig praksis, at kortere citatbidder indflettes i den løbende tekstlige fremstilling, men også lige så almindeligt, at længere citater udhæves med en selvstændig typografi. I forhold hertil må Røllum-Larsens bog betegnes som en meget påfaldende undtagelse. Men omvendt, så ville en – i hvert fald for nærværende anmelder klart foretrukket – udhævning af de mange citater jo have givet hele fremstillingen et helt andet – og måske lidt mere 'retvisende' – præg.

Sådanne små semi-sure anmelderopstød skal naturligvis opvejes behørigt, for der findes mange velafbalancerede afsnit i Røllum-Larsens bog. For at nævne blot et enkelt sådant skal der peges på 'Debatindlæg om koncertlivet i forandring og om den samtidige musik' (s. 334-38), hvor forfatteren inddrager mange af Riisagers tekster uden selv at slippe tømmerne. Rigtig fint!

Rigtig fint er det også, at forfatterens indledningsvist udtrykte ønske om at bogen "i bedste fald … vil kunne inspirere læseren til at lytte til Riisagers musik" (s. 19) uden tvivl vil blive opfyldt, uanset hvem der måtte begive sig ud i de 800 sider. Nærværende anmelder har i hvert fald fået en stor og berigende oplevelse ved læsning af Røllum-Larsens monumentale fremstilling og den samtidige præsentation af og indføring i Riisagers musik.

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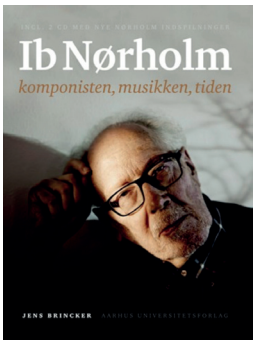

Jens Brincker
Ib Nørholm: komponisten, musikken, tiden
Århus: Aarhus Universitetsforlag, 2017
221 pp., illus., music exx., incl. 2 CDs
ISBN 978-87-7184-099-5
DKK 299.95

Jens Brinckers nye biografi om Ib Nørholm emmer af postmodernisme, eller skulle man måske sige: af den store fortælling om postmodernisme i dansk musik. For selvom postmodernismen selvfølgelig forstås som opgøret med de store fortællinger, et opgør der gentages med variationer henover årtierne, og som iagttages i værkgennemgange igennem hele biografien, så er der også tale et stadigt opgør der selv antager nærved mytiske dimensioner. Det er en fortælling, der har rødder i 1960'rne og 70'rne (konkretisme, attituderelativisme, Fluxus, ny enkelhed osv.), og som voksede til i løbet af 1980'rne, ikke mindst i spalterne i *Dansk Musiktidsskrift*. Det var dengang über-nørdede og energisk engagerede analyser af den nyeste kompositionsmusik, dens materialer og teknikker blev gennemgået, detaljer blev dissekeret og fundene blev koblet med aktuelle filosofiske debatter, som gjaldt det liv eller død. En dynamisk, intellektuelt spraglet og spændende tid, hvor Nørholm befandt sig i orkanens øje, både som komponist, pædagog og central aktør i musiklivet, og hvor Brincker desuden selv deltog aktivt som en af de skarpe iagttagere og kommentatorer. Man kan blive helt nostalgisk, for der var kul på. Formentlig en følelse både Brincker og Nørholm kan nikke genkendende til, hvis jeg da ikke tager helt fejl.

Brinckers Nørholm-biografi har naturligvis ligeså meget de omkringliggende årtier med, men trækker særligt på energien og tankerne fra denne postmoderne *heyday* i dansk musikhistorie og på følelsen af, at det der skete dengang faktisk var vigtigt og fortjener at blive husket, lyttet til, genfortalt og ideelt set også forstået i dag. To medfølgende CD'er der gør en del af de gennemgåede værker umiddelbart tilgængelige for læseren fungerer som en velkommen opfordring til at lytte med undervejs.

Bogen er vokset ud af Dansk Komponist Forenings komponistleksikon, et omfattende online projekt som Brincker er forfatter på. Som han forklarer i forordet, forsøgte han i forlængelse af dette arbejde i første omgang at overtale Nørholm til at skrive sin selvbiografi. Det lykkedes ikke, og i stedet indgik de to et kompromis, hvor Nørholm bidrog med korte selvbiografiske afsnit, mens Brincker skrev om værkerne og 'de generelle

linjer', alt sammen gennemlæst, kommenteret og evt. fejlrettet af Nørholm. Denne præmis er ikke uvæsentlig at have med, for selvom Brincker bedyrer at han alene er ansvarlig for sin del af teksten – en pointe han gentager flere gange i løbet af bogen, fx når han peger på sammenhænge eller tolkningsmuligheder der er lidt mere vidtløftige eller spekulative end gennemsnittet – så fornemmer man alligevel, at det stadig også handler om at give plads til og at skrive en slags Nørholmsk selvforståelse frem, eller i det mindste en forståelse der kommer 'inde fra' fortællingen om postmodernismen i dansk musik, fra en der kender den som sin egen bukselomme. Der søges ikke kun formidlet en forståelse *af*, men også en forståelse *for* det Nørholmske livsværk.

Brincker bestræber sig kort sagt på at tegne et loyalt portræt. Det er prisværdigt, men ind imellem bliver det måske alligevel lidt for meget af det gode. Analyser og rationaliseringer løfter værker op og ud over sig selv, perspektiverende og oplysende, men også med en tydelig forkærlighed for den fordelagtigste vinkling, leveret som et facit hvor ordene sommetider bliver vældig store, grænsende det anstrengt apologetiske. Og sommetider er rationaliseringerne decideret svære at gå med på. Som i analysen af *Klokken*, opus 172, hvor billedet i H.C. Andersens fortælling af konfirmandernes sjæle, der skulle "ligesom flyve over i en forstandigere person" (s. 153), i Brinckers læsning besynderligt uproblematisk bliver til det samme som menneskets overgang hos Kant fra selvforskyldt umyndighed til oplysning ved forstandens og fornuftens hjælp. En læsning der så bruges til at forklare hvordan og hvorfor den forklarelsens C-dur, der afslutter Nørholms værk (med tilføjet, dissonerende og problematiserende, stor septim) er tungt ladet med musikhistoriske referencer til både oplysning og oplysningskritik, fra Haydns *Skabelsen* og Strauss' *Also sprach Zarathustra*, med mere, og frem til Nørholms egen 4. symfoni, *Modskabelse*.

