Joy and Laughter in the 18TH Century

Conference Days in Kolding
August 2010

ISECS

Edited by Katrine Worsøe Kristensen

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Foreword

25 to 28 August 2010, the Danish Society for 18th Century Studies hosted the annual meeting of the International Society for 18th Century Studies and invited to an international conference, *Joy and Laughter in the 18th Century*. The conference was very successful and the August days in Kolding are memorable. Scientific discussions and studies were followed by musical performances and excursions to interesting 18th century places in the south of Jutland.

We were also lucky that many students participated and organized a special conference session where there was opportunity to present papers and receive responses.

This small publication gives an impression of the many experiences that the conference offered its participants.

In the publication you can, among other things, read an interview with the conference keynote speaker, Professor William Warner, UC Santa Barbara, papers given by a number of the participating researchers, a report from the student conference and interviews with various participants. The publication provides through the many photos hopefully an impression of the happy and enlightened 18th century atmosphere that prevailed at the conference, at the receipt at Kolding Town Hall and on the excursion to the Moravian Brethren in Christiansfeld and the old bishopric of Ribe.

Our special thanks to the conference administrators Pernille Dahl Kragh and Lone Møland Rasmussen and to the editor, Katrine Worsøe Kristensen.

Søren Peter Hansen,
chairman of the Danish Society
for 18th Century Studies

Anne-Marie Mai,
Secretary of the ISECS

A conversation with keynote speaker William Warner

by student Susanne Jakobsen Tinley

William Warner received his PhD from Johns Hopkins University in 1977. He is a professor at the English department at the University of California, Santa Barbara and previously taught at the State University of New York, Buffalo. Professor Warner has a special interest in Eighteenth Century British and American literature. He has authored several books, among these: Reading Clarissa: The Struggles of Interpretation (1979); Chance and the Text of Experience: Freud, Nietzsche and Shakespeare's Hamlet (1986); and Licensing Entertainment: the Elevation of Novel Reading in Eighteenth Century Britain (1998), as well as articles, many of them on the subject of the novel.

I had the pleasure of interviewing prof. Warner and put some questions to him regarding his focus on the practical aspects of the American Revolution in his keynote speech, entitled "Revolutionary Happiness".

When did your interest in the 18th century begin?

In graduate school I loved the irony, the skepticism and the sense of social form so important to the Enlightenment; I found the early novel to be more experimental and surprising than the 19th century novel, where forms had become more routine and convention. Although I admire the literature of earlier epochs, I don't feel that I can know a Shakespeare or Milton or Dante the way one can know a Fielding, a Franklin or an Austen. To me, they are the first moderns.

With the American Revolution as the subject of your speech and Revolutionary Happiness as your chosen title you (with Hannah Arendt?) posit that happiness is the ultimate goal of revolution.

You use the term 'political happiness'. Would you care to elaborate on this?

In the contemporary era, politics has become a) huge in scale, and b) embedded in vast institutions (of government) and media. This has made it much more difficult for political actors - who in a democracy interpolate all citizens - to come together to enjoy politics as centered in conversation, debate and making decisions to do things together. I follow Hannah Arendt in the effort to recover that vital aspect of politics. Crucial to that recovery is the recognition that politics can be sociable and fun. It can bring to citizens the feeling (rather than simply the illusion) that they are linked to one another and therefore can feel all the pleasures of belonging.

You mention the appeal of the very strong imagery used in an influential speech by James Wilson, which is the metaphor of the 'chain of freedom' where each link represents an individual in the colonies. You say that at this point, politics turns into aesthetics. How important a role do you think this conception of the citizen as part of something bigger played?

The concept of the citizen as part of a larger public is axiomatic to the founding of a republic (or the sort of limited monarchies that one has in Britain, Denmark and Norway). The 'republic' is 'res publica', the thing of the people. Without that sense of connection and linkage, upon a basis of fundamental equality before the law, a republic spins apart and it cannot develop a strong enough consensus to find a common direction for its politics. I suspect that this 'good enough unity' needs the supplement of aesthetics not just flags and seals, but also the sort of media event that is involved with inaugurations and coronations.

Your focus on the practical 'physical enablers' of the American Revolution/the Enlightenment is very interesting. As you mention, the focus is usually on the 'history of ideas', not so much on the 'physical enablers'. How did your interest in this more practical side of revolution come about?

In my early research upon the American Revolution I came to see how important empirical spaces and global geography was to the development of places that had the coherence and staying power to anchor political activity. At a theoretical level I found in Bruno Latour's concept of "Actor-Network Theory" a way to think how many things have the agency to do politics: places (Faneuil Hall in Boston), genres (like the declaration), things (cod trade), infrastructure (the postal system/ roads), assocations (clubs, committees). It is the convergence of these many factors, as they are woven together by human actors, that provides (as Clifford Siskin and I argue in *This is Enlightenment*) the conditions of the possibility of Enlightenment.

One of these physical enablers was the 'new genres' and you mention newspapers that were at the time controlled by none. Did this mean no censorship at all?

The ground rules, protocols and practical constraints placed upon the 18th century colonial and metropolitan newspapers were so liberal that they were virtually free from state sponsored censorship. Many times during the American crisis Governors or the Privy Council would have loved to close down the exchange of public opinion through the newspapers. However, they did not have the power to do so and this made it much easier for Whig leaders to use the media to communicate with each other before the public and in public. At the same time, I would argue that there is no such thing as no censorship. Censorship works in countless ways (within the individual, through the conventions of genre and taste) within every expression. (Here I agree with arguments made by scholars like Stanley Fish.)

In your speech you talk of the importance of the event we have come to know as the Tea Party. You mention the descriptions of men dressed up as Indians, boarding the boats and throwing the tea overboard. You mention the interesting choice of words used to describe these men, such as 'bold', 'daring', 'firm', 'intrepid', and that these are not the type of words usually used in connection with an act that might be seen as vandalism (from the point of view of the English). What kind of role did these men and this event come to play, in bringing about the revolution and later?

Practically, the 'destruction of the tea' functioned as the 'last straw' for British officials in Whitehall and Westminster: it precipitated a draconian set of laws (the Coercive Acts) that triggered revolutionary resistance to British law and authority. The wit of feigning Indian perpetrators gave a certain zest to resistance in Boston, but it did not clear them of the charge of an immoderate use of violence (for example by Franklin and Washington). In almost every revolution there is a moment when agents decide to do more than speak or write their resistance, and at these moments, events take on a more volatile character... and they can no longer be explained from one point of view.

Is it correct to say that you see the Whigs as the beginnings of "the people", and their 'agency to act' as stemming from town meetings, council meetings, and a general move towards organization? And that this was a tendency noticed by the English but not possible to stop?

'The people' is a term that the Whigs invoke as the hopeful horizon of their speech, the audience that they hope will countersign their speech with their own, thereby making the two together speak of 'the people.' But the term 'the people', since it becomes a source of power and authority, remains a contested term. Tories can quickly experience 'the people' as the 'mob'. That is why an organization that gathers power becomes, as you suggest, decisive. In a speech in

Parliament, Edmund Burke notes that 'we' Parliament tried the experiment of the Coercive Acts and 'we have failed', while 'the Americans' tried the experiment of making their own authority with the Continental Congress, and 'they have succeeded.'

How difficult do you imagine, was the move from this initial 'structure' (the more concrete physical enablers) and those emerging notions of being a people separate from English ruling, to the 1776 writing of The Declaration of Independence?

I suspect that the leap was large and difficult (and always incomplete); but to the extent that many American Whigs made that movement to become a separate people, came from the momentum of events (of battles, laws, etc). Once Britain refused to grant any of the concessions the American Whigs demanded of her, Americans found that they were separate, fighting a war, attacked by Britain, etc. The Declaration of Independence was a way to recognize what had come to be.

Regarding the pursuit of happiness as a right of the people, the original 'triad' of rights belonging to a citizen of the good state (if Lockes ideas are seen as directly inspiring Jefferson) were 'life, liberty and property'. As you mentioned you do not see 'the pursuit of happiness' as simply a euphemism for 'property'. So there was truly something new to this conception of a 'happy people'. How does the inclusion of the pursuit of happiness as a right affect a people?

I suspect that the idea, that the end of politics is happiness, was a distinctly Enlightenment invention. The currently poisonous political atmosphere in the US may be a direct result of the expectation and demand that is built into American culture that we have the right to happiness and prosperity. But, we confront structural problems (the decline of American power and wealth, etc.) which make the demand for happiness very difficult to meet. Poor Obama, whom I still support.

Impressions from a participant at the student conference

by student Ellen Carstensen

A special section of the "Joy and Laughter Conference" was exclusively for students. Four students presented their papers at this session; Allan Moss, Claudia Esteves de Oliveira, Kathryn Desplanque and Christina Holst Færch.

It is a lovely late summer morning, and the sunlight pours invitingly in through the windows. We feel a bit uncertain of what is expected of us as student participants in the sessions but after having carried out a few practical doings we begin to feel more comfortable about the whole arrangement. After a while people begin to show up; some of them have already been registered the day before, and others have arrived the same morning and have to be introduced to the programme as well as to practical information.

This morning students coming from England, Canada, Holland and Denmark shall present four different papers. In an atmosphere of good will and expectation the session begins, and we can lean back and enjoy some very well prepared lectures. The first student to present her paper is a young woman from The University of Cambridge: Claudia Esteves de Oliveira. She describes in details the character of Sir John Falstaff from the play 'Henry IV' by Shakespeare; or rather by means of the character of Falstaff she explains how the Shakespearean idea of humour and laughter was treated in the eighteenth century.

From Shakespeare we move on to a Dutch satirist and his satirical novel 'De modern Helicon' and to a young Dutch student, Alan Moss. In his paper he discusses the question to what extent humour is bound to a specific time and place. His background for doing so is the novel which extensively mocks its contemporary literature characterized by sentimentalism. (Alan's paper is available in the section "De modern Helicon – a new edition", page 20).

From these two literary approaches, we move on to an art historical viewpoint. Kathryn Desplanque, a Canadian Art History Gratuate student from Carleton University, Ottawa, in her paper presents an allegorical satire in the shape of an anonymously printed caricature against Jean Baptiste Greuze, who was a French moral genre painter from the eighteenth century.

The last paper to be presented has as its rather embarrassing and macabre starting point a police report dated from 1719 telling about a 45-year-old melancholic bachelor who had cut off his penis. His action inspired many contemporary writers; among others a clandestine poet, Hans Nordrup, whom the Danish PhD Fellow, Christina Holst Færch, tells about in her paper. Nordrup wrote the poem 'The Crying Dina' which Holst Færch describes as a poem where the writer manifests his own virility and potent rhetoric. (Christina Holst Færch's paper is available in the last section of this publication).

After a morning full of humour, wit and satire, it is time for a lunch break. We feel very good and have enjoyed four interesting and instructive lectures. We have witnessed four extremely clever, enthusiastic, dedicated and promising scholars who can be a great inspiration for others. It is just a pity that so few students from SDU took the opportunity to attend the session because these students are really perfect models for others no matter what interest one may have in the eighteenth century.

A satirical collaboration:

A look at laughter across the centuries

by students Ellen Carstensen and Susanne Jakobsen Tinley

Approaching the conference weekend we had the opportunity to go through the many abstracts of the papers to be presented. Satire soon emerged as the main recurring perspective on the topic of the conference, "Joy and Laughter in the 18th Century". This made us curious about the difference between satire then and now, what was allowed, the forms of expression, reactions from individuals or groups targeted. What you'll find below are the answers to more or less the same handful of questions, addressed to some of the speakers on the topic who kindly agreed to inform us.

Can satire be seen as a weapon and if yes, is it constructive?

Claudia Esteves (CE): I think it is a weapon. I really do believe that humour is a social tool. When it comes to theories of humour and laughter I am really interested and it is funny how no one can really define things. One thought that I find quite right is that humour, satire obviously being a form of it, can be seen as a social tool for correction. I do think it can be a weapon and not necessarily negative, it can be constructive. Maybe because it's a lighter way but yet very profound - which is kind of a paradox. It can point to something that is wrong. I think that people learn a lot through laughing.

Christina Holst Færch (CHF): Well, I certainly believe that satire can be seen as a weapon. Whether it is constructive or not depends on the context and the context in which it is used. If one sees such satire as an arena, where eloquence is the decisive goal, then it is on the one hand destructive for the person you wish to overcome, but on the other (re) constructive for the relationship you wish to point out.

Søren Peter Hansen (SPH): Yes, satire has a formidable ability to undermine authority. Whether it is constructive depends on the context. The satire that my paper deals with is directed at the feudal organization of a society. If you want to change society, satire can be a very constructive way of arguing your case for changes by showing how foolish the old system is. Kierkegaard has a story of a man who has a dream. He dreams that he talks to the gods and is granted a wish (by Mercury) and wishes for only one thing: that laughter may always be on his side. The duplicity of laughter is a beautiful thing - laughing at and laughing with. The laughter of satire is designed to persuade. (Søren Peter Hansen's paper is available in the last section of this publication).

Nan Gerdes (NG): Satire is always critical but whether it becomes a weapon or not depends on the context. It is in the hands of the reader that satire becomes a weapon. Because satire is so dependent on reader response it is very difficult to determine the effects of satire. If the reader (or audience) agrees with the satirical message satire surely can debase, degrade or ridicule its victims, causing loss of authority. If the reader is in some way offended by the satire, he/she can turn "the weapon of satire" against itself. Furthermore, the reader can be indifferent to the satire and in that case satire is not much of a weapon. (Nan Gerdes' paper is available in the last section of this publication).

CE: Nobody likes to be ridiculed but everybody likes to laugh at other people. We are very cruel animals, when we want to be so. Also, humour allows detachment. It allows you to look at things from another perspective and see what is wrong with it more clearly.

SPH: Certain forms of satire are quite subtle. You might say that satire is the language of a clique to the exclusion of the larger public.

CHF: Satire is only efficient if you have any success with it. There must be some truth in the accusation of the subject you criticize to reach the efficiency you want.

Satire and the freedom of speech? (How far could you go in the 18th century, the consequences). Compared to today – when does satire become problematic?

CE: The British were very fond of satire and I think you could go very far. Britain after the revolution wanted to be seen as the land of freedom. And it wouldn't be a good idea, in the land of freedom, to be repressing people for being humourous. That is why they had to find a way of dealing with humour. Humour, of course, can be very offending. Compared to today I will give you an example from my own culture. I am Brazilian and this year we have presidential elections. They have made a temporary legal impediment that means that humorists are not allowed to mock people running for office, either in cartoon or other ways. This is really strong censorship.

SPH: In Denmark there was a short span of years of complete freedom of speech, at the time of Struensee. After his fall censorship was reinstated. At the same time you were bound by your word as such and you were expected to be able to provide evidence for your claims. In my opinion some degree of self-censorship is always healthy. There is often the choice to say things in a polite way or even to keep your opinion to yourself.

CHF: Freedom of speech has very clear limits in the 18th century. Struensee abolished censorship completely in 1770, but after his fall in 1772 the new government gradually reintroduced censorship. Holberg, e.g, defines the acceptable and unacceptable satire. With the acceptable satire you find general conditions where the unacceptable satire contains personal elements. Jacob Worm, who writes poems in the period 1660 – 1680s, is a brilliant example of how satire becomes problematic. He mocks Griffenfeld – one of the most powerful men in the country at the time. You do not mock Griffenfeld! He mocks other powerful men *and* he mocks the King. Of course this has consequences and Worm is sentenced a death penalty for his satiric poems.

NG: It is difficult to talk in general about freedom of speech in the 18th century Europe as legislation and censorship differed from country to country. In France freedom of speech was inscribed in the declaration of human rights in 1789 but with the prior condition that one was not to abuse this freedom. Already for Enlightenment thinkers some modes of discourse, e.g. defamatory libels, were regarded as abuses of the freedom of speech. In that way, freedom of speech has rarely been considered as an absolute freedom. How far the satires could go, furthermore depended on penalty and the way in which criminal law worked in practice. During the first years of the French Revolution the French book market was highly uncontrollable. Even though defamatory libels were still illegal they flourished on the revolutionary black book market. The libels were aimed at royalty and other personalities on the political stage. Some of these libels were even extremely pornographic and very aggressive and, in that respect, they have rarely been outdone even in our days. One example, I can think of, however, is the Danish art group Surrend that has recently published a pornographic poster of the Danish royal family. Interestingly, they have done this not only to question our monarchy but also to point out that the politicians' defenses of freedom of speech are often biased: freedom of speech can be used to criticize Muslim groups but – according to Surrend – the same politicians would find satires aimed at themselves (or our monarchy) highly offensive.

What/who were the targets of 18th-century satire (political, religious, rulers, ethnic groups)?

CE: Most of the British satire was political. The targets were kings, prime ministers and others. I am interested in the reception of Shakespeare. His

plays were very popular, different plays at different times.

SPH: The satire in the novels that my paper deals with is directed at the representatives of the type of society that is on its way out. That is nobility, those in power, egoists, pretty much all administrators of the old system. Political and religious leaders, people in power, all those who administer the world wrongly. All sympathy is with those who are seen as messengers of change, of the new. The aim, mainly, and this has to do with morals, is for the individual to practice the civic virtues. That is kindness, consideration, loyalty, fidelity. Most of the texts I have come across contrast the beautiful, good, polite, simply dressed citizen with the ugly nobleman, who dresses ostentatiously, shows no emotion and doesn't have to work for a living.

NG: I have worked with political satire in 18th century France. Especially in the beginning of the revolution there were no limits to the satire: everybody could be the target: royalty, right and left wing politicians, groups of the population that claimed to have rights which others considered ridiculous.

Is satire the only solution?

CE: I think satire and humour is the best solution though not usually the one that works. It has had practical consequences, sometimes imprisonment. I think it's very hard to measure the effect of satire and humour. They were very effective in pointing out what was wrong but I don't know to which degree they actually changed the situation. Satire is a better solution than many others.

NG: I am not sure that satire is a solution. Satire poses problems…

Could 18th-century satire be viewed as a spin? (In the hope of turning a people against a ruler)

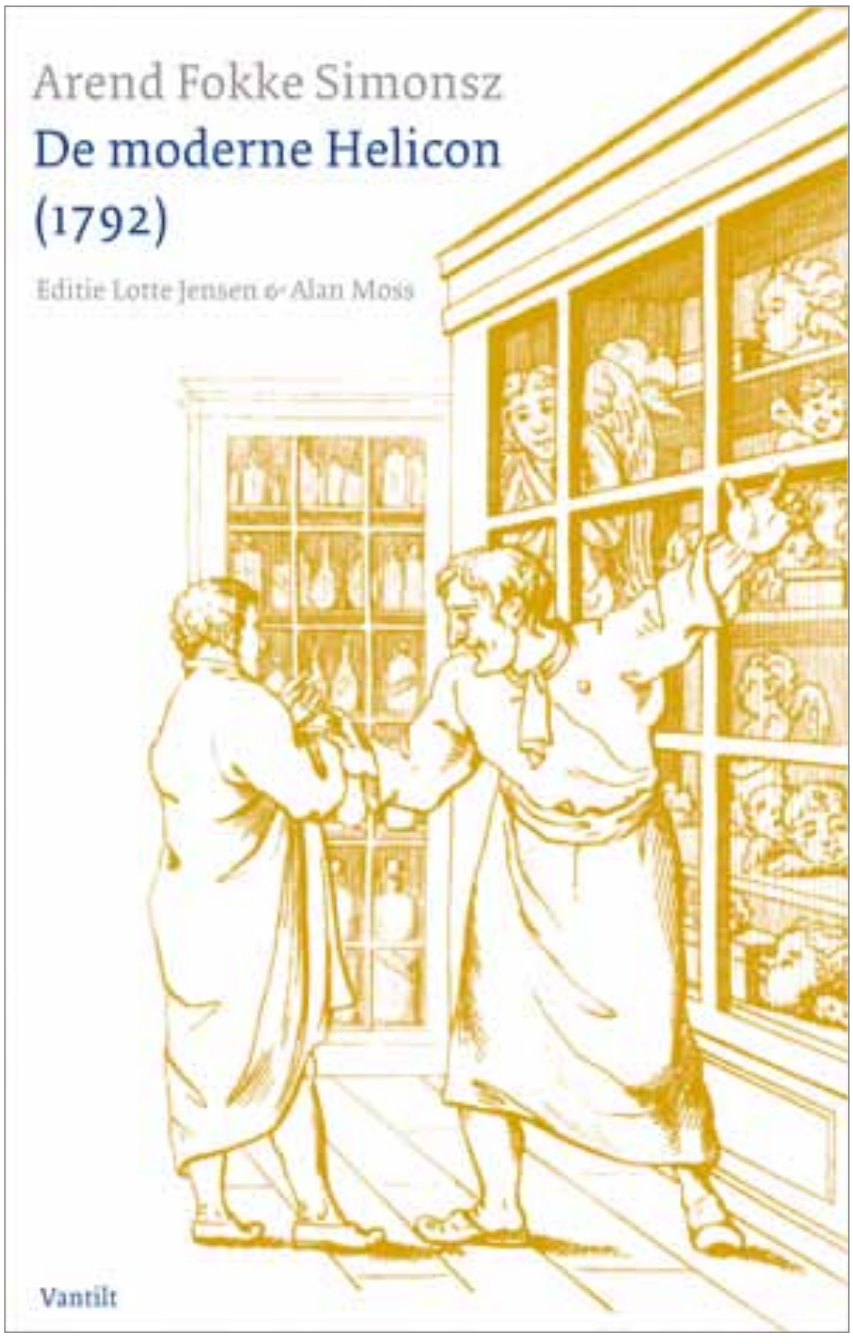
CE: There is the case of George III. He was deemed mad. He was frequently satirized and it greatly impacted his government. He lost the colonies, he lost the United States, he was mad and the kingdom was a mess. Of course it didn't make it easier for him. Obviously, satire always has a target. It played an important role then and I think it does nowadays.

CHF: Yes, spin in the sense of trying to unsettle political opponents. Harold Love who has written about manuscript libels in the Restoration England points out that the persons who were most pertinacious attacked in the libels were also the ones most powerful because the persons in the satires and libels had to be recognizable to a broad audience in order to be circulated widely. In Denmark, the libeler Hans Nordrup was in 1725 used by his patron C.C. Gabel to ridicule Gabel's political opponent bishop Deichmann and thus spreading the word that Deichmann was corrupt, lecherous, and had syphilis. The rumours about Deichmann were repeated in a number of libels and the bad reputation stuck to him. However, Deichmann was at the same time favoured by the king and was one of the most powerful men in the 1720'ies. In 1730, when Christian 6th was king he immediately dismissed Deichmann as bishop supposedly because of rumours about the bishop.

De moderne Helicon – a new edition:

A collaboration between Alan Moss and Lotte Jensen

by Susanne Jakobsen Tinley and Ellen Carstensen



by Ellen Carstensen

Two papers focusing on the Dutch writer Arend Fokke Simonsz, were presented at the conference, each with its own perspective(s), Alan Moss' "Edited Humour" and Lotte Jensen's "Typical Dutch humour? Laughter in the satirical writings by Arend Fokke Simonsz (1755-1812)". Together with Assistant Professor Lotte Jensen, Alan Moss is working on editing a new edition of *De Moderne Helicon*, a book written by the Dutch writer Arend Fokke Simonsz in 1792. In his presentation Alan Moss focused on the difficulties of editing an 18th century book. Will its kind of humour still be understood today, and how can a new edition help to improve a reading experience? Furthermore he focused on whether humour tells us all about society and whether it changes over the years.

De moderne Helicon is a humorous and satirical novel which glorifies the past and satirizes the kind of sentimentalism that was so common in contemporary writing. It also mocks the ancient literature and mythology of the Greeks and Romans. Sentimentalism was characterized by the use of clichés which Simonsz mocked thoroughly. By comical contrasts Simonsz ridiculed the writing of his time; he contrasted the exalted with the ordinary, and in his laughter there was both sadness and happiness. He made fun of things that were dear to him. In Simonsz' opinion humour is bound to a specific time and place. In his book he played with language by being both vulgar and gentle in order to protect himself against criticism.

I had the opportunity to ask both Alan Moss and Lotte Jensen some of the same questions focusing on satire, that we asked another group of speakers at the conference.

How far could you go with satire in the 18th century?

Alan Moss: In late 18th century it was difficult. There was much censorship, and a lot of poets were thrown into prison. This general trend originated from the French Revolution in 1789 and the Dutch revolution in 1795. Furthermore, the French occupation of Holland between 1806 and 1813 aggravated the situation. It became even more difficult to write satire and because of that people wrote in a more hidden way. They had to cover themselves up. They wanted to write sharp remarks, but they were forced not to, so they had to develop a way to avoid persecution. One way of doing so was to use the classical mythology because it was a well-known subject. Simonsz did not get away with his criticism. In 1811, Napoleon visited Amsterdam, and in connection with this visit the French censorship decided to imprison or exile all writers who could be dangerous for the empire so Simonsz, now an elderly sick man, was sent to prison, and after that most publishers did not want to have anything to do with him because he was blacklisted.

Lotte Jensen: That depended very much on the time. In 1790 Simonsz could go quite far because there was a fine climate in the Netherlands at that time for publishing books. When the French occupied the country from 1806 to 1813, and Holland was incorporated by the French, then censorship was imposed, and satire was not easily published because the French gained great control of the press. Simonsz himself tried to make a living of writing, and for him being witty was necessary because he needed an audience that was interested in what he wrote. At first he wrote in a very

learned style, but later on he changed his subjects and started giving speeches in the Dutch society. It turned out that he was very good at this, and he actually made money from it.

Is there a connection between expressing satire in the 18th century and nowadays?

Alan Moss: I think figurative speech is getting more valuable. In the 18th century they were much more accustomed to it. But I also think western societies are more open. We can put up with critique – also critique of power, of governments. We are relaxed to such critique.

Are we allowed to criticize others?

Alan Moss: That is a problem. Of course we have to respect each others' wishes, and in a free society that should be possible. What happened to the Danish cartoonist, Westergaard, and also Rushdie was terrible; it is really the same story.

Who or what was Simonsz' target?

Alan Moss: He had a literary target. He mocked the poets of his time. He did not mock sentimentalism in general – he is said to have killed sentimentalism – but all the phoneyness in literature itself. We use all these worn metaphors like 'bleeding hearts' and 'hot tears that drip from faces'. They are the clichés that he criticized.

Who were his readers?

Alan Moss: He was a man from the literary society in Amsterdam. That was of course a group of educated, well-respected men. But he was also a publisher , and therefore he also had a broad audience.

Did Simonsz use satire as a kind of weapon?

Alan Moss: Yes and no. He did attack the phoneyness, but he did not pinpoint people. *De modern Helicon* is not a key novel. Of course he did have certain poets in mind, but he did not pinpoint them. But at the same time it is a burlesque story, so he mocks those things that are dear to his heart. He loves the things he criticizes. He is a member of the society that he criticizes, so he criticizes himself. That is ironic self-representation and very ambiguous.

Lotte Jensen: Simonsz is said to be the man who killed sentimental writing so his satirical writing really had the effect that it killed a certain way of writing. Therefore satire could be used as a weapon, and it could have an effect. This could also be seen as to the patriotic writing of the democratic movements. It was spread and read by many people, and it did have power. Simonsz also wrote political satire, and in this sense he used satire as a weapon, e.g. when he criticized the French occupation between 1806 and 1813.

Is satire the only solution?

Alan Moss: No, you could say literature in general. Satire is the best example you can have to criticize society, but tragedy could also do it or an epic or even comedy.

Lotte Jensen: It is a very powerful weapon especially in the 18th century because texts are the public medium to have your ideas spread. It can be very powerful but it is not the only tool you have; on the contrary, I do not think that nowadays you can change people's behaviour by using satire. It is one way of approaching a problem. In some cases you will have to have a dialogue instead of shocking people because you also create enemies by writing satire. Another solution could be to find a more eloquent way of speaking with the enemy – trying to create a dialogue instead of provoking because satire is always provoking.

Why does satire appear to be so efficient?

Alan Moss: Because it pinpoints people – or at least political satire does. People immediately know what you are talking about.

Lotte Jensen: I think satire is the most appropriate of all "genres" (modalities) to really give a shock effect. Satire always criticizes manners and

the way people behave. Satire is a powerful way of confronting people with their own behaviour by ridiculing. So the ridiculing gives it sharpness. This power makes people think. It makes people think more about society. Satire is not entirely political. It rises to a higher level and criticizes human behaviour in general. That could be in a political sense or in a poetic sense as is the case with Simonsz, but generally it deals with human behaviour. But very often it is the political satire that draws our attention, and that is why we associate satire with politics.

