

'O, du gyldne Maskarade!'

'Oh, golden masquerade!'

The construction of Danish national identity in
Carl Nielsen's *Maskarade* (1906)

Aksel Dalmo Tollåli



Master's thesis, Department of Musicology

Faculty of Humanities

UNIVERSITY OF OSLO

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Abstract

This thesis explores the portrayal of Danish national identity in Carl Nielsen and Vilhelm Andersen's opera *Maskarade* (1906). The opera is markedly different in its portrayal of Danish identity – Danishness – than the Danish operas of the 19th century, which were generally characterised by nationalist tropes of rural mediaeval glory or folk mythology, with scores heavily reliant on the folk-like strophic song. *Maskarade* presents a much greater musical stylistic variety, and is also a comedy, set in the Danish capital Copenhagen, among the bourgeoisie in the early 18th century. The thesis also examines potential reasons for the *Maskarade*'s rapid success within Denmark and status as a national opera. It seeks to investigate how *Maskarade* relates to previous Danish music drama, and to place it in a wider Danish operatic history, as well as look at its critical reception between the premiere and its 25th anniversary revival in 1931.

While the thesis offers no conclusive answer to the question of *Maskarade*'s success in its first 25 years, it does posit that a main reason was the increasing fame of Carl Nielsen in that same period. It also sees in the critical reception of the opera that it was considered to be a new kind of opera, one which synthesised Danish and foreign elements into something specifically Danish-sounding. The critical analysis and historical contextualisation show that while *Maskarade* presents a more future-oriented Danishness than the operas of the 19th century, it is in constant dialogue with the musical, stylistic and narrative tropes of those same operas. The Danishness that *Maskarade* communicates is complex and changing in nature, but it is largely presenting a positive view of an idealised Danish society, in which freedom and equality reign. *Maskarade* manages to unite the tropes of 19th Century Danish music drama whilst at the same time breaking with its conventions.

Acknowledgements

I first discovered the music of Carl Nielsen, and – perhaps more importantly – his opera *Maskarade* as a student at Toneheim Folkehøgskole, back in 2011. I found a recording at the public library in Hamar and was immediately infatuated with the sound world of the opera, its fast-changing music and fast-paced dialogue. A few years later, I wrote an article on the opera for Nielsen’s 150th anniversary, and from then on, I was utterly obsessed.

This thesis has been long in the making, with rather a few obstacles thrown in for added excitement. But now, at long last, it’s finished. I want to profusely thank my two supervisors, Nanette Nielsen and Erling Guldbrandsen. Without your patience, encouragement, helpful nudges in the right direction and invaluable feedback, this thesis would never have been finished.

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Thank you also to Mark Pullinger of Bachtrack. I don’t think my obsession with *Maskarade* would have taken over to quite the extent it has, had you not let me write that article, those years ago.

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Chapter 1 – Introduction

At first glance, Carl Nielsen's second opera, *Maskarade* (1906), seems distinctly different from the Danish operas that preceded it. Yet from its very premiere, it was considered to be a specifically Danish opera, and soon gained the status of a national opera. Whereas the Danish opera and musical drama of the 19th century was largely centred around the explicitly nationalist tropes of mediaeval history or folk mythology coupled with rural settings and music rooted in Danish folk music (or the conscious replication thereof), *Maskarade* has an altogether more urban sensibility. The opera is a comedy, set in early 18th century Copenhagen, among the bourgeoisie; a far cry from the countryside nobility and peasant characters of the century prior. It is also an adaptation of a play by the early 18th century Dano-Norwegian playwright Ludvig Holberg – one of the first writers of plays in the vernacular. Musically and stylistically, *Maskarade* is far removed from the set numbers of past Danish operas, being largely through-composed, and lacking many of the explicitly patriotic elements of its predecessors. The dramatic and musical importance of the strophic song – hugely influential in 19th century Danish opera – is diminished considerably in *Maskarade* in favour of an almost Mozartian conversational tone, not really seen in Danish opera until then, even though strophic songs are still very much present in the opera. And yet, despite – or indeed possibly because of – these differences, it rapidly became one of the most performed and most popular operas – Danish or not – at Copenhagen's Royal Theatre, with several excerpts becoming massively popular outside of the opera house, both in songbooks and on the concert stage.

Keeping in mind *Maskarade*'s differences from 19th century Danish music drama, this thesis seeks to explore why the opera was embraced so quickly as specifically Danish, and the nature of the Danishness it portrays. Further, will attempt to explain potential reasons for its rapid popularity and status as a Danish national opera, by seeing how it positions itself among and relates to Danish opera and music drama of the 19th century. Informing this will be a historical context of the growth of Danish nationalism and national identity in the late 18th and 19th centuries, both through the influence of international ideological currents and as an internal response to external threats; Denmark underwent several military defeats and

significant losses of land throughout the 19th century. *Maskarade*'s place within Carl Nielsen's wider oeuvre is also worthy of discussion. His works are largely divisible into two camps: on the one hand, the works conceived for a popular audience – primarily his songs written in the final decades of his life – and the more complex, primarily instrumental pieces, examples being his symphonies, concertos and chamber music. *Maskarade* was written as Nielsen was reaching compositional maturity, before this stylistic divergence manifested itself, and can be said to straddle this apparent stylistic divide. These stylistic categories are not necessarily indicative of the relative popularity of the works themselves, but rather say something about Nielsen's musical idiom. Much of *Maskarade* is written in what would soon become Nielsen's popular idiom, yet it also has many of the characteristics of his more complex music.

1.1 The current state of Nielsen research

Nielsen scholarship has, until relatively recently, been a rather neglected field of research outside of Denmark and Scandinavia. Interest has been growing in the last two decades, much thanks to the publication of *Carl Nielsen Udgaven* ('The Carl Nielsen Edition') – critical editions of his complete works – by the Danish Royal Library. Recent publications have also included Nielsen's diaries and complete correspondence – *Carl Nielsen Brevudgaven* ('The Carl Nielsen Letter Edition', (ed. Fellow 2005-2016)) which runs to 12 volumes – and a three-volume (non-exhaustive) compilation of Nielsen's own thoughts on music – *Carl Nielsen til sin samtid* ('Carl Nielsen to his Contemporaries', (ed. Fellow 1999a)) – as expressed through newspaper interviews, manuscripts, articles, lectures and essays in Nielsen's own hand. Previously, only two highly edited and selective volumes of Nielsen's diary entries and correspondence with his wife had been made available, compiled by the musicologist Torben Schousboe in collaboration with the composer's daughter Irmelin Eggert-Møller (Schousboe et al. 1983). Nielsen's music – primarily his symphonies and concertos – have also to a greater extent found their way onto the concert stage and recording studio, particularly in the years leading up to the 2015 sesquicentenary. Despite this increased interest in his music and influx of accessible primary source material (though largely still in Danish), Nielsen is still situated on the periphery of the 20th century canon, especially in the context of European music. In a 2001 review of *Carl Nielsen til sin samtid*, Nielsen scholar Daniel Grimley points to potential reasons for the dearth of English-language Nielsen research:

On the one hand, his work occupies a place in the canon that is sufficiently central to seem well trodden or over-familiar, and yet sufficiently peripheral to be regarded unjustifiably as a musicological cul-de-sac or provincial backwater. On the other, many of his works, and his symphonies in particular, actively engage with notions of unity, coherence and large-scale structural syntax that have become increasingly unfashionable in certain current musicological circles. (Grimley 2001)

Even though almost two decades have passed since Grimley's comments, a lot of his points still ring true, despite Nielsen and his music seeming to be on the ascendant. Still, it is notable that the majority of scholarly interest is mainly focussed on the symphonies and concertos, undoubtedly genres seen as more glamorous than the humble strophic song, or, what can from the outside be seen as overly parochial operas in the native language. The fact that Nielsen's more popularly attuned pieces – and his vocal music in general – are still primarily only performed in his native Denmark presumably does not help raise general awareness of this side of his music. Additionally, even though the Danish language might not be that different from English, that, too, undoubtedly presents a challenge to non-Scandinavian scholars.

The first books on Nielsen to appear after the composer's death were generally written by friends, pupils and acquaintances of the composer, and were generally not preoccupied with critical engagement with the music. These were largely, too, in Danish. Books like Robert Seligmann's *Carl Nielsen* (1931a) and Ludvig Dolleris' *Carl Nielsen: En Musikografi* ('Carl Nielsen: A Musicography', (1949)) are rather on the hagiographic side of music writing, although they do reveal insights into Nielsen's standing in the mid-20th Century, or at least the standing he enjoyed among his pupils, which both Seligmann and Dolleris were. Indeed, the writing on Nielsen by his friends and acquaintances would continue for several more decades and has possibly led to Danish Nielsen scholars – until recently, that is – taking a rather less critical view of him than foreign scholars have. The first major non-Danish piece of Nielsen scholarship, Robert Simpson's *Carl Nielsen: Symphonist* (1952) largely deals with the composer's symphonies. Simpson spends no more than ten pages on a summary of Nielsen's entire output of vocal music, including operas, songs and several large-scale choral works. His opinion of these pieces is largely positive, but he does not delve into much detail. Granted, Simpson is primarily interested in Nielsen's symphonies, and it is by and large the symphonies and concertos that receive performances, both in and outside Denmark. This one-sided focus on Nielsen as an orchestral and symphonic composer is one that has remained

dominant since the publication of *Symphonist*. In addition to the reasons given, it is not unreasonable to think this is also because the scores for the symphonies and other instrumental music have been the most available; much of Nielsen's music was not published or widely available until the publication of the Carl Nielsen Edition.

Today, in 2019, Nielsen scholarship is still largely centred on his symphonic writing, although scholars are increasingly taking a more holistic view of Nielsen's musical output. Again, this is surely helped by the appearance of previously unavailable scores and music. Influential in this has been the Danish Royal Library's now-defunct journal *Carl Nielsen Studies*, of which five volumes came out between 2003 and 2012, and whose articles had wide-ranging approaches to all sides of Nielsen's music. Two somewhat recent English-language books which have also proved important are Daniel Grimley's monograph *Carl Nielsen and the Idea of Modernism* (2010) and Anne Marie Reynolds' *Carl Nielsen's Voice: his songs in context* (2010). Grimley's book offers a detailed view of the composer and his music, aiming to place Nielsen in a historical and artistic context of modernism, both in and outside Denmark. Reynolds' book is the first large-scale, systematic analysis of Nielsen's songs and his popular style. The book also includes an analysis of *Maskarade*, looking at the tonal and stylistic composition of the opera, elucidating relationships between musical keys, the characters and musical style of the opera. In Danish, one of the first large-scale publications to deal with Nielsen and his place in Danish national identity and popular imagination was Jørgen I. Jensen's *Carl Nielsen: Danskeren* ('Carl Nielsen: the Dane (1991)'), which is both a biography and an in-depth look at Nielsen's music and place in Danish society. His analysis of *Maskarade* is the first to look closely at *Maskarade's* librettist, the literature scholar Vilhelm Andersen, and the influences that the literary discourse of the time had on his writing of the libretto. Jensen's symbolist reading of *Maskarade* has proved extremely influential in later *Maskarade* scholarship. All three of these books have proved very important in the writing of this thesis, in providing different points of access to the opera and the cultural and artistic climate in which it was conceived and gained popularity. Still, however, *Maskarade* remains remarkably under-researched, and has to a large extent suffered the same fate as the rest of Nielsen's non-orchestral music. Despite a handful of performances in the early 2000s, it has gone virtually unperformed outside of Denmark – where it remains extremely popular – and writing on the opera has been scant, particularly in English.

In writing this thesis, I wish to look at the national significance of *Maskarade*, an aspect of the opera that is not sufficiently considered in the available literature. To a large extent, the currently available writing on *Maskarade* – Grimley and Jensen especially – concerns itself with placing the opera in the context of the artistic and cultural discourse of the first decade of the 20th Century. While the wider context of the 19th Century construction of a Danish national identity is mentioned, *Maskarade* is written about primarily as a break with 19th Century Romanticism, and the elements of the opera that directly respond and relate to Danish musical and literary tradition are glossed over. *Maskarade* does represent something new in Danish opera, but it also looks to the past – literally, in terms of its literary inspiration being an 18th Century play – and engages in musical conversation with the century of Danish music that came before it. While it is true that the opera – much like Nielsen himself – breaks with 19th Century Danish Romanticism and musical tradition, it still carries on elements of that same tradition. Nielsen is seen as an innovator, especially when assessing his symphonies and other orchestral music, but in other parts of his musical output, he put just as much importance on carrying on tradition. *Maskarade* stands with one foot in the complex symphonic music for which Nielsen garnered international attention, but its other foot is firmly placed in the popular music for which Nielsen would become famous in his native Denmark. In looking at *Maskarade*'s place in Danish music history, not just its place in the artistic and cultural Zeitgeist of the early 20th Century, a fuller picture of its place in Danish culture can be formed.

1.2 Presentation of source material

Aside from the previously mentioned writings of Grimley, Reynold and Jensen, much of the source material I have used in the writing of this thesis has been texts by Vilhelm Andersen, *Maskarade*'s librettist, and to a lesser extent the writings of Carl Nielsen himself. In particular, Andersen's treatise *Bacchustoget i Norden* ('The Bacchian Procession in the North', (1904)) and article series *Holbergs Henrik* written for the monthly periodical *Tilskueren* ('The Spectator', (1906)) have been very important in discerning the ideological underpinnings of the libretto and Andersen's own cultural and historical agenda – both of these texts are examined in more detail in Chapter 2, in conjunction with an essay by literature scholar Bent Holm (1999) on the significance of the masquerade motif in both 18th Century Denmark and Andersen's writings. Nielsen was also a reasonably productive writer, and his essays have informed much of my writing on his relationship with music, both that of others

and himself – although not to the same extent as Andersen’s. Between the two, Andersen was the professional writer and dealt exclusively in words, whereas there is at times a great disconnect between words and music in the case of Nielsen. Nielsen also did not write explicitly about *Maskarade*, unlike Andersen. An interrogation of the differences and inconsistencies in Nielsen’s writing on music versus his actual music is of limited relevance and well outside the scope of this thesis. I have also judged Nielsen’s statements to the press explicitly related to *Maskarade* to be of greater importance than the essays he wrote around the time of *Maskarade*’s premiere. This is not least because the interviews Nielsen gave to widely read newspapers inevitably had more of an effect colouring the public and critical reception of the opera than his tangentially related essays.

In the work with *Maskarade*’s early reception history, the main source material has been newspaper reviews of the 1906 premiere and the 1931 revival. I have tried to select newspapers that more or less accurately represent the media diversity of Denmark and Copenhagen in 1906 and 1931, but the quality of the individual critiques has also been an important factor. One of the main reasons why there half as many texts from 1931 (3) as there are from 1906 (7) is that the 1931 texts all are significantly longer than the 1906. I also wished to highlight reviews from the same newspapers, even though the opinions of the individual critic surely weigh heavier than the political leanings of the paper. Of the five 1906 newspapers surveyed – *Aftenbladet*, *Berlingske*, *Dagens Nyheder*, *Politiken* and *Vort Land* (which is represented with two texts) – only three were still in print in 1931 – *Berlingske*, *Dagens Nyheder* and *Politiken*. The last of the 1906 texts, from the monthly periodical *Tilskueren*, is more of an academically leaning appraisal of a new work, clearly intended for a more specialised audience than the average newspaper reader.

In looking at the historical and cultural context of *Maskarade*, I have had great use of the book *Musik og Danskhed* edited by Jens Henrik Koudal (2005b). It is small in size but has been instrumental in helping to establish a cohesive picture of the emergence of a specifically Danish musical national identity in the 19th Century. Particularly Heinrich Schwab’s essay ‘Guldalderens musik og danskhed’ (‘Music and Danishness in the Danish golden age’; (Schwab 2005)) proved illuminating in tracing the changing definitions and requirements of Danishness in the first half of the 19th Century. Also very helpful have been the two chapters

on the Singspiele and songs of J.A.P. Schulz by Randi Marie Selvik (2017) and Ellen Kristine Gjervan (2017), respectively, in the recently published *Tracing Operatic Performances in the Long Nineteenth Century* (Kauppala, Broman-Kananen, and Hesselager 2017). This thesis does not strictly deal with the music of Schulz, but an understanding of his contributions to early Danish opera and popular song are fundamental to an understanding of later operatic culture in Denmark, as well as of Carl Nielsen's music.

Around the year 2010 there was a discussion, particularly among Danish scholars, surrounding Nielsen and the influence of Vitalist thought on his music. A more thorough description and discussion of the term Vitalism will be given in Chapter 2, in the context of Vilhelm Andersen's writings, particularly *Bacchustoget*. In short, Vitalism is here meant to describe an artistic philosophy that places an unstoppable life force at the centre of all art. It was not, however, a unified artistic and cultural movement, but rather disparate artists – mainly authors – whose art centred some kind of deeply felt experience of life. In his 2010 book 'Den vitalistiske strømning i dansk litteratur omkring år 1900' ('The Vitalist current in Danish literature around the year 1900'), literature scholar Anders Ehlers Dam puts forward an argument that Carl Nielsen should be considered a Vitalist composer. Dam's argument is largely, if not entirely, supported by Nielsen's own writings on music, not least the famous quote 'Music is life, and like it, inextinguishable' ('Musik er Liv, og som dette uudslukkelig'), which he wrote in a programme note for his Fourth Symphony 'The Inextinguishable' (1916, (Nielsen 2000)). Dam's assertion of Nielsen's Vitalism was criticised by the Nielsen scholar Michael Fjeldsøe, who argued that, while some of Nielsen's music and related writings could be interpreted into a Vitalist context – most specifically the Third (1911), Fourth and Fifth (1922) Symphonies – he cannot be termed a Vitalist at all points in his career and in all contexts (Fjeldsøe 2009, 2010). To a large extent, what can be termed Nielsen's Vitalist impulses came from his experience of WWI, which, despite Denmark's neutrality, had a profound effect on him. Dam's reading of Nielsen also does not take into account the composer's music, instead taking his words at face value, to which Fjeldsøe raises the important point that Nielsen did not always do as he wrote. Like most composers, he was far more steadfast in his opinions when writing than when he was composing. In the 2009 essay, Fjeldsøe also looks at Jørgen I. Jensen's assertion of Nielsen as a Symbolist composer and came to much the same conclusion here; indeed, he sees Dam's Vitalism and Jensen's Symbolism as describing largely the same phenomena but looking at it

from different historical points of view. This discussion of whether Nielsen was a Vitalist or Symbolist composer is of limited relevance to this thesis and to *Maskarade*, as what can be termed Nielsen's more Vitalist period came several years after the premiere of *Maskarade*. However, the idea of Vitalist thought is still important when looking at Vilhelm Andersen. As will be discussed in Chapter 2, Andersen wrote unambiguously Vitalist texts, and this thought had a great influence on the writing of *Maskarade's* libretto.

1.3 Methodological approaches

This thesis has no specific chapter outlining its methodological approaches. A brief outline of them will follow in this subsection, but to a large extent, the methodology will be made apparent through the presentation of the historical and analytical material. This is also the main reason for this introductory chapter being as short as it is.

The primary aim of the thesis is to investigate *Maskarade's* portrayal of Danishness and how it relates to the ideas of national identity that was portrayed through 19th Century music drama in Denmark, and further why it achieved its status as a national opera so quickly. To achieve this, the thesis also wishes to place the opera in a historical context, both in terms of the cultural landscape in which it premiered and explore its critical reception in its first quarter century. The reason for the limited time scope in its reception– 1906 to 1931 – is twofold: firstly, it is because by *Maskarade* by 1931 had already achieved its status as national opera *par excellence*. In a review of the 1931 revival, one critic calls the opera 'the classic, Danish piece' ('det klassiske danske Værk'), 'untouched by time and fashion' ('urørt af Tid og Mode', (Seligmann 1931b)). The 25 years between the premiere and this revival, then, was the main period when *Maskarade* was accepted as a Danish national opera. Secondly, these 25 years were also the last 25 years of Carl Nielsen's life. He died eight days after the premiere of the 1931 revival of *Maskarade*. By 1931, Nielsen had achieved nationwide fame and recognition, and had cemented his status as the great Danish composer of the time, something that is quite apparent when reading the newspaper reviews of the 1931 revival.

The analysis takes as its starting point the score and libretto of *Maskarade*, but this is not meant as purely structural analysis. The historical context and reception history of the opera plays as much a part in investigating its popularity and place in Danish operatic history. It must also take into account the textual and dramatic elements of the opera in conjunction with its music. Still, this is not a performative analysis of *Maskarade*. I wish to look at the early history of the opera, but there is no recorded material of this opera from this time, aside from cast photos from the various revivals. I therefore wish to turn to the score and libretto for the analysis, not treating them as fully autonomous musical and textual objects, but rather as entryways into *Maskarade*'s presentation of Danishness. Still, it is important to concede that my own experience of the opera – having listened to several recordings and attended a live performance of it – inevitably will colour my own perception of it. Analysing opera can be a daunting task, just in terms of the sheer number of elements at play in the performance and historical context thereof. I have therefore wanted to exclude the interpretative choices of conductors, orchestras, directors and individual singers, even though these have of course also been vital to the popularity of the opera. In an attempt to limit the number of factors, therefore, I have excluded performative elements from this analysis.

As mentioned above, Nielsen's music has recently enjoyed an uptick both in performances and recordings. *Maskarade*, too, is quite well-served in terms of recordings, although most of the complete recordings are from the last couple of decades. The earliest somewhat complete recording of *Maskarade* I have been able to find is a live radio transmission with the Danish Radio Symphony Orchestra and the conductor Launy Grøndahl from 1954. Notably, this transmission included a narrator between scenes, so the radio-listening public would understand what was going on; when one speaks of *Maskarade* as a Danish national opera, it is important to remember that opera in Denmark was largely the preserve of those living in Copenhagen, certainly before the advent of radio and television; the first opera company outside of Copenhagen – Den Jyske Opera, based in Aarhus – was not founded until after WWII (Scavenius 2007). This transmission does not, either, seem to have been released to the general public until an issue of archival Nielsen recordings on the label Danacord in 2001 (Nielsen 2001b). Still, it seems likely that at least certain parts of the general public would have been familiar with excerpts from *Maskarade*, also before this 1954 transmission. In a 1965 survey of the recorded discography of Carl Nielsen, the Danish National Discotheque (Nationaldiskoteket) lists several recordings of popular excerpts from

the opera, although mostly the Overture and Act 2 Prelude (Fabricius-Bjerre 1965, pp. 16-18). A handful of these recordings are from the 1930s, but none of them were recorded in Nielsen's lifetime. The earliest recording of an excerpt of *Maskarade* I have been able to find – Jeronimus' Act 1 song 'Fordum var der Fred paa Gaden' ('Earlier the Street was Silent') sung by the baritone Einar Nørby with piano accompaniment – is from 1933 (Nielsen 2015a). The first act was also broadcast on the radio on 25 November 1925 to mark *Maskarade*'s 50th performance, although it is not, to my knowledge, publicly available in any format (cited in the liner notes of Nielsen 2015b). There have also been transmissions of *Maskarade* on Danish television, at least one in 1964 and one in 1986, although both of these transmissions have considerable cuts. Other recordings of *Maskarade* are of a significantly newer date, the first commercial recording being issued in 1979, and two others issued in 1996 and 2015. The opera has also been issued twice on DVD, with David Pountney's 2005 production for the Bregenz Festival being released in 2006 (in a German translation), and the Danish Royal Theatre 2006 production by Kasper Holten coming out in 2008.

In analysing *Maskarade*, I will be using a variety of approaches, but they all more or less spring from Joseph Kerman's idea of musical criticism, as put forth in his article 'How We Got into Analysis, and How to Get out' (1980). In the article, Kerman attacks the then prevalent school of structural analysis, whose aims he described as '[discerning and demonstrating] the functional coherence of individual works and their "organic unity"' (Kerman 1980, p. 312). While adherents of structural analysis might have looked at themselves as scientists of music, Kerman instead terms this kind of analysis more a kind of ideology than science, meaning 'a fairly coherent set of ideas brought together not for strictly intellectual purposes but in the service of some strongly held communal belief' (Kerman 1980, p. 314). This 'strongly held communal belief' was that the quality of a piece of music could be judged solely by the interplay of its constituent parts, which all would come together and form an 'organic unity', without any regard for any extramusical factors. If a piece possessed true organic unity, it could then be said to be a masterpiece – not worrying too much that the criteria for organic unity rather neatly overlapped with the aesthetic ideals of the dominant Austro-Germanic musicological tradition. The score was viewed as something akin to a platonic ideal, a perfect record of the composer's intentions – certainly if the piece was deemed a masterpiece – which was all but unattainable in performance. It was a view of the music primarily as object, not as performance. Kerman's suggested remedy is what he

terms *criticism*, a more holistic approach to the music at hand. It does look at the music itself but is not interested in notions of ‘organic unity’, and the structural coherence of a piece plays a drastically smaller role. Instead, he wants to take into account other elements, both musical and extramusical, like its historical contexts, its performance and musical features other than structure. Now, Kerman’s article is rapidly approaching its 40th anniversary, and, one hopes, things have moved on since the 1980s, and that analysis in general is not seen as an objective and scientific method of judging the merits of a piece of music. Still, despite its age, Kerman’s idea of musical criticism makes sense as a way of approaching *Maskarade*.

One could conceivably talk of the ‘organic unity’ of an opera like *Maskarade*, indeed of any opera, but it dramatically limits which aspects and qualities of the opera one could discuss. For the purposes of this thesis, it would not say much, if anything, about the reasons for *Maskarade*’s popularity and its relationship to earlier Danish opera. A truly structural analysis would completely disregard any extramusical content in the opera, including the libretto. Opera, far less than instrumental music, cannot be seen as Hanslickian ‘tönend bewegte Formen’, that is, to the extent that any music can be seen purely as self-contained, sounding forms. In Nielsen’s own essays on music – particularly in ‘Ord, Musik og Programmusik’ (‘Words, Music and Programmatic Music’), written in 1909 and later published as part of the collection *Levende Musik* (Nielsen 1925) – he argues strongly for the autonomy of music, how music cannot be adequately described through words, only through itself. If the music is set to words, the function of the music to the words is purely decorative, like ‘the sun’s relation to things, how it illuminates and gives colour, radiates and shines and in addition gives warmth and life, so that all possibilities can be developed’ (‘Solens Forhold til Tingene, som den belyser og giver Farve, bestråler og giver Glans og tillige varmer og giver Liv, saa alle Muligheder kommer til Udfoldelse’, (Nielsen 1925, p. 33)). Yet much of his orchestral music is explicitly programmatic, even surpassing the bounds of his own clear instructions that ‘the programme or the title must in itself contain an element of mood or movement, but never a motif of thought or concrete action’ (‘Programmet eller Titlen maa da i sig selv indeholde et Stemnings- eller Bevægelsesmoment, men aldrig et Tanke- eller konkret Handlingsmotiv’, (Nielsen 1925, p. 41)). While a title like ‘Helios-Ouverture’ (1903) might be sufficiently vague, Nielsen still inscribed the score with a programme, reading: ‘Stillness and darkness — Then the sunrises to joyous songs of praise — Wanders its golden way —quietly sinks in the sea.’ (‘Stilhed og Mørke — saa stiger Sol under frydefuld Lovsang

—Vandrer sin gyldne Vej — sænker sig stille i Hav.’, (quoted in Nielsen 2001c, p. viii, trans. James Manley)). Nielsen also wrote two operas, which are genres that inherently contain a ‘motif of thought and concrete action’. While Nielsen might have portrayed himself as an adherent to the Hanslickian principles of musical autonomy in his own writings, his music presents a rather different image.