Men værktolkninger er selvfølgelig til for at sætte noget i gang, ikke for at lukke ned, og selvom mange af Brinckers analyser gerne vil forklare og præcisere, hvordan musikken skal forstås eller ikke forstås (om for eksempel citater eller stilcitater skal forstås som enten ironiske eller ikke-ironiske, som udtryk for postmoderne stilpluralisme eller som forsøg på 'at tage tidens splittelse på sig', som klassicistisk genbrug eller noget andet), så behøver læseren jo ikke acceptere alle konklusionerne for at få noget ud af læsningen, eller for at hente konkret viden ud af teksten. Eller for at lytte med på de tankegange og problemstillinger der var med til at forme dette kapitel af dansk musikhistorie.

Biografien har selvfølgelig sit fokus på Nørholm og hans værker, men handler også samtidig om 'tiden' sådan som undertitlen jo bekendtgør. 'Tiden' tror jeg ikke skal forstås som et meget bredt kontekstualiserende, kulturhistorisk greb her, men hellere som den mere lokalt og subjektivt oplevede tid. Sådan fornemmer man i hvert fald (for)tidens tilstedeværelse i de stemningsfulde, venligt-tørt nostalgiske, selvbiografiske afsnit, som Nørholm selv har leveret, selvfølgelig formuleret i første person og med det personligt oplevede perspektiv som udgangspunkt. I Brinckers kapitler ligger der også med mellemrum noget i 'tiden', som Nørholm reagerer og agerer på. Denne tid, 'tiden', hvori

noget engang imellem lå, var Brincker jo unægtelig også selv tilstede i, som observerende, agerende og reagerende kritiker. Det mærker man sådan set godt mellem linjerne. Men det kunne nu have været ganske befriende, hvis det også var kommet eksplicit til udtryk. Det gør det ikke – kun i forordet optræder Brincker som 'jeg', og vi oplyses lidt om personlige relationer mellem portrættør og portrætteret. I resten af bogen træder han i baggrunden, og omtaler kun sig selv som 'forfatteren' eller endnu mere distanceret, som 'forf'. Utvivlsomt er det et helt bevidst valg fra Brinckers side at undgå det 'subjektive' perspektiv og i stedet at optræde som historiker uden egne aktier i historien. Men alligevel lykkes det trick ikke helt. Og godt det samme, for læst (formentlig lidt imod intentionen) som også et mere personligt dokument, som et slags to-stemmigt erindringsværk om Nørholm og tiden, hvor også Brincker selv har noget – en erfaring, en måde at se verden og høre musikken på – som han gerne vil vinde forståelse for, fremstår biografien efter min mening kun mere perspektivrig og engagerende.

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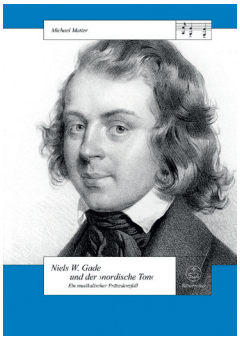

Michael Matter
Niels W. Gade und der 'nordische Ton'. Ein musikalischer Präzedenzfall
Schweizer Beiträge zur Musikwissenschaft, 21
Kassel: Bärenreiter, 2015
239 pp., illus., music exx.
ISBN 978-3-7618-2354-5
EUR 41.50

Michael Matter hat mit diesem Buch einen wichtigen Beitrag zur internationalen Forschung zu Niels W. Gade geleistet. Gleich im Titel tauchen die beiden Hauptthemen der Arbeit auf: erstens die Beziehung zum ‚nordischen Ton', mit Anführungszeichen versehen um Distanz zu essentialistischen Auffassungen zu betonen, und zweitens die Frage nach Gades musikgeschichtlicher Einordnung, wo der Begriff Präzedenzfall auf eine historisch bedeutsame Nachwirkung hinweist.

„Was verbirgt sich also hinter dem vielzitierten Phänomen des ‚nordischen Tons'?" (S. 10) wird als zentrale Frage der Fallstudie präsentiert, wo der Fall eigentlich auch eine Frage ist: Wie konnte es zum schlagartigen Erfolg des jungen Niels W. Gade in Leipzig und danach im ganzen deutschen Raum in den 1840er Jahren kommen? Matter vertritt die Meinung, dass es den ‚nordischen Ton' zweifelslos gibt (S. 10), weist aber sofort hin auf „das unzweifelhaft Uneigentliche, das dem Phänomen anhaftet … weil sich das Wesen des ‚nordischen Tons' nicht auf materieller Ebene erschöpft, sondern über den Rahmen der Partitur hinausweist auf das Feld der Rezeption." (S. 11). Obwohl dieser Formulierung noch ein Hauch von Glauben an den Notentext als der *Ursprung* einer Rezeptionsvorstellung anhängt, wird die Studie als eine Diskursanalyse im weitesten Fall präsentiert, wo die Werke, deren Rezeption und die diskursiv gestaltete Ideenwelt als ein Ganzes dargestellt wird. Und zwar finden in dem analytischen Hauptteil (Kap. 5: „Gade und der ‚nordischen Charakter': Analyse des Frühwerks" [von *Nachklänge von Ossian* zur Symphonie Nr. 3]) solche Merkmale, die traditionell als ‚nordisch' bezeichnet wird, durchaus besondere Aufmerksamkeit, aber glücklicherweise gelingt es, einen durchaus nicht-essentialistischen Sprachgebrauch aufrechtzuhalten.

Es ist nicht zu bestreiten, dass es in den Werken Merkmale gibt, an die die Vorstellungen vom ‚nordischen Ton' anheften können; nur sind diese, was auch dargestellt wird, von breiteren Vorstellungen von nordischen Wesenszügen vorgeprägt, und auch wenn Herders Idee vom Volkslied als Wesenskern der Volksseele nachwirkt, könnten

andersartige nordische Volkslieder einer anders konstituierten Vorstellung entsprechen. Und umgekehrt korrespondieren ‚nordische' Merkmale auch mit anderen Vorstellungen: Was bei Gade in der Ersten Symphonie als unzweifelhaft ‚nordisch' klingt, das selbstkomponierte ‚Volkslied' *Kong Valdemars Jagt* („Paa Sjølunds fagre Sletter"), liegt sehr nahe an Mendelssohns *Lied ohne Worte*, Op. 19/6, das mit dem Titel *Venetianisches Gondellied* versehen ist.