When does satire become problematic?

Lotte Jensen: When it is very political and against those in power. There was much political struggle within the Dutch society. The monarchy – the 'statholder' – was a strong and established authority with patriotic supporters so men of letters had to be careful what they wrote about this authority. So it was dangerous in a political sense. You can compare it with today: there are certain lines in politics and political criticique that are very sensitive. Today it is a more global problem. The press has become mass media, and with the internet news is spread very fast. There are no borders in this sense any more, and you have less control of your publications, and that is of course a great difference compared with the 18th century, also because in those days not all people could afford to buy pamphlets and newspapers so the spreading was limited.

Can satire be said to be a trend in the 18th century?

Lotte Jensen: The 18th century had so much political turbulence, and it was very trendy to have images printed. It was a trend set by great writers such as Voltaire and Jonathan Swift so it was really a literary trend. You might say that satirical writing is a genre of the 18th century. There are many stories in Dutch literature about satirical dreams where a person has a dream, and in this dream he criticizes society. This 'genre', satirical dreams, was also very trendy.

De moderne Helicon – a new edition:

A conversation with Alan Moss

by Susanne Jakobsen Tinley

How did you decide the subject of the book, where did the idea and your interest come from?

Well, I knew I wanted to study the eighteenth century. Lotte gave a course in my first year about it and I thought it was a really interesting subject. It was Lotte who came up with the idea of *De moderne Helicon*. To be honest I had never heard about it, but after reading a few pages, I knew it would make a brilliant project.

Can you tell more about the original book?

De moderne Helicon (1792) is writen by Arend Fokke Simonsz (1755-1812). He was an interesting writer and bookseller in the 18th century, who joined lots of literary societies in Amsterdam, as for instance "Felix Meritis". He presents himself as a writer of satires (like *De moderne Helicon,* in fact) and humorous texts. But somehow that is a misleading view: he really is an autodidact - a "dictionnaire ambulante" according to one of his biographers - someone interested in Hebrew, the Romans and the Greeks and all kinds of craftsmanship (his encyclopedia for example shows that). *De moderne Helicon*, which was originally presented as a speech for the literary society "Felix Meritis" in Amsterdam, tells us about the Roman god Apollo, the god of poetry, who has opened a store on the Helicon, the mountain of the muses. In the store he sells all kinds of literary clichés and worn metaphors, like "bleeding hearts", "hot tears" and "little angels" to guide your way. Business is going well for Apollo, because every second-rate writer tries to fill his works with this sort of rubbish. On the mountain, which has actually turned into a small hill, the main character also meets the muses, who have turned from beautiful young women into little old ladies, and Pegasus, the once mighty horse who defeated the monster Chimaera turned into an old mule. While presenting a humorous work, Simonsz criticizes the literary society of his time. He does so effectively, not by being a grumpy old man, but by being someone who is actually a member of the society he mocks. Of course, in the text, Simonsz presents himself as a very intellectual man: he quotes Vergil and Horace (sometimes by heart it seems), he makes some remarks on the etymology and origin of some mythological names and tells us about all kinds of historical events. You can imagine, therefore, editing *De moderne Helicon* was quite a challenge sometimes. It seemed to be a jigsaw puzzle, with the right pieces missing. In the end we succeeded, and we added an introduction (some twenty pages) to our new edition. We found a publisher in Nijmegen - Vantilt - and the book is to be published on October 25th 2010.

Just to be clear, you are a student of Humanities, more specifically history, right? Or is the programme open the first couple of years before you have to choose an area within the Humanities?

Well, it's always complicated to explain an educational system to someone from another country. Humanities, perhaps, is the best word for it, but we call it 'Letteren'. However, I don't study history, but Dutch.

Can you explain further about the programme?

In September 2009 I joined the Radboud Honours Academy. It is an opportunity for students, who've shown their merits in their first year, to learn and do more at the university. There are two kinds of programmes: a disciplinary one and an interdisciplinary one. In the latter students follow special courses and form think tanks for companies like the Royal Haskoning (a company that

works on the new water projects in New Orleans). The disciplinary programme, on the contrary, gives students the opportunity to focus on their own subject, like Humanities - in my case - but there are also programmes about Philosophy, Medicine and Law. In the disciplinary programme each student can do research in the area that interests him or her specifically. Of course, this isn't something a first year student can do on his own, so we all have to ask a professor to help and guide us through this process. In my case, however, it really was a project Lotte and I did together. In contrast to the interdisciplinary programme - something Nijmegen atually learned from American universities - the disciplinary programme started just last year. You can imagine it still has some problems to solve, but all the projects will eventually fall into place. To give you a couple of examples: someone (from Linguistics) is doing research on the effect of third language acquisition on second language acquisition (NT3-NT2 research), another one (from History) is looking at the Korean War and a group of students (from Dutch language and culture) is doing research on the importance of the literary critic in modern society.

Can you explain the term "typical Dutch humour"?

I didn't talk about a specific kind of Dutch humour: Lotte did. She told us that there are stereotypes for every European nation: the Germans are humourless, Spanish people are too proud, the Danes can never keep a secret and the Dutch are cheap. In her presentation Lotte told us that we focus on two kinds of things in our jokes: on excrements and on money. On excrements, possibly because the Dutch are always regarded as being tidy and clean: excrements being the exact opposite of that. Money, on the other hand, is a subject that returns again and again in literary works. Take *De moderne Helicon* for example, in which the Roman god Apollo is obsessed with making money. In Lotte's speech she noticed that Simonsz wrote a book about humour: *Verhandeling over den lach en het lachwekkende*, in which he talks about the essence of humour and categorizes the best humorous writers in Europe (of course Holberg is on that list). Of course, I can't give you an elaborate account of Lotte's speech. (Her paper is available in this publication).

How did you pick Lotte for collaboration? You mention that you ended up collaborating more closely on the project than some other student-professor collaborations? Is this because your interests are really very similar?

Lotte and I were both very enthusiastic about the project; we thought it would be a wonderful book to edit. I think it's because of this enthusiasm that we ended up working so closely together on the project.

Edited Humour

by Alan Moss

Introduction

Nowadays the Dutch author Arend Fokke Simonsz. is almost unknown in the Netherlands. Dutch students have heard about famous and important authors, like Vondel, Huygens and Hooft, but Simonsz is only remembered as the name of an alleyway somewhere in the canal district in Amsterdam. And that is a shame, because Simonsz was a well-known and respected man in his time. He was a scholarly writer – a "dictionaire ambulante" according to his biographers – who used to give speeches and lectures in about twelve literary societies in Amsterdam, "Felix Meritis" being the most important one. His works are varied: sometimes he wrote obscure books about magnetism and dreams, at other times he made sharp remarks about society and literature in his satires.

Because of that Dr. Jensen and I decided to publish a critical version of one of his satires. We chose *De moderne Helicon,* published in 1792, wherein Simonsz mocks both the poets and the literary society of his own time as the beloved and glorified classical literature. In this book the Roman god Apollo opens a store on the Helicon, the mountain of the Muses, where he sells a large collection of poetic clichés and phony sentimental rubbish, like bleeding hearts, hot tears and little angels. Modern poets use those metaphors so often – *ad nausea usque* according to Simonsz – that business is going well for Apollo and his nine Muses, who turned from beautiful young ladies into old bats.

After a year of editing I can tell you it is not an easy book. At first sight it is a very readable and amusing satire, but if you look closer you'll find tons of obscure notes about history, classical and modern literature and mythology. Besides writing a book to amuse people, Simonsz liked to show off his knowledge and teach his audience a bit about all those subjects. Beside these sometimes difficult social references, the book – obviously, I might add – is bound to a certain time. That is remarkable in *De moderne Helicon*: Simonsz refers to imprisoned Dutch authors and just slightly hints at books from other society members and literary colleagues. Because of that I experienced *De moderne Helicon* as a difficult jigsaw puzzle, with the exception that the pieces seemed to be mixed up with pieces from other puzzles.

Not funny anymore

The question I would like to answer about *De moderne Helicon* is a very simple one: can it still be fun? And as always with easy questions the answer is both yes and no. Take for an example this textual fragment:

> […] die zijn koetjens, gelijk men zegt, toch al op 't droog heeft […] […] who, as they say, already has his cows on dry ground […]

Before I start talking about this, I have to point out that I am facing a new problem here. Instead of just editing an old Dutch figure of speech, I also have to translate it into English. Sorry about that, but this is the best example in the text. There is this old Dutch saying, translated as 'having your sheep on dry ground', meaning that someone has enough money to be safe in the future. Simonsz did something different with this saying: instead of 'sheep' he wrote 'cows'. When a Dutch student would read the unedited text he would just shrug and keep on reading. However, Simonsz intended it as a joke. The person who has his cows on dry ground is in fact Mercury, the Roman god of thieves and sales-

men. According to mythology Mercury stole Apollo's cows – the main character of this satire – when he was an infant. Basically he means Mercury is rich enough because he stole from Apollo. Nowadays we wouldn't consider it fun and we'd think it is farfetched. The joke isn't funny anymore because our audience doesn't know enough about ancient mythology. And explaining a joke – as in a new edition – doesn't make it funnier. But that's not the only reason. Humour is bound to a specific place and time. We saw that – mutatis mutandis – in *De moderne Helicon*, but we can also see it when we compare classical comedy to the latest sit-com. Take for example the comedy *Lysistrata* by Aristophanes. In this play the women of Athens make a pact to stop having sex with their husbands until peace has been declared. It sounds funny when I say it like that, but you should keep in mind that all the male actors carried an enormous phallus made of leather on the stage. Perhaps we'd think it is great fun the first few minutes, but after that it will get embarrassing – both for the actors and the audience. Can you imagine a play like that in a modern theatre or even in a theatre in the eighteenth century? Heart attacks will follow. Is it completely useless then? No, it isn't. When we embrace the fact that we won't giggle about it, we see that we can learn something. We can now tell something about Simonsz' audience. An audience that could understand these remarks means that we deal with an educated audience. Furthermore, it tells us something about the specific time: a time wherein classical literature and culture was highly admired. This specific joke is just one example. In general we can say history books teach us just what they promise to teach – history based on facts and dates, but literature shows us the opinions and ideals of a specific time. Stories about knights and kings from the Middle Ages for example, sometimes show us the ideal of chivalry. And especially satire – like *De moderne Helicon* – deals with opinions, trends and the talk of the day. Because of dismay and critique in satire, it can be a social and cultural barometer. Sometimes it even tells us some important event (revolution, war, a law change) is about to happen or has already occurred. An important event in Dutch history to illustrate this is the Batavian revolution in 1795. In the years before this revolution there was a constant struggle between the monarchists and the republicans. The satirical magazine *Janus* in 1784 published an article that illustrates this fight and what was the new opinion of the monarchy. On the occasion of stadtholder Willem V's birthday they wrote:

> Missing: a child under custodian care. He is 1,82m. His face is round, red and looks like a juniper berry. Brown hair. Hasn´t got a straight back. About 39 years old. Wears a blue jacket with copper buttons, yellow trousers, boots. His underwear is labeled. Stays around pubs and brothels. Whoever returns it to his guardians in Delft, Manor the Madman, can count on a big reward. The biological parents want nothing to do with this lunatic.

Of course satire isn't only about political events. As shown in *De moderne Helicon* it can also be about literature itself. Simonsz mocks a new kind of writing: sentimentalism. It is something quite popular in Germany – with Goethe – and in England – with Thomas Gray – but because of satire it doesn't really work in the Netherlands. Again, satire can be a cultural barometer, an indicator of opinions. Sentimentalism wasn't received too well, it was mocked in satires and eventually it disappeared.

Yes, it's still funny

Is it completely humourless then? No, of course not. Simonsz had his own idea about humour and laughter. In his essay *Verhandeling over den lach en het lachwekkende* [Essay about laughter and the laughable] Simonsz said contrast was the most important characteristic of humour. Of course Simonsz didn't make this theory up on his own, some philosophers like Moses Mendelssohn preceded him. In *De moderne Helicon* he wrote:

> Thanks to a comical contrast between the exalted and the ordinary, this fragment is only designed to amuse and to make people laugh.

The exalted and the ordinary. That means that if I wanted to make you laugh I had two possibilities of making an entrance today. Either I could've worn a dinner jacket with a little bowtie and polished black shoes – perhaps some golden cufflinks to top it off –, but speak with a Cockney accent like 'Oi! Oi, watcha doin' 'ere, lads?'. Or I could've dressed up like a drifter and speak Queen's English.

Simonsz did almost the same in *De moderne Helicon.* When the main character – for argument's sake, let's just call him Simonsz – enters Apollo's shop he welcomes him with an exalted greeting straight from *The Iliad*:

> That moment I just didn't know how to act, because I was baffled by this strange meeting. However, I suddenly remembered a lofty speech that Cryses, a priest in Homer's works, used to greet this god. I then raised my voice and spoke, not without some grandiosity, these Greek verses:
> Κλυθι μου α›ργυροτοξ›, ος χρυσκν α›
> μφιβεβηκας, Κιλλαν τε ξαθεην, Τενεδοιο
> τη ιφι α›νασσεις. Σμινθευ.
> Iliad, Lib. I. vers 24, 25, 26 .
> God of the silver bow, who with thy power encirclest Chryses, and who reign›st supreme in Tenedos and Cilla the divine, Sminthian Apollo!

Apollo, however, doesn't respond as a god, but is almost human in his appearance. He smokes a pipe, he keeps talking about his financial problems and he even curses. Because of this contrast between Apollo's divine status and his actual behavior you'll be surprised and laugh, just like Simonsz intended you to. We know why his audience in the eighteenth century would have laughed because we understand the process. It's a comic formula that you can still see sometimes in modern comedy and sitcoms. Laurel and Hardy, *Bridget Jones , 'Allo, 'Allo* and *Are You Being Served?* are just examples that pop up.

When we focus on laughter in *De moderne Helicon* we can find out something else. The contrast between story and style is typical for a particular genre: the burlesque. We can look at *De moderne Helicon* as a specific kind of the burlesque, the so-called travesty, a genre popular in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. In this genre an exalted subject, like classical mythology or important works like *The Iliad* and *The Odyssey*, is contrasted with a very mundane style. In *Thalia* by W.G. van Focquenbroch for example the Roman god Apollo is depicted as a chain smoker, mourning for his beloved Daphne. In *De moderne Helicon* this can also be noticed: Apollo is not what he should be – a highly respected and exalted god – but a rude salesman.

Another characteristic of the burlesque is that it doesn't only attack and laugh at subjects it despises but also at subjects it admires and respects. Laughing at something you love, you might call it. To quote Clinton-Baddeley: "Satire is the schoolmaster attacking dishonesty with a whip. Burlesque is the rude boy attacking pomposity with a peashooter." The same thing is going on in *De moderne Helicon.* We know Simonsz respects classical literature and culture, but still he makes fun of it by turning the Muses into old women and Pegasus into an old mule. So this work can definitely be seen as a travesty. Focusing on laughter, on specific jokes, does more than just make us giggle. Without laughter we wouldn't have noticed that there is an underlying genre in Simonsz' text: that of the burlesque. Besides, jokes, especially in satire, tell us something about a time and a place, of the talk of the day, of human opinions and even about events and big changes in history. Laugh and learn, is the key.

Typical Dutch humour? Laughter in the satirical writings of the eighteenth-century Dutch author Arend Fokke Simonsz (1755-1812)

by Lotte Jensen

Is humour something universal or do people respond differently to jokes in different countries? In other words: does humour depend on national characteristics? According to most eighteenth-century writers, the sense of humour indeed varied from country to country. But before moving into the eighteenth century, I would like you to take a look at the following poster, which was published by the European Council to prepare people for the official establishment of the European Union in 1992. It presents a picture of the perfect European, who would cook like a Brit, drive like a Frenchman, be as humorous as a German, as generous as a Dutchman, and as discrete as a Dane.

We all get the joke immediately: the usual stereotypes have been inverted. Usually, the Dutch have the reputation to be very stingy: they keep their money in their pockets. The Danes are obviously not known to be discrete; rather the opposite. By spreading this poster throughout Europe, the European Committee wanted to make it clear that although Europe would be united in many ways, cultural differences would still remain. But there's something rather remarkable about this campaign: the Committee obviously thought that all European citizens would immediately be able to grasp the irony of inverting stereotypes and would thus consider this to be a funny poster.

So, paradoxically enough, all these different European nations should have something in common: their sense of humour (well, except for the German people, according to the poster, of course…). This shared sense of humour, however, is, as we all know, limited to a certain extent. Although the techniques that are used to arouse laughter might be the same, it is obvious that each nation has its own preferences regarding the content of jokes. This will become clear by taking a brief look at satirical programmes on television and humorous books and cartoons in different countries: each nation obviously has different preferences and even obsessions.

This poster brings me to the key issue of my lecture: the question whether national identity matters when it comes to joy and laughter in the eighteenth century. In this paper, I shall focus on the eighteenth-century Dutch writer Arend Fokke Simonsz (1755-1812). He wrote many humorous texts, including a learned treatise about laughter and the causes of laughter in 1788, entitled, in Dutch, *Verhandeling over de lach en het lachwekkende* (*A treatise on laughter and the Laughable*). Especially, I shall pay attention to one of the most striking features of his treatise: on one hand, he argues that laughter and the sense of humour depend on national characteristics, yet on the other hand, his treaty contends that the essence of laughter can only be understood from a historical and international perspective. His treatise is filled with references to foreign publications; he even constructs an international canon of humorous texts. His learnedness, in other words, is transnational: it crosses national borders.

Before discussing Simonsz' *Treatise on laughter*, I shall give some brief information about the author. He was born in Amsterdam in 1755 and was trained as a bookseller. He opened his own bookshop and played a very active role in the literary life of Amsterdam. He became known for his many lectures in the literary societies in Amsterdam, for which he even received fees. He published a variety of texts, all written in prose, which comprise a mixture of satirical and learned writings. He also wrote several plays and edited some journals. Among other texts, he published an encyclopedia of science, arts and literature, entitled *Catechismus der Weetenschappen, schoone Kunsten en fraaije Letteren* (11 vols., 1794-1802). Since then he has been more or less forgotten, but due to the growing interest in society poets and authors who could make a living by writing, Simonsz has recently received more attention from scholars. Alan Moss and I have just published a new edition of what is considered to be his best satirical work, *De moderne Helicon* (1792). It is a very funny text about the God of poetry, Apollo, who runs a shop that sells metaphors and words to poets. In this work, Simonsz criticises the lack of originality and authenticity among contemporary poets.

Let us turn to Simonsz' *Treatise on laughter*. On the first pages of his book, he mentions the most important sources of inspiration, James Beattie's *Essay on Laughter and Ludicrious Composition* (1779), which was translated into Dutch in 1783, and Poinsinet de Sivry's *Traité des causes physiques et morales du rire relativement à l'art de l'exciter* (1768). Although he considers these works to be highly qualified treaties, Simonsz claims that it was necessary to write a book on laughter himself as well. According to Simonsz, the matter must be treated differently in the Dutch Republic, because the function of laughter is nationally inflected. Therefore, Simonsz uses examples and specific situations that relate directly to the Dutch people.

Simonsz' treatise consists of two parts. In the first section, he proposes a definition of laughter and discusses the causes and consequences of laughter. In the second part, he discusses the techniques that writers can use to arouse laughter.

In the first section, Simonsz defines laughter as a physical state of pleasant feelings that is expressed by the face and by sound. Facial expressions should therefore be examined very carefully. Simonsz' exploration of the causes of laughter is very brief: he considers the main, if not the only cause of laughter, to be the use of contrast. People laugh when things are inverted and are presented in contrast to what they expect. For example, when an upper-class person speaks in a very vulgar man-

ner, or, equally, when a simple farmer uses very distinguished words, people start laughing.

Simonsz proceeds to give a very detailed account of all sorts of smiles which can be observed when people laugh. He distinguishes between natural and unnatural laughter, and gives a detailed account of the so-called deadly smile, which is laughter that can lead to death. To give you a short impression:

> If you watch the face, the forehead expands, the eyelids descend, the eyeballs withdraw, the corners of the eyes and the skin that surrounds them become unequal and covered with wrinkles. The obstructed eye is partially closed, and its shining is caused by the fluid in which it seems to be swimming.[1]

Simonsz also provides a meticulous account of the way in which the body reacts to such laughter, and of how the person dies in the end. For readers, it is a relief that Simonsz follows this rather horrible description by remarking that smiling and laughing can also have a healing effect and that laughter which causes immediate death is a very rare phenomenon.

Simonsz furthermore tries to answer a wide range of questions, such as: why do animals not laugh? Why do young children laugh, before they seem able to reason? Why do dead people never appear in our dreams laughing? And why do some people always laugh, and other people rarely? In answering these and other questions, Simonsz repeatedly pays attention to the influence of national character on people's behaviour. His ideas of national identity and laughter can be summarised as follows.

Firstly, all people seem to share an inclination to laugh, but the more rude and uncivilized people are, the less intelligent and witty their jokes. According to Simonsz, this can be observed in tribes from Lapland, Greenland, and the Hottentot people. Their sense of humour is more wild and less educated. Secondly, national character determines what is considered to be funny and what is not. In other words, the English, German, and French all have different ideas of what causes laughter: they laugh at different things. To explain such differences, Simonsz turns to the theory of climatological influences, which was ubiquitous at the time. According to this theory, different national characteristics were caused by various climatological circumstances. Simonsz also refers to the well-known theory of the bodily temperaments, which divided people (and, consequently, nations) into sanguine, choleric, phlegmatic and melancholic types. Some types can be found more often than others in certain countries, and this further explains why nations differ in their sense of humour. Thirdly, the type of humour differs from one country to another. This is illustrated by the fact that the English have a specific way of being humorous, which is called 'luim' in Dutch and which can be found in the works of Laurence Sterne. It is a sentimental, sad kind of happiness, which has no equivalent in Dutch literature. These national differences are caused by the fact that authors use typical national characteristics in their works.

Concerning his own people, Simonsz states that the Dutch have the innate nature of being tidy and clean. This explains why they have a tendency to laugh at dirty jokes, particularly jokes that refer to human faeces. It is precisely the contrast to their natural inclination to be neat that makes them laugh about dirtiness. Unfortunately, the Dutch national character also explains why they are less apt to produce great humorous works of art: their character is too serious, too neat and too orderly to create works which are characterized by turning things upside-down and depicting otherwise chaotic elements. Nevertheless, there have been great writers in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries who succeeded in making their audience laugh. One might think, for example, of playwrights like Bredero and Hooft or the novelists Wolff and Deken. Their succes can be explained by the fact that they all used typical Dutch characters. For example, the protagonist in Wolff and Deken's *Sara Burgerhart* (1782), the first Dutch epistolary novel, is a tidy, virtuous, simple girl, who represents the typical Dutch values of that time. Her an-

tagonist is a narrow-minded, stingy and miserable aunt, who thinks of her financial situation all the time.

Simonsz makes it clear, that, on the one hand, humour is anchored in national traditions. Authors should be aware of these national differences when they write humorous works. On the other hand, Simonsz' own treatise is embedded in a learned web of international texts and translations. For example, most of his ideas are drawn from the writings of Beattie, Poinsinet de Sivry and Moses Mendelssohn, and the examples he uses to demonstrate the techniques of humorous writing are taken from a wide range of European literary works. He even compiles an international canon of humorous writers. His favorites are:

> Ancient Greeks and Romans: Lucianus, Horatius, Juvenalis, Persius, Petronius.
> Italy: Ariosto, Aretin, Salvator Rosa, Gozzi.
> France: Boileau, Regnier, Palisset, Voltaire, Rabelais.
> Spain: Cervantes, Lope de Vega, Quevedo, Gongora, Isla.
> England: Swift, Pope, Young, Churchil, Rochester, Dryden, Donne, Garth, Johnson
> Germany: Brandis, Sittenwald, Haller, Rachel, Canitz, Liscow, Michaelis, Wieland, Rabener, Holberg. [2]

I sincererly apologize to Danish readers that Simonsz includes one of the most famous Danish writers, Ludvig Holberg, in his list of *German* writers. However, it might be a relief to know that Simonsz considers Holberg to be one of the greatest humorous writers of his century. This becomes clear by the fact that he quotes large parts of Holberg's comedies to illustrate the writer's comic talent. This also demonstrates that Simonsz, despite his ideas about the innate differences of national character, somehow clinges to a transnational canon of joy and laughter.

A final question remains: to what extent can Simonsz' own satirical writings be considered to be typically Dutch? The answer seems simple: his satirical writings can only be understood if one has sufficient knowledge of contemporary Dutch history, since there are many references to Dutch political events and individuals. But what about their alleged inclination to tell dirty jokes? In this respect, one might say that Simonsz is not at all typically Dutch. He refrains from telling faecial and vulgar jokes. But there is one obsession that might be called typically Dutch, especially so when one looks at contemporary writing: Simonsz seems to be obsessed with money and indeed jokes about poets who earn a living by writing. Let me give you one example of his jokes, taken from *De moderne Helicon*, the satirical work which I have already mentioned above. Apollo is trying to make pounding hearts, which he wants to sell to poets. However, he does not know how to achieve that, and this really frustrates him: 'Ik heb ze ook werkelijk gekreegen en in mijn pooten gehad, dat ik 'er nog pooten van maak', he says. [3]

To understand this phrase, one has to know that the word *poot* (paw) was a double entendre in the eighteenth century: it not only referred to the legs of animals, but it could also refer to a coin (money). So Apollo, the god of poets, not only speaks in a vulgar way by referring to his hands in a bestial mode, but he also reveals himself to be quite obsessed with money.

This is a rather learned and sophisticated sort of humour, which is typical of Simonsz' way of writing. He also repeatedly refers to historical, mythological and classical humorous works. In other words, Simonsz assures his readers over and over again that he is well-acquainted with a long-standing literary tradition. It would be wrong to classify his sense of humour as typically Dutch, because he is a learned writer who crossed national boundaries in his writings and placed himself squarely in the literary tradition of the burlesque. Well, except for his obession with money, of course… If we look at the promotional poster for the European Union once more, which ridicules the Dutch for their parsimony, we see that there is a historical pattern behind the inversed stereotypes: their preoccupation with money… It goes all the way back to the eighteenth century.

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1 'Zoo gij op het aangezicht let, het voorhoofd breidt zig uit, de oogleeden daalen, de oogappels trekken zig in, in de hoeken der oogen, en het geheele vel, dat dezelve omringt, wordt ongelijk en met rimpelen gedekt. Het belemmerde oog wordt half gesloten, en is zijnen glans alleenlijk schuldig aan het vogt, waar in het schijnt te zwemmen' (Simonsz 1788, p. 14).

2 Simonsz 1788, p. 81.

3 Simonsz 2010, r. 542-543, p. 80.

An interview with Ph.D. Daniel Johansen

by Katrine Worsøe Kristensen

Daniel Johansen presented the paper: "The last portraits of Gods grace. A study of the introduction of an absolutist representation in royal portraits in eighteenth-century Denmark and Norway", which is part of his thesis in progress. I had the privilege to discuss his paper with him on our bus ride home from Ribe.

King Christian VII painted by Jens Juel, 1789. The original painting belongs to The Royal Danish Collections, Rosenborg Castle, Copenhagen.

Where did you find your interest in the 18th-century royal portraits?

Actually, it was because of the particular one I showed in my session, where the king is sitting with a crown on his head. At that time I studied history, so when I found the portrait I rushed at everybody at the institute, asking "Isn't this portrait unusual? It doesn't fit with the rest of the royal portraits I've seen". Of course they didn't know what I was talking about, because everybody said "No that is completely normal".

Afterwards I started reading about this king, Christian VII and how the political change in Europe influenced the way he was portrayed. I asked myself: Can you find any traces of his madness? Was it in any way revealed, to a certain extent, that he was weak? The side he was on changed. The allegories were dead. The divine rights of the kings were questioned materially. So my intentional idea was to examine if anything slipped through in the portraits like you see it today. Beause it is a different world compared to it.

Your royal portraits relate to both Denmark and Norway – because they were one regime at the time – where are they typically displayed today?

My material is in Copenhagen. None of them are in Norway. The big portraits that could perhaps have been bought for royal palaces or public buildings or by private people wanting to place the king in some of their ballrooms at the time, have disappeared. So the material I work with is mainly at the Frederiksborg Museum and scattered around the royal palaces in and around Copenhagen.

Do you know why they have disappeared?