While there might be some meaning – however one wishes to define that – in *Maskarade* and the music itself, *Maskarade* primarily gets its meaning through dialogue between its music and its libretto, its historical and cultural contexts, the history of its reception, its performers and its audience, and further its significance when performed today. I do not consider the score – or libretto, for that matter – of *Maskarade* to constitute some platonic ideal that only exists on the page. Rather, the score and libretto can only be realised through performance. Even though this analysis is not looking specifically at performances of the opera, it is evident that *Maskarade*’s popularity and stature in Danish culture has come about specifically *because* it has been performed. Nielsen also revised *Maskarade* several times during his lifetime, and was never completely happy with it, referring to it as ‘the girl with the crooked back’ (‘Pigen med den skæve Ryg’ (Hauge 1999)). The full score was not published until 2001. If *Maskarade* is to be termed a masterpiece – which it has been, repeatedly, if only by Danish critics – it is then implied, if Kerman’s description of structural analysis is to be believed, that the score perfectly expresses the composer’s intentions, which, discussions regarding the significance of authorial intent aside, it demonstrably does not.

Writing three years before Kerman, Carl Dahlhaus described in many ways the opposite picture. In ‘The significance of art: historical or aesthetic’, the second chapter of his book *Foundations of music history* (Dahlhaus 1993), he describes two extremes in the writing of music history and understandings of music. One extreme is seeing music as an entirely aesthetically autonomous object, independent from all notions of history – a view that seems quite similar to that outlined by Kramer – and the other, seeing music only as part of a coherent historical narrative, where music is only appreciated for its social and intellectual functions as a product of history, and not as music. In short, on one side, music history without history, and on the other, music history without music. Dahlhaus is largely concerned with the same music historiographical problems as Kramer in his 1980 essay but comes at it

from the opposite angle. He argues that historically positivist music history writing – essentially seeing a piece of music only as the product of the lived experiences of a composer, and as the result of the society in which they lived – has become too dominant. Instead of writing about music, music historians have become more interested in seeing music as part of a larger social historical narrative, context overtaking the text in importance. This is not to say that one should revert to the structural analyses of old, where the artistic value of a piece can be said to be inversely proportional to its historic value, effectively making it impossible to write historically about ‘great’ pieces. Perhaps Dahlhaus’ most pressing issue is the place of aesthetic autonomy within a historical framework; in the same way a completely structuralist model discounts historical context, a completely historicist model will necessarily discount aesthetic autonomy. He argues that even when looking at a work historically, it still possesses a certain degree of autonomy, even if that autonomy is given to the work for methodological purposes. Further along those lines, a piece of music having an inherent aesthetic value does not imply a dismissal of its place in history or its historic value, nor does acknowledging the historical context of a piece rob it of its aesthetic value.

Applying Dahlhaus’ model, which seems at least implicitly directed at instrumental works, to opera does present some challenges. Indeed, one of the main reasons Kerman wrote his article was because of the inability of structural analysis to factor in words. He was talking specifically about song, but the same applies to opera. In more cases than not, the composition of opera is a collaborative process – it certainly was in the case of *Maskarade* – and the question of the amount of importance to be given to the words has been subject to lively discussion throughout the four centuries of the artform. While this thesis does not set out to solve the question of whether words or music are the most important in opera, it still seems abundantly clear that Vilhelm Andersen’s words to *Maskarade* should receive attention alongside Nielsen’s music. Nevertheless, the introduction of words presents some problems; the aesthetic autonomy of the music is irrevocably changed when words an audience might (hopefully) understand are introduced. While extramusical connotations might merely be hinted at in programmatic music, they become more apparent when actual words are involved. Dahlhaus does not suggest a correct way of writing music history – writing music history can have a multitude of aims, and it is up to the author themselves to choose the best way forward – but it must include the notion of aesthetic and artistic autonomy alongside historical context.

In this thesis, *Maskarade* is given a certain amount of artistic autonomy, but it is an autonomy predicated on its relationship with a longer tradition of Danish opera and music drama. Similarly, this thesis is not meant solely as a history of *Maskarade*'s reception and early 20th Century Danish national identity, even though these two subjects will and must feature heavily to better inform the examination of the music and libretto. To look at *Maskarade*'s relation to Danish national identity and Danish music in general, it inevitably must be placed in a historical context, but only in combination with an analytical approach can this relation be explored sufficiently.

1.4 Thesis Outline

Following this introductory chapter, is an extensive second chapter dealing with the various historical contexts of *Maskarade*. The aim of this chapter is to chart the emergence of what can be termed a Danish school of music drama, looking at the societal and cultural conditions that made it possible, as well as making apparent the international influences at play in its formation, and how these eventually came to be seen as Danish. In addition, it attempts to find these same tensions in the early reception of *Maskarade*, observing how its perceived Danishness was understood in the piece's first 25 years. The chapter looks first at developments in Danish society and music from the end of the 18th Century until the premiere of *Maskarade*, seeing the emergence and establishing of a specifically Danish national identity – a musical national identity in particular – as a consolidation of foreign influences with more or less native cultural expressions. Further, it looks at the development of Nielsen's popular musical style and his relationship with Danish national identity, both as expressed through his music and his own writings. The chapter also deals with the writings of *Maskarade*'s librettist, Vilhelm Andersen, and how he interprets the comedies of Holberg – including Holberg's own *Mascarade* – in a context of Danish national identity. Andersen's 1904 treatise *Bacchustoget i Norden* ('The Bacchian Procession in the North') and article series *Holbergs Henrik* (1906) form the basis of this section, looking at Andersen's own theories regarding the Dionysian in Nordic literature and how Dionysian or Bacchian thought had shaped the writings of Ludvig Holberg in particular. Here, too, there is an interplay between conception of the foreign and the national underlying his writing, especially on the topic of Holberg. The historical chapter concludes with a summary of *Maskarade*'s early reception, from its premiere in 1906 to its 25th anniversary revival in 1931, weeks before Nielsen's death. During these 25 years, Nielsen became a nationally renowned composer, also

outside the somewhat limited circles of ‘concert hall music’, and it is inevitable that his fame achieved after *Maskarade* coloured subsequent revivals. Especially in the early reviews, critics discussed and clearly identified the international elements of *Maskarade* while still underlining the Danishness of the opera. *Maskarade*’s perceived Danishness faced challenges of a different sort in the 1931 revival, as it was conducted by an Italian. Here, it was seemingly unanimously decided that the Danishness of *Maskarade* managed to transcend national boundaries, since the Italian conductor on some level managed to tap into the Danish qualities of the music. Having gone from a product of a tradition to a large extent concerned with consolidating internal and external national musical impulses, *Maskarade* had by the 1930s become Danish national opera with the potential of international success.

Chapter 3 concerns itself mainly with the analysis of the opera, exploring scenes and excerpts and how they relate to the construction of a Danish national identity as outlined in the previous chapter. It is not an exhaustive analysis of the entire opera and only looks at specific scenes and excerpts, divided into non-exclusive thematic categories: *Maskarade*’s references to and reworkings of established tropes of Danishness, Nielsen’s mixing of musical styles, and the role of dance and the masquerade itself as a symbol of societal equality and (sexual) freedom. The analysis attempts to show how, despite Nielsen’s own singular musical idiom, Nielsen and Andersen consciously positioned *Maskarade* in dialogue with the preceding century of Danish music drama and drew on a wide variety of national musical tropes that had been established as part of a Danish musical vocabulary throughout the 19th Century. The kind of Danishness that is expressed through *Maskarade*, however, is one primarily of bright-eyed optimism, looking to a brave new future – although not without a certain degree of knowing historical irony. Even though the opera is set explicitly in the spring of 1723, it does not engage in the kind of historicism that is so emblematic for 19th Century Danish opera. Yes, it looks back in time, but not so that it can marvel at the greatness of mediaeval Denmark or frolic in folk culture. Instead, the popularity of its urban setting and forward-oriented outlook points to a shift in the popular consciousness – at least within that of the opera-going audiences of Copenhagen – where a conception of Danishness was forming that also included Denmark’s cities, not only its rolling countryside. The reactionary historicism of 19th Century music drama is also present in *Maskarade*, but is presented as something of the past. Still, somewhat paradoxically, a song praising the ‘good old days’ – Jeronimus’ Act 1 song ‘Fordum var der Fred paa Gaden’ (‘Earlier the street was silent’) –

became the runaway hit of the opera, and to this day remains its most widely known excerpt. While to an extent, the impulse to look back at past greatness is ridiculed – Jeronimus’ Act 2 rage aria is the main example – it is also depicted as a benign nostalgia, set to a memorable and easily sung melody. Through the conscious referencing and reworking of already established tropes of Danishness, Nielsen and Andersen present a new, forward-looking Danishness – at least in terms of opera – which still manages to take on elements of its 19th Century iteration. Much like Holberg in his *Mascarade*, indeed to a much greater extent, *Maskarade* manages to present a tantalising vision of equality, where people, poetic and musical styles can mingle freely, appearing remarkably contemporary despite its 18th Century setting. The success of *Maskarade* was, in part, due to its successful merging of international operatic trends and influences, and the already established vocabulary of Danish national music into a musical language in tune with its particular location in history. The fact that Nielsen went on to become one of Denmark’s most celebrated composers and cultural personalities – a fame that continued long after his death – cannot have hurt.

Finally, there is a short fourth chapter, summarising the findings of the thesis. The chapter gives an outline of the points raised in the history chapter and the findings of the analysis. Further, the chapter presents further questions and areas of research that have been raised in the process of writing and researching the thesis.

1.5 Clarifications

The opera *Maskarade* is, as previously mentioned, based on the play *Mascarade* by Ludvig Holberg. Both of these titles have undergone several spelling changes in the 113 and 295 years since their premieres, respectively (as of April 2019). An early 20th Century complete edition of Holberg’s works (1901, ed. Martensen) gives the name of the play as *Maskaraden* (‘The Masquerade’ – in Danish, the suffix ‘-en’ denotes a singular, definite, common gender noun, somewhat comparable to the English definite article ‘the’), but also informs that the play was titled *Masqueraden* on the posters of Holberg’s playhouse in Lille Grønnegade, *Mascarade* in the first printed editions and in Holberg’s autobiography, and *Mascaraden* in his epistles (Holberg 1901, p. 103). Adding yet more confusion, Vilhelm Andersen notes in his 1906 essays on the servant character Henrik that the title of the play is specifically *Maskarade*, and not *Maskeraden* (Andersen 1906, p. 71). The most recent production of the

play at the Danish Royal Theatre (the 2017-2018 season), however, was titled *Maskerade* (Hesseldahl 2017), in line with contemporary Danish orthography. Various spellings of the title of the opera also flourished in the first years after its premiere, appearing in various iterations and combinations of the titles already mentioned. This is all to say, one can as easily make the case for the spelling of the title of the opera and the play to be one and the same, as one can make the case that they be different – history offers great linguistic choice. In this dissertation, I have chosen to go with the spelling *Mascarade* for the play and *Maskerade* for the opera, if for no other reason than to help easily separate the two.

Finally, a word on translations. Much of the source material for this thesis, including most of the primary sources, are in Danish. These have, unless otherwise noted, been translated by me. The translations of the libretto to *Maskerade* are generally also by me, although some have been copied from the critical edition of *Maskerade*. In it, a singing translation has been provided, but it does not always align word-for-word with the meaning of the original. I have attempted to highlight the meaning of the Danish words, and so in several cases, the singing translation into English has proven insufficient. I have also, to the extent it has been possible, kept the original spelling in the Danish quotes. Danish has undergone several, far-reaching spelling reforms in the past three centuries, and I have wished to keep the language as close to the original texts as possible. All Danish Bible citations are from the Danish Bible Society's 1871 revision of the *Resen-Svaningske* Bible of 1647. English Bible citations are from the Modern English Version of 2014.

Chapter 2 – Historical contexts

2.1 Introduction

This chapter aims to put *Maskarade* in a wider historical and musical context. Firstly, it will briefly describe 19th century Denmark, looking at societal changes starting in the late 18th century, before turning to the development of music and music drama – here used in a general, non-Wagnerian sense – in 19th century Denmark. The section will explore how tropes of Danishness were established and perpetuated, to see to what extent they do or do not relate to *Maskarade*. Secondly, it will also look at *Maskarade*'s place within Carl Nielsen's oeuvre. While it is one of his most acclaimed and performed pieces – certainly within Denmark – it is remarkably different to the superficially more Danish music he would compose in the decades following *Maskarade*. Thirdly, it will examine the ideological and historiographical views and methods of *Maskarade*'s librettist Vilhelm Andersen, through a close reading of his 1904 treatise *Bacchustoget i Norden* ('The Bacchian Procession in the North'), as well as a series of articles he published in 1906 on Holberg's character Henrik. Andersen wrote *Bacchustoget* shortly before starting work on the libretto of *Maskarade*, and the articles on Henrik were published in the months leading up to the premiere of the opera. In his treatise, Andersen seeks to establish a link between Ancient Greece and modern-day Denmark; ideas which abound in his libretto. Fourthly and lastly follows a survey of the critical reception of *Maskarade*, looking at critiques from the premiere performance at the Royal Theatre in 1906 and the 25th anniversary run in 1931, weeks before Nielsen's death. The critical reception does not necessarily say much about Nielsen's standing in general with the Danish public – in the case of *Maskarade*, its audience was the largely Copenhagen-based, opera-going public – but offers an idea of the change in Nielsen's fame in the last quarter-century of his life.

Maskarade was written at the end of a century-long period that saw an increase in the importance of a specifically Danish national identity. Not only was Denmark caught up in the same nationalist fervour that gripped the rest of Europe throughout the 19th century, but several crushing military defeats and wide-reaching societal reforms throughout the century changed Danish political and cultural reality. During this time, images of rolling hills and vast forests, as well as the humble Danish farmer, became the foundation of Danishness and Danish identity. With its urbane, bourgeois setting, *Maskarade* runs counter to the image of

Danishness as established in the 19th century. On a narrative level, it switches out rural Denmark and mediaeval greatness and drama for an altogether lighter scene, set in a not-quite-as-distant past, which is characterised by social progress and ideals of equality. These characteristics are rather different from the staid class divides and mediaeval settings of earlier Danish drama. Musically, Nielsen makes intimations towards thoroughly international operatic styles and tropes, setting a novel, conversational tone for much of the opera, heavily inspired by Mozart. Still, much of the music is still firmly rooted in the musical tropes set out in the late 18th and early 19th centuries, the *volkstümliche* or ‘folk-like’ songs of Johann Abraham Peter Schulz playing a particularly important part.

Much of Nielsen’s later music – his songs and cantata *Fynsk Foraar* (‘Springtime in Funen’; 1922) in particular – harks back to the subject matter and textual sources of Romantic Danish music drama and song. The perceived Danishness of his music comes from a dismissal of the Austro-Germanic conservatism and Romantic tropes that so dominated Danish musical life in the previous century. The urbanity and comic nature of *Maskarade* seem to have captured the imagination of Danish audiences – at least audiences in Copenhagen – yet it is not a musical language that to any great extent finds precedent in earlier Danish music drama, or in Nielsen’s later writings, for that matter. Indeed, as early critics pointed out, its musical inspirations are more international, with operas like Verdi’s *Falstaff* (1893) and Wagner’s *Meistersinger* (1868) being alluded to frequently (Henriques 1906a; Hammerich 1906). With *Maskarade*, then, Nielsen turns foreign, international musical inspirations into a nationally Danish piece of more progressive sensibilities than the historicism and folkloric nature of the music of the previous century.

2.2 (Musical) nationalism and national identity in 19th century

Denmark

During the 19th century in Denmark, the portrayal of Danishness and Danish identity in art grew in importance, amid great political and cultural change. In the music and music drama of the time, this impulse was seen through the use of what were perceived to be Danish folk tunes, as well as predominantly dramatic – as opposed to comic – narratives rooted in mediaeval Danish history or folk mythology. While the musical language of Danish opera

changed throughout the century, subject matter generally followed the historical, dramatic models that were set out in the late 18th century, partly through direct intervention from the state. Another development in Danish musical life in the same period was the increasing popularity of the *volkstümliche* or ‘folk-like’ song. The songs were not folk songs in themselves, but instead consciously modelled after them. They would prove a fundamental part of Danish music drama throughout the 19th century and would also prove influential well into the next century. It was also with the folk-like song that Carl Nielsen would achieve nation-wide fame in Denmark, composing almost 300 songs in total (Foltmann et al. 2009, p. 11). In the latter half of the century, other fields of the arts – most significantly theatre and literature – went along different trajectories, especially following the anti-romantic, naturalist turn of the *Modern Breakthrough*, spearheaded by the critic Georg Brandes (Hvidt 2002-2005), more on which below. Opera and music in general, however, largely stuck to the same narrative tropes as before, and even if the musical language evolved, the folk, or at least folk-like, song remained as fundamental components of Danish music drama.

The upturn in national sentiment throughout the 19th century happened for a multitude of reasons. Although nationalist thought was prevalent throughout the continent, Danish self-perception was also shaped by developments on a national level. Politically and militarily, the 19th century can largely be seen as a time of decline for Denmark. At the end of the 18th century, the country was a moderately successful trading empire with colonies in the West Indies, West Africa and India, in addition to controlling Iceland, Norway and parts of what is today Northern Germany. It also controlled – much like today – the Faeroe Islands and Greenland. By the end of the 19th century, Denmark had been reduced to one of the smallest nation states in Europe, having been forced to cede its European dominions after losing wars, as well as having had to sell its colonies. Only the Caribbean islands of Saint Thomas, Saint John and Saint Croix remained, but these were eventually sold to the United States in 1917 (Bjørn 2002-2005). Iceland eventually gained independence in 1944. Denmark’s overseas colonies and their fate are not within the scope of this dissertation, but they still warrant mention in the context of Denmark’s loss of land and wealth throughout the 19th century.

In Europe, Denmark’s losses were primarily brought about in the aftermath of wars. The first major blow to Denmark’s power occurred towards the end of the Napoleonic Wars,

at the 1814 Treaty of Kiel. The then-real union of Denmark-Norway had been on the side of Napoleon and at the Treaty of Kiel, following the War of the Sixth Coalition, Denmark was forced to cede Norway to Sweden. Denmark had also endured several humiliating attacks during the wars, most notably the two Battles of Copenhagen in 1801 and 1807, the latter of which burned down large parts of the Danish capital. The next great defeat of the 19th century occurred half a century after the Treaty of Kiel. The Second Schleswig War of 1864 saw Denmark cede its southern, German-speaking duchies of Schleswig, Holstein and Lauenburg to Prussia and Austria. Due to the long-standing cultural connections to Schleswig in particular – the region is known as Sønderjylland (Southern Jutland) in Danish, underlining its perceived Danishness – the great defeat of 1864 was felt more keenly than the loss of Norway (Brunbech 2014). These duchies made up approximately a third of Denmark’s population and land area, and their loss dramatically reduced the size and population of an already shrunken country. In 1920, the northern half of Schleswig voted to re-join Denmark in a referendum. The period also saw Denmark’s transition from an absolutist monarchy to a democracy, with the Constitution of 1849.

In addition to these largely outside factors, musicologist Jens Henrik Koudal (2005a) traces the burgeoning national sentiment in early 19th century Denmark back to the increased interest in Germanic languages and folk literature of the mid-18th century. There were also government-directed actions within Denmark designed to inspire national unity towards the end of the 18th century. Both Koudal and Knud Michelsen (2006-09) point to the nationally-minded Ove Høegh-Guldberg, who worked as first secretary (and *de facto* prime minister) to the severely mentally ill King Christian VII between 1772 and 1784. King Christian VII’s illness was so severe that he was unable to reign, thereby creating a space for potential power grabs by his first ministers. Høegh-Guldberg’s predecessor, Johann Friedrich Struensee, had attempted to introduce something akin to democratic reforms, but grew increasingly unpopular – not least because of his illicit affair with Queen Caroline Mathilde – and was eventually executed. Høegh-Guldberg was far more conservative and nationally minded and saw as his primary agenda to strengthen the absolute power of the monarch, and by extension himself. His nationalist, anti-democratic sentiments also influenced the arts. The Royal Theatre – which, as the name would imply, was under direct royal control – began commissioning dramatic works to better reflect a mood of national unity.

The first of these was Johannes Ewald's Singspiel *Fiskerne* ('The Fishermen'; 1779), also the first piece of Danish literature to depict the people of the country as anything other than comic characters. Kapellmeister Johann Ernst Hartmann's music also showed considerable folk music influences. The story concerns a group of fishermen in northern Zealand and their heroic rescue of an English captain whose ship had run aground – based on events that had happened five years prior. The real fishermen even attended the first performance, which took place on the king's birthday. As much as this was a story of bravery at sea, through it ran a streak of nationalism, as this heroism was clearly intended to be seen as a Danish trait. The piece also very explicitly connected the idea of Danishness with the monarch; for it, Ewald wrote what would later become Denmark's royal anthem, *Kong Christian stod ved højen Mast* ('King Christian stood by the lofty mast'; (Michelsen 2006-09)). In the song, King Christian IV of Denmark is hailed for his bravery at sea, alongside other Danish naval heroes like Niels Juel and Peter Wessel Tordenskiold. The song specifically references the 1644 Battle of Colberger Heide, a naval battle between Denmark-Norway and Sweden which ended indecisively. Denmark did not win the battle, and eventually lost the Torstenson War (1643 – 1645) – of which the battle was part – giving up large areas of land to Sweden. Despite this, the battle became emblematic in Denmark of the bravery of Christian IV, who kept fighting despite injuries and losing the sight of his right eye.

The 1780s also brought with them key agricultural reforms, which in 1788 effectively released Danish farmers from centuries of serfdom, giving them the opportunity to own land and move as they wished. This, too, was reflected in the plays and Singspiele given at the Royal Theatre, as well as in the changing demographic makeup of Copenhagen and Denmark's other large towns and cities. In the case of Royal Kapellmeister Johann Abraham Peter (J.A.P.) Schulz' (1747-1800) Singspiel *Høstgildet* ('The Autumn Feast'; 1790), the agricultural reforms themselves form the basis of the story: the plot revolves around a *selvejerbonde* – a farmer who owns his own land – from Zealand, whose two daughters end up marrying their suitors: a Norwegian former royal guardsman, and a sailor from Holstein (Selvik 2017; Gjervan 2017). The Singspiel was written and premiered – much like *Fiskerne* – for a royal occasion, this time the marriage between Crown Prince Frederick and his cousin Marie Sophie. *Høstgildet* stresses the unity of Denmark, with the characters from all around the Danish realm happily engaged by curtain. The king is already invoked through one of the

suitors being a former royal guardsman, but also through the praise levelled at the agricultural reforms, and not least the final chorus explicitly praising the king. Schulz' music was widely considered to be particularly Danish, with a mix of songs, choruses and dances; but, as Koudal points out, Schulz' music was not taken from folk music. That, however, was of less importance. What mattered was the construction of a particular Danishness in this folk-like music, which was *perceived* to have its roots in actual folk music (Koudal 2005a, p. 15).

The German Schulz was appointed to the post of Royal Kapellmeister in Copenhagen in 1787, after having held positions as music director and court composer at the Prussian court for almost a decade. By then he was a prodigious composer of operetta and Singspiel, but he had also begun to make his mark as a composer of song, the genre with which he would make his most lasting impression in Denmark. Schulz was closely affiliated with the *Berliner Liederschule* (Berlin Lied School), a mid-to-late 18th century school of composition seeking to emulate what they saw as the natural simplicity and timeless nature of the strophic German folk song; that is, songs that imitated folk songs but were not folk songs themselves. Musicologist Randi Marie Selvik (2017) traces the origin of the school back to 1752, with Christian Gottfried Krause's treatise *Von der musikalische Poesie* ('Of musical poetry'), and the 1753 collaboration between Krause and the poet Karl Ramler, *Oden mit Melodien* ('Odes with melodies'). In the preface of the latter, the basic ideals of the school are found, namely that '[t]he songs should be popular (*volkstümlich*) and have a simple and easy melody. In addition, they ought to function as educational tools for social and moral improvement and as a social bond that could unite people belonging to different social classes' (Selvik 2017, p. 218). The songs of Schulz and the Berliner Liederschule, then, were meant for a general audience, their melodic and harmonic complexity kept to a minimum. Paramount to Schulz' songs – and the Berliner Liederschule in general – was what he termed a *Schein des Bekannten*, a 'gleam of the well-known'. The music would '[follow] the form and verse of the poem, with melodies that suited the poem's content and "tone"' (Selvik 2017, p. 220). Songs were to sound familiar to the listener or singer, without them necessarily having heard them before. As remarked by Reynolds, Schulz was helped in achieving this *Schein des Bekannten* by German folk song being 'basically diatonic with extremely consistent melodic and rhythmic features' (Reynolds 2010, p. 124). The same features are largely present in Danish folk music, or at least in the early 19th century conception of it, as they were recorded in the

folk song collections that started appearing in the early decades of the century (Koudal 2005a, p. 22f.).

The ideals of the popular or ‘folk-like’ – as Reynolds translates *volkstümlich* – strophic song would also influence Schulz’ Singspiele. As Selvik points out in her essay on *Høstgildet*, ‘the strophic song is the basic musical unit – songs with simple melodies and almost primitive musical accompaniment, which correspond to the aesthetics of Schulz’ song collections’ (Selvik 2017, p. 226). Schulz’ other key musical inspirations – Neapolitan opera, Gluck and *opéra comique* – were apparent, but the simpler songs proved the most popular ones, being printed and sung, shorn of their connection to the original Singspiel. Indeed, Schulz’ songs seem to lay the foundation for a specifically Danish music. After hearing *Høstgildet*, its librettist Jens Baggesen, supposedly said of Schulz: ‘[t]his German has given us the first Danish music, and from such a deep source that no Dane will be able to bring us a second in so pure a manner’ (quoted in Selvik 2017, p. 226). Indeed, creating an image of himself as a German-turned-Dane had been the plan since he got the job as Kapellmeister in Copenhagen. In a letter to the poet Knud Lyne Rahbek in 1787, before he had even set foot in Copenhagen, Schulz notes his intention of becoming ‘a Dane in Denmark’, as opposed to his then current state of being ‘a German in Germany’ (quoted in Schwab 2005, p. 61).

The latter decades of the 18th century saw the establishment of both the Singspiel and the strophic, popular song as identifiably national musical genres in Denmark. These genres, at opposite ends of the cultural spectrum – one composed for the Copenhagen audience of the Royal Theatre, the other for the moral betterment and entertainment of the Danish populace at large – would be used as expressions of Danishness throughout the 19th and parts of the 20th centuries. External threats from the beginning of the 19th century onwards exacerbated the need for a distinctly Danish national identity around which to rally. During the Napoleonic wars, the popular song gained a more patriotic gleam, and a tradition of communal singing – *fællessang* – grew forth. Kirsten Sass Bak (2005) sees communal singing as at first a distinctly bourgeois activity, stemming from men’s drinking clubs in the years directly after 1800, yet it soon caught on in other societal strata. Traumatic events, such as the two Battles of Copenhagen (1801 and 1807), as well as Denmark’s losses in the Napoleonic wars led to a defiant patriotism, which was particularly evident in the poetic texts disseminated through

communal singing. When popular poets wrote patriotic or otherwise national poetry, composers would flock to them and settings would soon appear either as broadsheets or in songbooks – often both.

The nationalist significance of these songs, Sass-Bak notes, lay primarily in their texts, not necessarily in their music. The Danishness of the songs came not from the melodies themselves, but the nationalist texts to which they were set, and the contexts in which they were performed. '[I]t is after all a kind of musical performance, and without melodies that would naturally be impossible' (Sass-Bak 2005, p. 101). While the texts were explicitly nationalist in tone, the music to which the texts were set gained national connotations by association. A parallel can be drawn to how Schulz' Danish songs of a few decades previous came to be considered Danish, despite them being written by a German, and firmly based in a stylised German song tradition. It is not, however, entirely inaccurate to refer to these melodies as Danish. Not only did they almost automatically become considered Danish by being set to Danish poetry and sung by a Danish audience, but they also built on a Northern European predilection for simple songs in a major key, a genre that established itself independently of national borders (Sass-Bak 2005, p. 113).