Zu betonen ist vielmehr, dass Matter sich auf die deutsche Gade-Rezeption konzentriert. Damit wird deutlich, dass Gade in der europäischen Musikgeschichte eine wichtige Figur mit steter Präsenz im deutschen Konzertleben bleibt und nicht durch seine Rückkehr nach Kopenhagen gleich in Vergessenheit geriet. Matter analysiert die Rezeptionsgeschichte der Werke bis 1848 ins Detail und ihre Beziehung zu analytischen Befunden im Kapitel 5, und verfolgt dann die Rezeption von Gades Werken bis zum seinen Tod und die erste Jahre danach. „Werke" heißt hier die acht Symphonien, die drei ersten Konzertouvertüren *Nachklänge von Ossian*, *Im Hochland* und die *Ouvertüre in C-Dur* sowie *Comala. Dramatisches Gedicht nach Ossian*. Im zweiten Teil wird zudem oft an *Elverskud / Erlkönigs Tochter* verwiesen.

Gade scheint der richtige Mann zur richtigen Zeit gewesen zu sein. In den 1840er Jahren waren nationale Bewegungen in ganz Europa lebhaft in Erscheinung getreten und die gesamteuropäische Idee, dass jede Nation seine nationale Eigenart auch musikalisch zur Gestaltung bringen musste, war gereift. Man hat sich regelrecht nach einem Gade gesehnt. Wäre er nicht gekommen, hätte man einen anderen, ersten Vorreiter der nationalen Symphonik finden müssen. Als seine ersten Werke eine Anknüpfung an Mendelssohns Ouvertüre *Die Hebriden* und die Welt der Ossian-Sage mit einem neuen, volksliedhaften Ton und zudem mit derben Harfenschläge der Barden kombinierten, war Leipzig bereit.

Die Darstellung verfolgt weiter die Frage nach der Wandlung der Wertschätzung von Gade seit den 1850er Jahren. Mit der Zeit wurden die ‚nordischen' Züge entweder weggelassen oder als Selbstzitat empfunden, und die Nähe zu Mendelssohn wurde in der Wahrnehmung deutlicher bemerkt. Beide Erscheinungen trugen zum Zweifel am Gades Originalität bei: entweder wurde er zum Epigone seiner selbst oder einem Epigone Mendelssohns. Aus dieser Falle gab es kaum einen Weg heraus. Seine Musik wurde in einer Zeit, wo Wagnerianer und Brahminer das diskursive Umfeld prägten, als niedlich hingestellt. Und als zugleich eine neue Lieblichkeit auch in der dänischen Malerei erkannt wurde, wird Gade zuletzt bei Walter Niemann, der 1906 *Die Musik Skandinaviens* publizierte, als „explicit dänischer Komponist" (S. 190) dargestellt. Zu der Zeit ist aber auch schon die europäische Rezeption von skandinavischer, moderner Literatur wie Jens Peter Jacobsen vorausgegangen. Diese Beschreibung des deutschen Rezeptionsdiskurses ist überzeugend, muss aber eher als eine Relativierung seines Status als eine vernichtende Abwertung gelten, da er noch als ein sehr bedeutender Komponist galt, dessen Musik man weiter spielte und rezensierte.

Im letzten Kapitel, ‚Gades Kairos: die diskursiven Schnittstellen', werden die Hauptmerkmale der Gade-Rezeption als drei ineinander verflochtene Diskurse zusammengefasst: ein ästhetischer (Originalität), ein politischer (Nationalität) und ein kultureller (das ‚Nordische'). Diese Teilung, obwohl schwierig, macht deutlich, dass hier nicht nur verschiedene Diskurse, sondern auch Diskurse auf unterschiedlichen Ebenen gleichzeitig wirken. Da das Originelle auf das Kulturelle (‚nordische') sich stützte, das wiederum durch die nationalen Bewegungen eine politische Komponente bekam, hängt alles zusammen.

Das heißt jedoch nicht, dass Gade nicht mehr als Nationalkomponist dienlich war, als er nach Kopenhagen zurückkehrte und weithin die Ästhetik der Leipziger Schule vertrat. Im Gegenteil wurde Gade zum unbestrittenen ersten Mann im Kopenhagener Musikleben in den vier Jahrzehnten nach 1850, ein Musikleben, das er dem Leipziger Modell nachgestaltete. Er war ja in Leipzig nicht nur als Komponist, sondern auch als Dirigent des Gewandhaus-Orchesters und als Lehrer des Konservatoriums tätig gewesen. Über die Jahre wurde sein Personalstil und die Leipziger Ästhetik, einschließlich ihres Konservatismus, der auch in Leipzig zu finden war, in Dänemark als ‚dänisch' empfunden, auch ohne jeden Hauch von Volksliedern oder Barden-Gesang.

Zuletzt ein Wort über den „Präzedenzfall" Gade. Er wird erstens durch die „musikalischen Aneignung der altdänischen Balladen und Heldenlieder in der Ersten Symphonie" in die Lage gesetzt, ein „gattungsgeschichtliches Novum" zu schaffen; Schumann spricht von „ganz originellen Melodieweisen", die so „in den höheren Gattungen der Instrumentalmusik" nicht vorher gesehen seien (S. 200). So wird er als derjenige vorgestellt, der als „geschichtlich wirkmächtige Neuerung … die Integration eines Volksliedes in den sinfonischen Prozess" geschafft hat, und alle folgende analoge Konzepte bei Tschaikowski, Glasunow, Stanford, Dvořak und Sibelius „referieren letztlich – ob bewusst oder unbewusst – auf" Gades Prototyp (S. 202). Zweitens wird er zum „Begründer der … ‚skandinavischen Schule'" (S. 188) und „Begründer der neuen skandinavischen Tonkunst" (S. 190) emporgehoben, gestützt auf Aussagen von Riemann und Spitta. Die Begründungen sind in beiden Fällen aus der Rezeptionsgeschichte geholt.

Beim genaueren Hinsehen scheint dies nicht der musikkulturellen Realität zu entsprechen. Die meisten Komponisten, die in ihren Heimatländern nationale Symphoniker wurden, reisten fortan nach Leipzig, und wie Yvonne Wasserloos dargestellt hat (*Das Leipziger Konservatorium der Musik im 19. Jahrhundert*, Hildesheim 2004), wurde im ganzen nordeuropäischen Raum das Leipziger Modell, das sowohl das Komponieren im ‚nationalen Ton' und die institutionelle Einrichtung von Orchestern und Konservatorien umfasst, nachgebildet. Das gilt auch für die skandinavischen Komponisten. Grieg hat seine gesamten Lehrjahre in Leipzig verbracht, und erst 1867 wurde es überhaupt möglich, im neuen Konservatorium in Kopenhagen bei Gade zu studieren. Eine eindeutige Präzedenz gibt es nur in sehr vermitteltem Sinne in einer solchen im Grunde gemeinsamen Musikkultur im mittel- und nordeuropäischen Raum.