Actually, I don't have a good answer for it because we don't even know if there were any and in what scale. We know that there were small mock ones like those we saw at Koldinghus, which are painted by lousy painters. Norway has tons of those but they are not interesting. They don't display the refinement of an absolutist programme, which is not invented by an artist but planned thoroughly by ministers; how do we want to present our system? The incarnation of the state. Of course then, the question to ask is: for whom? But that is something I have to investigate further; how were these portraits used? How was it discussed how they were to appear? Who saw them on what occasions? So the small mock ones are probably those that were most often seen, but seen by people it wasn't that important to, because they believed in the system. They didn't have to be convinced. The state portraits are painted for an intellectual elite, familiar with the trend-setting society and also the iconographical contents. So the average Norwegian and Danish peasant wouldn't be able to understand anything.

In your paper you mentioned that when people believe in the system the king is safe. In France the people or the mob lost their faith in the king, Louis XVI. Can you explain why the people in Denmark believed in the system at that time?

France and Denmark/Norway were completely different regimes. First of all the landowners, or the nobility, didn't have the same power over the people in the same manner. France wasn't like Russia so it wasn't that bad, but it was bad. And in France you still had, just before the revolution, the privilege of Jus Primae Noctis, which is the right of the nobleman to sleep with the bride before the groom. Secondly, you did not have a court in Copenhagen which spent so immense amounts of money as the French court at Versailles did, and thirdly Denmark and Norway hadn't drained their treasures running wars they systematically lost. We hadn't been to war since the great Nordic war in the beginning of the 18th Century. So from 1718 till 1801 there was peace – until 1807 when we were actually dragged into the war. We cried over all the wars that were fought around us – the society was flourishing and above all the system wasn't stupid. To prevent the revolutionary tendencies many of the rights that people had been fighting for during the revolution in France were introduced in Denmark by the king.

So, if you look at Versailles at the end of the 17th century you have a complete change in attitude; at the portraits people began to present even the royals' private interests. They had never done that before. No one thought that the king would do that.

So that came from France?

Yes, mainly – it's connected to Rousseau's philosophy. For example Marie Antoinette was painted by Vigée-Le Brun as a peasant woman and King Louis XVI builds her a little farm. Furthermore, the King carries out carpentry and is painted as a carpenter. This means something very important to the perception of the king – it reveals that he or the royals in general have private interests, which show that they are not instruments. They reveal the fact through these portraits that they have private interests – they also reveal that they have preferences, being something individual to them. They can make decisions and therefore there is an extreme change in attitude around the court of Versailles. For the first time in French history the people doesn't call for the plot of the king's advisers. They call for the plot of the monarchs. For the first time the people speaks of the expenditure of the monarchs. Never before has there been a division between the state treasury and the monarchs – it´s all his right. And now, all of a sudden, they begin to speak of private spending – it's a new word – *private spending* which is linked to the invention of privacy and the fact that now they are suddenly given individual qualities, which they themselves misuse. It's no longer the advisors – they are pointing to the queen saying she's a whore, that she is feasting on the blood of the children. And this is a *change in attitude*. This

is also some of the challenge taking place in Copenhagen. During his reign Frederik V wasn't sober for one day, but that didn't matter because he was a popular king. There were very few rumours in Copenhagen about the fact that the king was a drunk, sorbent and a sadomasochist who loved to whip the whores of Copenhagen. The king was totally unfit to rule, but that didn't matter because he was the hero.

But as for King Christian VII the attitude is different. Of course, one isn't disloyal to the king, but at the same time there are jokes about him, there are poems written about madness. The people could see the problem openly because, as I said, one of the evidences of the fact that people believed in the system was that Christiansborg was open so that people could come in. Once a week they could get access to the galleries and watch the royal family eating. And through that the king's madness was displayed to the public. There are descriptions of episodes when, all of a sudden, he starts masturbating during this public gathering. He tears his clothes off; runs around naked while the royal guards do nothing. And of course they do nothing. They can't just throw the king down on the floor and force him to put his pants on. The galleries are packed with the population of Copenhagen; looking, watching this scene happening. I would say that what the regime then actually does is that it starts to look for a successor. The crown prince, son of King Christian VII and Caroline Mathilde, all of a sudden becomes a regent after his confirmation. There are almost no portraits of the king; it's the crown prince, the crown prince, the crown prince.

Why is that?

Well, it might be a tendency, that people, for the first time actually, doubt the system. The monarchy has to bring back the confidence and therefore presents someone the people can trust, somebody who is a strong leader, somebody who is enlightened. Instead of the king, who is mad.

You mentioned that Denmark is the only country or court that does not depict the royals in privacy..?

There is one exception – that is a portrait in Trondheim. But apart from that, no.

Why is that?

I can't actually answer that, but I do have theories. First of all, from 1778 Denmark was closed to the masters who had previously painted all the kings. You didn't get any foreign impulses to the representation of programmes. You usually had several portrait painters who painted the king. Royalty used to hunt down the best ones in Europe, but now only Danes and Norwegians were allowed in the administration – in the system. One also has to remember, that all representation of programme was in a crisis in the period from the 1760s to 1800. What on earth were they to do with the king? How should they present him? The playfulness that you have in Paris, at Versailles, in London and Vienna is not present in Denmark. I have to work more on that question to give you a confident answer. But it is strange – the only court where you don't have portraits of the royals going in for private interests is in Copenhagen. But then, there was only one court painter – Jens Juel. Nobody else.

Ludvig Holberg's novel *Nicolai Klimii iter subterraneum* (1741). Enlightenment satire in classic Latin garments:

A closer look at the paper by Karen Skovgaard-Petersen & Peter Zeeberg

by Ellen Carstensen

Karen Skovgaard-Petersen is dr. philos. in Latin and managing editor in The Society of Danish Language and Literature. Peter Zeeberg is cand. phil. in Latin and senior editor in The Society of Danish Language and Literature. In 1741 the Danish-Norwegian author Ludvig Holberg wrote the book *Nicolai Klimii iter subterrraneum*. It was written in Latin and first published in Leipzig. It is a satirical utopian novel, a kind of a philosophical science fiction travel through many different societies where the protagonist is exposed to experience different ways of organizing society. Because of its amusing societal satire, it instantly became a success and was soon translated into several European languages, including Danish.

The book can be seen as a parallel in genre to Jonathan Swift's novel *Gulliver's Travels* (1726), and Holberg admitted himself a great fan of Swift and acknowledged his great indebtedness to *Gulliver's Travels*. In spite of the similarities, there is one characteristic difference between the two novels, and that is the fact that Holberg's book was written in Latin, whereas Swift wrote in his mother tongue. The fact that Latin had its own sets of genres has to be taken into consideration when analyzing *Nicolai Klimii Iter Subterraneum*. It is full of quotations from classical Roman literature, poetry as well as prose. With these intertextual references, Holberg revived the tradition of the so-called menippean satire where satire in its contents is combined with narrative fiction. Menippean satire was meant to ridicule human vices in order to promote higher morals, and so it could be said to combine fun and seriousness. Holberg's attempt to attract attention to obviously ridiculous authorities in society fits well with his overriding way of thinking: that people should act on the use of their reason, their senses and intelligence. It also fits in with the general thoughts of the enlightenment period concerning people's knowledge of the world and its organization. A scientific and philosophical way of thinking became ruling and questioned the established authorities such as church and royal power. So, seen in relation to the enlightenment period, the novel can be said to attack intolerance, the lack of equality between the sexes, the craving for power and witty delusion.

Ludvig Holberg was born in Bergen, Norway, in 1684, and he died in Copenhagen in 1754. He was a prolific and richly faceted writer, and his works can be divided into three groups: historical, poetic/comic and religious/philosophical. He believed in reason and had a rational and empirical way of thinking that appealed to the use of one's senses and intelligence. Likewise and quite unusual for his time, he believed that women's potential was not at all fully utilized. In his opinion women were able to hold the same offices in society as men did.

The novel is the story about the young theologian, Nicolaus Klimius, who has just graduated from the University of Copenhagen and now returns to his native town Bergen in Norway. There he falls down into a mysterious cave and ends up on another planet deep inside the Earth. Here he gets acquainted with a number of different socie-

ties inhabited by strange and surprising creatures – first and foremost the slow and sensible trees in the land of Potu. His stay with them occupies roughly the first half of the novel. Sceptical of Nicolaus' swift mind, which in their eyes is a certain sign of superficiality, the Potuans do not consider him worthy of occupying any office of significance. They admit, though, that he does have an advantage with his two legs, and therefore he is entrusted with the task of delivering messages between the towns and regions of Potu. After some time, Nicolaus, tired of what is in his eyes a humiliating job, wants to improve his status by making a proposal for a significant societal change: he puts forward the proposal that women, who in Potu have the same rights as men to occupy an office, should be deprived of this right and kept at home. However, Nicolaus has not understood the risk in this plan since the Potuans regard all changes with suspicion. Consequently, the Potuans firmly reject his proposal.

As a punishment for having put forward the proposal, Nicolaus is exiled to the land of Martinia. Here begins the second half of the novel. The inhabitants of Martinia differ in every respect from the trees in Potu. They are swift and superficial monkeys who welcome all sorts of novelties and change without further consideration. Here Nicolaus is regarded as slow-witted and imbecile. Realizing that here the way to success is to put forward the most useless and stupid proposals, he introduces the use of wigs. The monkeys enthusiastically receive his proposal, and Nicolaus is now hugely admired and even ennobled. However, his success comes to an end when he rejects the advantages of a noble woman who in revenge for this claims that he has tried to seduce her.

Again Nicolaus is exiled. After having visited many strange societies, he is finally shipwrecked and cast ashore in the land of Quama where the crude and uncivilized Quamites live. They are the only humans that Nicolaus encounters – and by far the most primitive. The last part of the novel deals with Nicolaus' rapid ascent to power here. He introduces the Quamites to various kinds of weapons, first and foremost to the use of gunpowder which enables their army, with Nicolaus as its general, to conquer the surrounding societies. His greed for power grows, and he manages to become the emperor of Quama. But the glory is short-lived. His tyrannical ruling causes his downfall – and finally he returns to the Earth and spends the rest of his life as a sacristan in his native town Bergen in Norway.

Nicolaus can be seen as an impressionable, academically blind character who tries out different ways of organizing society, and who easily adjusts himself to the different conditions. He is time and again forced to realize that the institutions and customs familiar to him from Europe are not necessarily the only possible ones, but other societies are able to establish institutions and ways of living that not only differ from the Europeans' but also seem more sensible and appropriate.

With the novel Holberg attacked the habitual notions that prevailed in his time. His target group was broad, and above all he gave reason pride of place. His aim was to make people take a stand on their own instead of just taking over habitual models. This also applied to women's position in society because Holberg believed that it was an enormous waste of resources that women's abilities were not utilized in public society. He satirized matters that annoyed or amused him in society and particularly in the academic world, which he himself as a professor was part of.

However, it cannot be claimed that Holberg used satire as a weapon to change certain conditions. Rather, satire was used as an eye-opener. *Nicolai Klimii Iter Subterraneum* was a satirical novel, but satire is kept on a humanistic and moral level appealing to reason. Holberg is by no means revolutionary. Enlightened despotism, which was the ruling governing system of the period, was the best system according to his opinion. Many themes recur in different disguises throughout Holberg's works, and though they are mainly treated wittily, they are not always barbed with satirical remarks.

At Holberg's time, all publications were censored. When books were to be printed, they were censored by the professors of the university (which included Holberg himself), and the professors

were allowed to require certain passages changed or removed. However, there was no real danger of persecution with the publication of *Nicolai Klimii Iter Subterraneum*. Some leading theologians tried to stop the book, but as a matter of fact the king himself supported the publication of it. Holberg himself was not against censorship. In the Potu-society in his novel, there was censorship which he clearly approved of. To Holberg it makes sense to have the most subjective attitudes cleared away. So obviously there is a doubleness in his attitudes here; some rules seem to be established to control others, but not him.

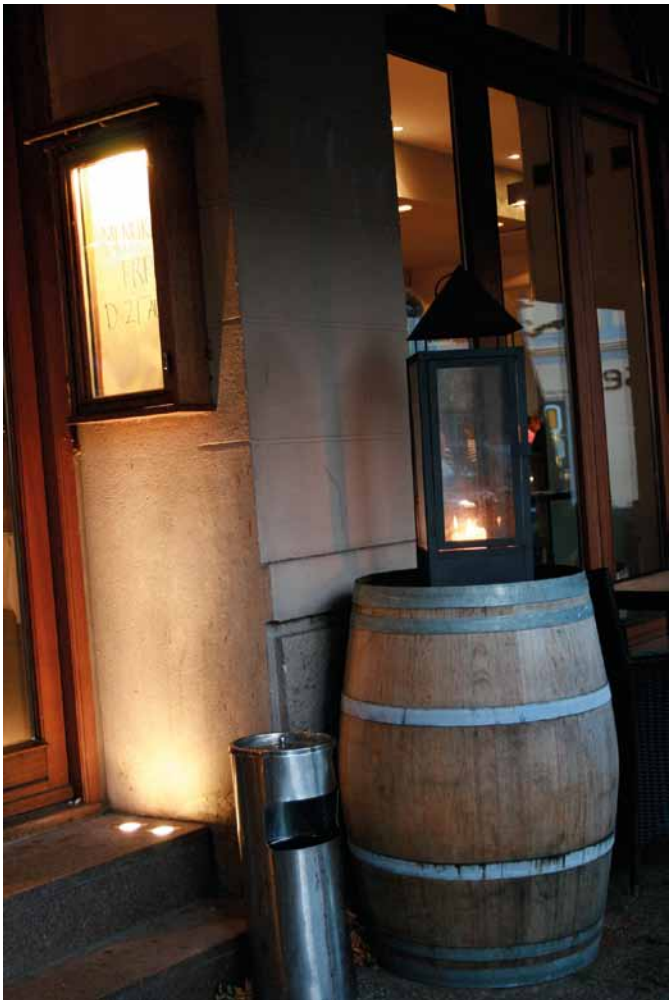
Does Holberg have any significance for the present? He seems very modern and likeable in his insisting on people's right to take a stand on their own and to understand that other people may have different preconditions and accordingly act differently. So nowadays we cannot help admiring the huge appeal of tolerance that permeats all his works. This appeal seems to be eternally relevant. This also applies to his opinion of women's position in society. Basically he claimed the same things which are still claimed today, and some would probably argue that not much progress has been made concerning this field. Therefore in some contexts, Holberg is easily attached to present debates, and he seems remarkably modern. But we also have to take into consideration that his way of thinking and acting originated from a contemporary context. We must be careful not to make him too modern and relevant and thereby forget that he actually supported enlightened despotism and insisted on censorship. Conditions that we today consider as being established, fundamental rights of society.

Capturing Joy and Laughter

The stories of a conference through images

by Katrine Worsøe Kristensen

Capturing the essence of a conference like "Joy and Laughter in the 18th Century" only through words seems unsatisfying. John Lennon asked of us to imagine the world a great many years ago, and it seems suitable to do the same here when speaking of such vibrant issues as laughter and joy. It is therefore my hope that the reader of this publication will enjoy the following stories told through images.

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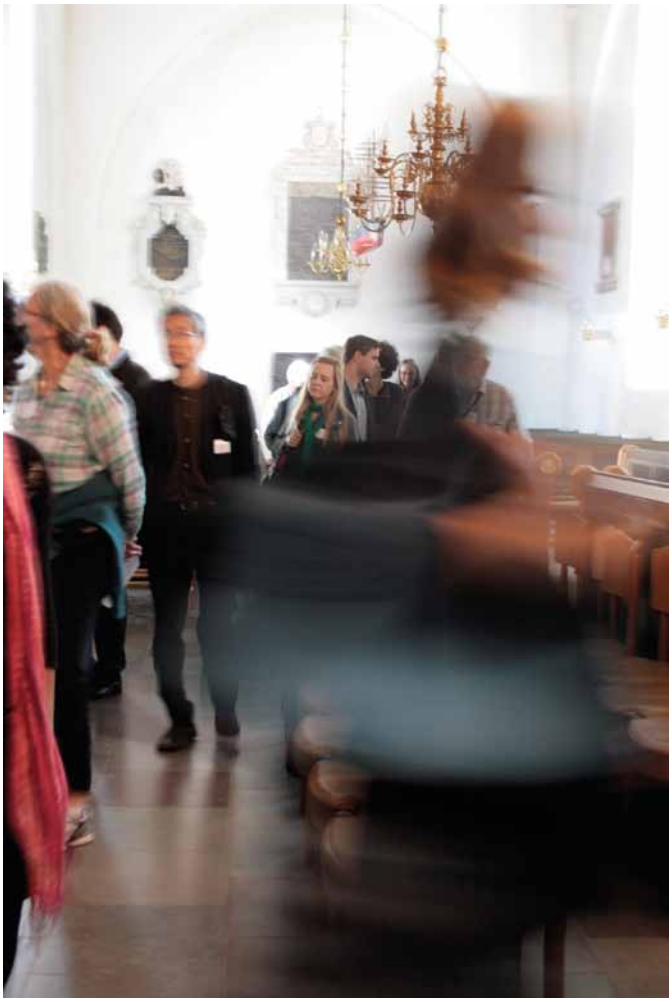


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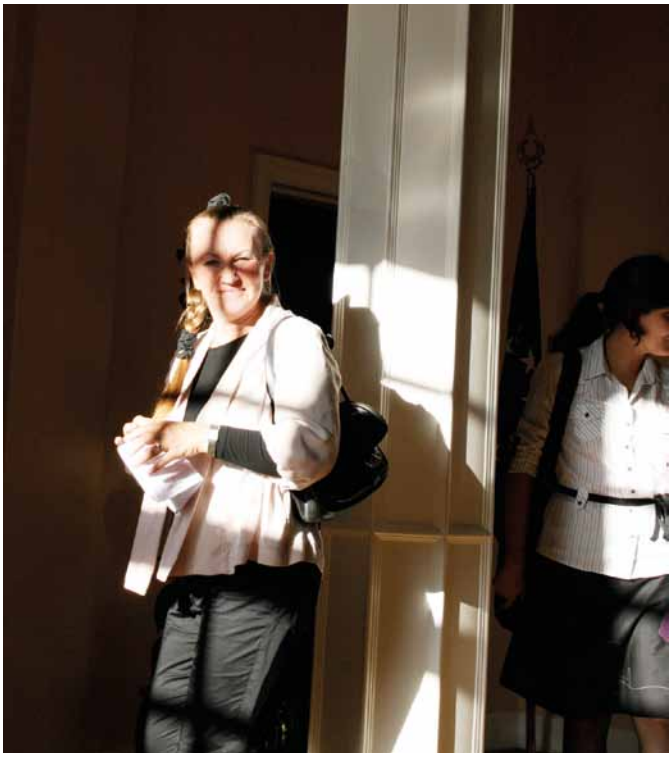

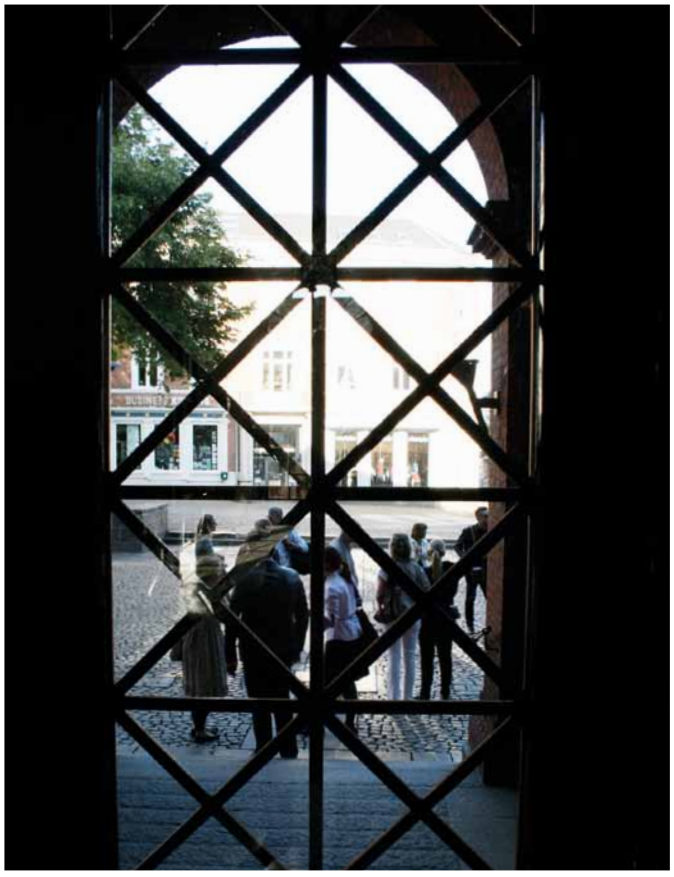

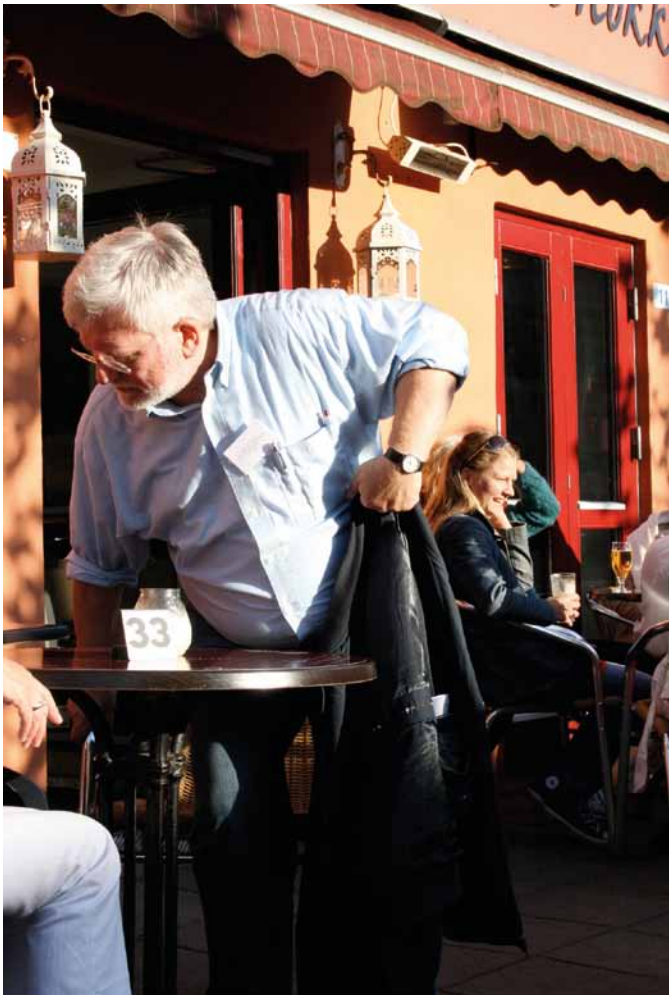
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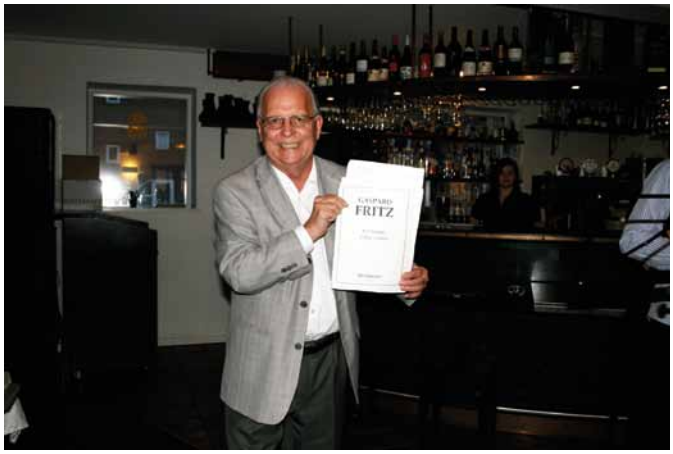
Café & Restaurant Mokka


GASPARD
FRITZ


GASPARD
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TERRASSE
AGE med
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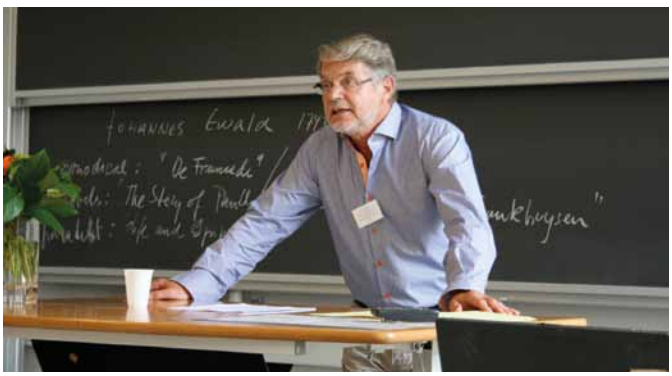
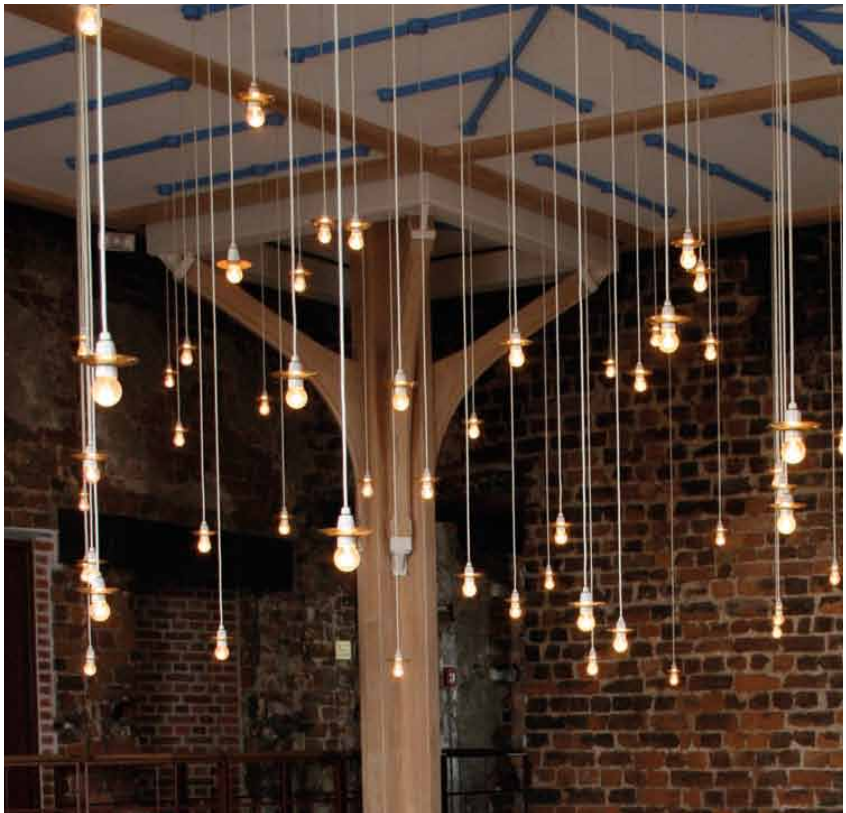
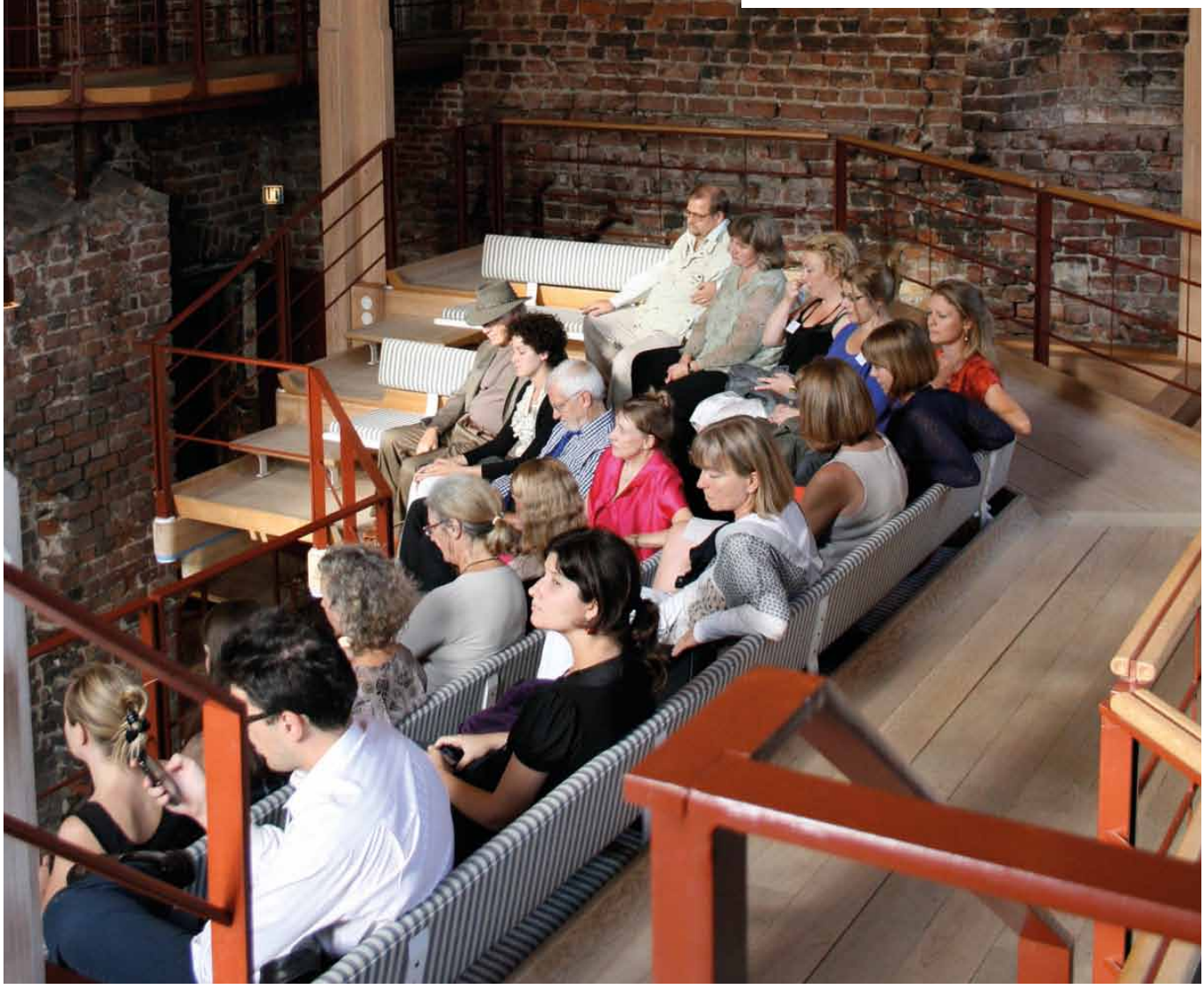
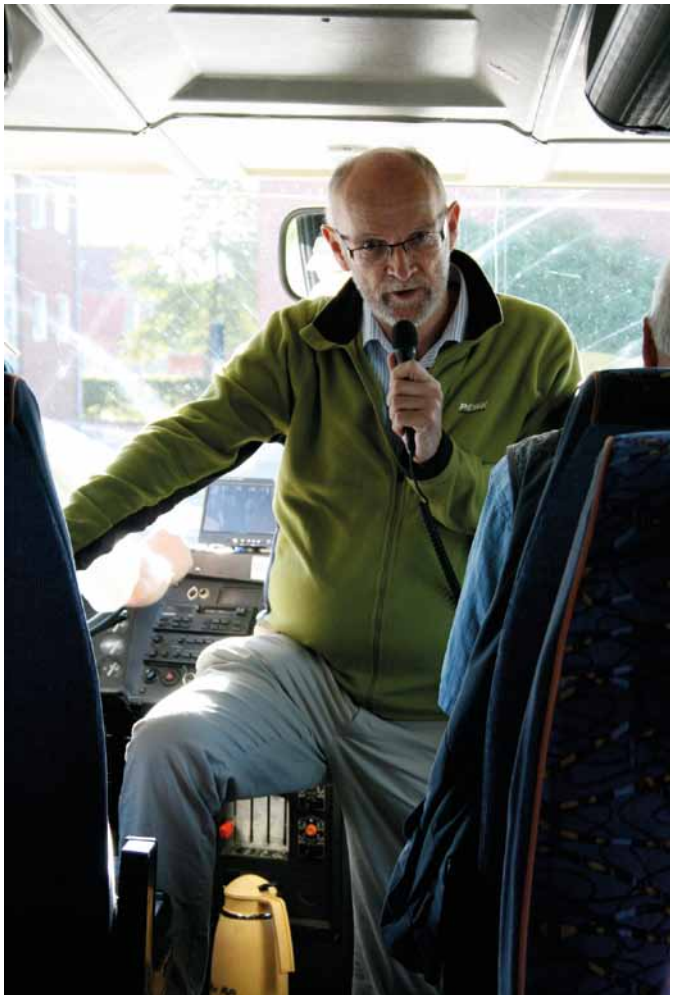
British Naval Vessels Control Harbor