The Singspiel remained the dominant genre of music drama written in Denmark for the first half of the 19th century, with the folk-like, strophic song making up the fundamental musical unit. The period also saw an increased interest in Danish folk culture, including folk songs, which in turn greatly influenced composers working at the time. The stories, too, changed, reflecting this interest in Danish folklore. While still national in nature, they largely took a less obvious interest in portraying an idealised present time – or close to present time – Denmark, as with *Fiskerne* and *Høstgildet*. Using music drama as a tool to construct a unitary, national identity did continue throughout the 19th century, although rather less explicitly than was the case with *Fiskerne* and *Høstgildet*. Folkloric or historic settings, as well as music directly influenced by folk songs would prove fundamental to Danish music drama in this time.

The tradition of pieces commissioned for royal occasions would reach its apex with Johan Ludvig Heiberg and Friedrich Kuhlau's Singspiel *Elverhøj* (*The Elves' Hill*; 1828), but unlike *Fiskerne*, its setting is clearly folkloric, albeit starring Danish royalty. Like *Fiskerne* and *Høstgildet*, *Elverhøj* was written for a royal occasion, the wedding of Crown Prince Frederick (later King Frederick VII) and his cousin Princess Vilhelmine Marie, the daughter of King Frederick VI. The setting of *Elverhøj* is identifiably Danish, as Heiberg based the story on the legends of the elfin people said to inhabit a hill – the titular elves' hill – on the peninsula Stevns, south of Copenhagen. It also has as part of its cast of characters, King Christian IV, who, acting as a sort of 17th century detective, untangles the story and challenges the supremacy of the elfin king. Kuhlau's music, in turn, is largely inspired by Danish folk music, strophic songs making up several of the sung numbers. The patriotic nature of the opera is hammered home through the inclusion of J.E. Hartmann's melody for 'Kong Christian', last heard in *Fiskerne*. It appears both in the grandiose coda of the overture, as well as in the Singspiel's final chorus, albeit with a different, even more explicitly royalist text, beginning 'Beskærm vor Konge, o store Gud' ('Protect our king, o great God'). *Elverhøj* stands as the

The late 18th century and early 19th century had a much less fixed idea of nationality and national belonging; as mentioned above, Schulz fully intended to become a 'Dane in Denmark' upon his moving to Copenhagen. Once he arrived in Denmark, his German nationality was not seen as a hindrance for the perceived Danishness of himself or his music, either. Other German-born composers, like the previously mentioned Kuhlau, would continue to shape Danish music in the first decades of the 19th century. The same decades also saw an increased prominence of native compositional talent and the development of self-sustaining Danish – or rather, Copenhagen – professional musical life. With an increased native Danish presence in Danish musical life, Danishness came to be seen as less a state of mind than a congenital trait. In an article on Danishness in the music of the Danish Golden Age (roughly the first half of the 19th century), musicologist Heinrich W. Schwab notes an increasingly nationally minded musical discourse in Denmark in the first half of the 19th century. This was coupled with an increased interest in Danish folk culture and music, as well as the fact of an increasing amount of native-born composers working in Denmark. Now, the Danishness of a composer had become contingent on their being born and raised in Denmark, not – as the case was with Schulz – whether they could be a loyal and productive citizen of wherever they lived

(Schwab 2005, p. 62). Schwab cites an 1846 letter from the poet Bernhard Severin Ingemann to the Danish-born composer Niels W. Gade – who at the time was living and teaching in Leipzig – urging Gade to return to Copenhagen and revive the spirit of patriotism in his native country:

Nearly all of our composers, even the two last departed greats, were of foreign descent; I hope that Kuhlau and Weyse will be replaced by you and Hartmann, truly Danish composers.

Næsten alle vore Componister, selv de to sidst bortgangne store, vare af fremmed Herkomst; ved Dem og Hartmann haaber jeg nu Kuhlau og Weyse skulle blive erstattede og af virkelig danske Tonekunstnere. (quoted in Schwab 2005, p. 62)

The Hartmann that Ingemann referenced in the letter was Johann Peter Emilius (J.P.E.) Hartmann, the grandson of Johann Hartmann, the composer of *Fiskerne*. The older Hartmann was born in 1721 in the Silesian town of Głogów, in which was then under the rule of the Crown of Bohemia. Ingemann might not have been thinking of the fact that J.P.E. Hartmann had a foreign grandfather, but the fact that J.P.E. had been born and raised in Denmark was presumably enough.

The Singspiel remained an important genre at the Royal Theatre throughout the 19th century – many of the foreign operas put on also featured spoken dialogue in place of recitatives – but from around 1850, compositional trends skewed more towards sung recitatives, and eventually more through-composed operas. More international musical influences can also be increasingly discerned. This is not to say that earlier Danish music drama had lacked in foreign influences: foreign opera had been a part of the repertoire at The Royal Theatre for as long as opera had been performed there. And, as has been mentioned earlier, the earliest composers of nationally minded music drama in Denmark had generally been German. Still, throughout the 19th century, the strophic song remained an integral part of the musical and dramatic fabric of these works, as did identifiably Danish settings and stories. This was especially apparent in the parochial vaudevilles, often written by Heiberg, that dominated the Copenhagen stage from the mid-1820s (Scavenius 2007; Johansen 2007). They would generally be set somewhere in or around Copenhagen, with gently comic stories and music that often would be adapted from other, popular works of the time, as well as folk melodies. One of the first operas to do away with spoken dialogue was J.P.E. Hartmann's

1846 opera *Liden Kirsten* (*Little Christine*) with a libretto by Hans Christian Andersen, replacing it with accompanied recitatives. It is still, however, firmly divided into numbers, features a pastoral setting and a story grounded in Danish folk myth, and its music remains inspired by folk music, especially in the many lively choruses and dances. There is also an unashamedly patriotic element to the opera, most explicitly uttered in the romanza ‘Langt, langt fra Hjemmets Kyst’ (‘Far, far from the coast of home’), sung by the male lead character Sverkel, about the beauty of Denmark and the delight of seeing his native land again. Despite musical innovation, the narrative and dramatic material of 19th century Danish music continued to be gathered from folk myth. Still, lighter genres, like operetta, would often be set in more ‘exotic’ locales, and allow for more similarly ‘exotic’ music, but which still relied on the strophic song.

Further developments in the music of nationally minded music drama can be seen in Niels W. Gade’s cantata *Elverskud* (*The Elf-King’s Daughter*; 1854) and Peter Heise’s opera *Drot og Marsk* (*King and Marshall*; 1878). Both take their musical inspirations from folk music, whilst at the same time keeping at least somewhat up to date with more international trends. Gade had returned to Copenhagen in 1848 after spending the last five years in Leipzig, conducting the Gewandhaus Orchestra, as well as teaching at the Gewandhaus Conservatory. In the years after his arrival in Copenhagen, he helped re-organise the Copenhagen Music Society (*Musikforeningen*), and from when he was appointed leader in 1850 until his death in 1890, he remained the primary tastemaker in Danish musical life. Early in his career, much of his music was explicitly national and influenced by folk music, most notably his First Symphony (1842), three out of four movements of which is based on his own folk song imitation *Paa Sjølund’s fagre Sletter* (*On the Pleasant Planes of Zealand*). When his music reached Germany, critics praised it for its ‘Nordic tone’, and when word of these critiques reached Denmark, Gade’s music of course sounded Danish, and one at last had outside confirmation of the Danishness of Danish music (Koudal 2005a, p. 26). In Germany, Gade’s music changed stylistic direction towards the Classically-tinged Romanticism of Robert Schumann and Mendelssohn, a change of taste that is also reflected in his four decades of leading the Copenhagen Music Society. While *Elverskud* was composed some years after Gade’s national period – over a decade after his First Symphony – it is still very much rooted in Danish folk music and culture, its story being an elaboration of a Danish folk ballad. Still, the Mendelssohnian influences in the scene with the Elf King’s daughters are not

inconsiderable. *Drot og Marsk*, too, has an identifiably Danish setting, albeit one rooted in history: the story of the murder of King Erik Klipping in 1286. Here, too, the influence and dramatic importance of the strophic Danish song – Heise was otherwise known as a prolific composer of songs – makes itself very much known, although the music also shows influence by operatic composers like Weber, Meyerbeer and Verdi (Jensen 2002).

Opera in Denmark has always been an international art form – even before the Royal Theatre started putting on opera themselves, Italian and German touring companies would perform in the Danish capital –foreign works always outweighing domestic ones (Scavenius 2007). It does, however, bear mentioning that overwhelming majority of the opera at the Royal Theatre would be presented in a Danish translation, largely drawing on the theatre’s own ensemble of actors and singers. In the 19th century, Danish opera largely remained tied to the narrative and musical models described above, drawing heavily on historical and folk cultural sources. This remained largely true towards the end of the 19th and beginning of the 20th centuries. The most commonly performed works were by composers like Wagner, Auber and Mozart, with the offerings of Danish opera limited to the occasional premiere and revivals of what had by then become repertoire stalwarts, like *Drot og Marsk* and *Liden Kirsten*. There were of course exceptions to the rule of the Danish-set, folk music-inspired opera, notably August Enna’s *Kleopatra* (1896) and Carl Nielsen’s own *Saul og David* (1904), but neither of these operas are set in anything approaching the present day. Danish operetta and lighter operas also featured, often with more far-flung locales and opportunities for distinctly foreign-sounding music. There is no Danish operatic equivalent of the realist and naturalist turn towards more urgent and contemporary subject matters that can be seen in the worlds of literature and theatre in the latter decades of the 19th century; no operatic counterpart to the Ibsen plays that so crowded the Royal Theatre seasons of the 1890s. Georg Brande’s *Modern Breakthrough* never reached the operatic stage.

The expression of Danish national identity – Danishness – that grew forth throughout the 19th century was largely contingent on stories set in distant Danish history or in what had become considered a specifically Danish mythos, as well as music which at the very least resembled an audience’s ideas of Danish folk music. From the late 18th century establishment of a Danish music drama tradition, the musical *appearance* of Danishness and its ability to

communicate its Danish nature was deemed more important than the actual Danishness of the music. As the 19th century went on, Denmark's status in Europe was severely weakened, and the need for a style of music that could easily be identified as Danish arose. To a large extent, this construction of Danishness sprung out of a late 18th century, German style of music, emphasising the easily recognisable style of the German folk song, with its 'extremely consistent melodic and rhythmic features' (Reynolds 2010, p. 124), features which in turn were in line with the Danish public's ideas of Danish folk music. The melodic and rhythmic consistency and diatonicism of German folk music are also found in other Northern European traditions of folk music – instead of delineating folk music by country, it is more appropriate to speak of a regional style existing on a continuum (Dahlhaus 1989, p. 304f.). As much as the composers of 19th century Danish music drama took their inspiration from the collections of folk music that had begun appearing, they also created and supported a musical vocabulary of Danishness which was built on musical ideas taken from foreign musical traditions – international ideas of music were made national. To quote Koudal, 'national music was both found and invented' (Koudal 2005a, p. 13).

2.3 *Maskarade* and Nielsen's notions of Danishness

Superficially, *Maskarade* differs from the musical and narrative tropes of Danishness as they arose in the 19th century, although, as will be discussed in Chapter 3, it still engages with them, particularly in the portrayal of conservative, reactionary patriotism. The opera also stands out within Nielsen's own oeuvre. Its musical idiom and ideological contents only briefly make appearances in his subsequent compositions, and then as conscious imitation, harking back to the time of Holberg. One reason for this is Nielsen's repeatedly stated reluctance to repeat himself, instead striving for constant innovation. In the years following *Maskarade*, he would tell interviewers that he was working on another opera, but *Maskarade* would prove to be his last effort in the genre. The nature of Nielsen's portrayals of Danishness also changed. The explicit urbanity of *Maskarade* was not seen again in Nielsen's output, and what evocations of Danishness and Denmark there are instead focus on nature and the people working the land. *Maskarade* stands as a defining – perhaps confirming – document of an early 20th century bourgeois, urbane Danishness, yet in Nielsen's oeuvre it stands remarkably alone. After *Maskarade* the apparent dichotomy in Nielsen's music between the serious and complex concert hall pieces and the simpler, folk-like songs becomes more clearly delineated. These songs often play on seemingly traditionally Romantic tropes of Danishness, often being

settings of Golden Age poets, with all the patriotic flourishes they entail. Still, Nielsen's musical Danishness clearly stands apart from the composers of the century prior.

Nielsen repeatedly spoke to the press about his reluctance for repetition, particularly where *Maskarade* was concerned – in his constant struggle for artistic innovation and renewal, he did not want to be seen as simply copying one of his most successful pieces. In an interview with the newspaper *Vort Land* on 13 November 1906 – two days after the premiere of *Maskarade* – he vowed to never compose a comic opera again:

When one wallows in as much musical seriousness as I have, one needs an outlet for the excess – the artistic [excess]! [...] Now I have gotten away with it successfully. I will never again write a comic opera. No, I will not. At least I don't think so.

Naar man svælger i saa megen musikalsk Alvor, som det jeg har gjort, saa trenger man til et Afløb for Overskudet – det kunstneriske! [...] Nu er jeg kommen af med det og det heldigt. Jeg skriver aldrig mere en komisk Opera. Nej, jeg gør ikke. Det tror jeg da ikke. (quoted in Fellow 1999a, p. 98)

Nielsen's reply was certainly exaggerated in its certainty – he toyed with the idea of composing another comic opera at later stages in his career, even though nothing came of it – but he was surely reluctant to accept the title as the great new composer of Danish comic opera, as some of the newspapers were heralding him. He was, however, correct in his statement that he would never write another comic opera – *Maskarade* would indeed be Nielsen's final opera.

Nielsen restated his aversion to writing another comic opera and potentially writing a copy of *Maskarade* in an interview entitled 'Vilhelm Andersens Holberg-Opera i Vanskeligheder' ('Vilhelm Andersen's Holberg Opera in Difficulties') with the tabloid *Ekstrabladet* in 1928. In the interview, he mentioned that Vilhelm Andersen had sent him a libretto for another Holberg opera, but that he has not been successful in setting it to music. Andersen's libretto this time was based on *Kilderejsen* ('The Healing Spring'; 1725), wherein Leonora pretends to be unable to communicate in anything but operatic arias and must therefore seek a healing spring, which is merely a ruse to run away with her beloved Leander and break off her engagement with Leonard – it is important to remember that the characters in Holberg's plays and their relations with one another are not constant; in *Maskarade*,

Leonard is Leonora's father. In the interview, Nielsen expresses his reluctance to write another *Maskarade*:

'However much I have thought and composed, I always return to my opera "Maskarade". And, do you see? I do not *want* to repeat myself; when I write on a new work, it is because I have something new to say; but with this Holberg opera, it is like something inside of me returned to what I left long ago'.

Hvor meget jeg end har tænkt og digtet i Toner, vender jeg bestandig tilbage til min Opera "Maskarade". Og, forstaar De? Jeg vil ikke gentage mig selv; naar jeg skriver et nyt Arbejde, er det, fordi jeg har noget nyt at sige; men med denne Holberg-Opera er det ligesom noget i mig vendte tilbage til det, jeg for længst har passeret. (quoted in Fellow 1999b, pp. 493-494)

Nielsen then went on to say that he had suggested that the composer Finn Høffding (1899-1997) instead could take on the task, something Høffding subsequently did, completing the opera three years later (Fellow 1999c, p. 850). Again, it was Nielsen's unwillingness to repeat himself that kept him from working on another libretto by Andersen. When Nielsen visited Gothenburg for a production of *Maskarade* in December 1930, he mentioned that he had started work on yet another comic opera (Fellow 1999b, pp. 568-569). Fellow notes that the opera would presumably be based on Ben Jonson's *Epicene, or the Silent Woman*, the play that would later form the basis of Richard Strauss and Stefan Zweig's *Die schweigsame Frau* (1935). Nothing came of this opera, either. Much like in his writings on musical aesthetics, Nielsen was rather more emphatic in his statements than he proved to be in his musical actions.

Even though Nielsen time and time again expressed his reluctance to repeat himself, he did return consciously to the musical world of *Maskarade* in the final decade of his career, albeit for occasional works. His occasional setting of Hans Hartvig Seedorf Pedersen's poem *Hyldest til Holberg* ('Homage to Holberg'; 1922) is perhaps the most literal. *Hyldest til Holberg* was performed as part of the Holberg bicentenary celebrations at the Royal Theatre on 26 September and 3 October, as an epilogue to Holberg's first play *Den politiske Kandestøber* ('The Political Tinker'; 1722). During the short piece, characters from Holberg's plays pay homage to the old poet, ending in a short final chorus. The opening quartet of muses is particularly reminiscent of *Maskarade*, with a dance-like accompaniment dominated by high strings and woodwinds (Nielsen et al. 2007, pp. xxxi-xxxvii). The season of the Holberg

bicentenary also included performances of *Maskarade* (Nielsen 2001a, p. xxi). Historical settings seemed to inspire a *Maskarade*-like style in Nielsen, at least towards the end of his career. It would seem like the musical world of *Maskarade* has a specific temporal and geographical context, that of 18th century Copenhagen. His incidental music to Sophus Michaëlis' play *Amor og Digteren* ('Cupid and the Poet'; 1930) – written for the 125th anniversary celebrations of the birth of Hans Christian Andersen, about Andersen's infatuation with the Swedish soprano Jenny Lind – displays a similar indebtedness to *Maskarade* as *Hyldest til Holberg*, although the music is much further removed stylistically, particularly in the more dissonant, sparse overture. This is fitting, as the play – despite its historical setting – takes place over a century later than *Maskarade*.

While Nielsen's musical language was ever-evolving throughout his career, the theme of Danishness is ever-present in Nielsen's last 25 years. It was in the years after *Maskarade* that he started composing his simple, popular songs. The songs are in a clearly Schulzian tradition, stressing the clarity of the melody and quality of the text being set. In Nielsen's writings on the matter, he stresses that the goal of a song is to clearly articulate and support its text. The simple, strophic setting of a good poem is what is crucial in both Schulz' and later Nielsen's songs. The texts that Nielsen set are also of note. He set a good deal of contemporary writers, perhaps most famously Jeppe Aakjær, whose 1905 poem 'Hvem sidder der bag Skærmen' became Nielsen's first major hit when he set it to music in 1907 – it is better known under the name 'Jens Vejmand'. Nielsen also set poems by the great Danish poets of old, particularly the ones from the Golden Age – he was clearly not as eager to distance himself from the literary tropes of the 19th century as he was to distance himself from the musical ones. For Nielsen, the song was not a genre for composers to exhibit their great virtuosity through writing distracting figurations, no 'runs and trills on the piano because a nightingale sings or a brook is babbling, nor thundering bass notes at the mention of death' ('Løb og Triller paa Klaveret, fordi en Nattergal synger eller Bækken risler, ejheller Rumlen med Bassen naar Døden nævnes', (Nielsen 1925, p. 67)). Nielsen's essay 'Danske Sange' ('Danish Songs'), from which the previous quote stems, was originally a review of a collection of songs by his friend and collaborator Thomas Laub, and it reads largely as a manifesto for his and Laub's idea of the song and its role in society:

Laub has taken his poems from Oehlenschläger, Heiberg, Paludan-Muller, Chr. Winther, Blicher, Ingemann and Hauch, and they have all been set in such a way that

the most delicate treatment has been coupled with the most deeply felt folk-like sentiment, the noblest of melodies with the most universally understandable harmonisation. Through these melodies, these poems have achieved such a delicate, soft, mild and sincere glow that you can see right into their souls [...].

Laub har fundet sine Digte hos Oehlenschläger, Heiberg, Paludan-Müller, Chr. Winther, Blicher, Ingemann og Hauch, og de er alle musikalsk saaledes behandlet, at den fineste Udarbejdelse er parret med det dybest mulige folkelige Præg, den ædleste Melodiføring med ganske jævn almenfattelig Harmonisering. Digtene er gennem disse Toner kommet i en saa fin, lind, mild og inderlig Gennemgløden, at man ser dem helt ind i Sjælen [...]. (Nielsen 1925, p. 66)

The poets mentioned by Nielsen are all Golden Age poets, many, if not all, of whom he also set to music. The noble melodies and understandable harmonies are principles he emphasised in his own songs; much like Schulz, he wanted his songs to be sung by the public, as moral and pedagogical aids.

While Nielsen did not start writing folk-like songs until after *Maskarade*, some of the music – notably Jeronimus’ Act 1 song – closely resembles what would become his more popular idiom. Nielsen did not copy the style of Schulz, although he was inevitably inspired by them, drawing from the same sources. Although he did not necessarily talk about his songs with explicitly patriotic wording, it is clear that he them as particularly Danish – many of his collections of songs were published under titles that underlined their Danishness, like *En Snes danske Viser* (‘A Score of Danish Songs’, 1915), which he published together with Thomas Laub. Indeed, the title of the essay in which he most clearly and explicitly formulates his idea of the folk-like song is *Danske Sange* (‘Danish Songs’). Nielsen decidedly continued the 19th century tradition of the strophic, folk-like song as a signifier of Danishness, also in *Maskarade*, but he lessened its dramatic function, thereby strengthening their standing as stand-alone pieces. The musical language and urban sensibility of *Maskarade* was only revisited on a handful of occasions, and largely abandoned by Nielsen for fear of repeating himself. While he did continue writing simple, strophic songs, these have more rural and idyllic texts, moving away from the city and into the country.

2.4 *Bacchustoget* and literary intoxication – *Maskarade*'s literary context

In the literary debates in Denmark around the turn of the 19th century, *Maskarade*'s librettist Vilhelm Andersen represented a voice of continuity, as opposed to the more radical breaks called for by Georg Brandes and his Modern Breakthrough. Starting in the 1870s, Brandes had called for more realist literature, which could freely and openly discuss the issues that affected contemporary life. Andersen was of a more historical inclination, and in his 1904 treatise *Bacchustoget i Norden* ('The Bacchian Procession in the North'), he outlined what he saw as a Bacchian impulse in Scandinavian literature – that is, literature and art predicated on the sensual and corporeal, not on the cerebral and logical – and, as part of this, the role of alcohol and intoxication in the last two centuries of Scandinavian literature history. In Andersen's reading, Ludvig Holberg is the first real exponent of this Bacchian trend in Scandinavia, and in his plays, he outlines the ritual – almost religious – significance of alcohol and the act of intoxication in this part of the world. This section will look at Andersen's reading of Holberg and what he conceived of as Holberg's art-as-religion, as well as how it seems to have influenced his libretto for *Maskarade*. Further informing this will be Andersen's series of three articles on Holberg's archetypal servant character Henrik, published in the monthly journal *Tilskueren* in 1906, shortly after he finished work on the libretto. The articles on Henrik relate more directly to Holberg's *Mascarade* – even though Henrik appears in several of Holberg's comedies – and Andersen's idea of this central character could help enlighten some of the choices Andersen made when writing his libretto.

Bacchustoget is divided into two parts, the first looking at Ancient Greek culture and its connections to the deity Dionysus, the Greek counterpart to the titular, Roman Bacchus. The second, longer part looks at Scandinavian – primarily Danish – history of literature and its relation to alcohol and intoxication. In attempting to draw lines between Ancient Greece and more recent Scandinavian (literary) history, Andersen wished to prepare the ground for what literature scholar Anders Ehlers Dam terms a 'modern Antiquity' (Dam 2010, p. 78), in large part as a measure against what he saw as encroaching Modernism. In basing his libretto for Nielsen's Holberg opera on the play *Mascarade*, Andersen could realise onstage much of the ideological content of his treatise, most notably in the masquerade of the third act, where intoxication attains a religious dimension. How much Nielsen knew of or indeed agreed with

Andersen's viewpoints is unknown – Nielsen famously picked Andersen as the librettist for his Holberg opera because he had seen him perform in a student revue (Fellow 1999a, pp. 97-98), and not because of any literary inclinations – but they seem to have shared some opinions on the connections between Ancient Greece and their modern-day Denmark.

The starting point of the second part of *Bacchustoget* is Alexander the Great's campaign in India and its cultural significance. He terms the campaign a 'dionysisk *Sejerstog*' (Andersen 1904, p. 83) – a Dionysian victory procession – which brought wine to the East, and with it, initiation into Hellenic culture. Alexander's campaign and subsequent victorious procession went in other directions than just eastwards – it also went westwards and northwards. This subsequent adoration of Dionysus is characterised by an almost religious relationship with alcohol and intoxication. Andersen finds the northern branch the most interesting and worthy of discussion. What came out of these processions were not necessarily the full-fledged Dionysian cults of Ancient Greece, but, Andersen argues, the act of drinking and alcohol itself became inextricably linked to Bacchus and attained a form of religious, or at least ritual, nature. Because Scandinavia is entirely unsuited to viticulture, beer became the main beverage attributed to Bacchus, and because access to alcohol in Scandinavia has historically been scarce, Andersen claims, alcohol and intoxication have gained a 'deeper rhythm' (Andersen 1904, p. 83) in this part of the world. The first section of *Bacchustoget* deals with how the wild, Thracian god Bacchus became civilised under Hellenic influence, but, Andersen argues, in Scandinavia, the two polar extremes of Bacchus, and by extension humanity – the god and the animal – are more clearly expressed. In the Norse sagas, Andersen insists, alcohol – usually mead – is only mentioned in relation to feasts (Andersen 1904, p. 83), and in subsequent literature, alcohol has been treated almost as something sacred. By coming to the north, Bacchus returns to his Thracian, wild origins, rid of Hellenic civility.

The second part of *Bacchustoget*, however, is not primarily a history of alcohol in the Nordic countries, but rather, a history of Scandinavian literature as told through the lens of intoxication. The Bacchian in Scandinavian literature, Andersen insists, is something approaching a Nietzschean life force, a fundamentally held sense of life at the core of existence. Indeed, the notion of an elemental force of life driving forth existence, Vitalism, had become quite dominant in Denmark around the turn of the 20th century. Vitalism is here

used to refer to a primarily Germanic philosophy of life, based on Schopenhauerian and Nietzschean ideas of a godless, monistic world whose driving force is life itself (Dam 2010, p. 23ff.). Vitalism, as argued by literature scholar Anders Ehlers Dam, is not a coherent artistic or philosophical movement, but rather a kind of artistic and philosophical paradigm, emphasising the experience of life and life itself (Dam 2010, p. 15). There was a desire to get back to a *fundamental* human existence, what the writer Johannes V. Jensen in his 1901 travelogue *Den gotiske Renæssanse* ('The Gothic Renaissance') formulated as wanting to '[return] to that which originally *was*, the origin of all cultus: Man as a living, functioning being' ('[vende] tilbage til det, der fra først af *var*, Oprindelsen til al Kultus: Mennesket som levende, fungerende Væsen' (quoted in Dam 2010, p. 10)). This notion of originality – 'that which originally *was*' is not necessarily meant in a chronological sense, but rather a return to the fundamental part of existence that had been obscured by modern life. Humans were seen as fundamentally alive – not necessarily alive in the sense of an absence of death, but instead having an immediacy and concentration of life.

To Andersen, the Dionysian, both in life and in literature, is this fundamental, original life force, unhindered by intellect and civility. Part of accessing this force is through alcohol and intoxication. Over the years certain parts of society have attempted to suppress this force; Andersen puts much of the blame on the Mediaeval Church, the influence of which was dampened by the advent of the Renaissance. Andersen writes of the Renaissance:

One usually says that the Renaissance was the first to 'discover Man'. In the Bacchian procession to the barbarians, the one called 'Renaissance', the original paganism was allowed to flourish, the unconditional flowering of human nature that had collapsed from anxiety during the Christianity of the Middle Ages.