Das Buch ist sehr lesenswert und bleibt ein wichtiger Beitrag auch für weitere Arbeiten, die sich die verwickelten Prozesse des musikalischen und musikalisch diskursiven Austauschs im Mittel- und Nordeuropa des 19. Jahrhunderts anschauen werden.

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3

Bibliography

Bibliography of Danish musicology 2015–2016

Anne Ørbæk-Jensen

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4

Reports

Editorial

Conference

The Ninth European Music Analysis Conference, Strasbourg, June–July 2017

The Ninth European Music Analysis Conference (EuroMAC 9) took place in Strasbourg from 28 June to 1 July, 2017. Let it be said from the beginning of this report: The conference was an extremely well-organized, well-visited and in many ways welcome event in the field of music theory and analysis.

EuroMAC is a collaboration of music theoretical and analytical societies based in several European countries. This year's EuroMAC was a collaboration between *Gesellschaft für Musiktheorie* (GMTH), *Gruppo Analisi e Teoria musicale* (GATM), *Polskie Towarzystwo Analizy Muzycznej* (PTAM), *Société belge d'analyse musicale* (SBAM), *Society for Music Analysis* (SMA), *Russian Society for the Theory of Music* (OTM), *Vereniging voor Muziektheorie* (VvM) and, of course, *Société française d'analyse musicale* (SFAM), the latter being the main organizers of the event together with *Groupe de recherches expérimentales sur l'acte musical* (GREAM) of the University of Strasbourg. The majority of speakers were from Europe and North America, but the remaining came from all over the world.

Xavier Hascher and Nathalie Hérold opened the conference, touching upon the two themes that were stated in the conference's call for papers. Theme 1 was called 'Extrinsic issues, intrinsic challenges: What is the future for music analysis?', and theme 2, directly related to the research of GREAM, was called 'Music analysis and music in act'. As theme 1 had received most proposals they talked about this at some length. The 'extrinsic issues' were, amongst other things, concerned with the growing financial pressure on academics; a pressure that prioritizes research with immediate societal utility, thus questioning the necessity of music analysis as a discipline. The 'intrinsic challenges' addressed the extreme richness that characterizes the discipline in spite of the extrinsic issues: Do the myriad of methods, theories and philosophical standpoints from which we conduct our music analyses amount to a Babel Tower of irreconcilable approaches? How do we strengthen the discipline, when we are so diverse – is there, indeed, a unified discipline as such? These questions also entailed what seems to be the refrain for reflections on music analysis, namely the question of the relation between music analysis and music theory.

A few interesting statistics of the conference were also presented. No less than 77 per cent of the proposals had been accepted, of which a large part were authored by 'young researchers'. In their rather broad definition that meant anyone who was currently a Ph.D. student, had finished their degrees within the last five years, or who were

younger than 40. In an overall perspective, the high acceptance rate turned out to have both advantages and disadvantages. One positive aspect was that many young researchers had the opportunity to receive qualified and valuable feedback from established and experienced scholars – surely a good investment in 'the future of music analysis', as theme 1 addressed. However, with up to ten parallel sessions, the programme became immense and a bit confusing. As Hascher said at the closing recital, the quality of a conference can never exceed that of its papers. One did wonder, when looking through the 440-page programme book, whether the butter was spread too thin.

The contents of the papers were diverse: Plunges into the history of music theory stood alongside computational and experimental approaches; and well-established analytical methods – Schenkerian, Neo-Riemannian, sonata theoretical and form functional to name but a few of the most frequent – stood alongside methods that were new and scarcely named. The repertoire under consideration was equally varied and included classical, popular as well as non-western music. This report can hardly do justice to the entire EuroMAC, knowing that the total amount of parallel papers that we missed really adds up to several other conferences. Some highs and lows, however, shall be referred in the following.

The title of the session on 'Modal and Tonal Organization in Polyphonic Compositions from the Late Middle Ages to the Early Baroque' resembled many similar ones presented at many previous conferences. Likewise, the outset was well-known – but still very appropriate – in that some of the most important theoretical landmarks of the 1960–90s, namely the ones established by Edward Lowinsky, Carl Dahlhaus, Bernhard Meier and Harold Powers respectively, served as points of reference. As quite rightly described in the session's heading, 'the question whether Renaissance polyphonic compositions can be described as modal has been the subject of much controversy', and even more rightly that 'now that these disputes seem settled, the time is ripe for a reconsideration of the whole matter' (p. 29).[1] Chaired and thematised by Nicolas Meeùs (SBAM-IReMus, Belgium), the session included three papers, and without going into any detail the outcome was predictable and meagre. It can come as no surprise that presentations spanning a period of more than two centuries can reveal nothing of real importance, and furthermore that it is – still – the modal-tonal theories and practices of the 17th century that constitute the real challenge for further research. The latter was addressed by Rudolf Rasch (Utrecht University) in his talk on 'A Paradigm for Studying the Transition from Modality to Tonality in the Seventeenth Century'. Even though his presentation had the status as one of a few 'semi-plenary talks' and although he renamed it to 'From Modes to Keys', no real new insights were brought to light. The contents of his paper by and large resembled what can be read in Joel Lester's enlightening presentation in *Between Modes and Keys. German Theory 1592–1802* (New York, 1989). Overall, the

1 All references relate to the programme book, which can be found at: http://euromac2017.unistra.fr/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/Euromac-2017-Programme-Book.pdf.

session was a disappointment regarding questions that still represent pertinent research areas. Perhaps the forthcoming book by Michael Dodds (University of North Carolina School of the Arts, US) – with a title lying close to that of Lester's book – will bring this field in more prosperous directions. At least to some degree, Dodds' paper on 'A New Model for Modal Analysis in Baroque Music' promised well.

Related to the tonalities-problems – and as tenacious as these – stand studies on the contrapuntal designs and details of the polyphonic corpuses of the 15th to 17th centuries. However, contrary to the aforementioned session, Alexander Morgan (L'université libre de Bruxelles), in his paper on 'Suspension Theory: Codifying Late-15th-Century Ternary Suspensions and How their Use Changed in Later Repertoire', addressed a question that actually seems solvable and manageable, at least up to a certain point. Focusing on the well-known fact that 'almost all accounts of idiomatic dissonance treatment in period treatises as well as in modern textbooks discuss dissonance treatment exclusively in duple meter' (p. 258), he presented the results of his analyses of suspensions in triple-meter contexts in various repertoires. Morgan's pointing out that in 15th-century music, to name but one example, the suspensions almost always occur on beat two, seemed convincing, although the prevalence of e.g. hemiolas still needs to be taken into consideration.