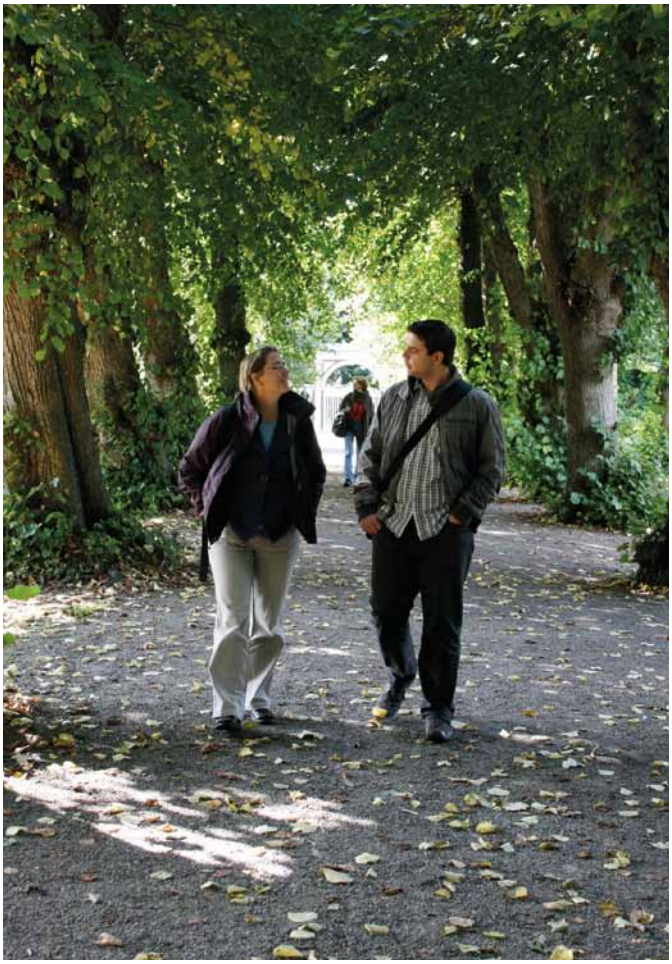

Jens Baggesen (1764-1826)
Labyrinten 1792 – 93:
The book was written
notes from
a journey

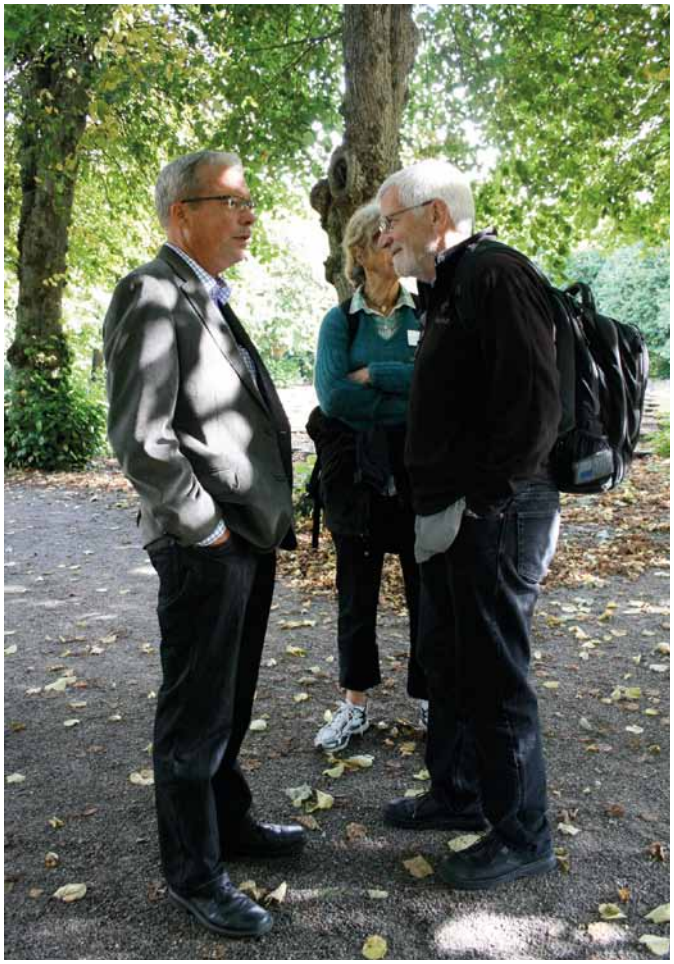

JOHANNES EWALD

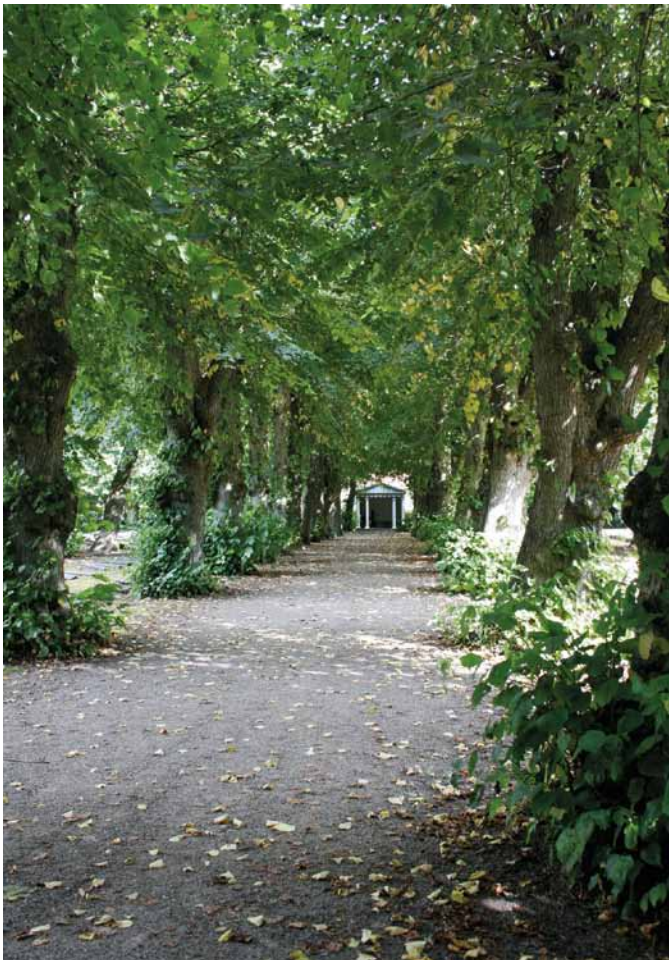


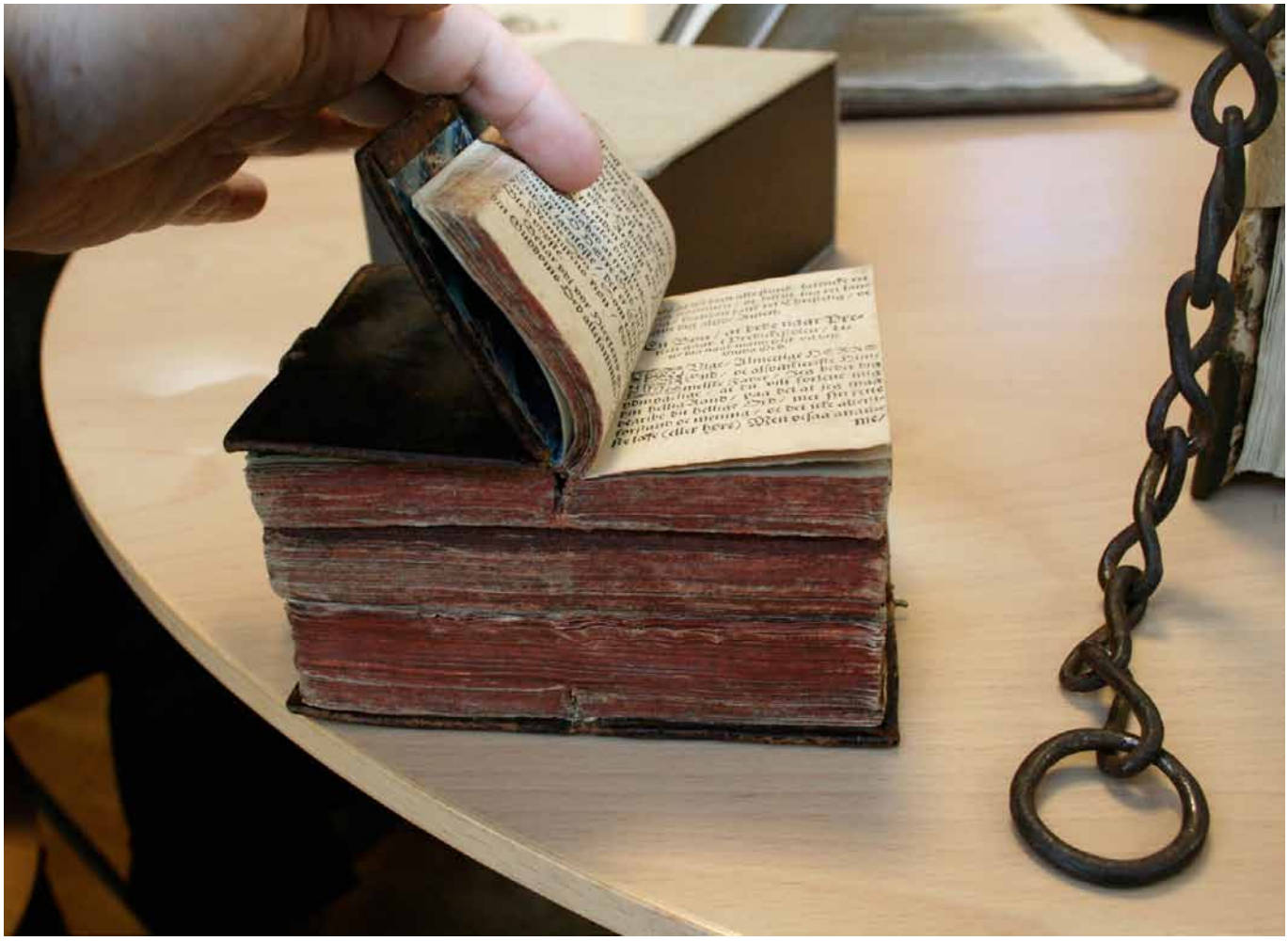












PAPERS

The joyful garden

by Karin Esmann Knudsen

Gardens tell stories. This presentation will focus on the narrative of one of the earliest landscape gardens in Denmark, called *Liselund*, after the owner's wife. The garden is laid out about 1790 at the east coast of the little island Møn, according to nature's own principles with organic lines and clumps of trees, in opposition to the French formal garden with its straight lines and topiary where nature is completely controlled by man. In this garden the French-Dutch Gérard Pierre Antoine de Bosc de la Calmette (1752-1803), chamberlain and chief administrative officer, and his wife Anna Catharina Elisabeth Iselin (1759-1805), called Lisa, could retire in a kind of Eden, enjoy life and love in romantic surroundings with water, hills and 'follies'. The garden can be read as a text with a narrative, with different points of view and with tropes and figures.

What is a garden? John Dixon Hunt focuses on gardens as a *third nature* (Hunt 2000). This notion goes back to the Italian renaissance. Jacopo Bonfadio writes in a letter to a fellow humanist in 1541: *Per li giardini… la industria de' paisani ha fatto tanto, che la natura incorporata con l'arte è fatta artefice, e connaturale de l'arte, e d'amendue è fatta una terza natura, a cui non saprei dar nome.* (For in the gardens… the industry of the local people has been such that nature incorporated with art is made an artificer and naturally equal with art, and from them both together is made at third nature, which I would not know how to name (Hunt 2000, p. 33).

The term *First nature* goes back to Cicero, and it means both the raw materials of human industry and the territory of the gods. We may call it wilderness. *The second nature* (he calls it *alteram naturam*) is the cultural landscape. Cicero writes: "We sow corn, we plant trees, we fertilize the soil by irrigation, we dam the rivers and direct them where we want." (Hunt 2000, p. 33) We talk about gardens as The *third nature* (according to Italian humanists, for instance Bonfadio) in the sense that gardens are a special combination of nature and culture. Gardens are more sophisticated, more deliberate, more complex in the mixture of culture and nature than agricultural land (Hunt 2000, p. 33). That is to say that gardens, even gardens where the ideal *is* wilderness, are created by man.

In this special combination of nature and culture we find two so-called primordial gardens. Each of them represents an idea of what gives pleasure. The first primordial garden is a model of an orderly paradise. Two different examples of this type of gardens are the Italian renaissance garden at Villa Lante, Bagnaio, and the cloister garden of the church Santa Maria Nouvella, Firenze. This type of garden is protected behind walls, and in the centre there is a water source, maybe a well, from which channels carrying the water go north, east, south, and west, dividing the garden into quarters. These quarters can be divided again once more and so on. This model goes back to the four rivers of paradise, described in Genesis: "A river flowed out of Eden to water the garden, and there it divided and became four rivers" (Genesis, English version 2007).

The second type of the two primordial gardens lets the surrounding nature in. An example of this is one of the most characteristic English landscape gardens, Rousham, with a view to the so-called *Eye Catcher*. The Eye Catcher is a false ruin, a construction placed several miles away. The point is that it is part of the panorama you have from the garden. It is outside the garden, but at the same time it is an important element of the garden. The architect behind this design was William Kent (1685-1748), one of the first to introduce the landscape garden. He had a background

as a theatre painter. Horace Walpole (1717-97), the great chronicler of English landscape gardening said about him that he "leaped the fence and saw that all nature was a garden" (Hunt 2000, p. 209). But even though nature is the ideal in this type of garden, the example shows that it is artificial, it is formed by man.

Now I'll turn to the narrative and rhetorical perspective of gardens. According to Moore, Mitchell and Turnbull (1997), gardens can be divided into four categories: *Settings* are gardens where the relationship of the elements in the garden is so clear that you can talk about one idea of the garden. In this way it is related to metaphor in literature. In *The Poetics of Gardens* they put it like this: "the rest of the world is illuminated to us" (Moore, Mitchell and Turnbull 1997, p. 49). *Collections* are gardens where fragments and elements from different realms are put together. These fragments evoke their origins, and in that way these gardens can be seen as metonymies. *Pilgrimages* are gardens that tell a story, unfold like a narrative as we move through them. And the last category they call *patterns;* they are laid out in geometric shapes, perhaps in repetitive rhythm or in symmetry around a center or an axis. Of course those categories can overlap, they are not exclusive.

As an example of a *setting* we can take the garden in Lago Maggiore: Isola Bella from the 17th century. It is a renaissance garden which makes a vision of a magic beflowered galleon in the middle of the lake, a fairy tale where every element points to beauty and pleasure.

Villa Adriana in Tivoli near Rome indeed is a *collection*. The Roman emperor Hadrian (emperor 117-138) filled an enormous area with souvenirs from his empire, a memory of his travels. You might say that the villa mirrors Hadrian's conception of the empire, seen as a plurality of cultures, each with its own unique identity, for instance the *Canopus* that evokes a sense of the canal that united Alexandria and the city of Canopus on the Nile delta.

A *pilgrimage* garden possesses the space dimension, but its designer must add the time dimension by establishing a sequential movement through it. As an example of a *pilgrimage* garden we can take the English landscape garden, Stourhead, designed by its owner Henry Hoare (1705-1785) who has placed it around a lake with references to the journey of Aeneas from the ancient work of Vergil. Round the lake are classical buildings, temples, but there are always references to the national past, for example a gothic house and king Alfred's tower, so that the pilgrimage can be interpreted into the politics of the Whiggish owner. The gardens tell a story of democracy, in opposition to the garden at Versailles where every element points at the absolute power of the Sun King. The classical temples refer to the antique world as the first democracy. The narrative of course was better known to Hoare's classically educated contemporaries than to most of us. "All gardening is landscape painting" Alexander Pope (1688-1744) suggested, one of the famous contemporary garden theorists. Stourhead is inspired by a painting by Claude Lorrain from the 17th century, "Coast view of Delos With Aeneas" (1671-72). Claude Lorrain made a series of six paintings illustrating episodes from *The Aeneid*. The composition in Lorrain's paintings was mirrored in many English landscape gardens.

The garden at Frederiksborg Castle in Denmark is an example of the type of gardens called *patterns*. The model is the foursquare garden pattern that has the possibility of innumerable variations. You find this prototype in all renaissance and baroque gardens, and also in the Islamic paradise gardens. It refers to order, paradisal order, and also the order of the absolute monarchy. In the garden at Frederiksborg, which was restored some years ago, the four squares consist of the four monograms of Christian VI, Frederick IV, Frederick V and the present Margrethe II.

Now I'll turn to the garden at Liselund, a Danish landscape garden. It is based upon nature's own principles, and thus it is categorized as the second of the two primordial gardens where Antoine de la Calmette has created a perfection of the landscape that was at hand at the end of the 18th century when he bought Sømærkegaard, a

few kilometers from Marienborg where he lived, in order to make a place full of beauty, pleasure and spirit, free from work. It served as a summer house. This is the first landscape garden in Denmark that is laid out from scratch and not on an existing formal garden. The architect was Antoine de la Calmette himself. He took advantage of the landscape at Møn, he planted trees and created an open area in the middle, he made five lakes out of the existing little river, and he added "furniture", that is different buildings. The path is an organic line, and you can walk from place to place and enjoy the different views in the garden. He was inspired by the German garden theorist, Christian Cay Lorenz Hirschfeld (1742-92), professor at the University of Kiel. It was Hirschfeld who made the English landscape garden well known in Denmark.

His famous work was *Theorie der Gartenkunst* (1779). In the Preface of this work he writes: "*Die Natur liefert den GartenKünstler den Platz , auf welchem er bauet; ….. Zwischen den bepflanzten und offenen Theilen müssen Wege seyn, die nach allen Szenen des Gartenplatzes zuführen"*. (The garden must be built on the existing conditions of nature. Between the different places in the garden must be paths which lead to all scenes of the garden) (Hirschfeld 1779) .

The ideal of the landscape garden is also expressed by Alexander Pope in *An Epistle to Lord Burlington.*

To build, to plant, whatever you intend,
To rear the Column, or the Arch to bend,
To swell the Terras, or to sink the Grot;
In all, let Nature never be forgot.
Consult the Genius of the Place in all,
That tells the Waters or to rise, or fall,
Or helps th'ambitious Hill the heav'ns to scale,
Or scoops in circling Theatres the Vale,
Calls in the country, catches opening Glades,
Joins willing Woods, and varies Shades from Shades,
Now breaks, or now directs, th'intending Lines;
Paints as you plant, and as you work, Designs.
Begin with Sense, of ev'ry Art the Soul,
Parts answ'ring Parts, shall slide into a Whole,
Spontaneous Beauties all around advance,
Start, ev'n from Difficulty, strike, from Chance;
Nature shall join you; Time shall make it grow
A Work to wonder at – perhaps at Stow.
From Alexander Pope: An Epistle to Lord Burlington (1731)

Key words of the poem are 'Let Nature never be forgot', 'the Genius of the Place', thas is: use what is at hand but develop it into greater perfection. Calmette has shown a very dramatic place, Møns Klint. As we have seen, the landscape garden is not 'natural'; it is created by man according to the idea of nature. It has gone through a process with certain aesthetic ideals. 'Parts answ'ring Parts shall slide into a whole' – that sentence refers to the storytelling, the narrative of the garden. Storytelling can be seen in the plan of the garden which shows a storyline through the garden with certain points where you can stand still to discover and experience different places. The places indeed are very different. Two of them for instance, are privies, disguised as a woodpile and a Chinese pavilion. The question is whether these parts 'slide into a whole', as Pope requires.

There is a connection between the ideal of beauty, formulated by William Hogarth in *The Analysis of Beauty* (1753), and the English landscape Garden. You can see Hogarth's *line of beauty* in the old plan that shows the reorganizing 1798-1804 of the park around Frederiksberg Slot (Frederiksberg Castle) that altered the garden from at formal garden with straight lines and symmetry, a garden where every detail was an expression of man's control over nature. In opposition to that the new garden of Frederiksberg is laid out on the basis of the organic lines, natures own lines.

The style in the English landscape garden is perfected by Lancelot Brown (1716-83), called Capability Brown, because he was capable of seeing what was special in every single site and form of the garden. You might say that he never forgot the genius of the place. Brown's gardens can be called a kind of minimalism, the sort of nature with great lawns and clumps of trees, and with perfection of the elements, for instance at Blenheim, his first work, where his bridge over the lake is famous.

When we go for a walk in the garden at Liselund we can ask two fundamental questions: One

concerns the narrative: Which story is told when we follow the path? The other one concerns the rhetorical: Which views and experiences are we offered and how do the different parts 'slide into a Whole'?

Liselund Slot (Liselund Castle) is built by the Danish architect Andreas Kirkerup (1749-1810). In fact it is just a villa, with a classical front with columns and covered with a thatched roof that makes it look like a simple and primitive cottage. Maybe the model is the primitive hut from the theoretical work *Essai sur l'architecture* 1753 by Marc Antoine Laugier. Four trees draw a square. The trunks are the columns of a temple, and the branches and leaves refer to the temple front. It is said to be the origin of the antique temple and thus of all architecture. The central building at Liselund shows that the owners were familiar with Rousseau's dictum: 'back to nature'. But if you look through the windows you will see that the interior of the villa was of a simple elegance, but not at all primitive.

Schweitzerhytten (The cottage from Switzerland) is built like a primitive cottage too. Originally it was the gardener's house. Later on it became an inn to house visitors. It is similar to the gothic houses in the landscape gardens in England and Germany. From Switzerland we go to the Peloponnese. In fact The Peloponnesian Cottage contains the store of food, a so-called ice house, the refrigerator of the period.

Behind the castle you find a gift from Lisa to Antoine, called Skriverstenen (The Stone with Writing). It is formed like an arch of granite, and it can be compared to the grottos in the English landscape gardens. But in fact there are grottos in the Italian renaissance gardens too. It may refer to the antique past and maybe also to the water, the source of life. In the centre is a plate of marble where a goddess or a muse is writing in French "A l'amitié pure" – to the pure friendship.

At the top of the garden the garden wanderer has come to Den Norske Hytte (The Norwegian cottage). You can see the dramatic surroundings of Møns Klint, which is not a common view in the Danish landscape but a contrast to the gentle surroundings in the lower part of the garden. Antoine de la Calmette has succeeded in taking advantage of the genius of the place, and he has succeeded in making a garden that changes when you walk around. The Norwegian Cottage represents the northern parts of the country. At that time Norway was part of Denmark. But the interior is not at all primitive in this cottage either. It is in the style from Pompeii which at the time had been discovered under the ashes from the volcano Vesuvius. Nearby you come to 'la grande cascade' and 'le pont norwégien', as it was called by the Calmettes. The great waterfall and the bridge over the 'canyon' – not quite a canyon, but in the flat Denmark you can imagine the drama and experience 'the sublime' with reference to Edmund Burke. A landscape garden must not only be characterised by beauty, but also by the frightening, dramatic impressions, and a kind of religious experience. Today it is called Djævlekløften (The Devil's Canyon) and Djævlebroen (The Devil's Bridge).

Gratiestenen (The stone of the Graces) is a stone which looks like a stump of a tree, placed where Lisa enjoyed to sit. The inscription is "Endroit chéris de Lise», Lisa's favorite spot. On a marble plate you see the two Graces, Lisa's two sisters who had died at an early age.They are waiting for their sister, «Elles attendent ici leur sæur" – to be the third Grace, one may think. Nearby there is a column, the only thing left from a chapel in the garden. In the beginning of the 20th century a great part of the garden was destroyed by a storm – in fact both in 1902 and in 1905. The chapel was meant to be a place to where you could retire and rest in quiet contemplation.

With reference to Rousseau there is an island in the lake. Every landscape garden had a lake with an island – after the garden of Ermenonville in France where Rousseau liked to come, and where he was buried in 1778 (until later he was transferred to The Panthéon in Paris). Therefore many islands in the landscape gardens have an urn on it. In the garden of Liselund there are two urns in memory of Antoine de la Calmette. The most exotic building in the garden is Det Kinesiske Lysthus

(The Chinese pavilion). At that time there was a great interest in China. William Chambers had built a big pagoda in Kew Gardens in London, and soon a Chinese pavilion became a must in the landscape gardens. The surroundings, a pond which mirrors hanging trees, also refer to China, and so does the interior – at least more than in the Norwegian Cottage.