Man plejer at sige, at Renæssancen først 'opdagede Mennesket'. I det Bacchustog til Barbarerne, som man kalder 'Renæssance', udfoldede sig paa ny det oprindelige Hedenskab, den uvilkaarlige Blomstring af Menneskenaturen, der havde lukket sig sammen af Angst i den middelalderlige Kristendom. (Andersen 1904, p. 87)

Andersen's definition of 'Renaissance' cannot be read as a purely temporal one, but instead something of a catch-all term for a period of spiritual and artistic awakening. His Renaissance emphasises the return of pre-Christian knowledge and ideals, supposedly

forgotten and suppressed after a millennium and a half of Christianity – specifically Catholicism. Jensen also uses the Renaissance to denote a period of renewed clarity, following an extended period of ignorance and decadence, calling for a new Renaissance in his own time. The main discussion of the Renaissance and its rediscovery of the Dionysian occurs at the beginning of the second part of *Bacchustoget*, where Andersen cites an early statue of Bacchus by ‘Michel Angelo’ (sic. (Andersen 1904, p. 86)) as the first example of Dionysian art in Christian times. Its ‘first and completely original counterpart’ in Nordic art, ‘our only Renaissance masterpiece’ (Andersen 1904, p. 87), are the comedies of Holberg, which allows humanity to discover its true self. And among Holberg’s ‘Renaissance masterpieces’ particular attention is given to the comedy *Jeppe paa Bjerget* (‘Jeppe on the Hill’) and its title character. The play revolves around a poor farmer, given to drink – the titular Jeppe – who is tricked, when drunk, by the local land-owning baron into believing that *he* has become the baron, and becomes ever more tyrannical as he is being deluded by the baron and his courtiers. In the play, Jeppe gets drunk twice, and it is through this double intoxication, Andersen argues, that Jeppe’s true, Bacchian nature is revealed. With his comedies, and *Jeppe* in particular, Holberg makes the first Nordic ‘discovery of Man’, imbuing them with the primal humanity of pre-Mediaeval and pre-Christian times: ‘[...] Dionysus has, like in the South, given his aid. Jeppe in an animal, who, lifted by intoxication releases all the original powers of human nature.’ (‘[...] hertil har som i Syden Dionysos givet sin Bistand. Jeppe er et Dyr, som, løftet af Rusen, udlader alle Menneskenaturens oprindelige Kræfter.’ (Andersen 1904)).

In his reading of *Jeppe*, and by extension, all of Holberg’s comedies, Andersen sees the contours of a Nordic *art-as-religion*. Indeed, he finds evidence of this art-as-religion in all the literature he looks at in *Bacchustoget*. However, calling this a religion in the modern sense is not entirely accurate. Andersen writes in the conclusion:

More correctly, the modern Dionysus is here, like everywhere in art that *is about to become religion*. In the Dionysian feeling, which was originally formed in those depths of life where the roots of plant life and human life meet, where there is still the deepest sense of the wholeness of life, the current of life flows through it, but just as present is the strongest sense of death.

Eller rettere, den moderne Dionysos er her som overalt i Kunsten, der *er ved at blive Religion*. I Dionysosfølelsen, der en Gang blev til i det dyb af Liv, hvor Plantelivets

og Menneskelivets Rødder mødes er der endnu den dybeste Følelse af det hele Liv, Livsstrømmen flyder derigennem, men derved tillige den stærkeste Følelse for Døden. (Andersen 1904, p. 297)

To Andersen, the Dionysian or Bacchian is an intensely felt sensation of life, a life that is universally felt in all living beings. It is not religion in the sense of necessarily believing in a god, but rather being connected to a fundamental force of life. As much as *Bacchustoget* is a history of literature seen through a lens of intoxication, it is also a Vitalist creed.

Andersen would further develop his ideas on Holberg in a series of three essays for the literary and scientific journal *Tilskueren* ('The Spectator'), entitled *Holbergs Henrik*. To an extent, it builds on ideas from *Bacchustoget*, but it is largely focused on placing Holberg within a wider Scandinavian literary context. As much as Holberg in *Bacchustoget* is the first Renaissance writer in Scandinavia – taking into account Andersen's not-quite-temporal definition of Renaissance – Andersen also points to him as the first Scandinavian bourgeois writer, this time looking particularly at the satirical poem *Peder Paars* (1719-1720), a parody of *The Aeneid*. The first essay starts with what Andersen considers the foundation of Dano-Norwegian literary history, namely the publication of King Christian III's Danish Bible in 1550. This was followed in the proceeding decades with secular works – Andersen mentions Anders Sørensen Vedel's translation of Saxo Grammaticus' chronicle *Gesta Danorum* (1575), and compilation of *Hundredvisebogen* ('The Hundred Song Book'; 1591), the first-ever collection of Danish folk songs, as well as Peder Claussøn Friis' 1633 translation of Snorri's sagas – which similarly created a foundation on which to build a Danish identity. Indeed, these texts 'gave our spiritual culture, in the sciences, in art and in poetry, its Nordic "renewal"' ('gav vor aandelige Kultur, i Videnskab, i Kunst og Poesi, dens nordiske "Fornyelse"'); (Andersen 1906: , p. 59)). Whatever specifically Danish identity had been created in the century prior, Andersen sees its foundation being laid in the mid-16th century – a heady mix of 'foreign' religious literature in the national language and secular translations and compilations of 'authentically' Danish – or at least Nordic – writings. If the 16th century had established literary Danishness, Holberg had introduced into Danish literature the bourgeoisie. According to Andersen, as of 1906, Denmark still remained in the era of the bourgeoisie.

In Andersen's reading of Danish literary history, the first bourgeois character is Peder Paars, a man utterly obsessed with appearing decent and honourable above anything else. These fundamental characteristics were passed on to one of Holberg's most important stock characters: the elderly burgher Jeronimus, who is often posed as the main antagonist of Holberg's comedies. Andersen sees the servant character of Henrik as the main foil for the above all decent and honourable burgher Jeronimus. Henrik is a fundamentally *urban* character – again, the first one in Danish literary history – his quick wit and irony eternally at odds with the humourless honourability of Jeronimus. Henrik appears in many of Holberg's comedies, and his character is not constant throughout them, but the different Henriks have more in common than what separates them; the same is true for Jeronimus. Andersen sees the relationship between Henrik and Jeronimus, servant and master, as the most fundamental tension in Holberg's comedies, and without the one, the other cannot exist. Henrik's irony and humour alone cannot defeat Jeronimus' bourgeois honourability. The one comedy that manages to defeat Jeronimus' honourability is *Mascarade*. Indeed, Andersen reads it as a comedy intent on defeating bourgeois honourability, but not through jokes and playing pranks, Henrik's usual strategy. 'It is, after all, not possible to tease someone to death' ('Det lader sig nu engang ikke gøre at drille Livet af Folk'; (Andersen 1906, p. 71)). No, 'to do off with honourability, one needs a positive pathos, which can bring forth the value that makes honour worthless' ('[t]il at gøre det af med Ærbarheden hører der en positiv Patos, der formaar at frembringe den Verdi, der gør Ærbarheden værdiløs'; (Andersen 1906, p. 71)). In *Mascarade*, Henrik becomes a lyrical character, not merely satirical; a distillation of Holberg's own delight in poetry, as music and dance personified. His defence of the masquerades is deeply caring, one where these controversial assemblies become a haven of light and equality in a dark and unequal world. Jeronimus' reactionary arguments are nothing compared to Henrik's poetry.

In his look at the role of the masquerade in early 18th century Denmark and its influence on Nielsen and Andersen's opera, theatre historian Bent Holm goes even further in his characterisation of the character of Henrik and his role in Holberg's *Mascarade* (Holm 1999). Citing Holberg's Epistle no. 347, a defence of masquerades published in 1750, Holm remarks that Holberg writes about masquerades primarily as a philosophical game with pagan roots but a Christian function in society. By 1750, masquerades had been banned for over a quarter of a century and were routinely subject to intense criticism, particularly from the

Church and religious officials. Indeed, *Mascarade* had been written as a protest against this ban back in 1724, premiering only a few days after it went into effect. Public theatre performances and masquerades would be banned for decades, not legalised until 1768; theatre did have a brief period of legalisation following the ascension of King Frederick V in 1746 but was again banned in 1750. In 1724, the year of the ban, Holberg wrote two plays dealing with masquerades, namely *Julestue* ('The Christmas Party') and *Mascarade*. The former depicts the masquerade and the festivities in an immoral light, as an animalistic, pre-civilisatory, pre-urban caricature of a party, set in 'the stronghold of stupidity', Æbeltoft in 'dark Jutland' (Holm 1999, p. 14). Its plot concerns a traditional Christmas party and the immorality and lasciviousness that entails. *Mascarade* is the modern, civilised and secularised counterpart of *Julestue*, its agenda being social rather than ritualistic. Even though it springs from the same pagan ritual world as *Julestue*, it is sufficiently refined as to be socially acceptable. As Andersen remarks in *Holbergs Henrik*, Holberg is fundamentally positive in *Mascarade*. Even though masquerades were criticised as being pagan, if not downright satanic, and associated with chaos and recklessness – the masquerade's possibilities for people of different social strata to meet was not looked very kindly upon either – Holberg saw them, unlike the livelier Christmas parties, as socially acceptable, even benign. In his 347th Epistle, written in 1750, he recognises their pagan roots, even calling them 'an imitation of the *Saturnalias* of old' ('en Imitation af de gamle *Saturnalier*'), in that they celebrate what he saw as the natural equality that originally existed among humanity, before the fall of man. Much like Andersen in *Bacchustoget*, Holberg speaks of the natural state of man, untainted by centuries of Christianity:

[E]veryone present is reminded of the state in which Man at the first creation by GOD was put, and from which he has fallen because of sin. One can in this way say that the normal state in which we live, is an ever-lasting *masquerade*, as government, home and custom impose masks upon us, which we take off at such games, and that we really are not truly masked, except when we walk with bare faces.

[A]lle derved erindres om den Tilstand, Mennesket ved første Skabning af GUD er satt udi, og fra hvilken det formedelst Synden er faldet: Man kand i saa Maade sige, at den sædvanlige Stand, som vi leve udi, er en bestandig *Mascarade*, efterdi Regiering, Moder og Sædvaner paalegge os Masker, hvilke vi ved saadan Leeg ligesom nedlegge, og at vi egentligen ikke ere ret maskerede, uden naar vi gaae med blotte Ansigter. (Holberg 1949, p. 123)

To Holberg, putting on masks released Man from stifling convention and removed the illusion of contemporary life. Andersen's concluding paragraphs in *Bacchustoget* on the Dionysian deeply felt sensation of life through which the current of life itself flows, and Johannes V. Jensen's desire to return to what originally *was*, both seem to have some resonance in this epistle. Henrik is the one who can see beyond this illusion. If *Maskarade*, like Andersen claims, is a play intent on de-masking bourgeois honourability – a mask of stifling convention if there ever were one – only an utterly disillusioned character can bring about such a change through the power of the masquerade. Henrik is able to see beyond the masks of everyday life; he is the only one who realises that the comedy is, in fact, a comedy: 'Only the disillusioned [Henrik] can operate in the illusion. The others are stuck in their belief that they possess insight and are therefore acting in a comedy they cannot perceive.' ('Kun den illusionsløse [Henrik] kan operere i illusionen. De øvrige er hildet i deres forestilling om at besidde en indsigt og agerer derfor i en komedie, de ikke opfatter.' (Holm 1999, p. 21).

Holm also remarks on the changing views on Holberg and his comedic output throughout the 19th century, arguing that Andersen's reading of Holberg is very much coloured by this change. For one, he repeatedly stated his love and admiration for the painter Wilhelm Marstrand's (1810 – 1873) illustrations of Holberg's plays. In his *Holberg Billedbog* ('Holberg Picture Book', (1928)), a jovial introduction to the world of Holberg, the illustrations are supplied by Marstrand, and Andersen's description of the characters are largely based on how they appear in the paintings, as well as how they were embodied in the naturalist Holberg productions at the Royal Theatre in the early decades of the 20th century. In the early 19th century, the reception of Holberg went from one of satire and criticism of pre-modern society to a sweetly nostalgic look at a generic, non-extant past: the poet Adam Oehlenschläger compared him to the old Dutch masters, seeing the same kind of forceful but warm realism of everyday life (Holm 1999, p. 24). Further, the taste for parochial, gently humorous vaudevilles and the increased importance of land workers, as championed by N.F.S. Grundtvig, informed Holberg reception generally, and Marstrand's paintings specifically. Seeing Holberg first and foremost as a popular playwright – as opposed to a critical one – Andersen, supported by Marstrand, gives much import to the national and the popular in the comedies. In the *Billedbog*, he notes that they are all 'founded in national customs and popular games, not found in the comedies of Molière' (Holm 1999, p. 28). To an extent, Andersen dismisses Holberg's critique of pre-urban popular culture, which he saw as

irrational and detrimental to society, in favour of the more Romantic view of it as precious folklore. In his libretto for *Maskarade*, in its Old Copenhagen *Gemütlichkeit*, Andersen channels the Romantic Holberg, rooted in and modelled on Marstrand's pleasant, conciliatory humour, not Holberg's own disillusioned comedy.

Andersen's reading of Holberg is decidedly coloured by the preceding century of Holberg reception. In many of his texts – particularly the *Holberg Billedbog*, which, granted, was also written for a general audience – Holberg and his comedies are portrayed as quaint relics of the past, as expressions instead of critiques of folk culture. It is this charming, old-timey image that Andersen gives when he is writing about and describing Holberg's comedies, often overlooking the more critical and satirical aspects of Holberg's writing. But at the same time, particularly when writing about the masquerade and its significance, Andersen and Holberg seem to be grasping at the same kind of thing. They both acknowledge the seemingly paradoxical reality of acting like oneself only when wearing a mask; both talk about the masquerade being a place where humanity can return to an original state. Holberg explicitly calls it the state of man before the expulsion from the Garden of Eden, but also, a state that was reached during the 'Saturnalias of old' – much like Andersen, Holberg also ties this feeling of originality to Greco-Roman society, pointedly a time before Christianity, even though he also makes sure to mention the explicitly Christian concept of the Fall of Man. Andersen also gets at this impulse when writing about *Mascarade's* Henrik. He – unlike the other characters in the play – is able to connect to this deeper understanding to everyday life. He stands outside the everyday illusion in which the rest of the characters live, the disillusion in which they seemingly can only take part when masquerading.

2.5 *Maskarade* and its early reception

At its premiere in November of 1906, *Maskarade* proved a success with Copenhagen audiences. Critics were not quite as laudatory. While there was general agreement about the success of Nielsen's music – some took issue with the sudden stylistic shifts, but the general conversational, rococo-like tone was deemed appropriate for a Holberg adaptation – Andersen's libretto left many unconvinced, finding that the text did not mirror Holberg to the extent it could – and to several critics' minds, should – have. However, despite the flaws of the piece, *Maskarade* was deemed by and large a success, and by some a promising start of a

new genre of Danish comic opera. The earliest critics also seem to have agreed on the Danishness of the piece, however. *Maskarade* at its premiere was perceived as particularly Danish, both in terms of how the opera sounded, but also by virtue of being an opera written by a Danish composer and a Danish librettist. 25 years later, the opera had been commonly accepted as the Danish comic opera *par excellence*, the qualities of the music and libretto hardly being up for debate. While these later critiques do not vary much in terms of their criticism of the opera itself, they help nuance the perception of *Maskarade*, Holberg and not least Nielsen, as particularly Danish. Looking at critiques written a quarter of a century apart also gives the opportunity to see how *Maskarade* and Nielsen's place in the Danish consciousness had changed since the premiere. While in the early 20th century, opera was performed in the Danish language at the Royal Theatre, opera written by Danish composers and librettists was a relative rarity. The Danishness of *Maskarade*, however, was not seen as an extension of the operas of the 19th century, which were very much still in the repertoire, but rather as something distinctly new.

Looking at newspaper reviews does not give a complete picture of the reception of *Maskarade* – nor indeed any piece – but they offer a window into musical thought in a certain segment of society. This selection is by no means exhaustive, but offers an idea of the varying opinions among *Maskarade*'s first critics, as well as a look into how early audiences might have interpreted the opera's Danishness. It is also fair to assume that the reception of *Maskarade* 25 years on had changed along with Nielsen's increasing ubiquity in Danish musical life – the publication of the two books of his *Strofiske Sange* Op. 21 in 1907, and the song “Jens Vejmand” in particular, was what really had made him a nationally recognised figure. While it might be difficult, not to say impossible, to discern Nielsen's increased popularity from a greater appreciation of *Maskarade* on the part of critics, it is still important to keep in mind how Nielsen's public standing changed in the 25 years between 1906 and 1931. The general reception of *Maskarade* was rather more enthusiastic than the critical one, at least to begin with. Judging by the revivals of *Maskarade* in its first quarter century, it is clear that the opera proved a success with audiences from the premiere onwards: the opera received a total of 68 performances, spread over 13 seasons and three productions in its first 25 years (Nielsen 2001a, p. xxi).

Maskarade's first critiques are somewhat disparate, ranging from outright adoration to at times long-winded arguments on the textual accuracy of Vilhelm Andersen's libretto. They do, however, all report its rapturous reception by the audience, and that the opera potentially had qualities that could make it a modern classic. Not least, the selected critiques of the first performance all mention the enthusiastic applause that greeted the work, its singers and not least its conductor-composer. Among the most positive reviews was Aage Lützau's in *Aftenbladet*, a Copenhagen tabloid. Lützau's short critique takes a very friendly approach to *Maskarade*, an opera written by 'two of our most prominent figures' ('to af vore mest kendte Forgrundsfignere' (Lützau 1906)), and the opera's popular success is a recurring theme. While he does not explicitly mention any national connotations, he credits the opera's success partly to the fact that 'the librettist has managed to turn the Holbergian *Maskarade* into a libretto without losing any of the Holbergian spirit' ('Tekstforfatteren har forstaaet at omskrive den Holbergske Maskarade til Operatekst, uden at der gik noget af det Holbergske tabt' (Lützau 1906)), thereby at least implying the national nature of the piece. He also notes the novelty of a Danish operatic comedy, 'in this country, which until now has been quite dominated by on the one hand Holberg himself, and on the other dignified operas' ('i dette Land, der hidtil har været ganske behersket af paa den ene Side selve Holberg og paa den andre af værdige Operaer' (Lützau 1906)).

In his review, Lützau mentions Andersen and Nielsen as two of the most famous figures of the day, which should say something about their fame, at least within the bounds of Copenhagen society. Certainly, Nielsen was a reasonably well-known name around the Royal Theatre by 1906. His first opera *Saul og David* had premiered there in 1902, with the composer conducting, and he had provided music to several plays, most recently Holger Drachmann's disastrously received *Hr. Oluf han rider* ('Master Oluf, he rides'; 1906), which premiered a mere month before *Maskarade*. Nielsen had also played second violin in the Royal Orchestra since 1889 and had on occasion conducted the orchestra. However, in the very short critique published in *Berlingske Politiske og Avertissementstidende*, a conservative national newspaper, the critic J. C. characterises the opera as a breakthrough for the 'talented' Nielsen (C. 1906). *Berlingske* had a more national readership, and it is probable that the composer was more unknown outside the musical circles of the capital. While *Maskarade* may well have proved a breakthrough for Nielsen, he was also 40 and had worked as a composer for over a decade and a half. Indeed, when Nielsen gave a concert of excerpts from

the then-unfinished *Maskarade* on 11 November 1905 – a year to the day before the premiere – the critic Angul Hammerich of the conservative, middle class *Nationaltidende*, wrote that the excerpts ‘showed us Carl Nielsen in a completely new light. Not only *is* he popular, now he also *writes* popularly!’ (‘[...] viste os Carl Nielsen med et helt nyt Ansigt. Ikke blot at han er populær, nu skriver han også populært!’ (quoted in Nielsen 2001a, p. xvii)).

Writing a year later, Hammerich is much enamoured with the finished opera, even though he struggles with the stylistic to-and-fro between the conversational rococo style and the intensely lyrical love duets between Leander and Leonora. He also sees several foreign influences on the opera: the quick wit of the music and libretto elicit comparisons with French *opéra comique*, and the score is found clearly evocative of Verdi’s *Falstaff*. Crucially, however, these foreign influences have been made explicitly, nationally Danish. Even though Nielsen has just shown himself as a successful composer of *opéra comique* – significantly, the opera is talked about as just that, despite being relatively through-composed and lacking spoken dialogue – his treatment of the orchestra and of Andersen’s text is ‘so fragrantly Holbergian’ (‘saa duftende Holbergske’ (Hammerich 1906)). And lest Hammerich’s invocation of an explicitly French genre should make the reader doubt the Danishness of the piece, he can ensure that ‘[t]he light, but still nationally Danish – not French – conversational tone is ever present as an undercurrent [...] This is the first true Danish *opéra comique*’ (‘[d]en lette, men dog saa nasjonalt-danske, – ikke franske – Konversationstone spiller stadig med som en Understrøm [...] Dette er den første danske virkelige *Opéra comique*’; (Hammerich 1906)). Hammerich gives no reason for exactly why he considers *Maskarade* to be so specifically Danish, although one would assume it is the fact that Nielsen has managed to successfully write a comedy based on Holberg, that most Danish of playwrights, at least in the Danish popular imagination.

One particularly critical voice – very thoroughly so – was Robert Henriques, writing for *Vort Land*, a party newspaper for the conservative party *Højre*, directed at a bourgeois audience. His review of the premiere itself is quite laudatory, even though he is doubtful about quite how much of Holberg is left in Andersen’s adaptation. Most significantly, he recognises *Maskarade* as a Danish piece of music drama:

In this, his new piece, the composer has gained new ground for national music. All the stylised arias and songs sound so familiarly Danish, and the amusing scene where Jeronimus and Leonard meet could only be written by an artist on whom Danish culture has left its mark.

Sikkert har Komponisten i dette sit ny Værk indvundet nyt Land for national Musik. Alle de stiliserede Arier og Sange klinger saa hjemligt Dansk, og den kostelige Scene, hvor Jeronimus og Leonard mødes, kunde kun skrives af en Kunstner, paa hvem dansk Kultur har sat sit Præg. (Henriques 1906a)

Henriques sees *Maskarade* as a Danish parallel to Wagner's *Meistersinger*, both because of Nielsen's musical allusions – the song of the Night Watchman in particular – but also because the central conflict of tradition versus modernity mirrors that of Wagner's comedy.

Henriques elaborates on the opera, the libretto and the connections to *Meistersinger* in an essay entitled *Dagen derpaa* ('The day after') published the following day. In it, he takes a rather more critical approach, questioning Andersen's (and Nielsen's) reading of Holberg. In his adaptation of *Maskarade*, Henriques writes, Andersen has tampered with the inherent symbolic victory in Holberg's play, namely that of modernity triumphing over tradition – the same victory that occurs in *Meistersinger*. Where in Holberg's play, the masquerade is a place that exists only in gesture and pantomime, Andersen has made it come to life in its own act, through song and dance, and, according to Henriques, muddled the moral of the play. When all the central characters of the opera meet at Andersen's masquerade – not to mention the fact that the supposedly dignified patriarch gets embarrassingly drunk – the masquerade loses its symbolic power, and Holberg's victory of youth over old age is not as clear cut. Nielsen and Andersen's *Maskarade* echoes, but ultimately distorts, the struggle between the old and the new that Henriques finds in *Meistersinger*. Nevertheless, what Henriques sees as a fundamental misunderstanding and misreading of Holberg is equally possible to see as Henriques' own fundamental misunderstanding of Andersen's ideas around the third act. From reading *Bacchustoget* it seems clear that Andersen was trying to imbue the play, and by extension Holberg's oeuvre and Nordic literature, with the theme of transcendence through intoxication. Young may triumph over old in *Maskarade*, but that is not the main point; the emphasis lies in the masquerade as an arena of social equality and progress, ultimately stemming from drunken transcendence.

A dissection of the opera, as well as its libretto, comes in an article in *Tilskueren*, the same journal in which Andersen had published his essays on Holberg's Henrik a few months earlier (Hohlenberg 1906). The author writes under the name of Hagen Hohlenberg, which is presumably a pseudonym, as the name is both unusual and held by an early 19th century Danish theologian. Hohlenberg notes the influence of Mozart, especially in that the opera is rather old-fashioned in its form. Indeed, the operatic repertoire of the Royal Theatre in the first decade of the 20th century did skew rather towards operas written during the past 50 years (Jensen 2015). The musical form of *Maskarade* is also quite different to that of Nielsen's first opera, the explicitly Wagnerian *Saul og David*. Still, he deems the music to be entirely Nielsen's own, even though its spirit 'rings through centuries to our times, through Strauss' waltzes, through the ballads of Montmartre' ('[...] klinger igennem Aarhundreder op indtil vore Dage, gennem Strauss's Valse, gennem Montmartres Ballader' (Hohlenberg 1906, p. 1009)). Hohlenberg's idea of the spirit of Nielsen's music having rung through the centuries is echoed in Daniel Grimley's assertion of *Maskarade's* historical references, both to Nielsen's own music and to a wider Danish and Central European music history (Grimley 2010, pp. 90ff). In the opera, Nielsen deliberately alludes to archaic musical forms to invoke a bygone era, particularly in the many dances of the third act.

In discussing *Maskarade's* relation with the past – indeed, temporality itself – Grimley terms the opera 'doubly allusive' (Grimley 2010, p. 93). On the surface it deals with the early Enlightenment of Holberg – the libretto explicitly states that the opera takes place in the spring of 1723 (Nielsen 2001a, p. xxxviii). Nielsen's music, however – especially that of the third act – refers to the already referential popular music of mid-late 19th century Copenhagen. Grimley specifically refers to the music of H.C. Lumbye, the musical director at Copenhagen's Tivoli Gardens from its opening in 1843 to 1872, as well as a composer of popular dances – waltzes, polkas and galops – in the style of Johann Strauss Jr. The stylised dances that occur in *Maskarade* might evoke the rococo – as is thoroughly pointed out by the first reviewers – but they are evoked through the lens of the light music that permeated mid-19th century Copenhagen, music that itself was refracted through an idealised lens of early 19th century dance music:

Lumbye's achievement, like that of his Austrian contemporary, was to capture and preserve an essentially early nineteenth-century musical idiom in an idealised form, and repackage it for later nineteenth-century popular consumption. From this perspective, Nielsen's music in Act 3 becomes doubly allusive, evoking a musical discourse that is in itself already historically referential. (Grimley 2010, p. 93)

The same element of doubly historic allusion occurs, if somewhat more subtly, in Andersen's libretto. Hohlenberg terms Andersen's libretto less a work of poetry, and more something of a linguistic work of art.

He plays the Danish language like a piece by a virtuoso in that he manages to imitate the voices of almost all poets from the time of Holberg to the middle of the 19th century.

Han spiller paa det danske Sprog som et Stykke af en Virtuos, idet han forstaar at efterligne omtrent samtlige Digteres Stemmer, ligefra Holbergs Tid og til Midten af det nittende Aarhundrede. (Hohlenberg 1906, p. 1010)

Not only does Andersen imitate and quote Holberg, he also basks in allusions and references to almost a century and a half of Danish literary history. Of the critics selected, Hohlenberg is the only one who grasps Andersen's literary allusions, or at least makes mention of them in a positive light. Robert Henriques also mentions the shifting textual style of the libretto, but in the context of a disparaging remark about the 'lightly stylised vaudeville jargon' (*[den] let stiliseret[e] Vaugdeville-Jargon*; (Henriques 1906b)) which removes the libretto even further from Holberg. The libretto was also harshly criticised before the premiere by the Royal Theatre censor, Otto Borchsenius, for not being faithful enough to the style and language of Holberg (Nielsen 2001a, p. xvi). Andersen used words and expressions that would not come into use for another century, and a language that would sound more at home in a revue than in the Royal Theatre. Still, by taking *Bacchustoget* into account, it seems clear that Andersen was going after a synthesis of Danish literature as part of his Bacchian project, not merely a Holberg imitation.