Yet a session followed the thematic paths outlined above, but concerning a somewhat later period. Although each of the four papers gathered under the heading 'Counterpoint and Composition in Europe during the 17th and 18th centuries' merits a lengthy summary, only the key points will be mentioned. In his paper 'Ein Mönch, zwei kurze Regeln und drei Stimmen zum Fundament: Untersuchungen zur Modellhaftigkeit von Cantionalsätzen und den daraus resultierenden Implikationen für deren Klanglichkeit', Stefan Garthoff (Leipzig) presented a systematic, analytical model 'zum Aufsuchen der Intervallschichtungen' (p. 347) in the Cantionalsätze of Calvisius, Praetorius and Schein, among others, including impressive three-dimensional visualizations. In his paper on 'Zacconi, Banchieri and the counterpoint species: reconstructing the *Klanglichkeit* of the *contrapunto compagnia*', Florian Vogt (Musikhochschule Freiburg) put forward the hypothesis that the traditional concept of species counterpoint – especially from J.J. Fux's renowned treatise *Gradus ad parnassum* (1725) and onwards – was preceded by a practice of improvised counterpoint, also to a certain degree functioning 'species-like'. Two presentations centred on specific Russian issues. The first was Evgeny Vorobyov's (Russia) paper on 'Tonal Space in Terms of Practical and Theoretical Approaches in Westernised Choral Idiom in Russia from 1670s to mid-18th Century', the focus of which was the concept of *Ton* in a handbook in Polish from *c.* 1675. Secondly, Natalia Plotnikova (Moscow State Tchaikovsky Conservatory, Russia) gave a paper 'On the Technique of Canon in Russian Baroque Music (on the Example of Polychoral Works by Vasiliy Titov)'. Supplementing the issues emphasized in the title of the paper, Plotnikova drew attention to the Russian composer and writer N. Diletsky's treatise *Musikiyskaya Grammatika* ('Music Grammar', 1679), a work that Richard Taruskin in his *Oxford*

History of Western Music (2010) points out as the earliest to visualize the full circle of fifths. Diletsky's treatise remains till now untranslated, and the same goes for the Soviet musicologist Leo Mazel's 1937 monograph on Chopin's Fantasy op. 49 that Ellen Bakulina (University of North Texas, US) centred on in her paper, 'Exploring Linear-Analytical Elements in the Writings of Leo Mazel' (included in a session on 'Schenkerian, Riemannian, and Neo-Riemannian Theories'). Although these papers along with others document the continuing – and imperative – interest in and subsequent research into the music cultures of Russia, Central and Eastern Europe, they underline the problematic absence of accessible sources. Thus, a great need of translation to one of the more mainstream academic languages and subsequent publication of many theoretical works from diverse Eastern regions still remains.

Few presentations focused on music pedagogy. One exception – indeed an excellent one – was Meghan Naxer's (Kent State University, US) 'Choose your Own Sonata Form'. Opening with a figure showing a subway chart (!) and the statement that 'students are often only taught one primary template for Sonata Theory' (p. 388) – a literal experience of many teachers, I think – she extracted the different approaches to sonata form in the publications by Donald Francis Tovey, Leonard Ratner, Charles Rosen, William Caplin, and James Hepokoski and Warren Darcy. Beethoven's String Quartet op. 18, no. 4, and Piano Sonata op. 10, no. 3, were singled out as 'random samples'; and Naxer made a persuasive argument for a pedagogical approach that includes exposing 'students to a variety of different analytical techniques' aiming to help them 'in their daily tasks as musicians in multiple ways, including learning and memorizing repertoire, writing about music, and teaching music' (ibid.). What else can one hope for?

As is always the case at conferences some sessions are well attended but turn out somewhat disappointing, and vice versa. With the attendance of only five listeners, Per F. Broman's (Bowling Green State University, USA) interesting introduction to the spectacular Swedish composer and intellectual Jan W. Morthenson must be representative of the last category, regrettably.

Any music analytical conference that takes itself seriously should of course have a paper on the three opening bars from that one prelude to you-know-which-opera. John Koslovsky fulfilled this in his excellent paper '*Tristan* and the Act of Music Analysis: Conflicts, Limits, Potentialities'. Koslovsky compared the practically unknown analysis of Horst Scharschuch – a dualist successor of Hugo Riemann who explained the Tristan chord as a 'Doppelleittonklang' in 1963 – with the better-known analyses of William Mitchell (1967) and Jacques Chailley (1972). Koslovsky's comparisons, as well as his presentation of Scharschuch's forgotten analysis, were of value in themselves. The real intriguing aspect was, however, his focus on the 'broader historiographical and intertextual network surrounding the history of analyzing Tristan' (p. 333) and his consequent invitation to understand music analysis as a social act that always reacts to – by including or excluding – other analyses. Unfortunately, this paper was also among the

less well attended, a shame when taking into account that Koslovsky's intertextual approach and his opening of 'dialogic space in music analysis' (ibid.) seem imperative in relation to the conference's theme 1.

One session promising to address theme 1 – specifically the question of music theory's babelization – was entitled 'Schenkerian, Riemannian, and Neo-Riemannian Theories'. The title is interesting in itself, in that it lists not only two theories (as is common in references to the well-known Schenker-Riemann controversy) but three, thus distinguishing Riemannian (functional) theories from Neo-Riemannian theories – and rightly so. In fact, due to the Riemann-reception throughout Europe as well as North America, this distinction can be further qualified: One can speak of Paleo-Riemannian theory – as it is somewhat jokingly called in Steven Rings' contribution to *The Oxford Handbook of Neo-Riemannian Music Theories* (2011) – when referring to Riemann's own writings (or other dualistic function theories close to Riemann's); one can speak of Neo-Riemannian theory when referring to the branch of theories applying David Lewin's 'transformational attitude' (Lewin 1987) in various more or less mathematical ways, as well as approaches focusing on parsimonious voice leading and *Tonnetz*-representations of musical space; and finally, one can speak of Post-Riemannian theories when referring to the many different *monistic* function theories that are influential to this day throughout Central Europe, Russia, Scandinavia and elsewhere. 'Post-Riemannian' was, curiously, the term that Ludwig Holtmeier used in his article 'The Reception of Hugo Riemann's Music Theory' (2011), even though this was published in the above-mentioned Handbook on *Neo*-Riemannian theories. The umbrella term 'Riemannian', then, covers not only these branches of harmonic and tonal theory, but also Riemann's thoughts on for example metrics and agogics and the reception of these, and is, consequently, rarely appropriate.