Now I'll return to the four categories: Gardens as *settings*, gardens as *collections*, gardens as *pilgrimages* and gardens as *patterns*. First I'll call Liselund a *pilgrimage* – it is a narrative which tells a story. But there are several questions to ask:

1) Whose story is told? Is it the story of the Calmette couple? In fact they died very early, and they have never seen the garden grow up.
2) How can you characterize the naming and the use of words? Words fix the meaning: in the title of the garden and in the French inscriptions.
3) How does the intertextuality work? First and foremost the garden has references to Rousseau, but Antoine de la Calmette's knowledge of the art of gardening, of architecture and philosophy and literature is obvious.
4) How/by what means is the story told? Is there a beginning, a middle, an ending? You can walk around in the garden, but you have the freedom to choose your own way, so there is not a strictly defined beginning, middle and ending. In fact the garden walker becomes the narrator and gives meaning to the garden.
5) So who is the narrator? Nature itself puts its marks on the garden – the plants grow, the storms destroy, plants die and so on. And the experience depends on the viewers knowledge of what is meant.

In fact much of the meaning has become dead metaphors. A great number of parks are designed after the model of the landscape garden, and you might say that it has become naturalized.

Liselund is not only to be characterized as a *pilgrimage*. It can also be called a *collection*: It is indeed the owner's place, a place where he represents himself: I'm rich, I'm cultural, I'm modern, I'm a loving husband. On our walk through the garden we have seen how 'Parts have been answ'ring parts' – and has opened to different realms, different worlds, geographic (from Norway to China), social (from elegant upper class to the dream of a primitive and simple life), cultural worlds (with reference to classical and contemporary literature and ideas).

Most of all I'll call Liselund a *setting*. It is a metaphorical garden – and its meaning points in three directions: *First* the garden is a metaphor of nature itself. *Second* the garden is metaphor of the modern, enlightened man. And *third* the garden is metaphorofr the modern way of living and loving: the joyful garden.

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An interview with Karin Esmann Knudsen

by student Caroline Boye Pedersen

Are there different historical trends in gardening, as there are in literature and painting?

Yes, definitely so. You can take the medieval cloister garden, surrounded by walls, where monastic brothers and sisters could walk around in prayer and quiet reflection in the colonnades. You can take the Italian Renaissance Garden connected to the villas owned by the clerical and secular upper classes. They were placed on the hills outside the cities, especially Florence and Rome, and they are characterized by the open view over the surrounding countryside. The French Baroque Garden was meant to demonstrate the power of the king, by means of perspective and by opening the view to infinity, to show the human control over nature. The Sun King was God – almost. And in the English Landscape Garden a new ideal was born, the ideal of the natural garden based on nature's own principles. The design had an important political aspect by telling the story of democracy, in opposition to the French garden which belonged to the absolute monarchy. In Denmark this type of garden is called 'the romantic garden'. Anyway, the structure, lines and 'furniture' of the gardens give in all types of gardens a meaning which is connected to history and the connection to literature and painting is often obvious.

Are gardens amusing by the design of the gardens, or by the pleasure of staying in the gardens or perhaps a mixture?

Right from the beginning – back to ancient times – gardens have expressed a dream of Paradise. They have represented a place where you could build your own terrestrial Eden and form the natural conditions, often in isolation from a disruptive environment. Through the ages there have also been lots of entertaining elements in the gardens. Water has always played an important role, in reflecting basins and fountains. There have been so-called topiaries, i.e. evergreen plants cut in fancy shapes, or exotic plants have been gathered when it was possible to travel to foreign parts of the world. There have been aviaries with all kinds of birds, and there have been zoological gardens and large hunting areas. Nowadays gardens function as a refuge, a place where you can relax, cultivate your own vegetables, arrange flower beds, play football and other games etc.

Unlike a novel, which is finished when the writer has written the last sentence, a garden is never finished. You will always have to take care of it. Would Liselund Garden still be Liselund if you stopped taking care of it, or changed the garden style?

The character of Liselund depends on being taken care of. And it is ironic that the so-called natural garden is in fact an illusion. It is formed by man as an artificial arrangement. It must be remembered that Antoine Calmette and his wife Lisa never saw the garden the way it has grown up today. They had to imagine how it would become. The natural garden can easily be too natural so that the basic idea of the garden does not appear. There are many such neglected gardens in Denmark, but fortunately Realdania has been helpful with money so that several gardens have been restored. In the restoration work you must find a balance between nature and the art of forming and cultivating in every single garden.

In the garden at Frederiksborg Castle it is evident that the garden is made by man. This is less evident at Liselund although it is a design

as well. Can you talk about Liselund as a kind of illusion since the viewer forgets that there are people behind the garden's appearance?

Yes, I think so. The natural garden is just as formed as the formal garden – but with different ideals of form.

You say that gardens tell stories. But when you move around in a garden, you cannot speak of a beginning, a middle and an ending as you can in a novel. Furthermore, you may overlook part of the garden? What does that mean for the experience of the garden?

The garden will always be a so-called open text where the reader contributes to the meaning. But the reading of the garden can be given certain directions, through naming and inscriptions. Many of the early English landscape gardens are emblematic; you have to know a lot of for instance ancient history. In fact they are a kind of Enlightenment gardens by telling about the ideals of the old Greeks and Romans as well as the national past. That is why they take part in building a society based on freedom and equality. The gardens have a political function. But gradually the gardens become less didactic, and they become places where the garden wanderer is aware of his own experience and feels connected with nature. That is why in Denmark we call this type of garden romantic.

Why are the houses different from the outside and inside: outside primitive, but inside with a certain luxury?

I guess it has to do with function. At Liselund they made little excursions to the different parts of the garden, and the houses were used as guest houses. Probably it would not be so pleasant if they were too primitive?

Is "The Joyful Garden" similar to the status symbols we have today? Have the gardens been ways of highlighting yourself?

I think this is an essential question. Whether you were an Italian cardinal, the French Sun King, or an English landowner, you could show your wisdom, your power, your aesthetic skills, your ability to entertain guests, your knowledge of plants etc.

Jens Baggesen voyageur en France

Un regard amusé et satirique sur la France révolutionnaire

by Jørn Schøsler

Si l'on se souvient de Jens Baggesen (1764 -1826) aujourd'hui, c'est surtout grâce à son chef-d'oeuvre, le roman autobiographique *Le Labyrinthe* (*Labyrinten*), qui raconte sous forme fictive son voyage en Allemagne, en Suisse et en France 1789-1790. Publié en 1792-93, ce récit de voyage ne sera pas achevé par Baggesen, qui ne le poursuivra pas au-delà de Bâle– ceci malgré l'intention affirmée de le continuer dans sa seconde Préface en 1807.[1] Or, la suite, qui raconte son voyage en Suisse romande et en France, sera publiée après la mort de l'auteur, en 1829-30, à l'initiative de ses fils, par l'écrivain et pasteur C. J. Boye . (A la fois dans l'édition *Danske Værker* et séparément).[2] Cette édition posthume se base sur les journaux et les lettres de Baggesen, conservés à la Bibliothèque Royale de Copenhague. Les journaux manuscrits ont été numérisés par la Bibliothèque Royale et se trouvent sous forme électronique avec transcription et annotation par Ove Baggesen, arrière-arrière-petit-fils de l'auteur. La présente enquête sur l'humour de Baggesen se base sur le *Labyrinthe* dans l'édition de Torben Brostrøm,[3] pour son passage en Alsace, ensuite sur les journaux dans la transcription d'Ove Baggesen pour sa traversée de la Suisse romande et son voyage à Paris.[4]

La question que je me propose ici est de savoir l'attitude de Baggesen non seulement en tant que témoin amusé contemporain des événements révolutionnaires en France mais aussi plus généralement face à l'esprit français connu pour sa joie de vivre, sa légèreté, son humour poli ou grivois, sa moquerie.[5] Autrement dit, on peut se demander si Baggesen, regarde la France en 1789-90 avec humour ou avec sérieux car, ayant d'abord fait ses débuts littéraires sous le signe de Wessel, de Holberg et de Voltaire, dans le genre comique, avec ses *Contes comiques* (*Komiske Fortællinger*) et sa traduction de *Niels Klim* de Holberg (1789), il devient ensuite surtout un admirateur sensible de Rousseau, en opposition à l'esprit voltairien. En effet, il affirme lui-même, dans sa seconde Préface pour la 2de édition du *Labyrinthe*, en 1807, que c'est dans le sérieux qu'il trouve sa vraie nature et non pas dans le comique qu'il dit avoir pratiqué – malgré lui - pour plaire au goût de l'époque![6] Or, son voyage en 1789-90, entrepris grâce à une bourse offerte par le prince d'Augustenborg, ne témoigne pas d'une 'conversion' exclusive en faveur de la sensibilité rousseauiste, mais d'un goût des plaisirs sensuels et d'un esprit satirique voltairien![7]

L'expérience de Baggesen dans le domaine francophone se fait en trois étapes : Strasbourg et l'Alsace, la Suisse romande et le voyage à Paris. Or, déjà avant d'arriver en France, Baggesen évoque souvent les événements révolutionnaires et l'esprit français avec humour. Le ton humoristique rappelle celui de Holberg dont il vient de traduire *Niels Klim* (1789) et surtout celui de Wessel dont il cite le fameux mot « Sans bière et sans nourriture, le héros ne vaut rien » (« Uden Øl og Mad er helten ingenting »).[8] Voltaire en revanche est plusieurs fois la cible de sa moquerie. Ainsi il se moque de sa traduction de *Jules César* de Shakespeare (p. 65), de sa tragédie la *Henriade* – « un canard pataugeant dans la mare du village » (« en And som plasker i Gadekiæret ») – et de son mauvais goût en peinture (p. 272). Plus conciliant, il et vrai, au nom de la tolérance entre les peuples, quand il voit en Voltaire l'incarnation de l'esprit français (p. 245-46). Quoiqu'il en soit, Baggesen partage avec Holberg, Wessel et Voltaire le goût de la plaisanterie, s'octroyant le droit de dire des « bagatelles drôles » (« spøgefulde Smaating ») dans une époque selon lui « trop raisonnable, se-

reine et grave » (« i en alt for fornuftig, sindig og alvorlig Tid ») (p. 241). La Révolution est tournée en dérision car, apprenant à Friedberg, la démolition de la Bastille, et les suites sanglantes de celle-ci, Baggesen ironise sur sa réaction et sur celle de son entourage : malgré la peur que suscite l'événement, tous trinquent à la chute de toutes les bastilles, car dit-il, « c'est trop naturel de trinquer sur les Bastilles tombées » (p. 198).De plus, après une séquestration à Mannheim due à une inondation, Baggesen décrit avec humour la libération comme « la sortie de notre Bastille » (« Udløsningen af vor Bastille ») (p. 279). Enfin, un débat sur le sens du mot « liberté » se termine par un épisode drôle : les chapeaux – symbole de la liberté – s'envolent dans le vent créant une « parfaite anarchie » sur le siège : voilà, dit Baggesen avec ironie « comment finissaient nos débat sur la Révolution ! » (p. 281).

Baggesen salue Strasbourg dans un poème joyeux et enflammé en hommage à la liberté française (p. 287). On sait par ailleurs avec quel enthousiasme il monte dans la tour de la cathédrale finissant dans une extase mystique, mais ce qui est frappant, c'est de voir cette expérience mystique encadrée par l'humour et la joie de vivre. Avant de monter dans la tour, il plaisante en comparant son courage à celui d'un matelot danois (p. 293-94) et redescendu sur terre, il s'éclate en joyeuse compagnie dans une auberge nommée « Hôtel d'Esprit ». Dans cette auberge dont le nom a été privé de son 'saint', le saint esprit a dû céder la place à l'esprit du vin, car la soirée se noie dans le vin et le punch accompagnés de chanson à boire. Lors de cette soirée arrosée, Baggesen s'amuse à observer qu'alors que les Anglais et les Allemands se déchaînent sous l'effet du punch, les Français, eux, sont plus discrets, plus drôles et d'une société plus agréable buvant du vin avec modération ! (p. 302-3). Et quand, le lendemain Baggesen s'entretient avec une alsacienne de la couche populaire, « Révolutionnaire au plus haut degré », qui regrette de ne pas avoir participé à la destruction de la Bastille, il s'étonne, avec ironie, qu'avec tant de ferveur libertaire, elle ne commence pas par démolir « la Bastille sur sa tête », c'est-à-dire une coiffure dure et rigide (p. 306). Traversant ensuite l'Alsace, où des hordes de paysans brûlent leurs propres villages, Baggesen dit ne pas comprendre une telle rage révolutionnaire dans un pays aussi riche et riant…

Muni des oeuvres principales de Rousseau, Baggesen entre en Suisse sur les traces du philosophe. Mais si les beautés de la Suisse suscitent en lui une grande sensibilité, il découvre aussi une joie de vivre dans laquelle les plaisirs des sens jouent un rôle important. Il dit ne rien trouver de plus drôle que d'étudier le beau sexe qui le fascine (p. 82), il profite du bon vin (p. 40) et il regarde avec ravissement les gaietés des villages, où « tout joue, chante, sourit, s'ébat, danse, saute et rit » (p. 80).[9] De plus, il a un compagnon local, Bonifacius, qu'il trouve aussi drôle que Wessel ! (p. 147). Seule ombre dans ce tableau : le spectre de Voltaire qui apparaît dans la ville de Mönchenstein. C'est là, dit-il, que son admiration pour Voltaire s'est transformé en dégoût quand il a appris la vanité et l'inhumanité du « vieux satyr » (« den gamle Satyr ») qui – de passage à Bâle– a refusé de venir se réconcilier avec Maupertuis moribond. (p. 47). Or, précise Baggesen, Voltaire n'était pourtant pas un Satan sous une figure humaine mais simplement « l'incarnation parfaite » de l'esprit français : « l'humour, la bienveillance, la vanité et la légèreté mêmes » (« Vittigheden, Godmodigheden, Forfængelighed og Letsindigheden selv… ») (p.48). Et malgré ses reproches adressés à Voltaire, Baggesen avouera trouver en lui-même « l'humour de Voltaire » (« Voltaires Vittighed ») et « la sensibilité de Rousseau » (« Rousseaus følsomhed ») (p. 186). Si les sentiments de Baggesen à l'égard de Voltaire sont pour le moins ambigus – admiration et dégoût cohabitent en lui – son adoration pour Rousseau ne connaît pas de bornes. En témoigne notamment sa visite sur l'Ile de Saint-Pierre (« Rousseaus Øe »/« L'île de Rousseau ») dans le lac de Bienne (p. 67-75).[10] Ravi dans ce paradis terrestre, il semble s'identifier avec son idole et subit de fortes émotions sur les traces de Rousseau. Saluant en Rousseau celui des philosophes français qui a apporté le plus de vérité à la France en défendant la morale, la nature et le droit civique, il voit la gloire de Rousseau « déjà se répandre pour de bon » « alors que celle de Voltaire baisse de plus en

plus » (p. 70). Baggesen constate néanmoins avec ironie les limites de l'importance de Rousseau et de la Révolution pour des parisiennes venues en touristes cultiver leur goût romantique : celles-ci semblent plus regretter l'absence d'une glace ainsi que les linges sales de Rousseau ! (p. 74).

Au mois d'octobre 1789, Baggesen traverse le Pays de Vaud sur les traces des amants de la *Nouvelle Héloïse*. De nouveau, il est ravi par la beauté de ce paradis et s'adonne aux plaisirs des sens. Paradoxalement, il dénonce la volupté des sens tout en regardant le physique des femmes (p. 263, 266) et en vidant des bouteilles de bon vin (p. 244, 269). D'un côté il déclare son amour du vin et recommande « Wein, Weib und Gesang », de l'autre il envisage comme titre accrocheur de son récit « Voyage de volupté » (« Vellystfulde Reise ») pour tromper les lecteurs, qui, dit-il chercheront vainement les plaisirs des sens dans son texte ! (p. 239). Ceci ne l'empêche pas, par ex. de s'exclamer, dans la région de Vevay et de Clarens : « ...je me noie dans la volupté – mes faibles sens ne suffisent pas pour jouir de tant d'objets très voluptueux, je souhaite pour moi tous les sens réunis de mes frères et soeurs pour pouvoir convenablement goûter à tout... » (p. 252).[11]

Si malgré tout la Suisse reste pour Baggesen surtout le pays de Rousseau, donc haut lieu de la sensibilité, la France semble plus lui inspirer la joie de vivre au sens voltairien, avec comique, satire, rire. Franchissant la frontière le 3 janvier 1790, enthousiaste, il se dit tout de suite « Français corps et âme » (p. 293)[12] et chante (en français) « vive l'assemblée nationale » en buvant un verre de vin rouge. (p. 296).[13] Il cite aussi un mot du journal de Montesquieu pour qui la France est le seul pays où l'on vit (p. 295). Traversant les villes en route pour Paris, il s'amuse à lire les enseignes, notamment celles des perruquiers et des auberges. Son humour devient même gaulois quand il commente une enseigne qui affiche « Hotel du l'ecu de france ». Il suffit, dit-il, d'enlever l'apostrophe et d'ajouter une lettre pour désigner exactement l'état de l'hôtel ! (p. 310)[14]. En général, il se moque des auberges en France qui sont en dessous de tout : sales et froides ! Peut-être, dit-il, ironiquement, que les Français se chauffent au bavardage... (p. 306). Un courant d'air, le 13 janvier, lui a fait passer, dit-il, « la nuit la plus triste, la plus pénible et la plus insupportable... » (p. 313).[15] Mais sa veine satirique s'exerce aussi sur un spectacle à la Comédie de Besançon (p. 301) et il se moque de la science quand il conclut qu'on ne perd rien en perdant la vie, après avoir médité en « généralisant, spécialisant, individualisant et en séparant, composant, dissolvant, en additionnant, multipliant, divisant et subdivisant... » (p. 312).[16] Même l'Assemblée Nationale lui inspire surtout de l'humour car non seulement il pratique avec son compagnon, le comte Moltke, ce qu'il appelle « le jeu de l'égalité » - en trouvant une inégalité entre l'Assemblée Nationale, qui annonce quelque chose de mort, et ses gants, qui conservent quelque chose de vivant -, mais il tourne aussi la politique révolutionnaire en dérision quand il dit vouloir régler « les finances de son royaume » « en convoquant une Assemblée nationale » dans le but, dit-il, de « réduire mon Clergé, c'est-à-dire la partie de mon Etat voyageur qui mange et qui boit » (p. 300).[17] En général, il admire l'esprit français -bavard, poli, complaisant, sociable - même s'il le trouve trop superficiel (p. 307).

Le séjour de Baggesen à Paris, dans la tourmente de la Révolution, se présente surtout comme une partie de plaisir. S'il note souvent des visites à l'Assemblée nationale (p. 322, 324, 332, 340, 342, 350), il ne rapporte jamais ce qu'il y entend et donne encore moins une analyse des événements politiques. En revanche, il passe le plus fort de son temps au théâtre à regarder des tragédies, surtout le *Charles IX* de Chénier (p. 321, 327, 334) ou à l'opéra (330, 335, 338, 347-48, 351, où il adore la musique de Gluck, écoutant plusieurs fois *Alce*ste (« Je suis Gluckiste », p. 351).[18] Tout semble le ravir – sauf son premier logis dont la chambre n'est qu'une « porcherie avec une fenêtre et deux lits » (p. 319).[19] Il raconte ses journées avec beaucoup d'humour et se grise des expériences passionnés, au théâtre ou en visitant les ruines de la Bastille. Les plaisirs des sens l'attirent irrésistiblement : les belles dames –parfois même de petite vertu -dont il admire les attraits physiques (331, 338, 350), les

cafés (338) et les spectacles. Conscient d'être sur une mauvaise pente, il trouve juste et mordant le slogan satirique de Mercier, disant que Paris « dévore celui qui la cherche » – « Quærens quem devoret »[20] et si Paris lui semble l'enfer, il s'y engloutit, malgré lui, avec jouissance (p. 323). La religion, par ailleurs si importante pour Baggesen, ne semble pas pour un temps le troubler dans ses plaisirs. Ville de perdition, il est vrai, Paris a néanmoins des habitants aimables et admirables et si l'art y a pris la place de Dieu, « il est impossible de ne pas se perdre dans la vie ». (p. 339).

Les rapports de Baggesen avec Voltaire à Paris ne sont pas nets. Explicitement il parle de Voltaire comme du diable et il se moque de lui à deux reprises : d'abord quand il voit son buste en marbre – celui de Houdon - dans le foyer du Théâtre National où, dit-il, « nous saluions Voltaire qui était assis là en marbre (de Houdon) demandant des billets à 1 Ecus-neuf » (p. 320),[21] ensuite quand il démolit complètement sa tragédie – *Tancrède*- après une représentation au Théâtre National : « De toute ma vie je n'ai jamais été autant ennuyé, chagriné et dégoûté que pendant l'abominable Eternité qu'a duré cette pièce…J'ai vu avec satisfaction la pièce la plus insupportable, la plus laide, la plus abominable, la plus dégoûtante, la plus horrible, la plus méchante que j'ai vue ou que je pourrai jamais avoir l'occasion de voir sur terre….(p. 340).[22] « C'est », poursuit-il, « la pièce la plus ratée que je connaisse, excepté toutes les autres tragédies de Voltaire »[23] et il enfonce le clou : « L'existence de cet homme est la seule fausse preuve que je connaisse contre l'existence de Dieu… » (p. 341).[24] Cette virulente attaque pourrait laisser penser que Baggesen a entièrement abandonné son ancienne idole. Or, ce serait simplifier la question car en même temps il voit en Voltaire la personnification de Paris – moins la méchanceté, précise-t-il. Donc, Voltaire reste pour Baggesen, comme Paris, à la fois moralement dangereux, mais irrésistible par son esprit. Autant le Pays de Vaud, pour Baggesen, s'identifie à Rousseau, faisant appel à sa sensibilité, autant Paris semble réveiller en lui son esprit voltairien.

En effet, un esprit de dérision et d'auto-dérision l'habite lors de son séjour à Paris. Un ton plaisantin (Voltairien) domine quand il se dit « citoyen » parmi les citoyens au Théâtre National, quand il se fait passer pour un millionnaire pour entrer au théâtre sans payer, quand du haut de Notre Dame, il se met à calculer le nombre d'idées dans les têtes en bas et dans tous les livres à Paris et quand il se moque d'un certain snobisme touristique chez ceux pour qui le but du voyage c'est de pouvoir dire – « J'ai été à Paris ».[25] Même quand il se dit profondément déçu de ne pas avoir une lettre de son épouse, Sophie, il exagère tellement en changeant de but en blanc sa vue sur Paris, qui devient soudainement exécrable, qu'il semble se moquer de lui-même. Et la Révolution dans tout cela ? S'il est vrai - comme l'on sait - que Baggesen danse sur les ruines de la Bastille, il retient surtout de cette expérience son plaisir : il vient, dit-il, au gardien, « pour avoir le plaisir de marcher sur des ruines » et quand on lui propose une visite plus approfondie il se dit « content(s) d'avoir dansé là » (p. 334).[26] Enfin il rentre, dit-il, tout satisfait du « plaisir gagné » cette matinée (« Nydelses Indtægten »).

Même quand il parle plus de la Révolution, c'est avec beaucoup d'humour en imaginant les événements sous une allégorie : Paris serait une femme en train d'accoucher d'un bébé – la liberté, les Lumières -, aidée par une sage-femme – l'Assemblée Nationale -, mettant son mari vaurien à la porte – le roi, le despotisme – séduite par des amants – les philosophes, Rousseau, Mably, Raynal et Voltaire. (p. 343-44). Ainsi, dit-il, cette « femme légère, joyeuse, souriante mais souffrante » a été conquise par le « Génie du siècle » qui lui a enseigné ses droits avec le « Contract-social » - « Un livre saint écrit par un de ses meilleurs amis » (p. 344).[27]

Nul doute que Baggesen, même si son approche de l'actualité politique de la France révolutionnaire reste amusée et superficielle, se rende compte de l'importance de l'événement. Or, son expérience est plus émotionnelle qu'intellectuelle : ainsi quand il note à Paris le 26 janvier qu'il s'agit d'un événement historique unique dans l'histoire de

l'humanité, ne laissant aucun homme indifférent, il en parle comme d'un « choc électrique » qui « enfle son coeur de confiance ou d'angoisse, de chagrin ou de joie, de dépit ou d'admiration… » (p. 353).[28]

Baggesen quitte Paris le 29 janvier pour retourner en Suisse. Longeant la Loire pour passer ensuite par Lyon vers Genève, il reste enchanté par la France, charmé par la politesse française (p. 356-58, 364) et par le caractère enjoué et accueillant des gens : « O ! pays charmant et peuple encore plus charmant ! Quelle joie de voyager parmi vos sourires ! « (p. 387).[29] Toujours sensuel, il n'arrête pas de vanter la beauté de la femme française (p. 373, 382-83, 385, 389, 399-401) qui l'attire par un « Magnétisme mystérieux » (« Ubegribelig Magnetisme ») (p. 385),[30] et plaisantant sur ses motifs de venir à Paris, il conclut qu'en fin de compte, il a voulu étudier la gent féminine (p. 363) qu'il dit préférer avant tout comme il préfère sa liberté au despotisme ! (p. 373).

Sans se prendre au sérieux – il rappelle en latin que celui qui ridiculise est souvent lui-même ridiculisé (« Derisor ridiculorum – stultorum omnium sæpe ridiculissimus ipse «) (p. 365)[31] -, Baggesen se moque des auberges et de l'actualité révolutionnaire. Faisant peut-être référence à la fameuse idée leibnizienne du meilleur des mondes possibles, ridiculisé par Voltaire dans *Candide*, il note comme la plus grande plaie parmi les « Macula mundi » les auberges en France, à l'origine, dit-il, d'une « ombre sombre, humide, froide et repoussante qui a pu se glisser malgré lui dans son récit de voyage… » (p. 367).[32] S'amusant toujours à relever les inscriptions sur les enseignes, il les recommande comme objet d'étude aux « Nomenclateurs, aux Crapuloges, aux Inscriptologues, aux Psychologues, aux Alphabetologues et aux Polyhistoriens », s'attardant notamment sur l'inscription « A Pied et à Cheval », répandue dans toute l'Europe. Précédée souvent par les mots « Bon Logis » ou « Ici on est logé », elle prête au rire en traduction danoise : « Her bor man baade til Hest og til Fods » (« Ici on loge à cheval et à pied »).[33]

Baggesen, qui reproche parfois aux Français d'être superficiels, trouve dans l'actualité révolutionnaire pourtant bouleversante, surtout un prétexte pour s'amuser. Ainsi, joie et amusement priment sur le sérieux en politique : parlant de la nature de la joie, que lui inspire la belle nature et la vue attendrissante d'une mère avec un bébé sur le bras, il adopte le vocabulaire politique, parlant de la joie comme d'un gouvernement « monarchique ou aristocratique », avec ses esclaves et ses idolâtres, qui dégénère souvent en « despotisme ».[34] Sceptique devant une Europe endormie qui s'éveille à la liberté « sans se donner le temps de mettre ses pantoufles et sa robe de chambre »,[35] Baggesen se propose d'écrire un chapitre sur le despotisme dans son journal. Or, ce projet est reporté plusieurs fois et tenu en échec par divers incidents qui lui arrivent à Cosne. D'abord il descend dans une auberge – « Le Cerf volant » - où toute son attention est retenue par trois jolies filles – Marianne, Babet et Mignonne ! (p. 373). Ensuite, sur la route près de Cosne, il rencontre ce qu'il appelle un « Objet » (« Object »), (p. 375),[36] c'est-à-dire un infirme qui se déplace sans jambes et même sans bas ventre ! Cette vue le jette dans un embarras rempli d'horreur et de pitié, le laissant avec la mauvaise conscience de ne pas s'être arrêté pour aider un « frère ». (p. 375-79).[37] Enfin, sortant dans les rues de la ville et criant « voilà le fauxbourg ! », Baggesen et ses compagnons se voient encerclés par une « armée » de « héros », c'est-à-dire d'artisans qui les prennent pour des « aristocrates » à abattre ! (p. 380).[38] Baggesen – pourtant l'ami des aristocrates allemands au Danemark – assure, pour sauver sa peau, qu'il hait les aristocrates de tout son coeur et qu'il souhaite, lui aussi, les abattre. Flattant ses agresseurs en les appelant de « bons citoyens », il arrive à les calmer et, dit-il ironiquement, « cette paix mémorable (..) fut conclue le 1er février 1790, à Cosne, en Boulogne (…) en trinquant avec six bouteilles de vin rouge ». (p. 381).[39] Levant le verre, tout le monde crie « Vive la liberté, vive la nation, vive la liberté française ! Périssent les Aristocrates ! que Dieu les confonde ! que Dieu les abolisse : qu'ils s'en aillent tous au diable ! » (p. 381).