By the time of *Maskarade*'s 25th anniversary and second new production in September 1931, the opera had established itself as a Danish classic. In the 25 years between the premiere and the 1931 revival, the opera had also received a not inconsiderable 59

performances over 12 seasons at the Royal Theatre, 68 performances over 13 seasons if the nine performances of the 1931 revival are counted (Nielsen 2001a, p. xxi). The flaws of the piece that so dominated the critiques of a quarter of a century earlier are nowhere to be seen, and *Maskarade*'s Danishness is even more readily agreed upon. The uncertainty faced by this revival did not even revolve around the work itself, but rather the fact that it was conducted by the Italian Egisto Tango. The notion that Tango, by virtue of being a foreigner, could not express the Danish nature of *Maskarade* was brought up by critics (at least the selection presented here) but only in order to firmly dismiss it. Said dismissal must have been made easier by the fact that Tango seems to have been overwhelmingly successful. Indeed, the fact that he was successful seems only to have cemented the status of the opera as a Danish classic, now with proof that it had international, and not just Danish, appeal.

To what extent Nielsen's fame by the very end of his life influenced critics present at *Maskarade*'s 25th anniversary revival is difficult to quantify, although it is certainly reasonable to assume that it had a considerable impact on his critical and popular reception. Where in 1906, the socially radical *Politiken*'s critic Charles Kjerulf had been on the cool side, lambasting what he saw as the opera's reliance on physical humour (Kjerulf 1906), *Politiken*'s critic Hugo Seligmann now hailed the piece and Nielsen to the point of sycophancy:

'No more words are needed about the work. Untouched by time and fashion, it now more than ever feels like the classic, Danish piece, and the years that have passed since its creation, the twenty-five years, only serve to highlight the Classicism. This is a work conceived in the radiant humour of youth, with exuberant richness, brimming with ideas, carried by the never-ceasing expansion of vitality – a singular 'get ready! – Fire!'. But at the same time, it is the impeccable masterpiece by the genius artist, who without stumbling puts everything in its place and in its rightful perspective. The truthfulness of this masterpiece, too, has only been underlined by the 25 years that now have passed. Not a single bar of *Maskarade* has diminished in its expression and could be conceived of differently by the modern, impartial ear. This is also true for most of Carl Nielsen's music, but hardly anywhere to a higher degree than here in his opera based on the Holbergian subject.

Om selve Værket behøves ikke nye Ord. Urørt af Tid og Mode føles det nu mere end nogen Sinde som det klassiske danske Værk, og Aarene, som er forløbne siden dets

Tilbivelse, de femogtyve Aar, tjener kun til at fremhæve Klassicismen. Dette er et Værk, undfanget i Ungdommens Straalende Humor, med en festlig Rigdom, en fylde af Indfald, baaret af Livsglædens aldrig afladende Ekspansion – et eneste ”Slaget an! – giebt Fyr!”. Men samtidig er det det lydefri Mesterverk af den geniale Kunstner, der uden Famlen sætter alt paa Plads og i rette Perspektiv. Ogsaa dette Mesterværks Lødighed har de forløbne 25 Aar kun tjent til at understrege. Der er ikke den Takt i *Maskarade*, der føles blegnet i sin Udtryksform og som for det uhildede moderne Øre kan tænkes anderledes. Dette gælder jo for Resten det meste af Carl Niensens Musik, men næppe noget Sted i højere Grad end her i hans Opera over det Holbergske Emne. (Seligmann 1931b)

Other critiques contained similarly laudatory sentiments, but the main attention was directed at the Italian conductor Egisto Tango. While not the first foreigner to conduct the opera – the Norwegian Olav Kielland had conducted a series of performances in Gothenburg in 1930 (Fellow 1999b, p. 567) – Tango was the first non-Danish conductor to take on the opera in Denmark. Generally, critics were anxious about a foreigner getting near this almost sainted opera, although much of that anxiety was levied onto the audience. Critics – like W. B. in *Berlingske* and the curiously named –r--A of *Dagens Nyheder* (*Nationaltidende* renamed) – asked the question and brushed it aside, calling the very idea of a foreigner not being able to conduct this most Danish of operas preposterous:

A conductor possessing both spirit and insight must of course master other tasks than those within the confines of his own nationalities; and a piece of music of great *musical* value will always have properties which cannot be contained by national borders. What if those who were nervously asking if Tango could conduct Danish music also expressed their doubts regarding how Danish conductors could conduct Italian operas?

En Kapelmester af Aand og Indsigt maa naturligvis mestre andre Opgaver end dem, der ligger indenfor hans egen Nationalitet; og et Musikværk av vægtig *musikalsk* Værdi vil altid eje Egenskaber, som ikke indestænges af Landegrænser. Mon de, der saa ængsteligt spurgte, om Tango kunde dirigere dansk Musik, ogsaa ofte har haft Tvivl om, hvordan danske Kapelmestre dirigerede italienske Operaer? (–r--A 1931)

And still, a constant theme in these critiques is the contrast of the very Danish *Maskarade* to the very Italian Tango. The foreign influences of *Maskarade* are invoked as a way of

signalling how it can be conducted by a foreigner. W. B. states that the opera has foreign roots, primarily Mozart's comic operas, but also in Italian *opera buffa* or French 'Singspiel operas' (*Sangspils-Operaer*), and so Tango should not have any difficulties finding his way with this music (B. 1931).

Indeed, Tango's conducting was seen as a success. It did lack requisite Danishness, although definitions thereof are elusive to the point of frustration, as evidenced by Seligmann's remarks in *Politiken*:

Last night, *Maskarade* under Tango was not imbued with all of its Danishness, that is, that which comes from the Danish spirit: the at once bold and shy, the Holbergian forcefulness and the Funen-dweller's blue-eyed smile and buckwheat-chewing contentment.

Maskarade fik i Aftes under Tango ikke blot al sin Danskhed, det vil sige det af dansk Væsen udsprungne, det paa engang djærve og vege, den holbergske Drøjhed og Fynboens blaaøjede Smil og boghvedemimrende Veltilpashed. (Seligmann 1931b)

Despite such remarks, Tango's performance was seen as a triumph, and perhaps more importantly, as a sign that *Maskarade* had the potential for success also outside of Denmark. In addition to being *Politiken's* music critic, Seligmann was a composer and student of Nielsen. In 1931 he published a small biography on Nielsen, which also included an appraisal of his major works. Writing about *Maskarade*, he doubts that it will catch on internationally, seeing *Saul og David* as a more likely candidate. The Holbergian story of *Maskarade* is too specifically Danish to catch on abroad, unlike *Saul og David*, which he likens to a Shakespearean tragedy (Seligmann 1931a, pp. 55-56). It seems clear that this biography was written well before this performance, as he continues:

But equally, it gained something that transcended its national plane. We saw, more than ever before, how this music has a message that extends far beyond those who reside within the borders of Denmark.

Men den fik tillige noget, som for os løftede den ud over dets nationale Plan. Vi saa i højere Grad end nogen Sinde før, hvorledes disse Toner havde Bud til mange, mange flere end de inden for Danmarkskortet beroende. (Seligmann 1931b)

Maskarade had by 1931 only received one production outside of Denmark: nine performances in December of 1930 at Stora teatern in Gothenburg (Christiansen 1997). The same theatre

had also produced *Saul og David* two years prior (Fellow 1999b, pp. 502, 576). In the early 1920s, Nielsen had been in contact with the theatre in Antwerp about a production scheduled for early 1923, but plans fell through due to economic concerns (Fellow 1999a, p. 276). However much it was wished for by the Copenhagen press, *Maskarade* did not prove a great success outside of Denmark. Although they were surely bolstered by the success of Tango's conducting and of the production in Sweden the year before, *Maskarade's* potential as an international hit would remain just that: potential.

When *Maskarade* premiered in 1906, its critical reception was not overflowing with superlatives and praise, although it was liked well enough and seen as a promising start to a new genre of Danish comic opera, headed by Nielsen; despite this, *Maskarade* would be Nielsen's final opera and did not really inspire a wave of comic operas in Danish. Unlike the critics, the public seems to have loved the opera from its first performance, at least if the same critics' reports of cheers and extended applause from the rest of the audience are to be believed. The opera also received a significant number of performances in its first 25 years, allowing it to become established as part of the repertoire of the Royal Theatre, repeated exposure making critics more amenable to the opera itself. The contrast between the lukewarm but occasionally enthusiastic critique of Robert Henriques and the bordering on sycophantic adulation of Hugo Seligmann is considerable. These same 25 years are also the years when Nielsen's career really took off, and when Nielsen, his music and his students and friends started wielding power and influence in Danish cultural life. While the overwhelmingly positive response *Maskarade* garnered in 1931 might have been because critics' eyes and ears had been opened to what were by then considered the delights of a well-known opera – qualities which might have evaded the opening night critics of 1906 – it is equally reasonable to assume that Nielsen's increased stature and popularity had something to do with it.

The critiques from either end of *Maskarade's* first quarter of a century also seem to reveal a change in attitude. In the critiques from 1906, the emphasis is solidly on the fact that Nielsen – and to a lesser extent Andersen – has created something which is specifically Danish. *Maskarade* might have taken its inspiration from foreign operas, but there is something about it which makes it sound truly Danish, also despite the foreign influences.

Quite exactly what is Danish about the opera is never explicitly mentioned – the fact that it is an adaptation of a Holberg comedy is certainly a contributing factor – but it is stated. Much like the Danish music drama of the 19th century, *Maskarade* takes foreign musical influences and then turns them into something that is perceived as recognisably Danish. As audiences got familiar with the opera, this perception of Danishness was strengthened – his biases aside, Seligmann’s remark that *Maskarade* in 1931 appeared as the ‘classic, Danish piece’ presumably rang true for a lot of the audience. The opera that 25 years earlier had been heralded as creating something uniquely Danish out of foreign operatic inspirations had by 1931 become an opera whose expression of Danishness had turned into something universal, something with a potential for international appeal. The primary question that faced the 1931 revival was how the inherent Danishness of *Maskarade* – which was, it seems, almost universally agreed upon – would fare when led by a foreign conductor, and an Italian at that. Egisto Tango’s success seems to have cemented in critics both an idea that *Maskarade* was a specifically Danish piece, but also that its Danishness transcended notions of nationality. *Maskarade* would never catch on outside of Denmark – performances in the rest of the world have been few and far between since the premiere – but the fact that it could be conducted so well by a foreigner seems to have confirmed at least some critics’ hopes that it might have the potential for success abroad. Like previously in the history of Danish music drama, foreign influences had codified into something – *Maskarade* – which was perceived as Danish, but after 25 years, these same international-influences-turned-Danish had to some extent proved that they at the same time had potential outside of Denmark. The international-turned-national had transcended the notion of nationality.

Chapter 3 – Analysis

As evidenced by the reception history in the preceding chapter, *Maskarade* was considered by some critics to be typically Danish from its 1906 premiere, even more so as its composer grew in stature in the remaining quarter century of his life. Its sustained popularity throughout the 20th century seems to indicate that audiences, too, embraced and recognised *Maskarade* as a *Danish* opera. At least part of this recognition was due to Nielsen and Andersen's own intimate knowledge of Danish literary, musical and operatic history, and their deliberate manipulation of traditional tropes within their opera.

This analysis will therefore attempt to identify features, both musical and textual, connected to this construction of a Danish identity that is both different from and relating to the already established musical Danishness of the 19th century. Also present in these categories and the opera in general – in its musical language in particular – is the transformation of foreign artistic impulses into ones considered Danish, as outlined in the previous chapter. This analysis is in part taking Anne-Marie Reynolds' analysis of *Maskarade* as its starting point. Her analytical method is outlined in more detail below, but in it, she uncovers connections between tonal areas of the opera and the characters, as well as the musical styles in which they are singing. Bearing this in mind, the analysis will also look at the stylistic features of the music, and the different connotations of high and low musical styles. Further, the analysis will look at the third act and its masquerade setting. This act was the invention of Andersen and Nielsen – the masquerade only appears as a pantomime intermezzo in Holberg's play – and it is here where Andersen's ideas of the Bacchian fullness of life are expressed the most clearly. As an extension of this, the role of dance within the opera warrants examination – one of the main arguments against the masquerade is that there is dancing going on there. Dancing has a central position in the opera, particularly in the third act. This analysis' approach to the Danishness of *Maskarade*, then, is divided into the following three main categories:

1. References to, and reworkings of, established tropes of Danishness.
2. Nielsen's mixing of musical styles – familiar, 'safe' genres contrasted with more modern-sounding music, as well as the deliberately comic pairing of the two.

3. The masquerade as an expression of idealised societal equality, and by extension, the role of dance, and dance as a symbol of (sexual) freedom throughout the opera.

Attention will be directed towards key excerpts and scenes which serve as examples of the above categories. Unavoidably, the majority of the opera has had to be left out – if for no other reason than the length requirements of this thesis – but the scenes that have been included give a representative impression of the opera and its conceptions of Danishness. These excerpts all relate to *Maskarade*'s construction of Danishness in their own particular way, and several of them have also been singled out by previous literature on *Maskarade* as being particularly important within the opera (Jensen 1991; Reynolds 2010; Grimley 2010). The excerpts have not been selected for their narrative significance – the plot of the opera is of secondary importance here – but instead for their portrayal of the kinds of Danishness evident in *Maskarade*. They are also ordered primarily according to thematic category, and not when they occur within the opera. The thematic ordering of the excerpts is meant as a loose categorisation, but the categories and excerpts therein are not meant to be exclusionary. As an aid to narrative clarity, a detailed scene-by-scene synopsis has been included as an appendix (Appendix 1). Note that the division of the acts into numbered scenes only happens for Acts 1 and 2, while Act 3 is ordered by unnumbered descriptors. The bar numbering also starts over at the start of each act.

As examples of Nielsen and Andersen's conscious references to and reworkings of already established tropes of Danishness, I have included the following:

- Henrik's aria 'I dette Land' ('In this land) in Act 1, Scene 8 (mm. 840-1101).
- Jeronimus' rage aria in Act 2, Scene 12 (mm. 838-925).
- The prelude to Act 2, as well as the Night Watchman's two songs which bookend the act (mm. 1-67, 938-965).

As examples of Nielsen's blending of styles, how high and low genres are combined and contrasted, often for comic effect, I have chosen to include the following excerpts:

- Jeronimus' song 'Fordum var her Fred paa Gaden' ('Earlier the street was silent') in Act 1, Scene 4 (mm. 735-775) and Leander's arioso 'Se, Henrik!' ('Look, Henrik!') in Act 2, Scene 7 (mm. 502-536).

- The two love duets in Act 3 – Leander and Leonora, then Henrik and Pernille (mm. 410-621).

As examples of the symbolic power of the masquerade and dance, the following excerpts have been included:

- Magdelone’s Dancing Scene (mm. 429-537) – Act 1, Scene 2.
- Act 3 – the ballet divertissement ‘Mars og Venus, eller: Vulcani List’ (‘Mars and Venus, or: Vulcan’s Ruse’), the Tutor’s song, and the scene with Corporal Mors (mm. 1194ff.)

This analysis, then, is not necessarily pre-occupied with examining the scenes of the opera in terms of their narrative, chronological order, but rather through thematic links.

Alongside this thematic ordering of the material, I will also be using and attempting to expand on the analytical model proposed by Anne-Marie Reynolds (2010) in her analysis of *Maskarade* in light of Nielsen’s songs. In her analysis, she identifies a relationship between narrative themes and certain keys and tonal areas, seeing it as a musical expression of the opera’s narrative conflict. In Reynolds’ model, *Maskarade* has four main key areas, all spread out a minor third apart, in effect forming a diminished seventh chord: F♯/G♭, A, C and E♭. The key areas of F♯/G♭ and C, and A and E♭ are placed a tritone apart – as harmonically distant as possible, and act as polar opposites of each other. The tonal area of F♯/G♭ is associated with young love – it is the key of both of Leander and Leonora’s love duets – while C, usually C major, stands for tradition, authority and duty – the key of Jeronimus’ First Act song decrying the masquerades. A is associated with the themes of modernity, youth and pleasure, and by extension the titular masquerade, while the key area of E♭ is symbolic of death and unmasking, the end of the masquerade. These different key areas also take on various musical characteristics – F♯/G♭ as rapturous 19th century art music; C as hymns and the *folkelige* songs Nielsen would later go on to write; A as music that is at the very least reminiscent of 18th century dance music; and E♭ as a dazed lullaby. Indeed, there is an opposition in the musical styles of the various key areas. Similarly, certain characters are linked to the various key areas. Reynolds’ idea of these links between key areas, musical style, narrative themes and the characters of the story can be summarised thusly:

Key area	F#/Gb	A	C	Eb
Musical style	19 th century art music	18 th century dance music	The <i>folkelig</i> /popular style, hymns	A lullaby
Theme	Young love	Modernity, youth, pleasure, the masquerade	Tradition, authority, duty, the status quo	Death, unmasking
Associated characters	Leander, Leonora	Henrik, Magdelone	Jeronimus	Korporal Mors
Examples	The love duets in Acts II and III	Magdelone's dance scene, Henrik's Act I monologue	Jeronimus' Act I song	Unmasking scene in Act III

(based on Fig 7.4 in Reynolds 2010, p. 326)

The main opposition between key areas is that of F#/Gb and C – of young love and old tradition. This can also be seen as the main opposition of the opera. The two areas in between – A and Eb – also act as mediators, arenas in which the opposites of F#/Gb and C can meet – the masquerade, where everyone gathers in the final act, and the final de-masking, the denouement of the opera.

Reynolds' analysis is primarily concerned with tonal relationships, which in terms of this analysis can only function as a starting point. In her analysis, Reynolds notes that this idea of associative tonality runs through much of Nielsen's music, as a way of establishing musical and dramatic unity. Associative tonality in itself does not provide answers as to why *Maskarade* was received as a *Danish* opera, but the idea of musical texture and style being linked to various characters and musical keys may prove fruitful as one starting point for an analysis. This analysis is concerned with investigating the markers of Danishness in the score and libretto and must therefore encompass extramusical references and allusions made throughout the opera.

3.1 ‘Er der nogen som kan hamle op med Danmarks gamle Helte?’ – Conceptions of Danishness in *Maskarade*

‘Who dares stand up to Denmark’s old heroes?’

Several scenes in *Maskarade* deal directly with Danish identity, and the Danishness – rather, plural *Danishnesses* – that are put forth are both progressive and conservative in nature. The image of the masquerade – by extension an idealised Denmark – put forth by Henrik in his defence thereof is distinctly egalitarian, a bright haven of equality which is contrasted to the dreary nature of everyday Denmark and the appalling conditions in which he and his fellow servants live. Jeronimus’ furious vengeance aria in the second act is brimming with patriotic allusions, calling on Denmark’s past glories and dead-set on setting the present to rights. A third, equally interesting portrayal of Danishness – albeit rather more subtly – is the Prelude to Act 2, and the Night Watchman’s two songs that bookend the act. Here, too, an antiquated vision of Denmark is conjured up – the Night Watchmen which patrolled the streets of Denmark’s merchant towns and cities were long gone by the time of *Maskarade*’s premiere – but unlike Jeronimus’ rage aria, the impression is one of benign nostalgia rather than aggression.

3.1.1 Henrik’s aria – Act 1, Scene 4

One notable invocation of Denmark in *Maskarade* occurs late in the first act. Henrik’s aria ‘I dette Land’ (‘In this land’) forms a significant part of his defence of the masquerades, in that they represent something cheerful and warming in the dank and cold of Denmark. The aria is Henrik’s second attempt at defending his and Leander’s attendance at the masquerade the night before. It bears mentioning that the term aria is somewhat approximate in this case, as Henrik’s monologue is interrupted several times before he is finished, and the last verse does not appear until the finale of the third and final act, which will be discussed further below. In the beginning of the scene, Henrik tries to blame their attendance on a strange man ‘from Frankfurt am Main, or an der Oder’, who spoke twenty-four languages and ‘played loudly on instruments’ (mm. 893ff.). This is quickly dismissed as the outright lie it actually is by Jeronimus, and so, after stating that they ‘would have gone there anyway’, Henrik continues unfazed with his second defence. Henrik’s first defence is a hectic 6/8 *Allegro molto* in A minor (m. 893-939), which then leads to the rather more authoritative 4/4 *Allegretto non troppo* C minor of the second (mm. 940ff.). It is not unreasonable to think of this first defence

as something Henrik just invented on the spot; it certainly fits Andersen's characterisation of him as someone who resides in fictionality and can lie unhindered, although it has an almost frantic feel to it. The second defence's calmer nature and more structured arguments implies something rather more sincere. 'I dette Land' can be broadly divided into two contrasting parts, which are separated by interjections from Jeronimus and Leonard. Reynolds sees the two parts as two separate songs, although considering that they form part of the same train of thought, it seems more logical to treat this second defence of the masquerades as one aria in two parts.

'I dette Land' starts with a descending C minor scale, and the tonality stays within the confines of C minor for the duration of the first verse, albeit a C minor constantly peppered with chromaticism, especially in the upper end of the scale. In this first verse, Henrik details the nasty weather of Denmark, 'where it is dark eleven months out of the year, / where the sky is the fog, / and light merely a glimmer' ('hvor det er mørkt de elve Maaneder af Aaret, / hvor Taagen er vor Himmel, / og Lyset kun en Strimmel', mm. 947ff.). This first part of 'I dette Land' can be said to be in a heavily modified strophic form. It is divided into three verses of roughly similar length which all start with the same descending scale – although the latter two verses are in C major. After the descending scales, however, the melody veers off in different directions, often depending on the words being set. The second verse, the tonality having changed to the parallel major, is more positive in its outlook, explaining how the '[...] cascade / of dance and song and light and fire, / which is called masquerading' ('[...] den Kaskade / af Dans og Sang og Lys og Ild / som hedder Maskarade', mm. 990ff.) offers respite from the dreariness of everyday life. This line builds up to the climax of the verse – a C major, melismatic setting of 'Maskarade' – by a chromatic ascent going from C to G, an ever more enthusiastic accompaniment increasing the tension. The climactic 'Maskarade' is repeated several times, first twice in C major, and then with a mediantic shift in Eb major. As Henrik tries to repeat the word one final time in C major, he is cut off before the final syllable by an incensed Jeronimus. The third verse of 'I dette Land' is prompted by Leonard asking Henrik why he chooses to attend these masquerades, as opposed to other servants, who wait outside. While still in C major, the verse harks back to the chromaticism and minor mode of the first verse, especially as Henrik describes how the servants left outside in the cold suffer '[...] fever chills and frozen jaws / and must seek sweating treatments to regain their strength' ('[...] Febergys og Klaprekæfter, / og maa i Svedekur for at faa Kræfter', mm. 1037ff.), and

so it is only sensible that he go inside. After another interruption by Jeronimus, who has had enough of his ‘lackey-procurator confabulations’ (‘Lakaj-Prokurator-Passiar’, mm 1051f.), Henrik reveals his second reason for going to the masquerades: simply that he enjoys going.

This second reason is followed by the second part of the aria – itself in two parts – which is much less song-like and more musically complex. As a response to himself saying how he simply enjoys going to the masquerades, Henrik launches into an aggressive C# minor justification of this: ‘We’re born into strife, / we’re coddled in hunger, / we thrive off loss and sighs’ (‘Vi fødes i Armod, / vi svøbes i Sult, / vi trives af Savn og af Suk’, mm. 1063ff.). As he describes the plight of the working classes, the melodic line grows more declamatory, breaking free from the semiquaver lines of the accompaniment with crotchet triplets. Henrik’s monologue grows more and more emotional – the rhythmic separation of singer and orchestra becoming increasingly clear – as he describes how he and his peers ‘[...] labour and haul / and make ourselves slaves / so we won’t starve to death’ (‘[...] slider og slæber / og gør os til Træl / for ikke at dø af Sult’, mm. 1074ff.). Then, with a fermata on the word ‘Sult’ (‘hunger’), there is another abrupt change in the music, both tonally and stylistically. C# minor turns into C# major, leading into F# major, as Henrik describes the haven of equality that is the masquerade, in what has turned into dance music, castanets and all. Judging by the $\frac{3}{4}$ metre and rhythmic pattern in the accompaniment, it is a polonaise. The declamatory nature of the preceding section has all but vanished, and Henrik once again has a tune, culminating in an ecstatic E major climax – the relative major of the original C# minor – as he wishes he could ‘[...] take all the world to this party, / and bring the driver and horses along!’ (‘[...] køre al Verden paa Fest / og ta Kusken og Hestene med!’, mm. 1096ff.). A brief restatement of the ‘Maskerade’ from the first section of the aria follows, before Henrik is finally silenced by Jeronimus.

The masquerade and Henrik’s description of it in the latter part of the aria take on an almost Biblical significance. Not only does the masquerade have room for ‘[...] the richest king / and the poorest wretch’ (‘[...] den rigeste Drot / og det fattigste Drog’, mm. 1083ff.) in its ‘motley procession of masks’ (‘det brogede Masketog’, mm. 1078f.), but Henrik also directs an invitation to people standing out in the cold: ‘You who is freezing outside, / come in and join us, / forget all anguish and harm’ (‘Du som fryser derude, / kom ind og vær Gæst, /

her er Glemsel for nød og Fortræd', mm. 1086ff.). Bent Holm sees this quote, and Henrik's defence as a whole, as an allusion to the Parable of the Great Supper (Luke 14:15-24), a parable whose painting by Marstrand Andersen also referenced in his writings on Holberg (Holm 1999, p. 31-33). The story of the poor and shunned of society being invited to take part a great feast – albeit at the expense of those who were originally invited and subsequently did not show up – has clear parallels to Henrik's masquerade description, and considering the religious overtones of the third act masquerade, is quite appropriate. There is also a clear allusion to Matthew 11:28 in Henrik's monologue: 'Come to Me, all you who labour and are heavily burdened, and I will give you rest'. The notion of a 'motley procession of masks' also rings of Andersen's own *Bacchustøget*; while Bacchus is not explicitly mentioned until the second act, Henrik is quite literally singing the praises of the Bacchian feast as outlined by Andersen. Alongside these Biblical allusions – and taking the conservative Jeronimus' incensed reactions into account – Henrik can be read as something of a socialist, at least superficially. Being a fictional character in an 18th century play, his political ideology probably does not stand up to scrutiny, but he demonstrates a keen awareness of the standing of his own class, both in the play and in the opera – even though said class awareness is shown only as part of a pathetic argument for the benefits of masked balls. Surely it was passages like 'I dette Land' which prompted Nielsen to say the following in an interview in October of 1905 with *Politiken's* Hj. Clausen: 'And then 'Maskerade's Henrik! I think he's absolutely wonderful! And he's really quite modern in his opinions; he says frankly Socialist things.' ('Og saa "Maskeraden"s Henrik! Jeg synes, han er saa storartet Og saa er han jo i Grunden ganske moderne i sine Følelser; han siger ligefrem socialistiske Ting. '); (Fellow 1999a, p. 55).

There is also the matter of key signature: 'I dette Land' starts in C minor, which, applying Reynolds' model of associative tonality, is related to tradition and the status quo. It is also the parallel key of the C major of Jeronimus' song 'Fordum var der Fred paa Gaden', in which he expresses his distress and dislike for the new-fangled masquerades and their morally corrupting influence on society. With 'I dette Land', Henrik tries to speak in something approaching Jeronimus' musical language – at least in his tonal domain. Stylistically, the first part of the aria also resembles Jeronimus' music in its more or less regular rhythmical nature and stepwise melody. The descending scales at the beginning of each verse are not unlike the furiously descending G minor scales of Jeronimus' Act 2 rage

aria. Despite the general chromaticism of the aria, the first part also belongs in a popular song idiom, or at least in the general vicinity of one. There is no convincing Jeronimus, but at least Henrik tried.