In its widely ranging approaches, the session bore witness to the advantages of such terminological distinctions. On the Neo-Riemannian side were Hei Yeung Lai's (The Chinese University of Hong Kong) transformational analysis of Alexander Goehr's piano sonata, Walter Nery's (University of São Paulo, Brazil) presentation of a Generalized Transformation Graph that mapped both major, minor, diminished and augmented triads in the same transformational network, and two papers discussing the potentials of a synthesis of Schenkerian and Neo-Riemannian theories (Hiroko Nishida, Kyushu University, Japan, and Yvonne Teo, University of Melbourne, Australia). On the Post-Riemannian – and very well-visited – side were Ellen Bakulina's above mentioned paper and Thomas Jul Kirkegaard-Larsen's (Aarhus University, Denmark) 'Analyzing Analyses: Towards a Reconciliation of Schenkerism and Riemannism'. Bakulina's paper showed elements in Leo Mazel's writings that are strikingly close to Schenkerian concepts of which Mazel had no knowledge. For example, Mazel created harmonic reductions akin to William Rothstein's imaginary continuo (Rothstein 1991). He also described that sonorities can be structurally retained 'as vaguely perceived pedal points', thus being close to Schenker's concept of prolongation and almost 'rephrasing' the idea of mental

retention. Kirkegaard-Larsen compared Schenkerian and Post-Riemannian analyses of Brahms' Intermezzo in B minor, op. 119, no. 1, arguing – in agreement with Koslovsky's aforementioned dialogic intertextualism – that a mediation and reconciliation of these two approaches to harmony and tonality must take as its starting point not the writings of Schenker and Riemann themselves (the Paleo-perspective, that is), but rather the actual analytical practices emanating in the two traditions (the Post-perspective). The proposed 'Functional-Schenkerian' analysis of the Intermezzo exemplified the two methods' ability to speak together despite frequent disputes on the relationship between chord and voice leading, specifically by demonstrating congruencies between the concealed motive uncovered by Allen Cadwallader (1982, 1983) and the tonal inflections and consequent B-minor/D-major ambiguity brought to the fore by Jens Rasmussen's (2011) Post-Riemannian functional analysis.

In an overall view, the session 'Schenkerian, Riemannian, and Neo-Riemannian Theories' was relevant, but the papers were so different in both method and scope that they did not interact very well. One reason for this may indeed be that it makes little sense to view (Post-)Riemannian and Neo-Riemannian theories as more or less the same. The conceptual differences and similarities between these two traditions need to be clarified before they can be discussed in tandem with the Schenkerian tradition.

Poundie Burstein (City University of New York, USA) gave a talk, 'Striking Approaches to Galant Recapitulations', that was as enlightening as it was amusing. He showed that in music of the Galant style, the chord directly preceding the recapitulation was not at all always the expected V; in fact, he showed examples of I, ii, iii, IV, V, vi, vii *and* the dominant of every single one of these serving as the final chord before the recapitulation and the return to the home key. The musical examples proving his argument were both surprising and with 'deep implications for understanding large-scale tonal structure not only for these specific pieces, but for Galant era sonata-form movements in general' (p. 194).

Many papers presented what were simply excellent analyses of musical works. Among these were Lauri Suurpää's (Sibelius Academy, University of the Arts Helsinki, Finland) convincing analysis of the arias 'Vedrommi intorno' and 'Il padre adorato' from Mozart's *Idomeneo*. Suurpää combined both Schenkerian, form functional, metrical and narrative perspectives in an analysis that, ultimately, showed one of the many fascinating ways in which text and musical structure interact. Another paper exploring text and music relations was Robert Snarrenberg's (Washington University in St. Louis, USA) analyses of Brahms' non-strophic settings of stanzaic poems in the lieder 'Nachklang' op. 59, no. 4, 'Eine gute, gute Nacht' op. 59, no. 6, and 'Verrat' op. 105, no. 5. It would have been interesting to hear Snarrenberg compare the above-mentioned 'Nachklang' with 'Regenlied' (WoO 23), since these are Brahms' non-strophic and strophic setting of the same poem, respectively ('Regentropfen aus den Bäumen' by Klaus Groth); however, this was unfortunately not the point in Snarrenberg's still very thought-provoking paper.

As a new thing for EuroMAC, a 'Young Researcher's Meeting' and a 'Career Forum' was organized. Both arrangements aimed at engaging the participants in, for instance, discussions and dialogues on career development, international networks, and job opportunities in formats that ranged from workshops, short talks and stands with the different societies for music analysis and theory. One can only applaud this initiative and hope that it will continue to be a part of EuroMAC. Some of the formats, however, should probably be rethought and, for example, be taken out of the auditorium and into rooms that appeal more to dialogue, discussion and actual *work*shop than to passive listening.

One very uplifting event was the Meeting of the European Societies for Music Analysis and Theory; uplifting because the enthusiasm and engagement of the societies was tangible, and because several new music analytical and theoretical societies and initiatives were presented. Among these were the Polish society (PATM) and the Croatian Association of Music Theorists (CAMT), the latter actually being 20 years old, but only recently engaged in EuroMAC. Additionally, a potential but as yet unrealized Portuguese society for music theory and analysis was presented. Finally, Nicholas Meeùs presented what he called a Loch Ness monster – an old, recurring project that has often been suggested (for example at EuroMAC 8 in Leuven, 2014) but has not yet been completed, namely the creation of a permanent European committee for music analysis and music theory with representatives from each of the national societies. This committee would promote collaboration between the individual societies and make for an easier way to co-operate with the American Society for Music Theory (SMT), for example. Potentially, the committee could also help establishing music theoretical and analytical societies in countries that do not have one. Interestingly, it was mentioned here – and this was repeated in other parts of the meeting – that the absence of Scandinavian societies was surprising. Indeed, Scandinavia was very ill represented in EuroMAC as such.

All speakers were asked to contribute to an online volume of proceedings to be published in the future. Until then, interested readers may find pre-proceedings (extended abstracts) of all papers on the conference's website: http://euromac2017.unistra.fr/.