L'incident, naturellement, exprime les réserves de Baggesen devant le sérieux de l'esprit révolutionnaire et devant un possible bain de sang arbitraire. Mais surtout il dit s'être amusé, malgré le danger de vie dans lequel il s'est trouvé ! De plus, cette réaction se reproduit plus tard, le 7 février, quand il arrive à Lyon. La ville est en révolte, la populace, qui a attaqué l'arsenal, se trouve nombreuse devant la porte, mais alors que l'entrée dans la ville va mettre leur vie en danger, Baggesen note dans son journal : « nos coeurs battaient du plaisir d'être arrivés à un moment aussi propice... » (p. 398). Ils entrent donc dans Lyon où ils trouvent une « chambre magnifique avec vue sur le Rhône et la vieille ville ». Le lendemain, ils repartent pour Genève, quittant cette ville – « indescriptiblement plus belle que Paris » (p. 399).[40]

Le voyage de Baggesen en France au début de l'année 1790 témoigne d'un Baggesen humoristique, satirique et sensuel. Loin du sérieux qu'il prétend être sa nature profonde dans la 2me préface au *Labyrinthe* en 1808, il prend un recul humoristique par rapport aux événements politiques qui bouleversent la France et si le séjour en Suisse le montre disciple sensible de Rousseau, la France réveille en lui – malgré lui -cet esprit voltairien qu'il condamne pourtant chez le « vieux Satyre «.

1 *Labyrinthen* (1829), "ny Forerindring", p. 1.

2 *Labyrinthen. Digtervandringer af Jens Baggesen.* Udgivet af Forfatterens Sønner og C. J. Boye. (Kiøbenhavn 1829-30).

3 *Labyrinten.* ..udgivet med efterskrift af Torben Brostrøm (Gyldendal, 1965).

4 *Jens Baggesens dagbøger fra 11/08 – 27/09 1790.* Digitaliseret af Det Kgl. Bib. og transskription af texten med noter ved Ove Baggesen. Sous cet intitulé, on trouve à la fois la transcription complète des journaux de Jens Baggesen, par Ove Baggesen, complétée par des lettres et par une partie de la continuation du *Labyrinthe* par Boye (« Malerisk Reise »), et chaque journal manuscrit avec la transcription en face (« Malerisk, de enkelte dagbøger »). Je me base sur le texte de « Malerisk Reise », d'une pagination continue, mais avec renvoi à l'écriture de Baggesen dans chaque journal de « Malerisk Reise, de enkelte dagbøger ».

5 Sur l'importance de l'humour au XVIIIe siècle, voir surtout le numéro spécial de la revue *Dix-huitième siècle,* « Le rire » (sous la direction de Lise Andries) (*DHS* 32, Presses Universitaires de France, 2000) et Georges Minois, *Histoire du rire et de la dérision,* (Paris, Fayard, 2000), chap. IX et XI.

6 *Labyrinthen.* "Ny Forerindring", p. 7-8, 14-15 (Kiøbenhavn, 1829).

7 Pour Peter Basse, Baggesen témoigne d'un engagement politique et social lors de son voyage en 1789. Or son voyage à Paris se fait surtout sous le signe de l'humour et de la joie de vivre. Cf. Peter Basse : *Et labyrintisk menneske. Portræt af digteren Jens Baggesen i revolutionsåret 1789.* (Århus, CUK, 1989), la 4me de couverture.

8 *Labyrinten...* udgivet med efterskrift af Torben Brostrøm. (Gyldendal, 1965), p. 32.

9 Cf. Dgb 6: p. 3

10 Dgb. 5: p. 36-55.

11 Dgb. 10: p. 61.

12 Dgb. 11: p. 13

13 Dgb. 11: p. 24

14 Dgb. 11: p. 62

15 Dgb. 11: p. 74.

16 Dgb. 11: p. 71

17 Dgb. 11: p. 34.

18 Dgb. 11: p. 124

19 Dgb. 12: p. 9.

20 Dgb. 12: p. 22.

21 Dgb. 12: p. 12.

22 Dgb. 11: p. 108.

23 Dgb. 11: p. 114.

24 Dgb. 11: p. 115.

25 Dgb. 13: p. 24.

26 Dgb. 12: p. 55.

27 Dgb. 12: p. 70.

28 Dgb. 12: p. 92-93.

29 Dgb. 13: p. 135.

30 Dgb. 13: p. 26.

31 Dgb. 13: p. 37.

32 Dgb. 13: p. 47.

33 Dgb. 13: p. 49-50.

34 Dgb. 13: p. 61.

35 Dgb. 13: p. 62.

36 Dgb. 13: p. 76.

37 Dgb. 13: p. 81, 85.

38 Dgb. 13: p. 95, 97.

39 Dgb. 13: p. 103.

40 Dgb. 13: p. 171.

The Line of Beauty and the Line of Reason[1]

Jens Baggesen's *The Labyrinth*

by Mogens Davidsen

Copenhagen, Cologne, Lübeck, Hamburg, Bad Pyrmont, Frankfurt, Mannheim, Strasbourg and Basel: cities lying as points along an almost straight line on the map, plotting out a goal-directed travel route according to the most reasonable traditions of enlightenment. This apparently straight-lined course, however, constitutes the framework of one of the most intricate journeys in Scandinavian literature, *The Labyrinth*, written by the no less intricate Danish author, Jens Baggesen (1764-1826).[2]

The work was published in two parts in 1792-93, and it was written on the basis of letters and diaries from the journey which Baggesen commenced in 1789, the year of the French Revolution. Initially, the destination of the journey was the spa of Bad Pyrmont, but the stay here was to be very brief: Baggesen was bored, and not until he and his travel companion, the German Karl Spazier, ran into Count Adam Molkte,[3] boredom was turned into joy. For unlike Baggesen and Spazier, Adam Molkte was a man of means, and therefore the three friends decided to join forces (and money) and continue their travel further down through Germany, Switzerland and France together.

In the posthumous version of Baggesen's *oevre* (published 1827-32), there is a sequel of *The Labyrinth*, describing the journey through Switzerland and France and back to Denmark. This sketch, like the composition, is quite congenial with Baggesen's mental character, and therefore the sequel will function as a kind of subtext to *The Labyrinth* in the following.

The Titan

Jens Baggesen came from a very humble background. Unlike the majority of Danish writers of the 18th century, who came from clerical or civil serving houses, Baggesen, the son of a subordinate stately accountant in the Zealand town Korsør, was not 'foreseen' to become a student. However, his obvious mental gifts and talent admitted him to the Latin School in Slagelse, and he sustained life and studies through modest scholarships and the good will of local citizens. The subsequent studies of theology at the University of Copenhagen, however, were never completed. As impecunious, Baggesen was totally depending on the patronage of his surroundings, and being – in the words of the writer Knud Lyhne Rahbek (1760-1830) – "a weird, enthusiastic, indescribable type", he was adopted by the powerful nobility. The time – the 1780s – had a *faible* for peculiar and sensitive artists. The "Werther-fever"[4] with lover's lament and cemetery longings were sentimental components of a new self-knowledge among the young generation of noble Schimmelmanns and Rewentlows.

Alongside this aesthetic shift of paradigm, a socio-economic development occurred, changing the mercantilistic policy of Denmark into a liberalistic direction. The old version of the absolute monarchy (from before the Danish court revolution in 1784) with state management, privileges, monopolies and tariffs was replaced by a policy based upon new currents from England and France, promoting the fundamental idea that the soil and its cultivation was the actual source to the wealth of a nation. By way of example this shift can be observed in the Schimmelmann family. The old count H.C. Schimmelmann had founded his enormous fortune by trading in black slaves who were exchanged for home produced guns, but, encouraged by the new currents, his son

Ernst Schimmelmann exchanged the traffic of his father's enterprise with the involvement in the reformation of the Danish agricultural system.[5]

With his sensitive nature and his inclination to Rousseau, Baggesen was an excellent tool for proving the legitimacy of noble reform efforts and the care for the commonwealth. So, when Baggesen, instead of studying, spent his time in noble manor houses, it was in the interests of both parties. He represented the free, creative spirit that was celebrated by the young noblemen, while their conception of enlightenment and reforms formed a nourishing substrate in his poetic universe.

As a young student Baggesen was introduced to the critic and poet Christen Henriksen Pram (1756-1821), and in the years to come he spent plenty of time in the homes of the Prams. Very much in the spirit of the time – and inspired by Rousseau's relationship with Madame de Warens[6] – he developed an intimate and sentimental yet platonic relationship with the lady of the house, Maria Magdalena Pram. Such a spiritual relationship between a married woman and a friend of the house was fully accepted and widespread in the *culture de salon* of the time. Through mental unification (obtained by soulful conversation and light touches), the parties were to sublimate the carnal desires to a spiritual level. Of course the project simultaneously required a willing and unattainable partner, and the sentimental and emotional Maria Magdalena Pram proved to be the perfect subject of aesthetic flirtation. Today, perhaps, we would call the result a kind of expansion of the mind - at any rate, the relation brought about an intoxicating sensation of joy in Baggesen with elevated feelings fit for a heaven-defying Titan.

Quite remarkable from a literary point of view, though, is that the relationship also brought about some radiant and lucid poetry. Baggesen's poetic praises of Mrs. Pram as the moon goddess *Seline* is a typical example of how great art sometimes arises from the most affected and artificial circumstances.[7] In poems such as "Min anden Skabelse" (My Second Creation) from 1785, Baggesen distilled sensuous and attentive poetry from the theatrical relationship with Mrs. Pram; an edifying instruction of how strange the relations between art and life can sometimes be, and a request to judge Baggesen primarily on his *work*.

From place to place

The physically pent-up relationship with Mrs. Pram became an increasing strain on the nerves of the sensitive poet, so when Baggesen's aristocratic friends in 1789 arranged for him to have a travel stipendium of 800 rix-dollars a year, it came as a welcome opportunity to get away from it all. And apparently the cure helped. When he returned to Denmark a year later, he had left behind him his platonic way of life in marrying the Swiss lady Sophie Haller, and furthermore he brought back with him the letters and records that were later to become the travel book *The Labyrinth*.[8]

Being a travel description, accordingly the composition of *The Labyrinth* is loose and punctual as is the nature of a travel. "From place to place" could appropriately describe the principle of composition – with the experiencing self as the absolute centre of the text. The self is autocratic in choosing and refusing, the sovereign describer, imaginative storyteller and reflector of it all.

It all begins with the travel-unaccustomed Baggesen finding out that he cannot get away from Copenhagen without a passport. After a labyrinthine hunt for civil servants responsible for taking out passports, he manages to catch the boat in the very last moment and arrives in Kiel. From there he continues over land to Lübeck and Hamburg, where he visits the poet Friedrick Gottlieb Klopstock (1724-1803), further over the moors of Lüneburg to the original destination of the journey, the Pyrmont Spa. Until then, the journey has been planned and – judging from the descriptions - without larger emotional peaks for the narrator. But from Pyrmont and the prospect of Adam Molktes money, the course of the journey becomes free and random – chance determines the pace.

The continued journey goes to Göttingen, Kassel and Frankfurt am Main, where the bleak and disconsolate Jewish street makes a strong impression on the narrator, who experiences it as a monument of human oppression. On the other

hand, the dead straight, militarily laid-out streets in the city of Mannheim causes the narrator to a poetic and philosophical settlement with classicistic aesthetics. With the arrival of the narrator in Strassburg, the book reaches a point of culmination with Baggesen's climbing the spire of the Gothic cathedral, after which the official record of the journey ends with a description of the travel through Alsace, ending at the gate of Basel.

Linguistic eruptions

As already mentioned, it was a pressing journey Baggesen undertook – in more than one sense of the word. But what seemed to be a weakness in his real life was transformed into strength in his work. The pressure of sexual abstinence from which Baggesen suffered, and a pressure that allegedly drove him mad, was transformed in *The Labyrinth* into a sort of thematically and stylistic "hydraulics" – an excess of linguistic drive from an apparently infinite storage of all kinds of genres and discourses. So, as Baggesen did not listen to good advice from his friends and doctors to stop his health-threatening abstinence through marriage or at least the practice of "good Coitus", one could get the suspicion that Baggesen was very conscious of the fact that as a poet he needed the accumulation of sexual instinct, and that the very accumulation was in fact constituting a poetic and cognitive potential.

Alongside the erotic accumulation becoming writing, one realizes that in *The Labyrinth* this practice is in fact Baggesen's general approach to any inexpedient mental activity: it is transformed into writing. The book contains a whole section about "spiritual faeces" in which the narrator elaborates the usually indelicate phenomenon of purging:

> The human being consists of soul and body; and till today, as far as I know, it has not been established which of the two plays the leading role in his nature. One can, however, without risking too much, assume until further, that the body holds the mentioned esteem among most. For that reason, one is also in general likely to imagine - if not everything – as bodily, then at least to attach certain bodily imaginations to all things. Well, it is doubtless that the very word [purging], which I for reasons of delicatesse shall not repeat – without any other connection can mean the action of the soul as well as of the body – and yet, I am convinced that at least two thirds of my readers will immediately have referred its meaning to the body. (pp. 59-60, my translation).

Here, with reference to the *"Oeco-nomie"* of his soul, the narrator claims his right to exhale from his brain all that causes him to engage in irrelevant speculation. For this purpose, he begins keeping a special diary where he can write down all his caprices to get rid of them. Knowing, however, that the mentioned diary is partly congruent with the diary Baggesen kept during the whole journey, the apparently mercantilistic and healthy attitude covers up for a different agenda altogether. He is in fact making an attack on the idea that some subjects are more suitable and valuable for mental and written processing than others. Thence, the assumed objectivity in the elucidation of the nature of purging becomes a defense for Baggesen's own and highly subjective practice of writing, where the most insignificant of events can serve as take-off for the most sublime reflections, and with the catalyst of linguistic ecstasy as the actual rationale. Remaining in the terminology of hydraulics, it is fair to say that *The Labyrinth* is driven by a jet principle, which is rendered visible for the reader in the constant stream of linguistic eruptions. Thus, the novel is endowed with a materiality unique of its time, because 'the meaning' – if there is any – is constantly brought by in a language that outdoes the narration. It is fair to say that the attention of the reader is drawn to the fact that writing is taking place rather than to what is actually written.

Furthermore, any attempt from the reader to get on the track of the actual meaning of the writing, is blurred by the advanced play with discours-

es, unfolded by the novel, speaking now from one position about moral and aesthetics, now from the complete opposite.

Linguistic musicality

Regarding the tradition in Denmark in the age of the national writer of comedies, promoter of enlightenment and philosopher Ludvig Holberg (1684-1754) and his fellow enlightenment enthusiast and language reformer J.S. Sneedorff (1724-1764), these important cultural figures of the 18th century didn't really recognize any gap between enlightenment and fictitious writing. Both Holberg and Sneedorff wrote to reform and develop Danish prose. In the last issue of the periodical *Den patriotiske Tilskuer* (*The Patriotic Spectator*) from 1763, Sneedorff states that his purpose of the cultivation of the mother tongue has been:

> To improve the common way of thinking, to announce the benefaction of the sciences, to teach the truths of religion [...] to reward the heroes through dignified eulogies, [...] and finally to grant our unlearned compatriots and the women some books that could edify in pleasing them. [...] Hence, it was more for the sake of things, of thoughts and of truths that I wished the language more cultivated. I esteemed the things far more than the word, and the sciences more than the language. (pp. 932-33, my translation)

In this, Sneedorff is in total accordance with the prevailing idea of the enlightenment about the cleansing of conceptions through language purification. To Sneedorff, reason was like a linguistic principle that could be formulated, if one made efforts to do so. And in concord with this, we have the classicistic aesthetic dogma, saying that beauty bears witness to the truth.

Hence, from an enlightenment point of view, any kind of aesthetic display has to be subordinated to common sense and moral. Accordingly, Sneedorff's prose is cool, correct and abstract, because first and foremost language must express the rational processing of thoughts.

Without explicitly saying so it is, however, this entire enlightenment complex which subjugated a one-to-one relationship between language and thing, that is questioned in *The Labyrinth*. Influenced by English writers such as Laurence Sterne (1716-1768) and Henry Fielding (1707-1754), who both questioned the linguistic sense and the sensible reality, Baggesen makes the aesthetic aspect of the language a subject in *The Labyrinth*. In doing so, he questions the way classicistic tradition links moral and beauty. So in a way he philosophizes quite different from Sneedorff about the mother tongue:

> The genius of my mother tongue has so much of the fluent lightness of the French language and of the mighty power of that of the German, that one should imagine it an embryo of the unification of the two. The actual natural sphere of this most happy language stands in an opposite relation to the circumference in which it is spoken. The Danish language in Denmark is, from this point of view, a meridian within a Polar circle, a larger circle within a smaller. Without possessing all the lightness of the French or all the power of the German, it still possesses enough of both in order to enrich its people with the blessing of both in translations or imitations. (p.78, my translation)

Here is no talk of reason, usefulness or truth, but of aesthetic qualities – "to enrich its people" does not mean to provide the population with an edifying content, but to open up the senses of the people to the power and lightness of the language. The language is not primarily an articulation of reason, but an instrument to promote aesthetic pleasure.

And the author of *The Labyrinth* is fully capable of playing his instrument. Although he has assimilated Sneedorff's syntactic conquests, he uses these with far more subtleness and elegance. In his style, he fluctuates between an ironic, reflexive

manner with a broad, complicated but logic syntax - through an English 'style' (mostly taken from Sterne and Fielding) with direct speech and concrete images – to a more passionate, Klopstock-inspired style, where a broken and illogical utterance with multiple exclamations, marks the involvement of emotion in the process of thoughts. The musicality of the flexible prose partly becomes a goal in itself, partly becomes a means of bringing the reader to his "senses", as demonstrated in the chapter "The Letters" from the posthumous sequel of *The Labyrinth*.

The presence of absence

Baggesen much enjoyed having letters on his journey. Preferably from the beloved "Seline", of course, but any sign of life from back home could bring him in ecstacy. On the other hand, he would rage if no one could induce themselves to write to him, and he uttered lots of complaints to friends because of their lack of inclination to write. As he rolls into Basel - and out of *The Labyrint* and into its sequel – he describes his agitation at a Swiss inn at the thought of no letters from Denmark:

> I left the table and went to the balcony, staring over the fence down into the dark green swirls of the majestic river. But I had not stared long, before – with shivering agony – the thought went through my head: You have no letters from Denmark, no intelligence from your friends! I still had some hope left; but had this been destroyed in the present moment, had a messenger stepped in and announced that no letters with my address existed – I had thrown myself into the open arms of the Rhine, floating below. (Danske Værker vol. 9, p.323, my translation)

Then he goes to the town secretary of Basel, honestly believing, that this man won't have any mail for him either. The secretary is not in, so the longing traveller has to do with a "talkative, good-natured, though by no means beautiful Swiss woman", who offers him water with raspberry juice:

> While she went to fetch it, I approached a bureau at the edge of the room. Good Heavens! What a sight! Three thick parcels of letters for me were lying there! What an immensely enchantment! Such must be the feelings of the soul which the second "let there be" whirls up from the grave into the open sky. I quivered; my trembling legs could barely bear me; my eyes stared at these angels of comfort, these coolers in the hot oven of my longings, through streaming tears. I could not, would not, dared not open them – I hardly allowed myself to touch them. (Danske Værker vol.9, p.325, my translation)

In spite of "quivering" Baggesen gradually gets so much hold on himself, that he dares touch the letters; he continuously postpones the opening of them in his description – now that he *has* made us as excited as himself about their content. And in this way the author gets away with leaving the revelation of the content as a leading suspense during a course of writing which unfolds over 25 pages. Baggesen refers to the letters. With a linguistic generosity, he pours out landscape descriptions and all kinds of associations to this and that, and the text stretches the reader's patience to the utmost: *when does it come?*

Finally, when the opening of the letters is duly prepared, something sneaks into the text which grates on the expectations so cleverly built up. A suspiciously well- known rhetoric blends into a narrative anticlimax:

> By the end of my ascend [I arrived] on an enchanting hill, waved by a down-purling waterfall not far away, to green cooling shades – to a darkness, seemingly spread merely by roses – so sweetly twittered the birds from the trees, vaulting a lower-lying arbour. I approached. Here, I said, will I rest – here will I unfold my treasures – here, by the monument of Gessner (his mere name on a picturesque

> – ivy-entwined – piece of rock) – by the perpetually purling fall – shall I read my letters. [...] Kneeling, I rushed my hand into my pocket to bring to light my seventeen encapsulated angels. An invisible lightening, an inaudible thunder struck from Heaven into my heart. After a while, the rest [of the company, M.D.] found me, still fainted. I was not brought to my senses again; but to those of somebody else – the most miserable among the living. The bag with its entire content was gone. (Danske Værker vol.9, pp.348-349)

With the famous Danish poem "Rungsteds Lyksaligheder" ("The Bliss of Rungsted", 1775) by the much celebrated poet Johannes Ewald (1743-1781) serving as matrix for the rhetoric in the quoted passage ("The Bliss of Rungsted" also has: "a darkness, seemingly spread merely by roses"; "cooling shades"; "the perpetually purling fall"), the scene is - parodically and pathetically at the same time – set for the letters to be "the Camena" (also present in "The Bliss of Rungsted"), filling the poet's breast and granting him - and us – release.[9] Yet, the letters are gone; the release stays away.

What is left, then? – There is the prelude of 25 pages, and the fact that the whole affair concerns letters. Letters represent the persons who are absent; letters manifest presence on the condition of absence, one might say. And in the same way as the letters are substitutes, the entire work – *The Labyrinth* – replaces the journey, long finished. However, the main quality of the journey has been *presence*, and that quality has to be re-established when reading the book. Not in a quantified manner through metaphor or other kinds of symbolic representation, but in arranging the text as "motivated sign", as an objective correlative. Thus - by pointing at its own artificiality, by reusing Ewald and depriving us of insight – we are moved away from any *illusion* which becomes transparent as the writing becomes opaque. Hence, in as much as the poet is "brought to [the] senses [...] of somebody else", we – as readers - are brought to our *own* senses here and now. In that process, the letters are not important as messages, hence they are sacrificed – to make us aware of our status as readers, involved in the making of the work, taking place in the presence of absence.

The instant

In Baggesen's aesthetics of presence, the instant is somewhat more than the crossing point between the present and the past. The instant becomes a subjective eruption, in which the feeling of presence is condensed; a kind of intellectual coitus, which Baggesen's rhetoric attempts to prolong by placing it in a kind of "no-when" or "anytime".

This view of the instant has its roots in religious mysticism and pietism. In the beginning of the 18th century, pietism flourished in Denmark. This sectarian religious movement (for a time during Chr. VI (1730-1746), the official religious observation in Denmark), credited the subject with religious admission outside clerical institutions and dogmatics. The widespread 'pietistic biography' encircles the place and the instant of a comprehensive picture of existence from the 'point' of divine penetration in human life, and this requires the passive surrender of man to God's idea. In Danish literature, we meet this conviction in the hymns by the pietistic minister and Bishop Hans Adolph Brorson (1694-1764) rather than in biographies, but the idea is the same: The recognition of God happens suddenly – "as the turn of a hand" – in the formulation by the pietistic fighter August Hermann Francke (1663-1727).

However, late pietism was somewhat different. The process of phasing out the devout comprehension of the world was fast in the latter part of the 18th century, when the theology of enlightenment replaced orthodoxy. But, in its extreme rationalistic nature, the theology of enlightenment was undermining its own foundation right from the beginning. In the course of a single generation almost all of the pillars, on which the orthodox theology rested, were overthrown.

To a certain extent, pietism and the theology of enlightenment had a common enemy. They

shared the showdown with orthodoxy, and both directions had an immense impact on the growing secularization of spiritual life. But contrary to the attempt of enlightenment theology of bringing the religion in accordance with common sense, *fervour* was central to pietism. By strengthening and intensifying the belief in revelation as a fervent, personal experience, pietism participated in shaping a religious *urge* that could serve as a framework for other experiences than those of a religious nature.

Thus, when pietism was gradually marginalized as religious persuasion, it survived as a form of experience. So the fervent intercourse with spiritual life, promoted by the eldest generation of the pious movement, also came to characterize a generation otherwise reversed to the enlightened world of secularization. But instead of a 'sincere' religious experience, the mere feeling occurred, only pleasing and cultivating itself. Words such as the English 'sentimental' and 'melancholy' and the German 'empfindsam', 'Hypochondrie' and 'Stimmung' characterize the fundamental feeling which also required its own Danish word ('følsom').

The pietistic influence on literature is typically seen in the author's remarkable inclination to self observance and self description, and with the 'instant' as the point of departure for an intensified feeling of life. The practice of finding expression in 'diaries' or 'letters' became the derivative form of the earlier pietistic penance of daily confinement and religious reflection. The changed secularized conditions become visible in literature where the lonely self doesn't confront God, but itself. The self becomes a psychological mystery, and the obligation to ask, seek and suffer becomes a personal task. The world of sentimentalism, in which Baggesen's work occurs, is to a large extent nourished by the pietistic legacy; the religious experience, however, is replaced by psychological self observance. Travelling holds many opportunities for psychological confrontation and reflection; hence the journey – and the almanac – is in focus in the literature of the time.

The almanac

As to genre, *The Labyrinth* is a kind of almanac, but a very special almanac. It is an almanac philosophizing about its own nature:

> [The journey is sweetened], especially by the care, alertness and effort to the full enjoyment of the moment, it teaches us, and by which we, so to speak, create for ourselves a totally new almanac, of which the ordinary calendar is but a brief draft. One of its weeks already contains 365 days. It is amazing how long a man can stretch his time, when he makes an effort with the spinning of its delicate linen; but ordinarily, one lets the spindle spin so fast, that instead of long thin thread, it all ends up with a thick, twisted and short packing twine. (p.247, my translation)

One of the reasons for the journey in particular to create a break in the mode of perception, is its nature of constant scenes of departure, which provides good practice in the stretching, moving and vitalizing of the moment. Thereby, a static point on the official time line becomes an individualized space – a time pocket of duration. The descriptions of these moments characterize the text, not as an overview, implying a linear perspective, but as sensitively perceived details. Not the entire female body, but parts of it – feet, ankles and calves – and not the whole landscape as a panorama, but the environment as material and intellectual stimulation, progressing unpredictable chains of association. This metonymic orientation and perpetual confrontation doesn't provide the reader with meaning and direction, but with fullness and spiritual movement:

> [...] nothing is more harmful for he, who suffers, than the constant remaining at the same place. There is nothing more natural, I think; because life in itself is nothing more than movement. Movement is what makes, upholds and renews all

> things. A means of constant movement for soul and body would be a means against death. (p.97, my translation)

This central passage is almost blasphemous: "life in itself is nothing but movement"- a statement of vitalism, 100 years before Henri Bergson, suspending any rational quest for direction and goal. Usually, the concept attached to the making, upholding and renewal of everything would of course be God and not movement, but in the quoted passage, the concepts seem to catch at the same. At any rate, there is a strong emphasis on the idea that life is not something which *is*; life is in perpetual *formation* in the self sensing it. Hence, the work of art is – before it is anything else – a catalyst of spiritual movement.

However, this conviction, which seems totally indifferent as to what values and normative positions the spirit is moved *from*, is ambiguous. Parallel with its hypostatizing of the written, it dethrones the text as unreliable – and questions the concept of the *work* as such. And this is a question which pushes itself forward in the ongoing discussions of a 'line of beauty' in *The Labyrinth*.

The line of beauty

The Labyrinth mentions the English painter and engraver William Hogarth (1697-1764) on one occasion. However, Hogarth plays a somewhat larger role in the book than the sparse reference to him seems to suggest. The entire aesthetics in the central chapter of 'Mannheim' poetically unfolds the same art-philosophical reflections as Hogarth's treatise from 1757 *The Analysis of Beauty*. In this, Hogarth introduces the serpentine s-line as beautiful and natural. In engravings he shows exactly what the line looks like. It appears in many of his pictures as an almost independent abstract woof in an otherwise classic mimetic representation of reality. It also serves as educational guideline for the representation of swan necks, female shapes and more. However, apart from serving as a pictorial element and formula of composition, the s-line also induces Hogarth to make more general considerations on 'serpentine' aesthetics.