Also notable is the contrast of nationality that is established in the two defences. In the first one, it was a foreigner – this mysterious polyglot from Frankfurt, either am Main or an der Oder – who convinced Leander and Henrik to go to the masquerade, whereas in the second, they went of their own volition, but also because it provides respite from the endless dreariness of everyday Denmark. In the first version of the story, the masquerade is apologised for, as something mysterious and foreign. Presumably Henrik is inventing an excuse on the fly, and his fluency with different styles and tonal areas speaks to his tenuous-at-best relationship with truth. Holm's remarks on Henrik being unbound by societal illusion and able to travel unhindered through fictionality ring loud and clear. Whether or not Henrik is being sincere in his second defence of the masquerade, it is notable how he does not so much downplay the foreignness of the masquerade – it *is* a decidedly foreign phenomenon – but instead sees this foreignness as something universal on a societal scale, its warmth and lights attaining Biblical dimensions.

The image of Denmark and Danish society of 'I dette Land' is diametrically opposed to that of Jeronimus' song 'Fordum var der Fred paa Gaden' ('Earlier the street was silent'), heard earlier in the act, and which will be discussed further below. 'I dette Land' looks forward to a bright and promising future, one heavily featuring masked balls and formalised equality. 'Fordum', on the other hand, looks back, to a past when people knew their place and there were no new-fangled foreign imports to corrupt the minds of the young. As will be discussed further in the section on Jeronimus' second act rage aria, his expression of Danishness is reliant on old, 19th century – if not earlier – tropes of Danishness, quite at odds with the more sympathetically treated progressivism of Henrik and Leander. The Danishness espoused by 'I dette Land' is not the 19th century exaltation of the virtues of the Danish countryside, but rather one that deals with a Dane's image of Denmark more at face value – at least to begin with. Surely complaining about the weather is just as popular a spare time activity in Denmark as it is elsewhere. This image of Danishness also includes the

masquerade – an idealised version of society if ever there were one. It is seen as the next step forward, as the heaven, or at least haven, that will accept anyone, no matter their standing.

3.1.2 Jeronimus' rage aria – Act 2, Scene 12

The ultimate portrayal of just how angry Jeronimus can get occurs in the last scenes of the second act. Having discovered that Henrik and Leander have ignored his call for a house arrest, he storms out of the house to find them, collecting a sheepish Arv on the way. His big rage aria occurs as he and Arv exit the booth of the mask-seller – a masquerade being a masquerade, they cannot enter without masks. Arv is dressed as Cupid and Jeronimus is dressed as Bacchus ‘bald, with a long nose, a garland on his head’ (‘skaldet, med lang Næse, Krans om Hovedet’, m. 838) – the significance of which becomes clear in the third act. In this ridiculous get-up, he proceeds to sing of how he will take revenge – ‘With their own weapons, / I will punish the rabble’ (‘Med dens egne Vaaben, / skal jeg tugte Hoben’, mm. 845ff.). This aria, too, is divided into two distinct sections. The first, shorter section, in G minor, is largely made up of furiously descending scalar passages, announcing how he is now ready for vengeance. Reynolds points to a certain resemblance between the first part of Jeronimus' rage aria in Act 2 – she terms it a revenge aria – and Don Pizarro's ‘Ha, welch' ein Augenblick!’ from Beethoven's *Fidelio* (Reynolds 2010, p. 270). Certainly, there are similarities in the opening descending scales, although the two part musical ways soon thereafter. A terrified aside from Arv – ‘It'll be a mess!’ (‘Det blir Fortræd!’; mm. 857f.) – leads into the second, more substantial section of the aria. Here, Jeronimus details how he will go about punishing not only his son and his valet, but seemingly the whole assembled crowd, while the furious quaver countermelody in the strings refuses to keep the tonality steady. The second part of the aria can be said to be in a modified ternary form, the third section acting as a shortened version of the first. Jeronimus sees himself as Samson, about to tear down the temple of the Philistines, and shouts ‘who dares stand up to Denmark's old heroes?’ (‘Er der nogen som kan hamle op med Danmarks gamle Helte?’; mm. 882ff.). Meanwhile, the hapless Arv is remarking how similar Jeronimus' shouts sound to the last time his family cow was calving. At last, the two enter the playhouse.

Naturally, this aria is a different portrayal of Danish identity than the one that is given in ‘I dette Land’. Jeronimus is the great keeper of order and the status quo, and does not see

the masquerade as a great beacon of hope and light in an otherwise dreary Denmark. In the first line of the second part of the aria, he sees himself as a hero of Old Denmark, who will rain down revenge on the partygoers. In comparing himself to Samson, he also sees himself as not only a Biblical hero, but also a great liberator – on a mission from God, no less – freeing the people of Denmark from the immorality of the present day. Like Henrik, Jeronimus sees parallels between the Bible, the masquerade and Denmark, but here, the masquerade is a den of sin that needs to be exterminated. It is Danishness in dire need of salvation. While Samson is the only character from the Old Testament whom Jeronimus mentions, there are also echoes of other passages. Keeping Andersen's formulation of a quasi-religion based around the masquerade and its religiously significant intoxication, Moses' commands against idolatry in Deuteronomy 4:24 – 'For the Lord your God is a consuming fire. He is a jealous God.' – is very much present in Jeronimus' aria. The opening of the Book of Nahum, too, has a certain resonance: 'The Lord is a jealous and avenging God; / the Lord avenges and is furious. / The Lord takes vengeance on His enemies, / and He reserves it for His adversaries' (Nahum 1:2).

Reynolds sees similarities between the second part of the aria and a hymn tune. It is nowhere as solemn and calm as, say, 'Fordum var der Fred paa Gaden'; there is a rhythmic regularity in the melody, which also, by and large, moves stepwise. The accompaniment of this second section can be divided into two distinct layers: winds that mirror Jeronimus' largely crotchet-based melody in unison; and a more agitated quaver-fuelled countermelody in the strings. Arv's interruptions are in the same style as Jeronimus' melody, but break up the hymn tune aspect of the aria, both in terms of the text – the contrast of calving cows and Jeronimus calling on the heroes of both the Bible and of Old Denmark is great – and the melody, Arv's large leaps – a tritone, a diminished sixth – are more like terrified yelps when compared to Jeronimus' heroic statements of Danish bravery and Biblical vengeance. They add another layer of absurdity to the already solidly absurd situation – taking the Bacchus-clad Jeronimus at face value becomes increasingly difficult.

Pointedly, the middle section of the second part of the aria, where Jeronimus lists the gruesome ways he will punish the Philistines – the party-goers inside the playhouse – Andersen seems to have inserted a reference to *Kong Christian*, that ultimate expression of Danish military glory. Jeronimus sings: 'In the darkness they will falter, / their spines will

clatter, / I'll melt their marrow, / I'll knead their brains! / who dares stand up / against Denmark's old heroes?' ('Om i mørket skal de famle, / deres Knokkelrad skal skramle, / deres Rygmarv skal jeg smelte, / deres Hjerne skal jeg ælte! / Er der nogen som kan hamle op / med Danmarks gamle Helte?'; mm. 874ff.). Jeronimus' threats echo the similarly graphic descriptions of battle in the first verse of *Kong Christian*, Denmark's royal anthem, first appearing in Ewald's *Fiskerne*, and then as the musical personification of the monarch himself in Kuhlau's music to *Elverhøj*. In his threats, Jeronimus places himself in the militaristic, protectionist tradition of Danish national song:

King Christian stood by the lofty mast
 In mist and smoke;
 His sword was hammering so fast,
 Through Gothic helm and brain it passed;
 Then sank each hostile hulk and mast,
 In mist and smoke
 "Fly!" shouted they, "fly, he who can!
 Who braves of Denmark's Christian,
 Who braves of Denmark's Christian,
 In battle?" (trans. Longfellow 1887, p. 26)

Kong Christjan stoed ved høien Mast,
 I Røg og Damp.
 Hans Værge hamrede saa fast,
 At Gothens Hielm og Hierne brast.
 Da sank hvert fiendtligt Speil og Mast
 I Røg og Damp.
 Flye, skreg de, flye, hvad flygte kan!
 Hvo staaer for Danmarks Christian
 I Kamp?

The old Danish heroes upon which Jeronimus calls are possibly the same whose swords hammered through Gothic (i.e. Swedish) brains, and sent the foreign invaders flying in *Kong Christian*; this despite the fact that the battle *King Christian* references ended indecisively, and Denmark ended up losing the war. While the battle has remained important in Danish history, there is more than a little irony in the fact that Jeronimus in calling on the glories of old Denmark chooses a battle and a war which did not end in Denmark's favour. It

might, too, be possibly one too many connections, but Jeronimus'/Christian IV's opposition to the Philistines/Goths places Jeronimus squarely against a project like Johannes V. Jensen's 'Gothic Renaissance'; Jeronimus is against the bright, re-born future imagined by Jensen and Andersen, as if that were not clear enough from the middle scenes of the first act. But, even though Jeronimus is clearly capable of truly great anger, as his first act outbursts also show, his Act 2 tirade is too over the top; it is little more than the bluster of empty threats. Despite whatever delusions he might have to the opposite, Jeronimus is not a hero of old Denmark, and incapable of acting on his gruesome – to him heroic – threats. Indeed, Arv's remarks about his family's cow underline the absurdity of Jeronimus' threats. As the third act shows, Jeronimus gets drop-dead drunk long before any kind of brain-kneading or marrow-melting occurs.

With his rage aria, Jeronimus places himself within a tradition of aggressive, militaristic Danishness, the one that is continued in the Danish royal anthem, *Kong Christian stod ved højen Mast*. Far from the bright future envisaged by Henrik, Jeronimus wants things to return to the way they were and is even willing to incite violence in what he sees as his mission. Like Henrik, he, too invokes the Bible, but it is the Old Testament. Unlike Henrik's kind and generous references to the New Testament, Jeronimus is explicitly acting on the behalf of a vengeful God; he sees the only solution to the depravity and amorality of the masquerade as being to tear it down, just like Samson did to the temple of the Philistines. The god he calls upon is the jealous God of the Old Testament, quite unlike the accepting and egalitarian God of Henrik's aria. Yet, from the situation – Jeronimus is dressed up in a ridiculous Bacchus costume – and from what happens in the next act – he is ridiculed and given far too much to drink – it is clear that this is not a version of Danishness that should be taken seriously; Jeronimus' threats are nothing but hot air. He is no heroic figure of the Old Testament, and certainly not acting on behalf of a vengeful God. This particular Danishness espoused by Jeronimus is one to be ridiculed as hopelessly old-fashioned and reactionary. Jeronimus' other expression of Danishness, the one of 'Fordum var der Fred paa Gaden', is still religiously tinged and longs for the past, but it takes the more acceptable form of bittersweet nostalgia, not as angry threats.

3.1.3 The Prelude to Act 2 and the Night Watchman's songs

The prelude that opens Act 2 offers a great contrast to the act that came before. Where the first act was hectic and fast-paced, the prelude to Act 2 paints a calm night-time scene set on the street outside Jeronimus' house. It is the slowest music that has been heard so far in the opera, and the slowest music in the opera overall – the tempo marking is *Adagio un poco* and the metronome marking crotchet = 'ca. 56', lasting throughout the prelude. The form is a modified ternary form, the repeat of the A section being a slightly truncated form of the first iteration. The first section is headed by a short but luminous horn solo in F# major, which is soon taken over a more contrapuntal and chromatic, quasi-fugal thematic development, primarily in the strings. As befits the modernity of F# major, the tonality is highly chromatic and unstable, quickly cycling through keys before landing in a more stable Eb major for the B section (mm. 26ff.). In the context of *Maskarade*, this harmonic instability is not necessarily perceived as unsettling – harmonic and tonal instability has been the rule rather than the exception for the entirety of Act 1, and this quickly shifting harmonic language remains throughout the opera – but rather as a fluid harmonic flow. In the B section, the tempo remains the same, but the melody is now more akin to a calm lullaby being passed through the high woodwinds and violins. The clarinets and violas settle on a gently undulating ostinato between Eb major and its dominant Bb major for the final two measures of the section before it modulates back to the F# major of the A section via the subdominant Ab major. A slightly varied and shortened restatement of the A section follows, leading straight into the Watchman's song (mm. 52ff.).

As pointed out by Grimley (2010, p. 91f.), the apparent calm of this F# major prelude foreshadows some of the most complex music of the whole opera, namely the two duets between Leander and Leonora in Acts 2 and 3, both of which have an intensely chromatic F#/Gb major tonality at their hearts. The Eb major lullaby of the B section, too, is significant, as it prefigures the tonality and stylistic idiom of the scene with Corporal Mors in the final act – a symbolic death and rebirth at the end of the masquerade. Both Leander and Leonora's Act 3 duet and the scene with Corporal Mors will be discussed in further detail below. The prelude to Act 2 is not necessarily a signifier of Danishness in itself – indeed, as was noted above, the early critic Robert Henriques points to the scene with the Watchman, and, one assumes, the preceding prelude, as being primarily reminiscent of Wagner's *Meistersinger*.

The prelude also readies the stage for the Night Watchman, perhaps the most explicit reference to the Copenhagen of the early 18th century.

A calm instrumental interlude making heavy use of the horn to signify the stillness of night is a reasonably regular occurrence in 19th century music and well into the 20th century. Examples include the opening of the second scene of the third act of Verdi's *Falstaff* (another opera cited as inspiration by *Maskarade*'s first critics) and the 'Nocturne' from Mendelssohn's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Another operatic excerpt, to which this prelude is closely related, is the 'Mondscheinmusik' ('Moonshine Music') from Richard Strauss' final opera *Capriccio* (1942), even though *Maskarade* predates *Capriccio* by almost four centuries. They both feature the horn prominently to depict the stillness of night, although the 'Mondscheinmusik' does so with rather more Romantic pathos. There is a similarity in the chromatic nature of both pieces, the accompaniment fluidly cycling through keys underneath the solo horn. Another significant piece in this particular context is Nielsen's own *Helios Overture* (1903), which opens with horn calls, going up to the seventh scale degree, which is also reminiscent of the Act 2 Prelude second violin entry of a descending fifth and ascending minor seventh – C#-F#-E – after the opening horn solo (mm. 8f.). Granted, the opening of *Helios* is supposed to depict sunrise, but this prelude has the same sense of calm, albeit not the same sense of rising tension. The horn does make a significant return towards the crepuscular finale of *Helios*, with surprisingly similar thematic material to that presented in the prelude. In the context of *Helios*, Grimley links the prominent role of the horn at either end of the piece to the increased interest in the *lur*, bronze-age natural horns which were being excavated from burial mounds throughout the 19th century (Grimley 2010, p. 63). The *lur* became something of a national symbol in the early 20th century, figuring on a wide array of nationally themed objects, from the butter packets and name of the Danish butter producer *Lurpak*, founded in 1901, to Siegfried Wagner's statue *Lurblæserne* ('The *Lur* Blowers'; 1914), outside Copenhagen's Town Hall. While the prelude to the second act might not in itself broadcast any grand visions of Danishness, the national implications of the horn lend it a certain nationalist sheen, however subtly. Still, its most important contribution to the Danishness of *Maskarade*, is introducing the Night Watchman.

The prelude is immediately followed by eight strikes of a clock – mirroring the five little dings from the parlour clock heard in the beginning of the first act – and the first verse of the Night Watchman’s song, announcing eight o’clock. The song is a straightforward unaccompanied melody in B major, urging the townspeople to settle down for the evening and for God to protect their houses. The tempo marking, following his short cry of ‘Ho! Watchman! It is now eight o’clock.’ (‘Hov! Vægter! Klokken er slagen otte’, mm. 52f.), is *Andantino*, with a metronome marking of crotchet = ca. 66 (mm. 54ff.). It is only slightly faster than the preceding prelude and resembles a hymn tune in that it is in a slow tempo, has a limited range and a regular, stepwise melody. Its words, as is discussed below, are also based on an actual hymn. Much like ‘Fordum var her Fred paa Gaden’, it is highly rhythmically regular, and with an even more limited range of only an octave. After a brief dialogue with Arv, the Watchman leaves. He returns towards the end of the act, as the street once again has fallen silent, to announce nine o’clock and bedtime, now in E major. This time, however, he is accompanied by the ever-louder music of the masquerade happily underway inside the playhouse. As the Watchman finishes his song, the masquerade music takes over, effectively negating the Watchman’s command to go to bed, and instead readying the stage for the revelries to come.

The text for both verses of the song is heavily based, to the point of outright copying, on the 9 and 10 o’clock verses of the old Night Watchman’s song. The song’s authorship is highly contested, although the influential late 17th century hymn-writer Thomas Kingo has traditionally been credited (Fausbøll 1862, pp. 11f.). These verses were both intended as a time-keeping measure and to ensure that the watchmen did not sleep on the job – there are verses to be sung from 8 o’clock in the evening to 5 o’clock the next morning. However, depending on the time of year, the watchmen would work longer or shorter hours (Davidsen 1910, pp. 243f.). Although night watchmen had patrolled the streets of Copenhagen since the late 13th century, an organised corps was not instituted until 1683. This organisation lasted until 1863, when the police took over the watchmen’s duties. The verses underwent slight changes in the almost 200-year history of the corps and received their final form in 1784. They were all religious in nature, and constant reminders of the sinful nature and mortality of Man; the 8 o’clock verse, added in 1731 reads: ‘When Darkness blinds the earth / and the day recedes, / we are then reminded / of Death’s dark grave. / Light up, sweet Jesus, / our every step / towards our grave, / and give a blessed death!’ (‘Naar Mørket Jorden blinder / og Dagen

tager af, / den Tid os da paaminder / om Dødsens mørke Grav. / Lys for os, Jesu sød, / ved hvert et Fjed / til Gravens Sted, / og giv en salig Død!’ (Fausbøll 1862, p. 4)). The melody of the Watchman’s song is Nielsen’s own, although the historic melody existed in various versions throughout the existence of the corps. There is little resemblance between the Watchman’s song in *Maskarade* and the ones laid out in the composer Jørgen Jersild’s survey of Watchman’s melodies (Jersild 1951). By the time of *Maskarade*’s premiere in 1906, the watchmen had been off the streets of Copenhagen for almost half a century, and the extent to which the audience would have remembered the old tune is debatable. The main objective of this scene is not historical accuracy, but rather to conjure up a certain atmosphere reminiscent of old Copenhagen.

In *Maskarade*, the first verse of the Watchman – 8 o’clock – is heavily modified from the original 9 o’clock verse, whereas the second – 9 o’clock – is a copy of the original verse for 10 o’clock, save a few, negligible changes. Interestingly, the main change between Andersen’s 8 o’clock verse and the original 9 o’clock verse was to tone down the Baroque moralist sensibilities of the original. The original reads: ‘Now the day is ending / and night-time pouring out / forgive, by Christ’s wounds, / our sins, o sweet God! / Save the royal house, / and every man / in these lands / from the enemy’s violence and destruction!’ (‘Nu skrider Dagen under / og Natten vælder ud; / forlad for Jesu Vunder / vor Synd, o milde Gud! / Bevare Kongens Hus, / samt alle Mand / i disse Land’ / fra Fjendens Vold og Knus!’ (Fausbøll 1862, p. 1)). In Andersen’s version, the two first lines are identical, but he does not include the prayer for forgiveness, nor the benediction of the royal house. Instead, the Watchman sings ‘Keep in this hour of darkness, / our house, o sweet God; / the bells call to the watch. / Do your duties and repent, / keep your spirits up, / take heed of the hour!’ (‘Bevar i Mørkets stunder / vort hus, o milde Gud; / det ringer nu til Vagt. / Gør Pligt og Bod, / vær ved godt Mod, / tag Tiden vel i Agt!’ mm. 57ff.). By changing the final six lines of the verse, Andersen removed the more unsavoury aspects of the original verse – authentic though it might be, calling on the wounds of Christ for forgiveness might have seemed rather *de trop* for an early 20th century audience – and turned the verse into a rather more toothless instruction to behave and get ready for bed. The king and royal house are also absent, as is the prayer to keep the enemy at bay. Additionally, while the spectre of war was very real around the time of the play *Mascarade*’s 1724 premiere – Denmark had emerged victorious out of the 21-year-long Great Nordic War three years prior – by the time of the opera *Maskarade*’s

premiere in 1906, Denmark was midway through an almost century-long period of peace. Denmark in the time of the watchmen was rather more bellicose than it was in 1906.

Another, probably just as significant reason for the changing of the verse, is that it is more thematically in line with the rest of the act – in that none of the other characters heed the Watchman's word – and that it creates a narrative arc between it and the second of the Watchman's verses: 'If you want to know the hour, / master, mistress, girls and boys, / then it is now the time / that you find your beds. / Leave your freedom to the Lord, / be wise and kind, / mind your lights and fires! / Now the clock has struck nine.' ('Dersom I vil Tiden vide, / Husbond, Madmor, Piger, Dreng, / da er det nu paa de Tide, / at I følger Jer til Seng. / Nu befal jer Herren fri, / vær nu klog og snild, / vogt Jer Lys og Ild! / Nu er Klokken slagen ni.', mm. 939ff.). The command to behave is continued into the second verse, but now with the addition of announcing bed-time. The fact that none of the characters in the opera have actually heeded the Watchman's command so far in the act is made even more explicit as the music from the playhouse takes over. As nice and nostalgic the inclusion of an old Copenhagen relic like the Watchman might be, it is clear that he belongs to the Denmark of old, and that through the disobeyal of his orders by every single character – even Jeronimus – he has been relegated to the pages of history.

The image of Danishness that is portrayed in both the Prelude to Act 2 and the two verses of the Watchman's song is different than Henrik's and Jeronimus'. Unlike Henrik's, it decidedly looks back – the Watchman's song literally depicts one of the watchmen who used to patrol the streets of old Copenhagen – but unlike Jeronimus, it is not an aggressively nostalgic call for the return of days gone by. The prelude engages several temporal levels at once: its Danishness looks back to the setting of the piece, but also looks to the present and to the future. The music of the Act 2 prelude is among the most complex of the whole opera; more than any other part of the opera, it sounds like it could belong in one of Nielsen's symphonies, with its string dissonances and contrapuntal thematic treatment. It is a fleeting moment of musical modernity which quickly gives way to more conservative-sounding musical material, but it is still very much there. As is pointed out by Grimley, the prelude's F# tonality also prepares the musical ground for Leander and Leonora's duets, both in Act 2 and 3 – by far the most complex vocal music of the opera (Grimley 2010, p. 93f.). The reference

to the watchmen of Copenhagen is ultimately benign, certainly with Andersen's rewritten first verse. They belong to a much more violent time in Danish history, but in *Maskarade* they act as quaint reminders of a past which does not exist anymore. Andersen's changes to their song – taking out the references to human mortality and the forgiveness through the wounds of Christ – have made these keepers of night-time order into walking reminders that bedtime is fast approaching. They represent an entirely toothless force of the past, which is in turn defied by every single main character of the opera.

3.2 'Saa muntert disse Rim i Øret krille.' – Stylistic diversity

'How cheerfully these rhymes tickle our ears'

The musical stylistic language of *Maskarade* is remarkably diverse. Reynolds, in her model of associative tonality, sets out four main musical styles and links each to specific characters and musical keys. As was already discussed in the section on Henrik's aria 'I dette Land', the stylistic language and tonality of the different characters can be encroached upon by others – particularly by Henrik – but certain characters primarily sing in certain musical styles and tonal areas. This section will explore two pairs of contrasting musical excerpts. The first one will compare Jeronimus' Act 1 song 'Fordum var her Fred paa Gaden' ('Earlier the street was silent') and Leander's aria 'Se, Henrik!' ('Look, Henrik!') in the second act. Jeronimus' song is a hymn-like evocation of the good old days, whereas Leander's aria is a song praising the future ushered in by the masquerade and wishing to leave behind the somnolent past as symbolised by his familial home. Both songs are explicitly about differing conceptions of Danishness, but they share several musical and stylistic features. The next pair of excerpts occur right after one another – the duets of Leander and Leonora, and Henrik and Pernille in the third act. These do not deal as explicitly with ideas of Danishness, but in them, both Nielsen and Andersen use the same thematic material to seemingly make a wider point about the equality of the masquerade. Reynolds describes the masquerade as a 'microcosm of life itself [...]' (Reynolds 2001, p. 264) in that it is a fleeting event, over before it is barely begun. While class distinctions are gone in the masquerade – hidden by masks – the characters still speak in the same musical language they did before the masquerade. Even though class might not be immediately noticeable at the masquerade, it is still present. The characters, Henrik and Pernille, are all too aware of their social standing, and their parody of Leander and Leonora

might be self-aware, but it very much stems from their own class – it is not a vision of total equality after all.

3.2.1 Jeronimus' song – Act 1, Scene 4; Leander's aria – Act 2, Scene 7

The first act of *Maskarade* is notable for its fast-paced action. It is largely dialogue-based, although at certain moments arias are inserted. Still, despite these arias, the narrative largely flows unhindered – the arias and ariosos are all reasonably quick, or at least in a moderate tempo. One exception to this is Jeronimus' song 'Fordum var der Fred paa Gaden' ('Earlier the street was silent', mm. 735ff.), occurring in the fourth scene. The first act is largely dialogue-based, and Jeronimus' song is in many ways the first time the narrative, dramaturgical and musical pace of the opera slows down. The preceding scenes have all been full of fast-paced dialogue and arias, and music that as a rule has been harmonically and tonally unstable, with frequent orchestral interjections and other musical gags. Even the rage aria Jeronimus sings as an introduction to 'Fordum' (mm. 667ff.) is relentless in its drive, propelled forward by a melody primarily written in 2/4 and non-stop quaver accompaniment in 6/8, creating a constant feeling of two against three. Finally, after having bemoaned his unhappy fate as a father, the music slows down and settles on a unison low G fermata in the low strings and timpani (m. 734).

After his rage, Jeronimus is suddenly calm and composed – for the first and only time in the opera – and sits down to sing a song: 'Fordum var der Fred paa Gaden' (mm. 735ff.). The song is planted somewhat solidly in C major, the low G heard in the measures previous acting as a dominant. The song is surprisingly stable, both tonally and rhythmically – not least compared to what has been going on in the previous scenes – and has a limited range of an octave and a third. The song is also strictly strophic, the accompaniment and melody being identical in the two verses. While the song is remarkable for its tonal stability within the confines of the opera, Nielsen does stray into flat tonalities rather early on (mm. 738ff., 758ff.), cycling through F, Bb, Eb and Ab major – the latter three foreign to the scale of C major – eventually modulating back to C major through the lowered submediant Ab major. Through the two verses, Jeronimus sings of how things were better in the old days, how people knew their place in society back when 'the evening porridge was steaming hot, / good people went from their supper / and peacefully to bed' ('Aftengrøden røg i Staden, / Godtfolk

gik fra Aftensmaden / fredeligt i Hi', mm. 741ff.). Now that the masquerades have come to town, equality and revelry has taken over, and night time peace has been disturbed. The melody takes the form of a hymn tune, with its slow and quite stately tempo, marked *Andantino* and crotchet = 76. The accompaniment is largely homophonic, save a few flourishes in the two measures leading up to the climactic cries of 'Maskarade, Maskarade!' (mm. 751f., 771f.).