The next EuroMAC will be organized mainly by the Russian Society for the Theory of Music (OTM) and will take place in 2020 at the Moscow Conservatory. As has already been stated, a vast amount of texts and treatises from Russia and Eastern European countries remains to be translated into one of the mainstream academic languages. It will be interesting to see whether the next EuroMAC will be an opportunity to gain a deeper insight into these more or less closed music theoretical traditions.

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Research project

A Phenomenology of Expert Musicianship

The dissertation, which was defended in 2015 at the Centre for Subjectivity Research at the Department of Media, Cognition and Communication, University of Copenhagen, develops a phenomenology of expert musicianship through an interdisciplinary approach that integrates qualitative interviews with the The Danish String Quartet and philosophical analyses bearing on ideas from phenomenology, philosophy of mind, cognitive science and psychology of music.

The dissertation is structured through the asking, analysing and answering of three primary questions: 1) What is it like to be an expert?; 2) What is the general phenomenology of expert musicianship?; 3) What happens to the self in deep musical absorption?

The first question targets a central debate in philosophy and psychology on whether reflection is conducive for, or detrimental to, the bodily unfolding of the expert skill. In other words, can you think about what you're doing while doing it? My analyses show that the concepts in this question are poorly defined and glosses over the more important features of expertise. I conclude that thinking about one's performance while playing does not necessarily impede it, but also that it is important for the individual musician to learn which forms of thinking are conducive to, and which ones are detrimental to, beautiful performance.

The second question asks as openly as possibly what happens in the consciousness of a performing musician and leads to the construction of a taxonomy of absorption, showing that expert musicians can perform well irrespective of whether they are mind-wandering, under stress, feeling like 'another day at the job', or deeply absorbed. This implies, among other things, that the key to understanding musicianship is not to be found in a discussion of reflection, but requires a more inclusive phenomenological analyses which I provide focusing on 'passive synthesis', 'embodiment', 'intercorporeity', 'sense of agency' and the emotions.

Finally, the third question targets a key dimension of musicianship, namely deep absorption, sometimes experienced as selfless or blackout-like, which challenges core philosophical conceptions on the nature of the self. Through the work achieved by the second question, I account for the conditions of possibility of deep absorption, that is, how it is possible to perform well, even if one 'is not there'.

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Research project

Robots in Music Videos: A Study of the Non-Human as Political Statement in African-American Popular Music Videos

This Ph.D. project (2017–2020, Section of Musicology, Department of Arts and Cultural Studies, University of Copenhagen) aims to provide a musicological perspective on how robots appearing in popular music videos by black American artists serve as a figure for racial oppression and inequality. My contention is that these robots should be read as both a way to communicate racialized otherness and as a way to construct a collective sense of identity in relation and opposition to a racial majority. The word 'robot' originally translates to 'slave' or 'serf' which makes it a fitting figure for the history of a people who were seen as objects and forced to work like machines, especially if seen in relation to stereotypes about African-Americans as being more 'natural'.

By means of work interpretation, I attempt to determine the multi-layered relationships between sound, image, and text – that is the music video as an isolated piece – on one hand, and the social media landscape in which the videos are situated and consumed on the other. I do this in order to establish what, how, and where the robot as figure in popular music communicates. The project is situated in the intersection of music video studies, post-humanist studies, sound studies, and critical race theory, each field relating to its own project branch (music video, the robot, technology, and racialization).

I hypothesize that the form and space of the music video is able to facilitate African-American experiences in a digital and technological space in a way that emphasizes the human/robot duality as a valid historical narrative – that of the racialized subject as mechanized subject. I argue that the tradition of minstrelsy among black (and white) performers is still very much present and that it determines the ways that racialized artists can inhabit sonic and digital spaces.

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Research project

Ad Hoc Entrepreneurs: Middle-Layer Musicians and the Contemporary Media Landscape

The Ph.D. thesis *Ad Hoc Entrepreneurs: Middle-Layer Musicians and the Contemporary Media Landscape* is a study of key structural changes in the working conditions of popular music artists, specifically within two rock music scenes in Copenhagen and Boston. The aim is to understand how organizational and communicational practices of middle-layer musicians are related to media-driven changes in the music business. This is studied through an integration of analyses of structural changes in the music industries based on quantitative industry data, and qualitative case studies.

The thesis, which was defended November 2015 at Roskilde University, Department of Communication, Business and Information Technologies in cooperation with the Rhythmic Music Conservatory in Copenhagen, contributes to music industry research with a particular interest in the musicians' perspective, and integrates micro and macro perspectives on the economic, organizational, communicational and social consequences of digitalization.

The thesis is organized in three main parts. Part one reviews literature and concepts from three distinct research traditions that cover different aspects of the nexus between music industries (Horkheimer & Adorno 2006/1944, Hirsch 1972, Negus 2011/1993, Hesmondhalgh 2012, Wikström 2013), media theory (Baym 2012, Baym & Boyd 2012, Benkler 2006, Jenkins 2006, Hearn 2008, Meyrowitz 1985) and cultural labour (Ryan 1992, Banks 2007, Stahl 2013).

Part two analyses the structural and economic change in the music industries since the advent of digital distribution from a macro perspective, and explores the effects of these changes on the conditions for individual musicians by analysing empirical case studies of the organization of professional activities and media practices of four musicians from Copenhagen and Boston in the early 2010s. The case studies illustrate the idiosyncratic approaches musicians take in shaping their professional practices in response to the structural challenges. Both in terms of strengthening their independent professional organization, and in terms of utilizing new media to develop their communication, media production, and business models.

Part three develops two primary analytical themes. First, the conception of musicians as entrepreneurs is developed, and the emerging social role of middle-layer rock musicians is conceptualized as *ad hoc entrepreneurs*. Second, the relation between new media and social change is developed drawing on Meyrowitz's (1985) conception of *feedback*

loops as a way of understanding how organizational changes in response to new media practices can lead to a reestablishment of structural equilibrium, while substantially changing the social roles of the musicians.

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Research project

Pop as Minimalism: Objectivity, Repetition, and Spatial Staging in Pop Music's New Software

Music technology has developed rapidly in the past decades. The shift from hardware to software has manifested itself noticeably in pop music where composition, performance, and production have converged in the computer-based DAW (digital audio workstation) and its additional programs.

The Ph.D. project (2017–2020, Department of Arts and Cultural Studies, University of Copenhagen) seeks to explore how this change towards software manifests itself aesthetically in contemporary pop music. The project proposes minimalism as a way to explore and analyse the relationship between pop and the digital methods that produce it. Three central attributes of minimalism will be at the centre of the investigation: objectivity, repetition, and spatial staging.