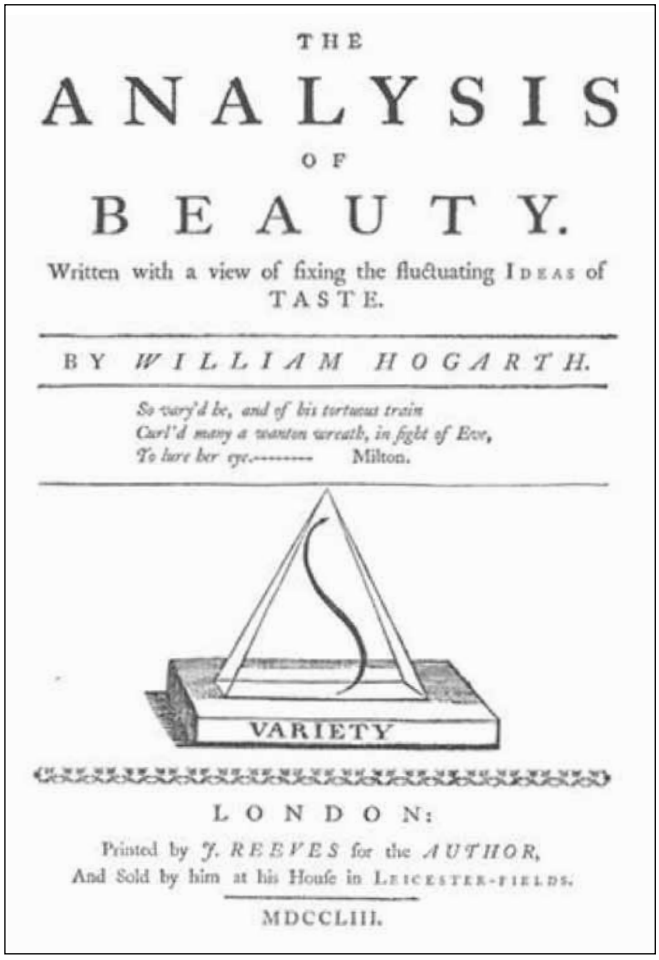

THE
ANALYSIS
OF
BEAUTY.
Written with a view of fixing the fluctuating IDEAS of TASTE.
BY WILLIAM HOGARTH.
So vary'd he, and of his tortuous train
Curl'd many a wanton wreath, in sight of Eve,
To lure her eye.-------- Milton.
VARIETY
LONDON:
Printed by J. REEVES for the AUTHOR,
And Sold by him at his House in LEICESTER-FIELDS.
MDCCLIII.

Fig.1

In *The Analysis of Beauty*, Hogarth blames the philosophers, who build their norms of beauty on the absolute – those

> who by their extended contemplations, on universal beauty, as to the harmony and order of things, were naturally led, into the wide Roads, of uniformity, and regularity; which they unexpectedly found cross'd, and interrupted, by many other openings Relating to a kind of Beauty, differing, from those they were so well acquainted with, they then, for a while travers'd these, seeming to them, contradictory paths, till they found themselves bewilder'd in the Labyrinth of variety.[10]

In the quotation, Hogarth is in obvious opposition to the aesthetics of classicism, where beauty bears witness to moral: what is beautiful is also

true. This connection is not obvious to Hogarth; on the contrary, he secularizes beauty by liberating it from moral and ontological anchorage, which is not the same as saying that God has no relation to beauty. But rather than the classicistic practice of jumping to conclusion about the nature of the world from the knowledge of God's existence, Hogarth turns things upside down, and concludes about the nature of God from the general character of the world.

Similarly, we observe this shift of paradigm in *The Labyrinth*. 'God', 'Virtue' and 'Immortality' were cornerstones of the Enlightenment and of classicism. However, *The Labyrinth* opens up a new Trinity. It is formulated as the narrator speaks of his thrill at the magnificent nature around Plön:

> Never have I been so excited by almighty nature. God, love and beauty were the Trinitarian thought which filled my entire soul, the triple feeling which intoxicated my entire heart. I worshipped – for that is true worship – so drunk with pleasure to behold nature (p.47, my translation)

In substituting the concepts of 'virtue' and 'immortality' with those of 'beauty' and 'love', the recognition of God is drawn *into* the subject – thus becoming a personal affair. And in this manner, the mentioned religious revolution in *The Labyrinth* is articulated as a certain view, becoming perceptible through a special rhetoric.

Labyrinthine rhetoric

The title of the famous passage "Staden paa Vers" ("The Versified City"), from the chapter "Mannheim", is ironic and refers to the artificial – meaning 'rigid' – nature of the city. On the one hand, the straight streets of the city and its 'squeezed' quarters resemble the metrics of verses, and accordingly it raises expectations of beauty. On the other hand, these expectations have to be disappointed in a city like Mannheim, because symmetry and order are only beautiful features if their patterns are conceivable in their totality by vision – in a glimpse or at a glance. What is not conceivable in a temporal "now", has to be submitted to variation in order to provide aesthetic pleasure. And the streets of Mannheim don't display variation. Hence, the city plan or a postcard-view of Mannheim may well be beautiful, but a walk in the city is not. These are the aesthetic considerations of the narrator, obviously in accordance with Hogarth's serpentine line and his quest for variation:

> The streets are laid out by a string […] The houses fall into rank […] But straight lines and right angles alone are not sufficient for the satisfaction of the taste. [...] A city in the taste of Mannheim is fit for the dead – or for those who kill [...] I sincerely feel, that it would be impossible for me to fall in love here, at least not in the street, a thing, which is somehow possible in curved cities. All warmth, all movement, all kinds of love are round, or at least oval, spiral or in some way sinuous. Only the cold, the immovable, the indifferent and even the hateful is dead straight and edged. If men at war stood in round circles instead of columns and ranks, they would dance instead of fight. (pp. 266-268, my translation)

But the text doesn't content itself with judging the city from an aesthetic point of view. The mind's point of view is also involved in legitimizing the conclusions of the feelings:

> This was [the judgment] of the eye; but now to the judgment of the mind! What mere taste found unsightly, tiresome and disgustingly boring, the higher sense of judgment here finds unreasonable, inexpedient and unbearable. (p.266, my translation)

A matter of potential

Although there is an obvious connection between Baggesen's aesthetic preferences and principles in *The Labyrinth* and Hogarth's *The Line of Beauty* in chapters such as the one concerning

Mannheim, Baggesen goes further than Hogarth in his settling with enlightened orientation, if we consider the *The Labyrinth* as a whole.

The Enlightenment, with its quest for universal standards of the principles constituting the world, regards the world from the assumption, that the enlightened European of the 18th century incarnates the highest standards of judgment. Whereas the sinuous line questions the 'natural' – and linear - connection between cultural growth and the progress of time (fig.2), *The Line of Beauty* still displays a continuity, which depicts it as a derivative of enlightened reason, but still within the overall framework of common sense and general standards of judgments – rather a rococo whimsical corrective than a brake with enlightenment altogether. Baggesen, however, is more inspired by J.G. Herder's historicism of the 1760s and on (fig.3). It is not the idea of history as such that appeals to Baggesen, though, but rather the fact that historicism conceives historic phenomena as unique, specific and individual, containing their own potential of fulfillment. In a way, Baggesen reduces a historic period to an instant, enabling him to thrive on potential as the prime characteristics of reality. In this, he is in complete accordance with modernism and Bergson, but this way of thinking is not introduced in England until John Keats writes his visionary ideas on 'Negative Capability'.

Fig. 2

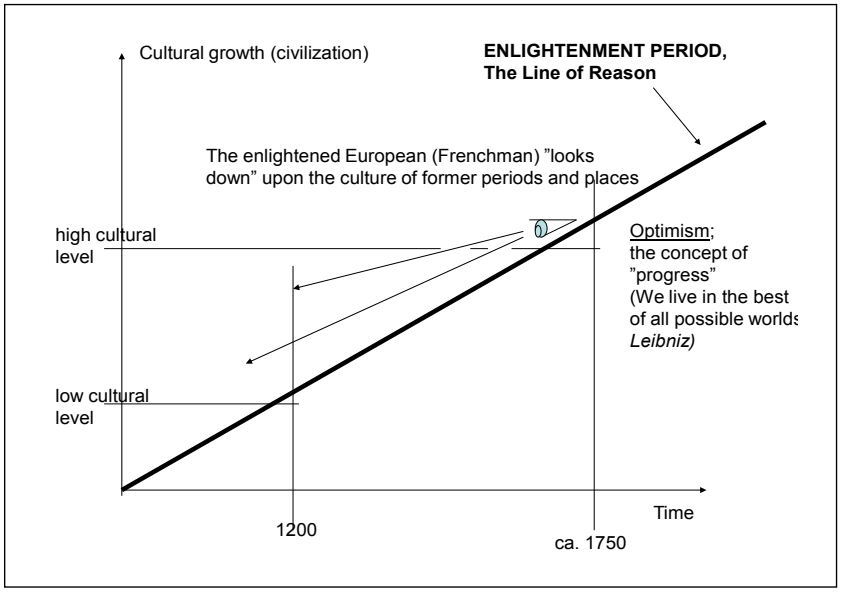
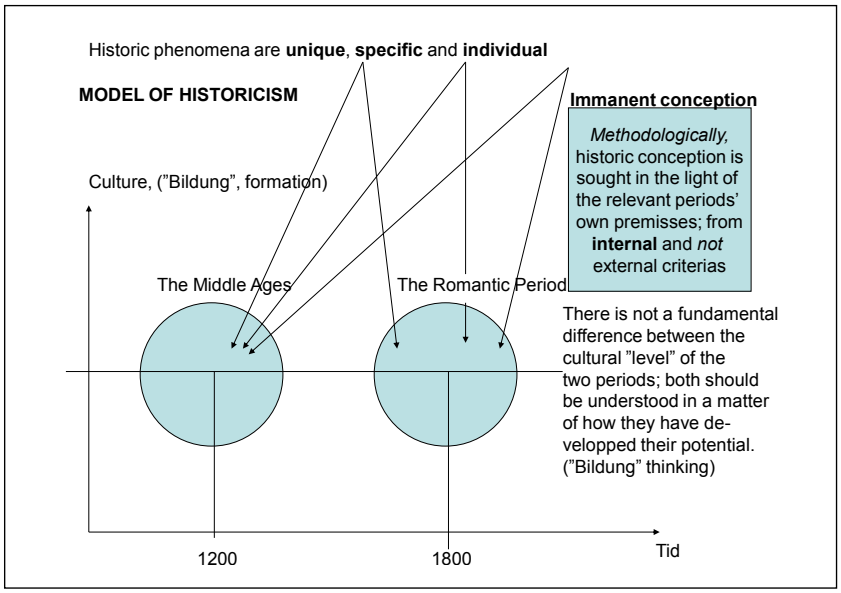


Fig. 3



Negative Capability

Keats writes about negative capability in a famous letter to his brothers, dated December 21th, 1817:

> Several things dovetailed in my mind, & at once it struck me, what quality went to form a Man of Achievement especially in Literature & which Shakespeare possessed so enormously – I mean Negative Capability, that is when a man is capable of being in uncertainties, Mysteries, doubts, without any irritable reaching after fact & reason[11]

Probably with the Enlightenment in mind, Keats is anxious to keep art and literature clear of the criteria of prognosis, probability and causality by which human activity is otherwise characterized from the Enlightenment and onwards. Should we encircle the concept of negative capability further, we can characterize it negatively with its opposition: *positivism*, being the watchword of Continental intellectual life from August Comte's presentation of the ideas in the 1840s and on. This scientific movement seeks to limit knowledge to the positively given experience. The positivistic hero is one of distinct character and with a strict course set out for his aims.

In contrast to that, Keats suggests with his idea of negative capability a certain way of perceiving the world, free from prejudices and a fixed preconceived view. He is satisfied with not having a consequent perspective.

In a letter dated November 22nd, 1817, Keats writes to Benjamin Bailey, a student of theology at Oxford:

> Men of Genius are great as certain ethereal Chemicals operating on the Mass of neutral intellect – but they have not any individuality, any determined Character. I would call the top and head of those who have a proper self Men of Power. [...] Can it be that even the greatest Philosopher ever arrived at his goal without putting aside numerous objections – However it may be, O for a Life of Sensations rather than of Thoughts! It is 'a Vision in the form of Youth', a shadow of reality to come – [...] I scarcely remember counting upon Happiness – I look not for it if it be not in the present hour – nothing startles me beyond the Moment. The setting sun will always set me to rights or if a Sparrow comes before my Window I take part in its existence and pick about the Gravel.[12]

When Keats says that "nothing startles [him] beyond the Moment", he speaks just as Baggesen could have spoken. And there are several other interesting passages of the same nature in the quotation. Firstly, Keats says that men of genius have no individuality (somewhere in his letters he says something similar about "the poetic character"). Secondly, he speaks of taking part in the activity of the smallest creation. In saying this, he conceives, I think, the poet as a depersonalized receptive being without an anchored and preconceived attitude towards life; at least not when art is to be made. Keats actually emphasizes that in order to be an artist you must *not* have a fixed life-view, influencing the way in which you arrange reality in your work. In many ways, Keats anticipates the ideas of impersonality that were to become a foundation for a large part of art in the 20th century, and in particular the ideas attached to the poetics by T.S. Eliot and Ezra Pound. Eliot launched the concept of impersonality in his famous article "Hamlet and His Problems" from 1919, in which the concept of the objective correlative is also introduced.

The play with positions of speech

The Labyrinth is characterized by opposing voices. Whenever the narrator speaks in the most pathetic and emotional manner, his position of speech is 'reprimanded' by sensible and level-headed evaluations with metaphoric language in the traditional rhetoric of enlightenment. For example, the emotional passages from Mannheim, quoted above, continue in a long-winded sequence,

where a traditional image of the queen bee in her hive appears as allegory of society and its structure – until again the feelings run away with the text.

Sensible argumentation and well-known rhetoric are thus not denied, but on the other hand they are not allowed to block casual associations, evoked by the individual links in the string of language. On the contrary, the text invites the caprice and the imagination to take control over the course. In a broken, passionate style, the queen bee is abandoned in favor of a vision of no less than the entire Globe, regarded as an Arcadia, arranged in agreement with the best of the Danish reformed agricultural principles. And equally impulsively and incalculably, this vision is – again – expressed in a rhetoric, at the same time in opposition to and in accordance with classicistic aesthetics:

> I saw the instinct hand over the baton to reason, it became a talisman in the hand of the queen – and the worm flew up, as a butterfly! It was a blissful sight! The bride and the groom embraced each other on this side of the river – and in the background I saw Justice and Peace kissing each other. (p.267, my translation)

In an allegorical language, where justice and peace are personified, a classic, unambiguous relation between image and concept reigns. However, the rhythm, the subjective break-ins of the emotions of the self, the wilful use of dashes, covering up for even more emotions and feelings than expressed in the high pathos, contradict the unambiguous and 'translatable'. Beneath it all lurks the presentiment, that the entire normative apparatus will collapse as the self ascends to the heights, suggested by the dashes. Thus, the chapter about Mannheim depicts an ascending curve, later to reach its point of culmination. And the excitement on the way is enhanced, because *The Labyrinth* is also saturated with other powers of form than those of beauty.

As an example serves the vivid description of the Jews' street in the chapter "Frankfurt am Mayn" which is a realistic masterpiece in English style. It is a conjuring up of images that could very well have served as a model of one of Hogarth's moral engravings or made up the framework for the adventures of Tom Jones in Henry Fielding's novel (1749):

> What an appalling pile of misery! What a crowd of wretches! What a muggy pestfume of living, lifeless and dead filthiness! For fear of the stink spreading to my pages, for fear of my nervous and delicate readers falling into a faint, I dare not paint a single one of the multiple groups of skinny and fat, worn out and half rotten children of Israel, who watching and sleeping were standing, sitting and creeping at the steps, at the doors and in the street, or rather, of which the entire street, a cheese full of mites, seems to crawl. (p.205, my translation)

As in the description of Mannheim, this depiction of human misery is also characterized by rhetoric touches, aiming at presenting the emotional movement of the self. But the aesthetic attitude, directly and indirectly speaking in "the versified city", is here drowned by another aesthetics. On the one hand, it is a harsh realism where details are sparse, but full of very concrete and indelicate metaphors such as "a cheese full of mites", totally supplanting the classic personification of abstract concepts. On the other hand, a classicistic argumentation is paradoxically used in legitimizing the 'stinking' realism. Because, contrary to the serpentine line of beauty, a moral point of view is interwoven as a superior aesthetic principle:

> Even the repulsive can appropriately be adjusted, and Christ did not hesitate, in spite of the fine world, in the parable of Lazarus to adjust the image of "the dogs who came to lick his wounds". The rules of aesthetics must yield for those of moral, where the former could prevent the spreading of the latter – and woe the writer who in order to please taste is un-

> faithful to his heart! It is the duty of the advocates of the suppressed in all moral ways to draw the suppressors' attention to what they are doing, if they don't know, which in the honour of mankind is most often the case. (p.206, my translation)

"The rules of aesthetics must yield for those of moral" – looked at in isolation this could be taken from any moral enlightenment treatise. But it doesn't appear in isolation – on the contrary, the most diverse rhetorical and discursive manoeuvres appear in an inconsistent text, pointing in all directions and – in doing so – preserving its own sensual pleasure in the organized stereotypes as well as in the chaotic and by no means edifying sensations of the materiality of the present. Basically, it is written on a fundamental, powerless sense of *lack* of direction and coherence. And the idea of identity which nevertheless is formed, does not unambiguously point at the organic connection of the subject with the universal of a later romanticism. On the contrary, at the staple of Strassbourg Cathedral, at the culmination of the journey, a *modern* identity is born.

Ascending to the self

Long before Baggesen let *The Labyrinth* culminate in the chapter about Strassbourg Cathedral, the great poetic figure of the time, Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (1749-1832) had already been there and given his version of the encounter with the majestic cathedral. The interesting thing in this connection is the difference between Goethe's and Baggesen's interpretations of the confrontation of the self with the gigantic Gothic construction. Whereas Goethe was carried away by the otherwise stigmatized Gothic and confronted himself with the cathedral, the height and the vertigo in order to overcome the dizziness and become a coherent soul, Baggesen climbs the high tower to *worship* the dizziness and gambol in the intoxicating experience of being exactly where all dimensions slide down. In *The Labyrinth*, the tower and the climbing of its spire is not – as with Goethe –a symbol of the overcoming of physical and existential vertigo; on the contrary it becomes a symbol of vertigo itself - a "Vertigo-Monument". And on the spire, the self bursts into singing:

> Here I stand, a speck of dust, a point,
> Half something, half nothing – a sigh –
> A barely beginning thought –
> [...]
> Where am I whirled to? – O! Do I perish? –
> [...]
> O, are you extinguished?
> Am I extinguished too?
> No, just dwindle, o Earth!
> [...]
> The spark which sprang of nothing,
> My sprouting self will yet grow,
> Spreading out, still elevating itself –
> O God! In your everlasting hand!
> - - - (p.299-300, my translation)

"Half something, half nothing – a sigh –". This is by no means the "proper self" of the man of power which Keats speaks of. Much more it is the man of 'negative capability', the poet, enabling to endure the vertigo of collapsing dimensions. As was earlier the case with space and time, the self is now also constituted from a punctual point of view: "a speck of dust, a point". It looks as if the book's entire play with discourses, genres and descriptions of places has only been established for the labyrinthine self to be able to feel itself as an indeterminate,e all-sensing "nothing" – a depersonalized self.

Positively regarded, *The Labyrinth* is about the formation of a self, which is constantly generating through the attention on its conditions in a world which has to be reshaped over and over again in the confrontation of the self with the world's 'potential' or character of possibility. Negatively regarded, the urge towards the intense "now" is in danger of becoming pure narcissistic being, neglecting any responsibility for the rest – nature, community and history. And then one remains – as Baggesen – a traveller, escheated to an existence 'outside'.

[1] Parts of this article have appeared in Danish as "Et Svimmelmonument" in *Læsninger i dansk literatur* vol. 1, Odense 2001

[2] Passages in *The Labyrinth* are taken from *Labyrinten*, Kbh. 1986. Passages in the sequel are from *Danske Værker* vol. 1-12, Kbh. 1827-32. The sequel appears in vol. 9-11.

[3] Count Adam Gottlob Detlef Molkte (1765-1843). Moltke was very moved by the French Revolution which caused a break with his powerful family and the exclusion from the order of succession to the estate Bregentved.

[4] The"Werther-fever", where lots of young men threw themselves into hopeless love affairs with unattainable women, followed Goethe's little novel from 1774 *Die Leiden des jungen Werthers.* In this, the protagonist commits suicide in despair over his passionate and unhappy infatuation with Lotte, who is engaged to someone else.

[5] The main purpose of the Danish agricultural reforms was to change the feudal structure of the old society and to give the peasant ownership of his soil.

[6] Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712-1778) was introduced to Madame de Warens in the late 1720s in his 'wandering' years. They began a platonic relationship which later became a love affair.

[7] From about 1785 to the journey of The Labyrinth, Baggesen wrote about 60 elegiac poems to Mrs. Pram. In many of these, she is apotheosized as the moon goddess 'Seline'. Seline was an image of the platonic Venus Urania, the spiritual love.

[8] Baggesen married Sophie von Haller (1767-1797) in 1790 on his labyrinthine journey. She was a Swiss from Bern and granddaughter of the poet and naturalist Albrecht von Haller. Baggesen hoped to integrate his carnal love for his wife in the ethereal relationship with Mrs. Pram. However, none of the involved women wanted to please Baggesen in that respect.

[9] Throughout the work, parody and pastiche are important modalities of the text. It stretches from the parodic devotion, revealed as shallow when disturbed by a fox (p.47) to an exposure of the 'high' style on page 159: "Barely had the purple-dressed monarch of the day, Apollo, let down the golden locks of his hair over the blushing face of the earth, barely had the little party-coloured birds with the sweet-melting harmonies of their harp tongues begun praising the rose-cheeked Aurora, who, after leaving the soft conjugal bed of her jealous husband, from the windows, and the gates of Pyrmont's horizon presented the newly risen guests in the alley – before the unified three left the lazy feathers".

[10] William Hogarth: *The Analysis of Beauty* p. 190, Oxford 1955. Here quoted from "the rejected passages", because it is a more potent formulation of the statement than in its final form in the book.

[11] John Keats: *The Letters of John Keats* 1814-1821, vil. I, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1958, p. 193

This makes me weep this very hour for Joy and Shame

Body and belief in the Moravian Church during the 18th century

by Christina Ekström

Introduction

This paper concerns the current of sensibility during the 18th century, focusing on questions of what emotions/sensations it contained and how they came to bodily expression. The social context I have chosen as an example is the Moravian Church (in Danish: Evangeliske Brødremenigheden) because it seems to have established the sentimental current in its doctrine and spirituality. The problem in question is: What cha*racterized the emotional culture in the Moravian church?* This perspective on feelings connects to the historian Barbara Rosenwein (2006) and what she terms "focused studies of emotion".[1] As she points out it is not possible to know which emotions all people in an historical context felt but that one can start to try to find out what members in a specific group might have felt.[2]

The study is based on memoirs ("Lebensläufen") from the Moravian Church (Evangeliska Brödraförsamlingen) in Stockholm and on letters from the Swedish minister who served the Moravian Church in Ireland and England, Lars Nyberg, to count Nicolaus von Zinzendorf, the first leader of the church. The memoirs were read at the author's own funeral and afterwards they circulated among the sisters and brothers in faith as moral testimonies. The title of this paper is taken from the correspondence between Nyberg and Zinzendorf and in the following I shall connect to reasons for Nyberg's tears and his ambivalent emotional life.

Emotional Culture in the Moravian Church

The sources provide what was worth striving for, namely to *be sensitive*. Examples of expressions are "to have a touch" and to experience inner "motion".[3] There are also statements about the undesirable, to be insensitive.[4] In addition to data on sensitivity and insensitivity there are testimonies to indicate what the individual felt. This may include the degree of closeness to the Saviour: "I felt the Saviour's presence", "There is a particular nearness of Our Saviour to Be Felt".[5] Other examples of what individuals felt are explicit emotions. These are contradictory: one is anxiety-like, in terms of shame, fear and unworthiness.[6] The other one is characterized by its contrast: joy, happiness and peace.[7]

In addition to statements about internal, mental sensations the sources provide rich examples of bodily expressions of emotion. Themes that the sources point out are: the whole body, mouth-stomach, eyes and heart. Statements involving the *whole body* are: shivering, shaking, trembling, tremor, fatigue of body and soul, sweating and a feeling of heaviness. Statements revolving around the *mouth/stomach* indicate to feel thirst, taste and queasiness.

Among bodily expressions of emotions the eyes and the heart occupy a special status that concerns frequency of mentioning and a variety of metaphors. Statements including *eyes* are about tears. There is surprisingly extensive information about tears in terms of details of cause for tears, in what social context the tears are shed, its frequency, intensity and its quantity. *Causes* for tears are feelings and/or activities. Tears associated with feelings are joy: "I wanted to cry almost constantly only for joy".[8] Also consciousness of debt/sin is the cause of tears. Expressions such as "tears of sin" and "weep bitterly" give examples of this.[9] In addition, there are statements about the mixture of joy and guilt/shame: "to this very hour

Weep for Joy and shame".[10] Other causes for tears seem to be activities like reading The Bible, singing[11] and praying. Especially frequent are statements like: "wept and prayed".[12] Regarding the *social context* of tears there are several statements in the memoirs that tears were shed in private/in isolation: "I often have to move aside to weep and pray".[13] Some statements are also about tears shed together with others, as the letters from Nyberg to Zinzendorf show.[14] Regarding the *frequency* of tears the word "often" is significant in the sources like "I often melted down into Many Tears Before the Heart of Our thropierced bleeding Lamb".[15] There are also expressions communicating even a higher frequency of shedding tears: "I cried day and night for the Saviour".[16] The most extensive testimony of frequency I have found is: "I cried almost constantly".[17] In addition to indicate the tears' frequency there are testimonies on quantity. The most frequent word seems to be "many" like in "Then he asked God with many tears".[18] In addition, there are statements about *intensity*. This in a spectrum that ranges from "moistened eyes" by "hot tears" to tears that have run out: "eyes that could no longer cry".[19]

Finally, the *heart*: According to the sources the heart appears as a sentient organ. Moreover, it seems to be able to cry and be an arena for erotic escapades. As a *sentient* organ, the heart can be sensitive, alternatively be insensitive: "what my heart felt is not possible to describe" respectively "my dead and my destroyed heart".[20] Statements will also provide information about what the heart can experience: emotional sensations and explicit emotions. *Emotional sensations* the heart could experience were i.e. 'comfort', 'desire', 'distress and sigh'.[21]

Explicit emotions that the heart could feel are characterized by the polar expressions: happiness, joy or sorrow, anxiety.[22] According to the sources the heart was not only able to be sensitive and to experience emotions. It could also shed tears. Again, there is a widespread rhetoric about tears that indicates the intensity: "countless tears," "eyes flowed with tears", "my heart wants to float out of my eyes".[23] In addition, there are statements about the heart that might refer to *erotic activity*. A few examples are: "By the dream the Saviour called my heart" and "he had to comfort and satisfy my poor heart every day".[24] More explicit was Lars Nyberg in his letter to von Zinzendorf where Nyberg states that "His [Jesus'] manhood & and Bloody martyrdom Have Not Yet quite captivated my heart".

The investigation among memoirs and letters showed that: sensibility seems to be a key word for the emotional culture, sensations and emotions could be internal, hidden or become external, bodily expressions, there was an ambivalence between polar emotions: commuting between anxiety and joy was in favour, emotions becoming bodily expressions relate to: the whole body, the mouth-stomach, the eyes and the heart. Eye and heart occupy special positions in terms of frequency of mentioning and of varied rhetoric. The heart seems to be the seat of the emotions and the organ with which individuals could feel the presence of Jesus. The question is how this relates to the doctrine and spirituality.

Emotions reflected in doctrine and spirituality

Being sensitive associates with the conviction that Jesus is the central figure and the idea that it is through Him man could approach God.[25] This through an emotional experience of closeness to Jesus regarded as the soul's bridegroom. In this life it was only possible to feel His presence while after death one could see him with the eyes.[26] Hence the extent of statements about being 'touched' and the importance of being sensitive.