'Fordum' is in many ways a premonition of the popular songs that truly brought Nielsen nationwide fame and recognition. Indeed, it quickly became one of, if not the most, popular excerpts of *Maskarade*, despite its reactionary text, going directly against the opera's positive outlook towards the future. Its popularity is so widespread, even up to the present day, that it is printed as a stand-alone song in *Højskolesangbogen*, the most popular and widely used songbook in Denmark (Andersen et al. 2006). The reasons for this are surely manifold – the public, or at least certain segments of it, might have identified with the nostalgic tone, or they might just have fallen for the melody. However significant the text to a certain song is, it is often of less importance if the melody is catchy. The limited range of the song must also have helped it gain favour with the general population. Reynolds points to another potential reason for 'Fordum's popularity: its placement within the opera. As mentioned, the song is a great contrast to the music that has come before it, and indeed the music that comes after. It stands out as an ocean of quasi-religious calm in the madcap comedy of the first act, the first time the opera takes a breather (Reynolds 2010, pp. 267ff.). Unlike Jeronimus' other musical outpourings of dismay at the present – his rage aria in Act 2 and indeed the furious outburst which directly precedes 'Fordum' – 'Fordum' takes the form of a more musically and textually palatable longing for the past. It does not have the aggression of either of the other arias, and removed from its context it sounds quite benign. There are no grandiose threats of Old Testament violence, instead just a calm, if melancholy, longing for a Denmark that no longer exists. It is a more explicit longing for the Denmark conjured up by the Watchman and his song – something idealised and pleasant.

'Fordum' finds its ideological counterpoint in Leander's second act aria 'Se, Henrik!' ('Look, Henrik!' mm. 502ff.). Where Jeronimus was singing about how things were better in the past, and how the masquerades are a nuisance, if not detrimental to society, Leander

praises the bright lights of the playhouse, and sees his father's old house as part of the past. This aria, too, is in C major, although the tonality is highly unstable and modally inflected, as is typical of Leander's music. It is also strophic, but with a small coda in which Henrik and Leander both swear allegiance to the masquerade. Interestingly, the aria is the same tempo – *Andantino*, crotchet = 66 – as the Night Watchman's first verse. 'Se, Henrik!' is rather more lyrical, its melody and accompaniment largely driven by quavers, and so it sounds like it is flowing faster and more smoothly than both the Night Watchman's song and 'Fordum', both of which are overwhelmingly crotchet-based. Musically, the verses themselves are in a binary form, corresponding to the text. In the first half of each verse, Leander looks back to his family home, standing in the middle between it and the playhouse. In this initial, unstable C major tonality, he sings of '[...] how night and darkness / are clenching the old house, / where my fathers / went about their work / to bed, to prayer, to drink! / Look how the closed windows are shutting in sleep' ('[...] hvor Nat og Mørke / knuger den gamle Gaard, / hvor mine Fædre gik til deres Dont, / til Sengs, til Bøn, til Drik! / Se hvor de lukte Vindver Søvnen suger', mm. 502ff.). The melody in this first part is also coloured by modal chord progressions, which lend the melody a 'distinctly archaic aura' (Reynolds 2010, p. 286) – in effect creating the same effect of dramatic time standing still as in 'Fordum'. In the second part of each verse, Leander turns to face the playhouse, '[...] where people in wonderment / opened their eyes to fun and theatre / you bright and free Eighteenth century! / I choose you, to you I belong!' ([...] hvor Folk forundred / slog Øjet op til Fest og Skuespil, / du klare frie attende Aarhundred! / Dig jeg vælger, dig jeg hører til!', mm. 527ff.). In a repeat of the A major climax of the last phrase, Henrik joins Leander in embracing this promise of a bright, new future. As Leander sings of the light of the playhouse, the music literally becomes brighter – the tonality changes to A major, through its submediant F# major, both keys that are particularly significant for Leander.

Even though 'Fordum' and 'Se, Henrik!' are at odds ideologically, there are certain musical features which unite them. They both have a musical starting point of C major, and this is the same kind of C major, largely preoccupied with tradition, the past and the status quo. They differ in that one – 'Fordum' – longs back to these subjects and treats them reverentially and with a nostalgic fondness, whereas the other – 'Se, Henrik!' – treats them negatively, as something that should be left in the past and not revived. Conversely, in 'Fordum', Jeronimus sees the masquerades and other novelties like tea and chocolate as

something decidedly negative – how could they be anything but when mentioned in the context of C major – whereas Leander sees the A major light of the masquerade as what will lead the world into a new and literally bright century; Holberg and *Mascarade* are, after all, products of the Enlightenment. And even though Leander’s aria is certainly more in line with the ideological mission of the opera – the masquerade is, after all, portrayed as a haven of light and equality – it is not his aria that sticks out in audience’s memories of a performance of *Maskarade*. ‘Se, Henrik!’ can be an ideological crux of the opera all it wants, but it is simply not as memorable as ‘Fordum’. There is also another, more historical irony in Henrik and Leander’s keenly held convictions – not long after the 1724 premiere of the play *Mascarade*, public theatre and masquerades were banned on and off for almost half a century. The glorious future of which they dream was never to happen, at least not in real life. The Denmark in which *Maskarade* premiered was also standing at the beginning of another ‘bright and free’ century, but that dream was cut short by the advent of the First World War eight years after the premiere.

Jeronimus and Leander stand at polar opposites where their conception of Danishness is concerned. In his Act 2 aria, Leander formulates what is in many ways the progressive manifesto of the opera; the masquerade and its lights show the way forward into a (literally) bright and promising future, whereas the house of his father is the abode of sleep and the past – Jeronimus’ house is literally shrouded in darkness, as opposed to the enlightened masquerade. There is no similar ideological fervour in Jeronimus’ Act 1 song. Jeronimus is a volatile character, who is certainly prone to anger, and potentially violence. In his song in the first act, in the aftermath of an enraged monologue, it is a more earnest nostalgia that steps forth, unhindered by his own blind rage. ‘Fordum’ is in effect a distillation of his longing for the good old days, when things were easier, set to a simple C major melody. No doubt its simplicity had something to do with its popularity; while the song is entirely in opposition to the opera’s sympathetic treatment of the masquerade, it is simply more memorable and more easily sung than Leander’s aria. While the popularity of the aria might speak to a nostalgic streak – with varying degrees of irony – in the Danish public imagination, its sheer simplicity must have been just as vital to its popularity. As is so often the case in opera, the villain – to the extent Jeronimus can be termed a villain – gets the best and most memorable tunes.

3.2.2 The love duets of Act 3 – Leander and Leonora; Henrik and Pernille

In *Maskarade*, Leander and Leonora have two scenes together, both taking the form of large-scale duets. The first is when they meet in the street before the masquerade in the second act (mm. 536ff.) – their second meeting ever, and the first since their engagement – and the second when Leander brings her a rose at the masquerade in the third act. In their first duet, Leander convinces Leonora to call him by the informal ‘du’ instead of the formal ‘De’, and in the second duet, they finally learn each other’s names. Both of Leander and Leonora’s duets are contrasted by the servants Henrik and Pernille – who are also becoming a couple – parodying their master and mistress, and their serious courtship. Henrik and Pernille, being comic characters, are rather more direct and to the point. Following Leonora and Leander’s second duet, the two servants sing a duet of their own, explicitly titled ‘Canzone Parodica’, ridiculing the high-flying poetry of the young lovers. Notably, for all the purported equality of the masquerade, the musical language of these two Act 3 duets still follows the same pattern as in the two preceding acts; the servants and their masters act, sing and speak much in the same way at the masquerade, albeit with greater freedom. The equality of the masquerade is not one of likeness, but rather one of co-existence, where the stratification of society, language and musical idiom remains, even though the party-goers may talk and dance together freely.

Leonora and Leander’s Act 3 duet begins with Leander singing to Leonora in his customarily ardent Gb major (mm. 415ff.), after a lyrical solo oboe prepares the tonal ground. The duet is in a ternary form, starting with Leander’s first section, asking Leonora for her name in Gb major. Leonora’s section, wherein she asks Leander about his name, is in A major, and then finally they sing together back in Gb major. The music for Leander in this duet is highly contrapuntal and with a ‘quixotic harmonic scheme’, to borrow a phrase from Reynolds (Reynolds 2010, p. 290) – his music is generally lyrical, passionate and highly tonally unstable, and so for this moment of heightened emotion, harmonic tension is increased further. Leander’s music cycles through keys as he tries to muster the courage to ask for Leonora’s name. Once he finally finds the words, he asks them in a straight-forward D major – Leonora’s reply (mm. 436ff.) continues Leander’s D major, but soon modulates to A major through the subdominant E major. Leonora’s section of the duet takes the form of dance music, *Agitato, ma non tanto* to Leander’s *Andante espressivo*, and it is much less harmonically complex than Leander’s music. She, too, takes a while to find her words, but in

the end manages to ask Leander what he is called. When the two finally learn each other's names, they return to the lyrical Gb major of the opening, singing the melody of the first section together in 'romantic polyphonic embraces of parallel thirds and sixths' (Reynolds 2010, p. 296). They also invent little nicknames for one another, even though they are first uttered before they learn each other's names – presumably for rhyming reasons: Leander – 'mit Hjertes Musikanter' ('My heart's musician') and Leonora – Flora (she is dressed as the flower goddess).

As soon as the triumphant G flat major climax of Leander and Leonora's duet has rung out, there follows a quick submediantic slide down to D major – Gb major being the enharmonic key of F# major – for Henrik and Pernille's 'Canzone Parodica' (mm. 493ff.). They are clearly making fun of the very polite and sincerely felt courtship of their master and mistress, disguising their own flirting in a thick layer of irony, even adopting the same melody as in the outer sections of the preceding duet. Where Leander and Leonora used considerable time to get to their respective points, Henrik and Pernille get straight to it – their not having to cloak their intimations to one another in layers of poetry clearly indicative of their lower standing. Their duet is also more dialogue based; where the structure of Leander and Leonora's duet was 'monologue, monologue, duet', the servants are talking with one another from the beginning. Henrik sings: 'My sweet perfume pot / let me kiss your rosy lips' ('Min søde Balsambøsse / lad mig din Rosenmund kysse', mm. 494ff.), to which Pernille replies 'Yes, all right, but you must hurry / I'm not one for long rests. / For folks of our standing / a grave, Spanish *amour* is not appropriate.' ('Ja nok, ja nok, men du maa ile / for jeg er ikke for den lange Hvile. / For Folk af vore Klasser, / en gravitetisk spansk Amour ej passer.', mm. 502ff.). Henrik and Pernille sing in short, direct lines, as opposed to the more long-winded, poetically inclined Leander and Leonora. Unlike Leander and Leonora, Henrik and Pernille get physical before they know each other's names – only just before the second section of the duet do they inquire about them (mm. 531ff.). They also parody Leander and Leonora's nicknames with their own, decidedly more nonsensical versions: 'min Sjæls Persille' ('my soul's parsley') – Pernille, and 'mit Hjertes Fænrik' ('my heart's cadet') – Henrik. Notably – even though rhymes are at play here, too – Pernille calls Henrik her heart's cadet, the lowest officer rank. Even when paying each other compliments, the two aren't particularly ambitious – as befits the parody. But still, their names and rhyming nicknames 'so cheerfully tickle our ears' ('Saa muntert disse Rim i øret krille', mm. 590ff.). In the short B section of the duet, the

music takes a quick detour to a minor tonality, the two lovers repeat their bizarre nicknames with mock-serious ornaments straight out of *opera seria* (mm. 557ff.) – possibly illustrating the unsuitability of ‘grave, Spanish amour’. In the return of the A section, Henrik and Pernille vow to never leave each other’s side and, on an A major climax, promise to never stop teasing each other.

The ‘Canzone parodica’ continues in the same tempo as the preceding duet, but there is a metric modulation at play: the seemingly languid 12/8 of the last section of Leander and Leonora’s duet turns into a quicker 3/8; where Leander and Leonora calmly – if passionately – saunter, Henrik and Pernille go straight into a gallop. Even though this duet, too, is in ternary form, it lacks the variety in tempo of the previous duet, the only distinguishing factor being the minor subdominant of G minor. The musical language is also far simpler; the duet plays out over a rhythmic ostinato of two semi-quavers followed by two quavers, and the harmonic layout is generally confined to the musical key, chromatic gestures only really being used when Henrik and Pernille are even more explicitly parodying people above their own station.

In *Maskarade*, the masquerade functions as an idealised microcosm of life, where people of wildly different standing can coexist. The equality espoused is not one of likeness or similarity. Henrik and Leander went to the masquerade together, but their relationship is largely unchanged; Henrik is still Leander’s servant during the masquerade. Pernille, too, is still Leonora’s maid. The masquerade does not magically turn them into strict equals. What the masquerade does, however, is open up a space in which the different classes can exist together, and where the confines of daily life to an extent are opened up. Leander can flirt unsupervised and find a partner who – he believes – is not the one intended for him by his parents. Leonora, too, can express desire and sexuality much more openly at the masquerade than she would be able to do outside of it. Particularly for the higher-class characters, the masquerade opens up a wealth of opportunities for expression that would be considered inappropriate out in the real world. To a large extent, these opportunities are already there for Henrik and Pernille – being servants, they are not beholden to the same social codes regarding behaviour as their masters. The impulse of the masquerade is – despite the thematic associations the choice of tonal area and harmony imply – to an extent to preserve the status

quo. Unlike Jeronimus, there is no desire or need to go back in time *per se*, but the vision of equality espoused by the masquerade still keeps people in their place. There might be more freedom to act and do as one pleases, but the power dynamics remain largely the same. Nielsen's claims about Henrik's supposed Socialism ring false when the masquerade is underway.

3.3 'Hvad er her for Kommers?' – Masquerading, dancing and the idea of the Bacchian

'What on earth is going on?'

Dance is the primary activity of the masquerade. In the opera, due to the already somewhat anarchical nature of the masquerade – certainly its absence of tradition and conservatism – dance becomes an activity almost synonymous with, if not sex and sexual behaviour, then at least flirting and unsupervised contact between (young) men and women. The masquerade symbolises a bright future, far from stilted convention; it is not, however, a complete rejection of the past: the parents of the story – Magdelone, Jeronimus and Leonard – all partake, if some more enthusiastically than others. Magdelone is particularly enthusiastic, which is not all that surprising considering her extended first act Dancing Scene, reliving the dances of her youth. Even Jeronimus is forced to recognise that things work out in the end. The masquerade, both as an idea and its physical location within the opera, functions as a place of youth, freedom, diversion and progress – in contrast to the home, the domain of conservative tradition, of the parent generation. But the masquerade is not an unambiguous acceptance of progress and dismissal of the past, either. As is pointed out by Holm (1999), the masquerades of the early 18th century – the masquerade of Holberg's *Mascarade* – were considered deeply immoral and a cesspool of vice by conservative theologians of the time, and were repeatedly banned. To an extent their claims were well-founded; prostitution and gambling were rife at the masquerades. But seeing as the opera, and indeed the play, are at their hearts a *defence* of the masquerades, all ends well. As the masks fall towards the end of the opera, it is revealed that Leonora and the girl to which Leander got engaged were the same all along – it all ends happily, keeping both the younger and the older generations placated. Young persons getting engaged willy-nilly at masquerades is not such a threat to societal stability after all. The Denmark of old that Jeronimus so longs for is not returning, but much is also the same. The

Danishness of the masquerade might appear threatening at first glance, but, as the resolution of the opera shows, much continues in exactly the same fashion.

3.3.1 Magdelone's Dancing Scene – Act 1, Scene 2

Magdelone's Dancing Scene is the second instance of dancing in *Maskarade*. The first is a brief passage in the preceding scene – Act 1, Scene 1 – where Henrik dances in his sleep, only to be rudely awakened by a slap from Leander. When, in Scene 2, Magdelone enters, it is to ask her son about the masquerade; she has heard on the street that he went and wants to know if old ladies also can go. Leander expresses disbelief that his mother would want to go, and she summarily shows that she 'still has not trod the dancing leather off her shoes' ('[...] endnu ej har traadt sit Danselær af Skoene', mm. 417f.). The Dancing Scene is formed out of two arias, which both detail Magdelone's dancing prowess. The first aria (mm. 429ff.) is in the form of an A major gavotte, in which she lists the dances she used to dance in her youth: the gaillard, the rigaudon, the polonaise, the passepied – the list goes on. Henrik and Leander also have little interjections, amazed at Magdelone's dancing prowess, or indeed lack thereof – the libretto gives no indication of whether she is actually a good dancer or not. At the end of the aria and the list of dances, she arrives at the dance she used to know the very best, the *Folie d'Espagne*. The music then turns into something more appropriate, a folia in A minor, with castanets clattering away (mm. 483ff.). Much to the delight of Henrik and Leander, Magdelone starts dancing the Folie d'Espagne with much enthusiasm: 'To dance the Folie d'Espagne / you must pretend to walk / to confession and repent / with a serious face.' ('Folie d'Espagne med din Fod / skal spilles som du triner / til skriftestol at gøre Bod / med gravitetske Miner.', mm. 491ff.). Everyone is enjoying themselves rather a lot, until the sudden arrival of Jeronimus, who puts an end to the dancing, asking 'what on earth is going on?' ('Hvad er her for Kommers?', mm. 541).

Magdelone's dancing music is among the most old-fashioned sounding in the whole opera. It is clearly based on 18th century dance music, particularly in the use of the gavotte for the first aria. The second aria – the Folie d'Espagne – is not a folia, as it does not follow the harmonic sequence of a folia, nor does it take the form of a sarabande. The tempo of quaver = 92 and marking of *Andantino quasi allegretto* is far too quick for a sarabande; if anything, the aria more resembles a minuet or even a bolero in tempo – significantly quicker dances than

the sarabande – even though the rhythms are not really indicative of any dance in particular. Regardless of whether Magdelone’s ‘Folie d’Espagne’ is really a folia or not, it is clearly signifying an archaic-sounding, Spanish dance, with its name, minor mode and castanets. Magdelone also dances the Folie d’Espagne in the play *Mascarade*, but there are no other instructions than that she dances and sings it (Holberg 1901, p. 110). Notably, all of the dances Magdelone mentions in her dancing scene are foreign dances – most of them French court dances – yet they formed part of Magdelone’s youth. Their foreignness is acknowledged – their names are largely French, and one dance even mentions its country of origin – but they are also part of the culture in which Magdelone grew up. The fact that Magdelone was dancing in her youth makes Jeronimus’ insistence in ‘Fordum’ that dancing and masquerading is a new-fangled thing seem rather more selectively nostalgic.

Dancing is not only linked to the A major of the masquerade, but also to an idea of sexual freedom. Jeronimus’ enraged reaction to seeing his wife dance is clearly indicative of his opinions on dancing, as is the fact that he asks if they are having a Christmas party (‘Holder I Julestue?’, m. 542). As described in the previous chapter, the traditional Christmas party was seen as intensely immoral, even by Holberg, and it bears with it a multitude of sexual connotations. Jeronimus then asks Henrik to run and fetch Master Herman, the local barber-surgeon, and ‘with fleam and lancet, / we’ll soon cure your minuet’ (‘med Sneppert og Lancet, saa skal vi snart kurere *den* Menuet.’, mm. 564ff.). The procedure Jeronimus wants Master Herman to carry out is a bloodletting, a fleam (Danish: *sneppert*) being a tool for puncturing veins. Bloodletting was a very common procedure up until the 17th century – the fact that Jeronimus is suggesting an archaic medical treatment is very much in character – and was done to relieve someone of excess blood, sanguinity. In the medical theory of humourism – the belief that the body was made up of four humours or fluids which in turn decided one’s well-being and temperament – too much blood was characterised by excessive enthusiasm and activity, to the point of fever, and so that blood had to be taken out through the process of bloodletting (Blakemore and Jennett 2003). It is also easy to see this excess of enthusiasm and activity as having sexual connotations, especially when mentioned alongside the immoral Julestue.

From its first appearances in the opera, dancing is linked to sexuality and sexual freedom – her Dancing Scene lets Magdelone relive her presumably wilder youth. It is also an example of the opera’s navigation of the relationship between the foreign and the national; as foreign as the dances indeed are, they still formed part of Magdelone’s youth, which was presumably spent in Denmark. The presence of the Dancing Scene also casts doubts on the vision of old Denmark painted by Jeronimus in ‘Fordum’. Although he does not mention dancing explicitly, it is the primary activity of the frequently mentioned masquerade, and does not fit into the vision of familial bliss and an unshakeable sense of duty which he describes in the second verse: ‘Earlier people knew their place: / master, mistress, daughter, son; / faithful boy and honourable maid. / Prayer nor payment could / persuade the order from veering off / this road to Heaven’ (‘Fordum var den sikre Stige: / Husbond, Madmor, Datter, Søn; / trofast Svend og ærbar Pige. / Til at rokke den og vige / fra den vej til Himmerige / hjalp ej Løn, ej Bøn.’, mm. 755ff.). Magdelone’s Dancing Scene offers an altogether more nuanced picture of the Denmark of earlier generations, one where fun was had and dancing occurred, some distance away from the strict religiosity of Jeronimus’ portrayal.

3.3.2 Act 3: ‘Mars and Venus’, the songs of the Tutor and Corporal Mors

Dancing, as is to be expected, also plays a significant role in the third act masquerade. Setting aside the general dance music that permeates the score, there is a total of five dances which take place diegetically within the act: a cotillion, three ballet interludes and a final *Kehraus*, an energetic chain dance which ends the masquerade. The third act is also where Andersen’s ideas of the Bacchian are the most clearly expressed. Through the middle of the ballet interludes, the divertissement ‘Mars and Venus, or: Vulcan’s Ruse’ (‘Mars og Venus, eller: Vulcani List’), and the ensuing song of the Tutor, Andersen stresses the importance of the Bacchian wholeness of life, how the Bacchian impulse unites and deepens the forces of love and battle, already present in life. This is further elaborated in the end of the masquerade, as the sinister character of Corporal Mors – the Master of the Masquerades in disguise – puts an end to the festivities through a ritualised death and rebirth. The masquerade offers a glimpse into an idealised society, but it is merely a glimpse; at the end of the evening, everyone must take off their masks and once again face the real world outside. The symbolic immortality of the masquerade must end for the real mortality of everyday life to take over.

The ballet of Mars and Venus begins with the Master of the Masquerade announcing that the Dancing Master and his girlfriend will now premiere a new divertissement, ‘which is known only by experts’ (‘som er kendt af de færreste’, mm. 1175f.). The ballet opens with a pantomime accompanied by a flute cadenza, wherein Venus is longing for her lover Mars, but at the same time dreading the return of her husband Vulcan (mm. 1194ff.). Accompanied by a C major figure in the accompaniment and some violent mediatic detours through A \flat major and E \flat minor, Vulcan enters, and ‘tells her he has to go away for a few days to attend to some blocked volcanoes’ (‘fortæller, at han skal rejse bort i nogle Dage for at se til noen forstoppede Vulkaner’, mm. 1198ff., trans. Manley). This is the titular ruse, as he is well aware that his wife is having an affair with the god of war. After he leaves, Mars enters ‘omnipotently’ (‘almægtig’, mm. 1221ff.) in a triumphant E major. The E major continues into Mars and Venus’ pas de deux, a rather grand waltz (mm. 1237ff.). As waltz reaches its climax, a golden net is lowered by Vulcan, and the two lovers are trapped. The ballet ends with Vulcan triumphantly grabbing the net and dragging his wife and her lover off the stage, ‘to the joy of the spectators’ (‘[...] under Tilskuernes Jubel [...]’, m. 1331).

Throughout the ballet, the aged Tutor has been pouring Jeronimus a not inconsiderable amount of wine, and the latter is now quite drunk. After the ballet, the Tutor is asked by his retinue of students to sing a song as a thank you for the dance. The tutor sings a song in D major, detailing how when Mars and Venus have ended their courtship, a third god – Bacchus – enters. Bacchus is the one who can unite and expand the forces of the two gods, love and war: ‘The soul that Venus has kissed to death, / [...] / only ripens to Bacchus’ lust. / [...] / The earth that war has bloodily kissed, / [...] / the vine gives a double harvest.’ (‘Den Sjæl, som Venus til Døde har kyst, / [...] / den modnes bare til Bacchi Lyst. / [...] / Den Jord, som Krigen har blodig kyst / [...] / den lover Ranken en dobbel Høst.’, mm. 1418ff.). The song has refrains after each line – ‘Petehej, petehej, peteheja’ and ‘Polemej, polemej, polemeja’ – as well as a concluding refrain after each verse – ‘Oh, look at how the three / whirl around, / rundadinellula.’ (‘Eja se, hvor de tre / i et Bundt snurrer rundt, / Rundadinellula.’). After the first verse, these refrains are taken over by the increasingly enthusiastic chorus.

The ballet of Mars and Venus is quite explicitly sexual – it is, after all, about an illicit affair – although in this ballet, the illicit sexual behaviour is punished, and even cheered by

the audience. Interestingly, the main dancing between Mars and Venus occurs in E major, the dominant key of A major – the key might be seen as preparing for a cadence into the masquerade and freedom of A major, but at the same time, in its dominant relationship to A major and the fact that their dancing is cut short, E major represents something just out of Mars and Venus’ reach. In many ways, the story told by ‘Mars og Venus’ is the opposite story of *Maskarade*. Without an appropriate arena in which to play out their affair, Mars and Venus can never be together. The authoritarian figure of Vulcan – whose entry music is in C major, the key of Jeronimus – is successful in his plot to catch his cheating wife, unlike Jeronimus, whose plans all fail in the opera. But this ballet is little but a prelude to the Tutor’s song, in which the outcome of Mars and Venus’ story is not so sad after all. The two gods are united and joined by Bacchus, the third god. Jørgen I. Jensen sees Bacchus as the artistic counterpoint to Venus’ eros and Mars’ eris (Jensen 1991, p. 248f.). This is the point in the opera where Andersen reveals the power of Bacchus and his ideas formulated in *Bacchustoget*: alongside the life forces of love and battle – eros and eris – there is also Bacchus – life as *art*. This is Andersen’s notion of art ‘about to become religion’, and the ‘deepest sense of the wholeness of life’ (Andersen 1904, p. 297).

The Tutor’s song is also significant in that it references specific tropes of musical Danishness. With its narrative structure, and many verses and refrains, the song takes the form of a ballad, a very common genre in Danish folk music – although in no way specific to Denmark. The strophic song with choral interjections is also a tried and true ingredient of Danish opera – one of the most notable examples occur in the first act of Hartmann’s *Liden Kirsten*. The refrains – the seemingly endless barrage of ‘petehea’ and ‘polemeja’ – are directly quoting Holberg: they appear in a song in *Jeppe paa Bjerget*. The Tutor’s song both explicitly demonstrates the power of Bacchus – as the one who can unite the opposite forces of Mars and Venus – and ties this unification directly into the history of Danish opera through the ballad form of the opera and Holberg quotes. The ballet shows that Mars and Venus on their own are not capable of uniting their forces – if only for the reason that Venus’ husband has found out about their affair – but it is only a preamble to underline the importance of Bacchus. Only with Bacchus – life as art – present, can the disparate forces of life be united. By then linking this idea so clearly to Danish operatic history, it becomes clear that this Bacchus-infused life is something specific to Denmark; what the Tutor’s song is describing is the actual *Bacchian Procession in the North*.

The masquerade cannot last long after the Tutor has finished his song. The song is followed by the by now very drunk Jeronimus' failed attempt at flirting with the fiancée of the Dancing Master. He is then grabbed by the Dancing Master and his fiancée – the Mars and Venus of the ballet – for his own whirl in a round. As well as being a description of *The Bacchian Procession*, the Tutor's song was also part of the plan he hatched with Henrik, to ridicule and punish Jeronimus for his old-fashioned ways. As Jeronimus is swirled around by the dancers, an ever-growing chorus is chastising him for coming to the evil masquerade and playing the role of Bacchus (mm. 1652ff.). When Jeronimus is released, a B \flat minor shadow falls over the assembled guests, as the figure of Corporal Mors appears, flanked by 'two black-clad hussars carrying an enormous urn on poles' ('to sorte Husarer, der paa en Bærestang bærer en uhyre Urne', m. 1739). Corporal Mors is actually the Master of the Masquerade in disguise, but presents himself as the 'recruitment corporal / of an old general' ('Hvervekorporal / hos en gammel General', mm. 1755ff.). He announces the end of the masquerade to the same tune as the Tutor's song, with the same 'Polemeja' and 'Peteheja' interjections from the chorus: 'You all know Corporal Mors. / [...] / His skeletal fingers beat the chamade. / [...] / His drumsticks are a spade and shovel, / [...] / so the great masquerade is now over.' ('I kender dog alle Korporal Mors. / [...] / Med Knokkelfingre han slaar Chamade. / [...] / Hans Trommestokker er Skovl og Spade, / [...] / saa ender den store Maskarade.', mm. 1765ff.) The corporal's final words are: 'Demasking! / Fem Minutters Pause!' ('Remove your masks! / Five minutes break!'), following a substantial monologue that functions as an end-of-amusement memento mori. The masquerade is over, and it is time for the guests to throw their masks into the corporal's big black cauldron, once again returning to the mortality of everyday life. As a contrast to the sudden seriousness of the scene with Corporal Mors, the spirited finale of the opera follows, a kehraus in A Major, in which the praises of the masquerade are sung one final time: 'Here you dance, here I dance/here everybody dances!' ('Her danser du, her danser jeg/her danser en og alle!' mm. 1851ff.).