Increasingly, pop shares its use of new music technology with electronic genres such as EDM (Electronic Dance Music) and hip-hop. Aesthetic traits of disco, house, techno, and hip-hop – including its African-American roots – can be found in pop's use of sampling, MIDI-sequencing, quantization and vocal pitch correction. These ambiguities and repetition-prone production methods will be investigated in relation to minimalism which sought to negate subjectivity through *grid*-based non-teleological processuality and additive shifts between musical patterns.

Early minimalist art and music were largely based on the repetition of a fragment in a given space, or, in the case of recorded fragments, on the built-in space of the recording being repeated. The works contained an inherent spatial staging and a focus on materiality and instrumental unity where sounds were used as monolithic fragments pointing away from expression and the human body. In contemporary pop, spatial staging becomes almost eclectic when techniques such as sampling, envelope-control and reverb are combined with dynamic controls like gating, compression, and side-chain compression. This new kind of spatiality is often interwoven with an increased use of EQ-filtered sounds such as sub-bass, digital noise, and distortion that emphasize frequency over tonality. Using a phenomenological approach, the project will investigate how this development can be seen as an enhancer of a more textural, corporal, even tactile, musical experience.

To exemplify, test, and challenge the theories, the thesis will contain musical analyses of songs after 2010 by artists such as Justin Bieber, Rihanna, M.I.A., Beyoncé, and The Weeknd.

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Editorial

The present issue of *Danish Yearbook of Musicology* is the first one to be published online in four sections throughout the year. This has made it possible to present new articles, reviews and other contributions to the reader in a continuous flow, a clear advantage for authors who want their work published without unnecessary delays and, frankly, it has also have made the editors' task less stressful. Each section has its own consecutive numbering and each contribution is thus clearly identified with a reference to the volume, section and page. Section 1 contains articles; Section 2 reviews; Section 3 the bibliography of scholarly work by Danish musicologists and by music researchers from abroad dealing with Danish music; and finally Section 4 comprises reports on conferences and Ph.D. projects as well as the editorial.

In 2015, Carl Nielsen had his 150th anniversary, and accordingly conferences and other celebrations marked this occasion. *Danish Yearbook of Musicology* marks the anniversary with a special subsection including four articles on Nielsen. Marie-Louise Zervides and Paolo Muntoni each have a new reading of Nielsen's opera *Saul and David*; the former placing it within the context of the Symbolist Movement, and the latter discussing it within the context of Italian opera trends in the decades around 1900. Christopher Tarrant provides a new and innovative reading of Carl Nielsen's Sixth Symphony, and Regitze Ida Tetzlaff presents her research on the Nielsen reception in the United States and the discourses in which it is embedded. We are very happy that Christopher Tarrant and Daniel M. Grimley joined us as co-editors for these articles.

The first article by Peter Woetmann Christoffersen presents a study of 15th-century chansons by Gilles Mureau and Philippe Basiron, looking into their possible relation to the wider cultural field of rhetoric and poetry. The reviews offer critical assessments of a number of important books, including markings of Niels W. Gade's 200th anniversary, monographies on Danish composers F.L.Æ. Kunzen, Knudåge Riisager and Ib Nørholm, two books on the cultures of folk music and a handbook on music philology.

The editors would like to thank all who have provided the yearbook with articles and other contributions as well as our guest co-editors for all their help. Thomas Holme, who has left the post of editor following the completion of vol. 40 (2016), deserves a special and heart-felt thanks for his long and always meticulous effort to bring out *Danish Yearbook of Musicology*. He joined as editor of vol. 26 (1998) and was thus the most experienced of all the editors. Special thanks goes to Anne Ørbæk Jensen for providing the bibliography, and to her and Peter Woetmann Christoffersen for their indispensable help to the editors; and not least, we are most grateful to Independent Research Fund Denmark | Humanities for their support making the publications possible.

Michael Fjeldsøe & Peter Hauge, October 2017

Publications received

Books

Appel, Bernhard R. and Reinmar Emans (eds.), *Musikphilologie. Grundlagen – Methoden – Praxis* (Kompendien Musik, 3; Laaber: Laaber-Verlag, 2017), 325 pp., illus., music exx., ISBN 987-3-89007-723-9.

Bergsagel, John, David Hiley and Thomas Riis (eds.), *Of Chonicles and Kings. National Saints and the Emergence of Nation States in the High Middle Ages* (Danish Humanist Texts and Studies, 52; København: Museum Tusculanum Press, 2015), 335 + [10] pp., illus., music exx., ISBN 978-87-635-4260-9.

Brincker, Jens, *Ib Nørholm, komponisten, musikken, tiden. Introduktion og efterskrift af Ib Nørholm* (Århus: Aarhus Universitetsforlag, 2017), 221 pp., illus., music exx., incl. 2 CDs, ISBN 978-87-7184-099-5.

Koudal, Jens Henrik, *Skæbnesymfoni og krokodillepolka. Musikkulturen på en stor gård mellem 1880 og 1960* (Danish Humanist Texts and Studies, New Series, 61; København: Gads forlag, 2016), 239 pp., illus., ISBN 978-87-93229-68-8, ISSN 0105-8746.

Lotzow, Alexander, *Das Sinfonische Chorstück im 19. Jahrhundert: Studien zu einsätzigen weltlichen Chorwerken mit Orchester von Beethoven bis Brahms* (Kieler Schriften zur Musikwissenschaft 55, Kassel: Bärenreiter, 2017), 483 pp., ISBN 978-3-7618-2385-9.

Ramsten, Märta, *Kungl. Musikaliska akademien och folkmusiken. En musiketnologisk undersökning* (Kungl. Musikaliska akademiens skriftserie, 141; Skrifter utgivna av Svenskt visarkiv, 42; [Möklinta:] Gidlunds förlag, 2016), 184 pp., illus., music exx., ISBN 978-91-7844-964-4, ISSN 0347-5158, ISSN 0081-9840.

Wald-Fuhrmann, Melanie, and Christiane Wiesenfeldt (eds.), *Der Komponist Friedrich Ludwig Aemilius Kunzen (1761-1817). Gattungen. Werke. Kontexte* (Köln, Weimar, Wien: Böhlau Verlag, 2015), 331 pp., illus., music exx., ISBN 978-3-412-22275-8.

Music editions

Peter Heise, *Strygekvartetter nr. 1-6. String Quartets Nos. 1-6*, ed. Michael Fjeldsøe (Copenhagen: Dansk Center for Musikudgivelse, 2017), xv + 236 pp., ISMN 979-0-9001843-3-7.

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