One of the most characteristic features of Andersen's idea of the Bacchian party, the masquerade, is the constant presence of death. Nowhere is this made more explicit than with the appearance of Korporal Mors and ensuing ritual death and rebirth. The scene with Corporal Mors exists in two versions, the second instated as the result of the last part of the

Corporal's monologue being cut (Fjeldsøe et al. 2001, p. 94). In this second version, the Corporal is much more explicitly religious. Instead of merely announcing that the masks are to be removed, he sings: 'Kast Jer Maske, / og bliv atter Støv og Aske!' ('Throw your masks, / and again turn to dust and ashes!'). As an afterthought – almost Straussian in its banality – he then announces the five-minute break. While *Maskarade* was written almost three decades before *Capriccio*, Corporal Mors' announcement of a break feels like an anticipation of *Capriccio*'s Major-Domo telling Countess Madeleine that dinner has been served. Jensen points out that these remarks from the Corporal – before the publishing of the critical edition of *Maskarade*, this was considered the standard text – have something of the Old Testament about them, like Job's repentance upon having seen God: 'Derfor forkaster jeg, hvad jeg har sagt, og angret i Støv og Aske.' ('Therefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes.', Job 42:6; (Jensen 1991, p. 250)). As much as the masquerade represents fun and dancing, it must end, and the ever-present 'strongest sense of death' (Andersen 1904, p. 297) must be acknowledged. The end of the masquerade also functions as a repentance of sorts; the guests have all experienced and lived in this vision of an equal, ideal society, but it could never last forever, and now they must take off their masks and leave, returning to their normal lives and the strictures of society waiting outside.

Andersen's thoughts about the Bacchian in art are the most clearly and explicitly expressed in the latter part of the third act of *Maskarade*. Through the ballet about Mars and Venus and the song of the Tutor, the vital importance of Bacchus and the Bacchian are clearly underlined: the opposite forces of life – love and battle, eris and eros – can only be united through the introduction of art – Bacchus. Only with the help of Bacchus can the 'deepest sense of the wholeness of life' (Andersen 1904, p. 297) be achieved. Through Bacchus – art, dancing, the masquerade – the forces of love and violence can coexist. But alongside the Bacchian deep feeling of life is also death. Corporal Mors sings his song to the same tune and with the same refrains as the song of the Tutor; it is in a different key, but the implication is clear: after life must come death. In both the Tutor's and Corporal Mors' songs, the idea of Bacchian life is also tied to Danishness. In writing the songs in ballad form, which in addition are set as a strophic song with chorus, Andersen and Nielsen emphasised the Danish aspect of the Bacchian, and making very explicit Andersen's point in *Bacchustøget* that this Bacchian sensation is something which is particularly strongly expressed in Denmark and Scandinavia.

Chapter 4 – Summaries

My primary aim of this thesis has been to explore the portrayal of Danish national identity in Carl Nielsen and Vilhelm Andersen's opera *Maskarade* (1906) and why it came to be seen as a particularly Danish opera within a short amount of time after its premiere. To achieve this, I have investigated how *Maskarade* relates to the tradition of 19th century Danish music drama, as well as the portrayal of Danish identity within this tradition. I have also explored the reception of the opera in its first 25 years, looking at critiques from the premiere in 1906 and from the 25th anniversary revival in 1931. Further, I have sought to formulate potential reasons for the opera's rapid popularity in the years following its premiere.

Through a critical analysis of *Maskarade* and its relation to previous Danish opera and music drama, it is clear that the opera does not present a unified image of Danish identity. Instead, its presentation of Danishness is complex and multifaceted, presenting primarily an optimistic vision of an idealised future society, but one which still carries with it remnants of Denmark's musical past and tradition. The opera is not an outright rejection of the tropes of Danishness established in 19th century music drama but presents a more forward-looking attitude than the myth and mediaeval romance of the operas of the previous century. The question of *Maskarade*'s rapid popularity cannot be conclusively answered, but the analysis and investigation of the opera's historical context has suggested that the opera's rise in popularity coincided with Carl Nielsen's own increased popularity in the period from *Maskarade*'s premiere in 1906 until his death in 1931. The opera was also an adaptation of a play by one of Denmark's most significant playwrights and was seen by critics after its premiere as a successful synthesis of foreign and Danish musical elements into a truly *Danish* opera.

4.1 *Maskarade*, Danish national identity and 19th century Danish music drama

While *Maskarade* engages with the tradition of 19th century Danish music drama, it is not a strict continuation of the 19th century narrative model of heroic, mediaeval or mythic settings, nor is it a continuation of 19th century Danish opera's reliance on strophic songs as their basic dramatic unit. Still, *Maskarade* willingly references the patriotic nature of earlier Danish

music drama – albeit with a certain element of irony – and strophic forms occur within the opera. There is, however, greater stylistic diversity in *Maskarade*'s music than in 19th century Danish music drama, and despite its historical setting, the outlook of *Maskarade* is directed towards the future, not the glories of Denmark's past.

The Danish national identity of the 19th century was largely centred around Denmark's proud mediaeval history, or its folk myths. In addition to being caught up in the same nationalist fervour that had gripped the rest of Europe starting in the late 18th century, Denmark saw a need for a specifically Danish national identity as a response to external threats. The 19th century in Denmark was one of tremendous social change. The country shrank significantly in size and power throughout the century, losing great tracts of land in wars, and having to sell off most of its overseas colonies. Denmark also became a democracy in 1849, after centuries of absolutist monarchy. What can be seen as the beginning of a tradition of Danish music drama began in the late 1770s, with several state-commissioned Singspiele to celebrate national unity and the king. There were further developments in the late 1780s and 90s as the German composer J.A.P. Schulz was appointed to the post of Royal Kapellmeister. In addition to writing patriotic Singspiele, Schulz was also a prolific composer of songs and belonged to the Berlin Lied School, a school of song composition that valued what they saw as the natural simplicity of the strophic German folk song. Songs were composed with limited melodic ranges and a simple accompaniment, meant to mimic folk songs, in order to be accessible for a general audience. Schulz brought the idea of the simple, strophic song composed for a general audience into his operatic writing, and the folk-like song would remain an important part of Danish opera and music drama for the next century. The introduction of the folk-like song into Danish opera also coincided with an increased interest in folk music and culture in Denmark. Increasingly, throughout the 19th century, the music for music drama would be based on or inspired by folk melodies, or at least something that sounded like it.

19th century Danish opera was also open to international musical impulses, and the influence of non-Danish composers is clearly evident in many of the operas of the time. Niels W. Gade's cantata *Elverskud* ('The Elf-King's Daughter', 1854) is heavily indebted to

Mendelssohn, whereas Peter Heise's opera *Drot og Marsk* ('King and Marshall', 1878) shows clear influences from the fashionable opera composers of the mid-late 19th century like Verdi, Weber and Meyerbeer. International influence on what had become a national genre was nothing new; Schulz' operas were heavily influenced by French *opéra comique* and Gluck, and even though his songs were eventually considered truly Danish, they sprang out of a German school of composition. The important thing with 19th century Danish music drama was that it *sounded* Danish, not that it necessarily was based on Danish folk music. So long as the composer could emulate the foreign elements into their own, already Danish-sounding musical idiom, it could be considered Danish. Nielsen, too, had clear foreign inspirations when writing *Maskarade*. Early critics cited operas like Verdi's *Falstaff* and Wagner's *Meistersinger*, but also noted that he managed to tie it all together so that the musical result sounded Danish, although what this Danishness consisted of, was not expanded upon. Nielsen also wrote music that clearly referenced the strophic songs and musical tropes of 19th century music, which would have certainly added to the musical feeling of Danishness. As was identified by its earliest critics and later scholarship, Nielsen incorporated and followed international operatic trends, whilst at the same time making disparate musical impulses part of his own musical language.

Vilhelm Andersen's libretto provides further historic depth. The libretto can be read as an attempt to make explicit the ideas he presented in his treatise *Bacchustoget i Norden* ('The Bacchian Procession in the North'). There, he draws parallels between the ideas and culture of Ancient Greece and that of Denmark and Scandinavia. In Danish literature, Andersen argues, there is a Dionysian or Bacchian inclination, a particularly deeply felt sensation of life – life as art. This idea of deeply felt life permeates particularly the third act of *Maskarade*, the masquerade act.

Maskarade shows remarkable stylistic diversity, the music running the gamut from hymn tunes to music that would not sound out of place in one of Nielsen's symphonies. It is also through musical allusion that much of *Maskarade*'s Danishness appears. The various musical styles, characters and tonal areas are linked, appearing like a musical expression of the narrative conflict (Reynolds 2010). The father character of Jeronimus often sings in hymn-like C major melodies, indicative of his conservative views on Danish identity and his longing

for the past. Jeronimus' son Leander, meanwhile, often sings in a more lyrical F#/G♭ major tonality, characterised by a complex and unstable harmonic language. The opposition between F#/G♭ major and C major is illustrative of the central conflict of the opera, that between young and old, modernity and tradition. However subtly, Nielsen uses these various tonal areas and their associations throughout the opera in order to chart the relationships between the characters and their relationships to Danish identity.

Maskarade manages to unite the tropes of 19th Century Danish music drama whilst at the same time breaking with its conventions – at least on the surface. It possibly identifies a larger shift in the Danish national consciousness towards urban environments, as was seen in the social realism of the writers of the Modern Breakthrough, but it does not possess the impulse of debating contemporary issues. *Maskarade* turns away from the explicit portrayal of *rural* folk culture; urbanity can now be seen in a national context. *Maskarade* is in no way part of the Modern Breakthrough – it does not so much debate current issues as it presents an idealised version of Danish society, utopianism rather than realism – but it turns attention away from the National Romanticism that had coloured Danish opera and music drama for the past century.

4.2 *Maskarade*'s early reception and popularity

The change in *Maskarade*'s reception from its 1906 premiere to its 1931 revival is considerable. At the premiere, critics were largely positive, but were not convinced that the opera was entirely successful. It was, however, seen as the potential start of a new genre of Danish comic opera. 25 years later, and *Maskarade* was more or less unanimously deemed a great Danish opera. Some critics were more enthusiastic than others, but the prevailing mood was that *Maskarade* had become a modern classic. This 25-year period also coincided with Nielsen's own breakthrough as a composer; while he was relatively well-known in Copenhagen's musical circles around the time of *Maskarade*'s premiere, he had become a household name by the time of the 1931 revival.

Maskarade was seen as a new kind of opera when it premiered. Critics clearly saw it as something different to the Danish operas of the previous century, several of them

remarking on the novelty of a comic opera in Danish. The critics also remarked on the many clear foreign influences on the opera, but, they argued, those influences had been co-opted into a new, Danish operatic aesthetic. While the music was new-sounding, it still sounded familiar enough to elicit the conclusion that this was a new kind of Danish operatic music, especially suited to comedy. In terms of popularity outside of the opera house, however, the excerpt that most resembled the strophic songs of 19th century opera prevailed: Jeronimus' song 'Fordum var her Fred paa Gaden', a slow, hymn-like melody and lyrics imbued with a gently melancholy nostalgia proved the opera's great runaway hit.

In terms of the early popularity of *Maskarade*, this thesis does not provide any conclusive answers. It seems likely, however, that the opera benefitted from its composer's rising fame in the years after its premiere. Its novel-but-not-too-novel sound world might also have been a factor, although this is based on critiques of the opera, which may not necessarily have coincided with public opinion. Certainly, the fact that the opera's most popular excerpt is also its most conservative, gives pause for thought.

4.3 Final thoughts

Maskarade is a Danish opera. It is Danish in that it was written by a Danish composer and a Danish librettist; it was premiered by a Danish orchestra in a Danish theatre by Danish singers; the opera is sung in Danish and is based on a Danish play. *Maskarade* is clearly and explicitly a Danish opera. But upon closer inspection, this image of Danishness becomes more nuanced. It is a Danishness which is largely based on foreign musical impulses, which over centuries have become Danish in the ears of the audience. *Maskarade* presents a complex image of several Danishnesses, which, on closer inspection might not be as Danish as one might be led to believe.

In working on this thesis, the relative lack of scholarship on *Maskarade* has been quite clear. While the already available material is helpful in casting light on the opera, there is still considerable work remaining in creating a full picture of the opera, its historical contexts and its standing in Danish musical life. This thesis has only dealt with a limited section of the

opera's history, and while that has provided *some* answers, many questions have been left unanswered, and several questions have arisen in the process.

The matter of *Maskarade's* popularity has not been as conclusively answered by this thesis as one might have wished. While it is not possible to go back in time and interview audience members at various performances, a more systematic and rigorous survey of the opera's receptions should be undertaken. While the opera has remained remarkably popular since the premiere, changing critical attitudes, particularly in the period between 1931 and the present day might shed some light on *Maskarade's* standing in Denmark. Spill-over from the increased popularity of Carl Nielsen himself in the period between 1906 and 1931 might explain part of *Maskarade's* popularity, as may the appeal to early 20th century audiences of the novelty of a comic opera in Danish, but this is not and cannot be the whole picture of *Maskarade's* popularity.

One missing element from this thesis has been that of performance and performativity. This thesis has not looked at *Maskarade* from a performative point of view, which is an approach which could provide answers to yet more questions about the opera's relation to the idea of Danishness. It is, after all, through the act of performance that the ideas of Danishness and nationality in the opera are realised. As much as it might be tempting to think of these ideas as lodged within the score itself, they only appear in the moment of performance, when interpreted. Doing a performative study of the early history of the opera has sadly proved impossible, but later historical performances have been recorded, and the opera is still in repertory, at least at the Royal Theatre in Copenhagen. Newer productions have also started treating the opera less reverentially, potentially shedding more light on how its treatment of Danishness can be perceived and interpreted in the present day.

Maskarade's treatment of Danish national identity is extremely complex. This thesis' approach to this portrayal of Danishness as primarily a reaction to the Danish identities of 19th century opera has in many ways proved illuminating, but it is not the only way to tackle this issue. Other historical approaches might yield similarly interesting results. One approach

which had to be left out in this thesis was the political climate in Denmark in the years around *Maskarade*'s premiere. Similarly, a large-scale analysis of *Maskarade* with emphasis on the motif of the carnival, or a direct comparison with Holberg's play might also prove illuminating. The investigation of *Maskarade* and Danishness is far from over.

Appendix 1

Maskarade, a scene-by-scene synopsis

Note: This synopsis uses the scene division as laid out by the critical edition of *Maskarade*, published between 2000 and 2001 (Nielsen 2001a). A previous vocal score (Nielsen and Andersen 1906-1907), published soon after the premiere, gives no such indication of scene division. Act 3 is not divided into numbered scenes like the two preceding acts, instead going by unnumbered, descriptive markers.

The opera takes place in Copenhagen, in the spring of 1723.

Overture

ACT I

Inside the house of Jeronimus, an upstanding citizen of Copenhagen.

Scene I: It is five in the afternoon and Leander – the son of the burgher Jeronimus – wakes up after a night of revelry at the masquerade. His servant, Henrik, is still asleep and dreams that he is still at the masquerade, even dancing in his sleep. After a box on the ear from Leander, he wakes up, and the former recounts the events of the previous night: he has gotten engaged to a strange girl – a different girl than the one to whom he is already engaged. Amused, Henrik then sings ‘Først kommer fæl og fus’ (*First enter furious*), comically describing how Leander’s actions will land him in matrimonial court. The two then start preparing for the current evening’s masquerade, which starts at eight o’clock.

Scene II: Leander’s mother Magdelone enters. She excitedly asks Leander about the masquerade, inquiring whether ‘old wives’ also can attend. When her son questions her dancing abilities, she sings her two dancing songs (‘Magdelones Dansescene’ – ‘Magdelone’s Dancing Scene’), first describing the dances she danced in her youth, followed by the fiery ‘Folie d’Espagne’. In the final bars of the ‘Folie’, Jeronimus – Magdelone’s husband and Leander’s father – enters.

Scene III: Incensed by the frivolous dancing and realising that his wife wants to attend the masquerade, Jeronimus announces that the entire household is under house arrest and sends Magdelone off to her room. Henrik confesses that he and Leander went masquerading the

previous night and that Leander is now engaged to another girl. An even more furious Jeronimus sends them both out of the room.

Scene IV: Jeronimus explodes with a short rage aria, bemoaning the sin and lecherous behaviour he associates with the masquerades, as well as his own loss of face, now that he must tell Leonard – the father of Leander’s betrothed – that the engagement needs to be broken off. As he calms down, he sings a song (‘Fordum var her Fred paa Gaden’ – ‘Earlier the street was peaceful’) longing for the good old days, before masquerades, tea and chocolate, when everyone went to bed at a reasonable hour.

Scene V: Henrik announces the arrival of Herr Leonard, ‘impertinently’.

Scene VI: Hr. Leonard – a merchant from Slagelse, a small town to the southwest of Copenhagen – enters, ashamed. He and Jeronimus kneel before one another and tell each other that their respective children have broken off their engagements. They formulate a plan to change their children’s minds

Scene VII: Jeronimus’ outdoor servant Arv enters and Jeronimus describes his plan to catch anyone trying to leave the house: Arv will stand guard by the gate all night.

Scene VIII: Leander and Henrik re-enter and Jeronimus tries to make them apologise to Leonard. Henrik first attempts a fanciful explanation of their attendance of the masquerade, but then gives an impassioned defence of the very same (‘I dette Land, hvor Solskin er saa kummerligt beskaaret’ – ‘In this land, where sunshine is so pitifully rationed’). Jeronimus shuts him up, but Leonard thinks he has a point. Jeronimus then gets Leander and Henrik to apologise to Leonard, but jokingly, they repeat Jeronimus’ apology in a minor key. When Jeronimus tries to make Leander promise to marry Leonard’s daughter, he loudly protests. The finale quintet then follows, in which Leander and Henrik vows to go to the masquerade no matter what, much to the protest of Jeronimus. Leonard, enticed by Henrik’s description, formulates his own plan to attend the masquerade.

INTERVAL

ACT II

Act II takes place on the same evening, on the street between Jeronimus’ house and the playhouse (‘Komediehuset’), in which the masquerades take place.

Prelude

Scene I: The clock strikes eight and the Watchman sings his first song. He notices Arv, who has been placed outside the gate for his guard duties. The Watchman continues on his round.

Scene II: Arv – a superstitious character – attempts a hymn to keep his spirits up and evil spirits at bay. The hymn does not quite have the desired effects, so he instead sings a song about his love of food and Ane, the kitchen maid. Henrik enters dressed as a ghost, and mid-verse, he scares Arv. Henrik makes the terrified Arv confess all of his sins – he has stolen various food items, as well as Ane’s virginity. Henrik removes his disguise and threatens to tell Jeronimus if Arv does not let him and Leander pass. Arv begrudgingly agrees.

Scenes III-V: Arv is accosted and abused by respective choruses of students (tenors), officers (basses) and young girls (sopranos and altos). He curses them all to hell in various ways.

Scene VI: Leonard leaves Jeronimus’ house and wants to join the revellers at the playhouse. When he meets Arv, he lies and pretends to be on his way home.

Scene VII: Leander and Henrik step outside. Arv tries to confront them, but Henrik reminds him of their run-in earlier, and he lets them pass. Leander sings about the promised land of the masquerade and the sleep and conservatism that permeates his own ‘old house’.

Scene VIII: Leonora – the girl to which Leander got engaged the previous night – enters in her sedan chair along with her maid Pernille. Leander sings a love song to Leonora, followed by a rather more comic effort by Pernille to Henrik. Leander and Leonora sing their first love duets, in which Leander makes Leonora address him by the informal ‘du’. In the background, Henrik and Pernille start making ‘parodistic gestures’ (‘parodiske Gebærder’). As Henrik hears rustling by Jeronimus’ gate, all four hurry into the playhouse.

Scene IX: Jeronimus has realised Henrik and Leander have left and storms out of the house in a rage. He drags a very unwilling Arv along to the playhouse.

Scene X: Jeronimus and Arv are stopped at the door to the playhouse, where the doorman explains that they must be in disguise to enter. They go to the drunkenly stuttering mask-seller and enter his booth.

Scene XI: Magdelone steps out, already disguised. She meets Leonard, also in disguise; neither recognises the other, and they resolve to go to the masquerade together.

Scene XII: Jeronimus, dressed as Bacchus (‘bald, with a long nose and a wreath around his head’) storms out of the mask-seller’s booth, followed by Arv, dressed as Cupid. Jeronimus

sings his second rage aria, calling on the heroism of the old Denmark. They both enter the playhouse.

Scene XIII: The mask-seller closes his shop for the evening, dresses up as Dido and leaves for the masquerade. The clock strikes nine and the Watchman sings his second song. As he sings, the music from the playhouse is heard ever more prominently in the background.

ACT III

Act III takes place inside the playhouse.

Chorus: ‘Gaa af Vejen! Gaa af Vejen!’

Opening chorus of partiers with interjections from the main characters: Arv is scared; Jeronimus regrets his choice to come; Magdelone is excitedly confused; and Leonard is delighted. The Master of the Masquerades calls for silence as the Cotillion, the first dance of the act, is about to begin.

Cotillion: ‘Studenter! Studenter’

Dance. In the middle of the dance, a chorus of students is approached by a chorus of young girls, until they are interrupted by the students’ ‘fat and ageing’ tutor. Undeterred, the students continue dancing with the girls. Towards the end, a boy is offering his wares, among them Seville oranges, smelling salts and flowers.

Scene: ‘Lad vær’ at knibe mig. Jeg skriger.’

Henrik is pinched and pricked by two women, who, as they lift their masks reveal themselves to be old flames. One further girl accosts him. Henrik bluntly and rudely dismisses them before fleeing.

Madrigal: ‘At slig er Ungersvend i sin Tale’

The three women sing a moralising madrigal to warn other young girls about the dangers of men in general and Henrik in particular. The moral of the madrigal is not to trust men any farther than they can be thrown. The little boy reappears, and Leander – dressed as a shepherd – buys a bouquet of red roses for Leonora, who in turn is dressed as the flower goddess Flora.

Duet: ‘Ulignelige Pige’

The second of Leander and Leonora’s love duets, during which they finally learn each other’s names, and their young love reaches a yet more swooning climax.

Duet: CANZONE PARODICA ‘Min søde Balsambøsse!’

Henrik and Pernille sings their own, purposely ridiculous love duet, parodying Leander and Leonora.

Duet: ‘Ydmygste Tjener, Madam! og Tak for Dansen!’

Leonard tries to woo Magdalone, who is eagerly, if coquettishly, playing along. Their tête-à-tête is interrupted by Jeronimus, who is on the hunt for Henrik and Leander. Leonard and Magdelone recognise him, but Jeronimus does not recognise his wife nor his son’s father-in-law-to-be, and he begs pardon and leaves them alone.

Scene: ‘Aa med Forlov, De!’

A fight between an officer and a student as the officer steals a girl from the student, but before anything happens, the Master of the Masquerades again calls for silence as the Dance of the Cockerels is about to begin.

Ballet: HANEDANSEN – DANCE OF THE COCKERELS

Ballet interlude, the action of which is not described in the libretto. In an interview ahead of the concert premiere of the Dance of the Cockerels, Nielsen said: ‘In the music, you can hear the cockerels and the hens courting one another, one moment a quiet cluck, the next a loving cackle. Finally the music turns into a general dance.’ (‘De hører gennem Musiken Hanerne og Hønerne gøre kur til hinanden, snart en stille Klukken, snart en kælen Kaglen; tilsidst gaar Musiken over i almindelig Dans.’; (Fellow 1999a, p. 57)). Throughout the dance, Arv and Jeronimus are skulking around the perimeter of the stage, looking for Henrik and Leander.

Scene: ‘O, kom min Ven!’

Leonora and Leander try entering a side room but are interrupted by Henrik. He has spotted Jeronimus in the crowd, who is being taunted by students. Henrik, having hatched a plan, approaches the Tutor.

Aria: ‘Hvis ej jer Mine lyver slemt’ –

Henrik explains his master’s plight to the Tutor and wants his help in foiling Jeronimus.

Scene: ‘Dit Snakketøj gaar ej i staa’ –

The Tutor agrees, and Henrik elaborates his plan: getting Jeronimus drunk in order to embarrass him. The Tutor then invites Jeronimus over for a glass of wine. The students re-focus their attention on Arv and start pushing him about.

Ballet, Mars and Venus: ‘Gør Plads! Gør Plads!’ –

The students' taunting of Arv stops when the Master of the Masquerades announces a new ballet divertissement: 'Mars og Venus, eller Vulcani List' ('Mars and Venus, or Vulcan's Ruse'), prepared by the Dancing Master and his beloved. The story of the number is that of the lovers Mars and Venus and how the two are finally trapped by Venus' jealous husband Vulcan.

During the divertissement, Jeronimus gets increasingly drunk. When it is over, the students ask the dancers to come sit with them and the Tutor to sing them a song.

Chorus: 'Naar Mars og Venus har endt deres Spil'

The Tutor sings a song about the aftermath of Mars and Venus' courtship: when the two gods (Mars and Venus) have ended their game, the third god (Bacchus) enters, and the three gods whirl in a round.

Scene: 'Og dette skal være vor Broder til Ære'

The students surround Jeronimus, singing a drinking song in his honour. The action is again interrupted by the Master of the Masquerades announcing another ballet interlude, this time a 'solo dance with entrechats', danced by the Venus of the last interlude. Jeronimus, now quite drunk, attempts to woo the dancer, and she – as well as the Dancing Master (her fiancé) play along. As Jeronimus is beckoned back for another drink by the Tutor, the two dancers take him by the hand and whirl him around ever faster. A crowd gathers around them, chiding Jeronimus for going to the 'evil masquerade', and on top of it all, playing the role of Bacchus.

Scene: 'Tramtrara! Tramtrara!'

The Master of the Masquerade appears, dressed as Corporal Mors (Death). He announces the end of the masquerade, commanding everyone to throw their masks into his black cauldron, and announces a five-minute break for the masqueraders to walk up to the cauldron. As the masks fall, everyone recognises each other with varying degrees of distress. It is finally revealed that Leonora is the daughter of Leonard, and so Leander was engaged to the right girl all along. Jeronimus is the last to take his mask off and recognises Leander, who is already standing with the others. He understands everything and feels rather sheepish. A chorus of students sing a 'Vivat Jeronimus' in his honour and the Master of the Masquerades announces the end of the break and the final Kehraus – a chain dance to mark the end of the party.

Chorus: 'Kehraus! Kehraus! Dans ud! Dans ud! Dans ud!'

A final dance and chorus, extolling the egalitarian values of the masquerade: 'Her danser du, her danser jeg/her danser en og alle!' ('Here you dance, here I dance/here everybody

dances!'). Henrik comes forth to address the audience, asking for their approval and applause, set to a major version of the melody of 'I dette Land' from Act I. The dancing, singing and general merrymaking continues.

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