Emotions becoming bodily expressions connect to statements from von Zinzendorf because he expressed that the internal experience would have an external, physical expression. He made it clear in statements targeting preachers and the congregational singing.[27,28] Emotions and states of mind appearing as bodily expressions are also discernible in paintings of Moravian sisters and brothers of faith. The picture below depicts Elisabeth von Zinzendorf (1740-1807), the youngest of the children of Erdmuthe och Nicolaus and is conducted by Johann Valentin Haidt (1700-1780). In addition, portraying members of the Moravian Church and

painting biblical motives, Haidt served as layman priest in Moravian churches in England, Holland and USA.[29] The portrait then ought to display the desired status of mind and its bodily expression because both its creator and its motive were persons well aware of the doctrine and the spirituality of the Moravian Church.

Polar emotions, the mixture of anxiety and its opposite, joy and peace, can be explained partly by the doctrine and partly on the basis of spirituality. The theological concept contains both joy and pain. This, on the one hand to celebrate Jesus' death, resurrection, atonement, and on the other hand to feel sorrow for His sufferings that we are involved in.[30] Spirituality is based on emotional ambiguity in the doctrine but also the ambivalence that existed: uncertainty in touch with Jesus. It is demonstrated with clarity in the sources that there is an oscillation between the certainty of knowing Jesus' closeness, joy and happiness, and in uncertainty, fear of being too sinful to deserve His love. Overall, it appears that emotional content of doctrine and spirituality can be mutually reinforcing and in this way explaining the strong and conflicting feelings that are expressed in the sources.

The heart as the seat of feelings and the organ with which individuals could experience Jesus relates to the memoirs that have shown that the concept of the heart plays a central role, by being partly an organ for feelings, partly a scene where the drama of the soul's salvation is played. It was in their hearts the Moravian sisters and brothers in faith could perceive the touch of Jesus, alternatively, the lack of it. The prominent position of the heart in the memoirs causes the question of how Zinzendorf regarded this organ. In his "Homiliae über den Wundenlitanei der Brüder" he states: „For the heart is of course our spiritual life retreat, and the seat of our souls and senses... […]…".[31] Although the statement raises questions about Zinzendorf's understanding of the concept of soul and senses the quote indicates the heart as a body associated with both earthly and transcendent dimensions. This would explain that the heart, according to the sources, might both get in contact with Jesus and could be sentient – albeit symbolic: to be able to shed tears.

Concluding words

The investigation revealed that the Moravian Church seems to be a social context in which the characteristics of the era of sensibility become explicit. Sensibility was not only a social code among people; it was also elevated to the central part of the doctrine and spirituality. That would enhance the culture of emotion, make it more explicit. The Moravian Church also offers written sources in which a condensed form of sensibility is expressed. Memoirs and letters used in my study provide examples of this. Additional arguments to use sources from the Moravian Church are that its doctrine and spirituality contain a single reference point, Jesus, to whom individuals responded with sensitivity. There are, therefore, numerous

statements in which it is possible to find similarities and differences. To get a clearer picture of the emotional culture in the Moravian Church calls for a more extensive study than this one in terms of number of sources and range, the latter in perspective of nationality and gender. In addition, there is an extensive amount of portraits of Moravian sisters and brothers in faith and musical compositions that might as well provide information about the emotional culture.

Finally, recalling Lars Nyberg and the question why he shed tears and experienced contradictory feelings: according to my study his testimony reflects what was the emotional code of the Moravian Church.

[1] Rosenwein 2006:1

[2] Rosenwein 2006:196

[3] ”Jag hade en salig känning” [Deber, Ike], ”Fattades ord att beskriva den känning” [Malmström] respektive ”Ömma rörelser av Frälsaren” [Johannis], „ mycket rörd” [Berthelia], ”Var gång med ny rörelse” [Bagge].

[4] ”Förlorade känningen av min fattigdom” [Göring], ”Saknade den ljuva känningen” [Berthelia], ”Sedan iag fylt 15 år skickades iag till Stockholm at se den så kallade stora werlden. Iag kom dit, des dårskaper smakade mig – iag blef helt förstörd och känslolös” [Carpelan]

[5] ”Kände frälsarens närvarelse” [Göring], “There is a particular nearness of Our Savior to be felt” [Nyberg 7 aug. 1755], “Indearing nearness & deep sense of great poverty” [Nyberg 27 nov 1756], “Captivated my heart” [Nyberg 27 nov 1756]

[6] ”Stor själaoro” [Berthelia], ”Mitt hjärtas oro” [Cedermark], ”Orolig och förlägen om min salighet” [Berthelia], ”Föll den där oron över mig”, ¨våndades och var i jämn förlägenhet” [Åhlman], ”När jag var ensam bad jag men kände ingen tröst” [Åhlman], ”Ängslig över att jag aldrig kunde få mig att tänka” [Åhlman], ”Ängslan” [Åhlman], ”Osalig till kropp och själ” [Cedermark] ”Blygdes” [Göring], ”Med förlägenhet och bad” [Göring], ”Förlägen, bekymrad, ovärdig” [Berthelia], ”Mycket förlägen” [Berthelia], ”Jag kom ofta i förlägenhet” [Cedermark], ”Mycket orsak att skämmas” [Ike]

[7] ”Transported with Joy” [Nyberg, 7 Aug. 1755], ”Obeskrivlig fröjd och glädje – komma till syskonen” [Walander], ”Överströmmad av frid och glädje” [Ike], ”Frid, outsäglig frid, alla englar i himlen tillropade mig frid” [Malmström]

[8] ”Jag ville ständigt gråta bara av glädje” [Hierne].

[9] “syndatårar” [Cedermark], “bittra tårar” [Berthelia]

[10] [Nyberg]

[11] Margareta Stenmans levnadslopp, quoted after Haettner Aurelius 1996:389

[12] ”Grät och bad jag” [Berthelia], ”Grät och bad” [Walander], ”grät och bad” [Walander], ”Såg henne ofta med tårar bedja” [Cedermark], ”Gud såg till hennes suckar och tårar” [Cedermark], ”grät bittra tårar och bad…”, ”Grät och bad till Gud” [Cedermark], ”jag grät dag och natt för Frälsaren” [Cedermark]

[13] “Jag måste ofta gå åt sidan för att gråta och bedja” [Göring].

[14] ”We often weep together” [Nyberg 27 nov 1756].

[15] [Nyberg]

[16] “Jag grät dag och natt efter Frälsaren” [Cedermark]

[17] “Jag grät nästan ständigt” [Ike]

[18] “Sen frågade han Gud under många tårar“ [Hallblad].

[19] “fuktade ögon” [Larsson] by “heta tårar” [Ike], “ögon som inte längre kunde gråta” [Cedermark].

[20] “vad mitt hjärta kände är inte möjligt att beskriva” [Cedermark], “mitt döda och förstörda hjärta” [Cedermark].

[21] ”kände mången tröst i hjärtat” [Cedermark], ”stor längtan i mitt hjärta” [Åhlman], ”mycken nöd och suck i mitt hjärta” [Walander]

[22] ”mitt hjärta hoppade av glädje” [Cedermark], ”steg en glädje i mitt hjärta” [Gyllenhammar], ”mitt hjärta är fullt av fröjd” [Sten], ”villigt och glatt hjärta” [Nordenstolpe], ”känna sitt bedrövade hjärta” [Ike] ”mitt hjärtas oro” [Cedermark]

[23] ”O hur gråter mitt hjärta över Jesu död och smärta” [Gerner], ”mitt hjärta och ögon flöto af tårar” [Cedermark], ”att hans hjärta dervid kan försmälta i otaliga tårar” [Ike], ”som jag var allena i rummet föll jag straxt ner, grät bittra tårar och bad… mitt hjärta ville liksom flyta ut af mina ögon” [Cedermark]

[24] “I drömme kallade Frälsaren på mitt hjärta” [Elisabeth Gustava Gyllenhammar], “han måste trösta och tillfredsställa mitt arma hjärta varje dag” [Cedermark].

[25] Zinzendorf 1757:17. “Alle aber kommen darin überein, daß sie Jesum Christum, den Kern und Stern der Heil. Schrift, nach seiner Gottheit und Menschheit, und ins besondere als das geschlachtete Lamm, als den Versöhner durch sein eigen Blut, durch welchen, und den allein, man zu Gott nahen, selig und heilig werden kann und muss, als den Bräutigam ihrer Seelen, als ihr Alles und in Allem, predigen.“

[26] Grimm 1753/2002: 159, 160/114 “Wir allegieren hier, was im 1ten Cap[itel] von der seligen Bestimmung der Music gesagt worden, nach welcher wir kein ander Obiect, als den Heiland selbst, haben. Die Hauptmaterie, wovon wir singen und spielen, ist die Geschichte seiner Menschenwerdung, seines Lebens, Leidens u[nd] Todes bis ins Grab. So singen u[nd] spielen wir auch von seiner lieben Nähe, mit welcher Er fühlbar unter uns gegenwärtig ist, bis wir Ihn mit allen seinen Wunden mit unsern Liebesaugen leibhaftig sehen werden.“

[27] Synode vom 26 September 1754, quoted after Uttendörfer 1931:20 ”Bei der Predigt von den Wunden kann man kein Orator sein, weil da allemal etwas von Anmaßung und Selbstsicherheit ist. Unsere Reden müssen vielmehr einfach und schlicht sein, und allein der Wert der Sache muß Eindruck auf das Gemüt machen. Sobald man sieht, es bespiegelt sich einer in sich selbst und ein schöner Ausdruck lockt den andern heraus, so ist einer kein wahrer Apostel mehr. Recht predigen heißt, den Heiland predigen.”

[28] Jüngerhausdiarium 13.1 1754, Bd 1:90ff, quoted after Wehrend 1993:220, ”… das Äußere sollte hübsch mit dem Innern harmonieren; aber wenn wirs singen, so müssen unsere Stimme, Miene, u. ganze Positur des Leibes von der innerlichen Angethanheit zeugen, die wirklich da ist. Darauf muss man sich nicht exercieren, sondern man lernts so von selbst, oder man siehts nur etwa einmal von einem wohlgezogenen Nachbar.“

[29] Nelson 2007:101-122, Nelson 2008:8f

[30] Synodalvedtægt 1782, §917, quoted after Reventlow 1984: 651.”Vi har i vor tid den allerstørste [velgerning] at besynge, nemlig Jesu død og forsoning. Deraf opstår foruden glæden svarende til de gamles glæde ved Herren tillige den dybe nedbøjethed over hans smerte, som vi er skyld i: og dette tilmåler sangens glæde, således at den bliver liturgisk. Inderlig glæde og blid smerte kommer da sammen i hjerterne og ytrer sig følgelig også i de syngende og klingende toner“.

[31] Zinzendorf 1747:46f. “Weil nun das so gefährlich ist, so heißt: Vor unbebluteten Herzen behüt uns lieber Herr Gott! Denn das Herz ist doch einmal der Ressort unsers geistlichen Lebens, der Sitz aller unserer Seelen= und Gemüths=Kräfte: das muß einmal ganz hingenommen seyn, das muß sich einmal vergessen haben, das muß einmal zergangen und zerflossen seyn in den Wunden Jesu, danach ist einem auf ewig geholfen. Denn wenn man einem wollte das Blut abzapfen und wegnehmen, so nähme man ihm auch ein Herz mit; man könnte den Bach abführen aber das Herz schwömme mit. Das ist die Gnade der Unzertrennlichkeit des Herzens, von der Creuz=Lehre; wers einmal dahin hat, der ist in Zeit und Ewigkeit von seinem Manne inseparabel.“

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At gavne og fornøje[…] [1]

On two minor Danish novels from the 18th century, Christen Pram's *John Thral* and Johan Clemens Tode's *The Usefulness of Love* [2]

by Søren Peter Hansen

One might begin with the Danish philosopher Søren Kierkegaard who in *Diapsalmata* tells about a dream where a man (the narrator) is given one wish by the Gods. ""Do you want eternal youth, or beauty, power or a long life or the most beautiful girl in the world, or any of the other beautiful things we have in our bag" Mercurius asks. For a moment I felt perplexed, then I addressed the Gods as follows: "Most honourable Contemporaries. I choose but one thing: That laughter must always be on my side." Not one God spoke – on the contrary they burst out in laughter. Hence I concluded that my wish was fulfilled and that the Gods knew how to express themselves tastefully. It would have been inappropriately serious had they answered: "That we grant you!"" (SK. Samlede Værker, 1962, bd . 2, s.44))

In the following paper I shall focus on two minor, funny, entertaining and witty novels from what might be called the underground prose of the late 18th century. Both novels to a certain extent unknown, written by authors whom time has erased from the written history of Danish literature. None of them are mentioned in recently published Danish literary histories. Maybe rightfully so. Writing fiction was none of the two authors' primary doings, and their writings were not written out of necessity, but because they had a 'cause' and a conviction, that it was fun to try and deliver as fiction. Both novels have laughter on their side. One of the novels appeals more to laughter and logo, than the other, where joy and ethos prevail. Pram's novel, *John Thral*, delivers a more direct and manifest critique of society with sentiments and love as an epic motor and addresses the readers' 'intellect', whereas Tode's *Kærligheds Nytte eller Tre Dages Tildragelser. En National og Original Roman* [ie: *The Usefulness of Love or Three Days' Occurrences. A National and Original Novel*], is more a morally toned story appealing to sentiments on a background of reason. Both novels were originally published in the 18th century's modern medium, the periodicals. Pram's novel in "Minerva" (1787), Tode's in "Iris"(1791-1792). And though the novels are very different, both in content and form, they have common features. Both novels reflect the transition period – the late 18th century – in which they were written. Some features point backwards to a static and rigid feudal society and others point forwards to a modern, dynamic capitalistic society.

Generally, writing fiction had not yet become a main occupation in Denmark. Writers in the 18th century very often were some kind of civil servants, and as we heard in some of the papers presented last year in Graz, about learned peoples' careers, writing and editing periodicals helped them to keep their name remembered in the public and – at the same time - represented a possibility of additional income. In a vast number of periodicals they wrote about a large and varied number of subjects, but their works of fiction represent only a smaller part of their significant production. That goes for Pram and Tode, too. Let me give you a brief presentation of the two writers:

CHRISTEN PRAM (app. 1815)
Etching by *A. Flint* after a portrait
made by *Bertel Thorvaldsen*

Christen Pram (1756 – 1821) held various positions as a civil servant, and a lot of his writings came from his duties. He was an employee at *Oeconomie og Commerce-Kollegiet* (which would resemble a Ministry of Finance and Commerce today), and as a civil servant he visited the island of Bornholm in 1799 and wrote about the coal-industry on the island, and during the years 1804-1806 he travelled in Norway (at that time part of the Danish kingdom, where he was born) and wrote a report in ten volumes about the various industries of Norway. He was the editor – and founder – of one of the most influential Danish periodicals of all times called *Minerva* in which he wrote loads of articles. First of all he wrote a renowned monthly box called "The History" where he – amongst other things – was one of the most eager informants to the Danish public of the developments in France in 1789. Although he tried to keep a neutral attitude he could not hide who had his sympathy: the bourgeoisie.

He wrote articles on socio-economic, historical, moral-philosophical and aesthetic subjects. A few examples of titles show his widely spread interests: "Om Kilderne til Rigdom" ["On the Sources of Wealth"], "Om Opdragelse" ["On Bringing up Children"], "Det filosofiske Seculum" ["The Philosophical Century"], "Om Bogskriveri" ["On the Writing of Books"]. He wrote against slavery in an article called "Om Negerhandelen" ["On the Buying and Selling of Negroes"], but he also wrote about daily life subjects; "En Husmoders Pligter" ["On The Duties of a Housewife"] (1787), "Forsøg om Dragten, især for Danmark og Norge" ["An Essay on Clothing. Especially in Denmark and Norway"] (1791), "Forsøg om en Højskoles Anlæg i Norge" ["On Trying to Establish a folk high school in Norway"] (1795). Furthermore he wrote minor pamphlets or theses entitled "Om Forbrugningen af Tobak i Danmark" ["On the Use of Tobacco in Denmark"], "Om Uldproduktionen" ["On the Production of Wool"] and on lots of other subjects.

Because of his debts he had to leave Copenhagen, and in 1819 he was appointed Chief Customs Officer on the island of St Thomas (one of the Danish West Indies Islands) where he died in 1821.

JOHAN CLEMENS TODE (1797)
Painted by *Jens Juel,* oil on canvas
The University of Copenhagen)

Johan Clemens Tode (1736 – 1806) shares Christen Pram's widely spread interests on various subjects. He was interested in education and was amongst the founders of several private schools that still exist in Copenhagen today, and he wrote essays about education. He was interested in lan-

guages, wrote a German grammar and translated some of Smollet's novels from English into Danish.

Tode was born in Germany in a rather poor family. He began as a barber and military surgeon, was introduced to officers from the nobility and soon he served as a GP for noble families and at Court. His mentor (the king's physician) judged that "his head was better than his hand" and advised him to give up the surgery and focus on medicine. Eventually he became a doctor of medicine and had a brilliant career as such. He became a highly renowned researcher (within medical and health research) and is famous for having introduced and developed 'Folkesundhedsvidenskab' (i.e the science of popular health, which focuses on prophylaxis rather than healing) as an academic subject. Furthermore he was the first researcher to point out the differences between gonorrhoea and syphilis.

He became headmaster of The University of Copenhagen, but only for one year after which he was fired for having lost control of the economic situation. He had matrimonial problems and was known to be a heavy drinker.

Both Pram and Tode are in many ways typical examples of a democratic, progressive, public, Danish 18th-century individual. Born abroad (Norway and Germany respectively), energetic, stubborn, bright, fast thinking and dynamic doers, looking for results – but unfortunately at the same time unhappily married spenders, always looking for discussions, alcoholics and constantly threatened by imprisonment because of large debts. In periods both Tode's and Pram's lives seem to have been rather chaotic.

But now without further delay – let's turn to the novels.

Christen Pram: *John Thral*

Reading Christen Pram is joyfull. And his comtemporary German translators thought likewise. In Germany his novels and short stories were published several times with titles such as: "Salz, Laune und Mannichfaltigkeit, in comischen Erzählungen von Pram" (1790) og "Comische Erzählungen oder Szenen aus der menschlichen Leben alter und neuerer Zeiten" (1792) og "Heitere Erzählungen von C. Pram" (1802-03).

And *John Thral* most certainly is a funny novel – whilst reading it you find yourself laughing many times – but at the same time it is edifying and propagates moral values. It is a novel that openly depicts the late 18th century's negative and in some aspects insane social conditions with coersion, bribery and exploitation but at the same time renders a cautious optimistic view of the future. All that is evil in *John Thral* is what prevents and hampers progress and the free development of the individual, whether in private or in public life. Throughout the plot there are two kinds of people: the good ones and the bad ones. The bad ones are those constantly focusing on their own gains and their own satisfaction and fulfilling their own wishes, no matter who and how many others suffer. The good ones are the ones who live by the words written by Jeremy Bentham: "The greatest happiness of the greatest number is the foundation of morals and legislation" – and who at the same time generally live by the views published by Adam Smith in his famous book: "*An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations"* (published 1776). This might seem a contradiction because Adam Smith in his book actually praises egoism and selfishness as a sort of natural power that rules and sorts things out to the benefit of everybody: "We do not expect to have our dinner because of the butcher's, the baker's or the brewer's beneficence, but because of their considerations for their own interests." But it is not a contradiction. The crucial point is how you administer your egoism and to what purpose. If your egoism leads you to act in a way where you only consider yourself, it is bad, but if your egoism at the same time is good for others – maybe even for society as such – it is a good form of egoism. John Thral's deeds are good because they are dictated by an idea of a world that reflects Freedom, Equality and Brotherhood (to say it in French!) – and Lord Huntingdon's are bad because they are based upon inequality, the suppression of others and he only seeks personal gain and satisfaction.

The novel pledges for freedom, and its major theme might be described as the condition of goodness in an evil world. Accordingly, the major juxtaposition of the novel is 'freedom vs. oppression'. But other juxtapositions are to be found: 'Bad vs Good', 'Force vs Free Will', 'Rich vs Poor', 'Vice vs Virtue' and 'Egoism vs Altruism' - they constitute the novel's major structuring scheme. These juxtapositions are plotted into a larger composition, that of the so-called 'picaresque novel' like Cervantes' *Don Quijote* and Voltaire's *Candide.* This composition might be compared to a necklace consisting of identically sized pearls. Apart from the beginning and the end (where the necklace is locked), the elements of the story (the pearls) are more or less interchangeable. The succession of events is of no importance, mainly because they are all used for the same purpose: to illustrate the main theme of the novel. In each situation, in each 'pearl', theory and theorization are juxtaposed with reality. Theory loses, reality and fact win. And the reader laughs, because most of the situations and descriptions are grotesque. An example from the beginning of the novel:

The narrator tells us where the plot takes place, in "Norfolk, situated in the Land of Freedom, England" and continues to tell about the main character's father who was a

> free farmer, a man who could not be judged if not by an English jury, that always convicts according to the letters of the British law, if only they know how to read, and can say no to bribery (if not paid in Guineas); a man who knew of no superior powers except for the one he himself had chosen. For the village of Huntingdon sends a representative to Parliament (and one vote costs app. 16-24 English Shillings); a man, by the way, who when he had paid his land-tax, his Parish-tax, his Constable-expences, his Poor-tax and his Window-tax and Malt-tax and Salt-tax, his Excise, etc, etc, etc, that all in all could amount to 80% of his income, in the evening could go to the village pub in his parish, and read and discuss the news in the London newspapers, speak badly about royalty and the House of Lords, the ministers and the King and bless the English Constitution whilst having his glass of Smalbeer or Ale, perhaps even a glass of Portuguese wine (whenever such a thing was available)" (JT, p. 13-14)

"The land of freedom" turns out to be a land with practically no freedom at all.

But as John Thral makes his way around Europe it turns out that authorities everywhere use the word 'freedom' to describe limitations in order to maintain disparity between rich and poor, between nobility and bourgeois, between landowners and peasants, between masters and apprentices and thus stay in power. The novel gives examples concerning trade, religion, industry, administration of justice, and farming. Time allows me but one example:

John and his Spanish friend, Amalcado, arrive at a French farm in St. Omer close to the border between Artois and Flanders. They are hungry, and it is very, very cold outside. Inside, in the farmer's small living room, there is equally cold, and they ask the peasant to light a fire and get the chimney warm for the night. But the peasant says, that it is not possible, because the forest and all the trees and the wood in it belong to his Excellency Monsieur de Bailleul. And

> Monsieur Poing, who is chief assistant for Monsieur L'Ecrasseur, who is the Bailiff for Monsieur L'Éclair who is the chief inspector and responsible for his Exellence's Estate is a very rigorous and severe man; and his Excellency, who spends all his time at Court, and Monsieur L'Éclair, who lives in Paris, need all the firewood they can get, so there is no way the forest could bear, that we peasants collected wood in the forest, furthermore because it is necessary to sell for at least 1.200.000 Livres, which is the

> amount of money these two gentlemen need for their households every year.

A few minutes later, when they ask for some bread and butter, the peasant says:

> Butter is a product we only know by name. We are not allowed to have cows, not to speak of sheep or goats - who easily eat small and fragile new trees (…) and we have no bread, since we do not grow any wheat; That is forbidden as it calls for so much care and cultivation, that we would neglect Monsieur the Inspector's fields. The rye we grew this year we had to give to the city of Dunkerken as tax-payment, from where his Excellency sells it to be transported to The Royal Warehouses.

Etc. etc. etc.

One could easily think, that Christen Pram (the civil servant at the Ministry of Finance) had read books written by the founding fathers of modern economics Anne-Robert-Jaques Turgot, or Adam Smith. In his latest book *A Revolution of the Mind* Jonathan Israel describes the content of their views as follows: They, he writes, "insisted on the broadly inhibiting effects of the obstacles to enterprise and production posed by tradition, mistaken policies, restrictions, privileges, monopolies and wrongly conceived tariffs and taxes" (Israel 2010, p. 107), and he sums up, that "these theoretical and practical contributions in economics were designed to bolster efforts to remove such barriers to the unrestricted flow of capital, labour and commodities as regional tariffs, guild regulations, provincial fairs, and royal and municipal controls on the international movement and pricing of grain and wine." (Israel 2010, p. 109). This is more or less an enumeration of all the domains where John Thral collides with problems on his journey through Europe.

In the book mentioned earlier, *An Inquiery into the Nature And Causes of the Wealth of Nations* Adam Smith argues against monopoly. Monopoly is not part of the solution; it is part of the problem. And John Thral is a victim of monopolies in lots of situations in the novel. A free market where decent and well-behaved people act, governed by common sense and sensible laws, interpreted by independent judges, seems to be the solution. That is also what Christen Pram thinks. Therefore, towards the end of his novel, John Thral takes over an estate in Denmark where he earlier served as a tenant. When he was a tenant, the owner demanded that the tenants delivered all their products so that he could speculate on the market. However, because of his greed his speculations failed and now he has to sell his estate. In the meantime John has married Nancy, who luckily by coincidence has inherited a lot of money, so they decide to buy the estate and settle down in Denmark, because Denmark, the narrator says, is a country where "he who carefully administers his rights always here can find the protection of justice". After he has taken over the estate, he makes a lot of changes that in short consist of the following:

> His tenants do not have to work for him without being paid, and his attendants are not armed. The local judge is not his valet, and his tenants are free to leave, without having to pay him for a passport. (…) He does not use his preemptive rights to the harvest, and he is constantly trying to prevent his tenants from being forced to pay extra tax to the church, and has insured his tenants against unjustified actions made by himself in a fit of bad temper (should such a thing occur).

In that way the novel – not unlike Voltaire's *Candide* – shows how a 'free' society can work. The hero ends in industrious and diligent happiness and prosperity and the novel ends with the following words:

> And as it seems as if Nancy will give him more sons, he will happily look forward to bringing up several useful workers in their new homeland, whom he hopes to bring up in a country where none pre-

> vents them from acting in their trade whether that be industrial or agricultural. By means of his and his beloved Nancy's excellent household their fortune rapidly grows to an extent that gives him the possibility to envisage the happiness of being able to give all of his children a solid and useful education as free and devout citizens.

John is not only thinking of his own happiness, but also of how his happiness can serve the country by supplying the nation with skilled and well educated and behaved workers.

If you compare this statement with the description of John Thral's father's situation from the first page of the book you can easily see what the novel aims to tell you: In a realistic way it depicts some social conditions in some European countries and it satirizes over these so-called freedom-loving nations in a way that makes you laugh, but at the same time it depicts John's way up the social ladder: his social climbing from almost a slave to bookbinder to peasant to landowner and Esquire to a position where he is able to practice all the good manners and ideals that he was born with on page one. The novel is not interested in John's psychology. He is the same (cliché) figure from page one to page 70. His personality does not change – he learns absolutely nothing during his travels. But the reader might perhaps have learned something through his own laughter: That the old feudal and static society is no good – and that in a possible new order of society, social mobility is a possibility for the good, the honest and the industrious.

Johan Clemens Tode:
***Kærligheds Nytte* [*The Usefulness of Love*]**

Kærligheds Nytte has many funny scenes. Let me quote one that could easily have been in a Laurel & Hardy-production. I quote:

> In anger she pushed a rather big boy, who happened to stand next to her with her skinny hand, so that he rushed into a burly woman who received him with a large bumper of fat on her hips so that he – because of the speed with which he hit her – glided off to the left and hit an apprentice with a large bottle of varnish, which he dropped, so that the bottle was crushed towards the pavement and its content splashed all over a skirt, worn by a young girl, who the same morning had rented it for the day. (KN, s. 21-22)

As you can see the realism in Johan Clemens Tode's novel *Kærligheds Nytte* is realistic in another way than in Pram's *John Thral*. The realistic features in *John Thral* were related to political issues and power structures in society rather than to actual places and characters of the novel, but in *Kærligheds Nytte* the focus shifts to persons and places. The course of events takes place during only three days in Copenhagen, and people's behaviour and reactions (and their looks, their gestures, their eye movements and clothes) get much more attention. Furthermore, the novel is not composed like a picaresque novel. The focus is more on the elements of the plot and they are not interchangeable but planned consecutively – some events have to come before others in order to let the plot develop. There are still themes to be illustrated (like: rich vs. poor, men vs. women, bad vs. good), and the minor characters are still only one-dimensional characters used to depict a certain type of human beings, but some sort of psychological interest supersedes the social criticism. The main characters in Tode's novel are individualized rather than just being one-dimensional individuals, examples of a certain type of human beings.

This is reflected in the names of the characters in the two novels. In *John Thral* the names were used to characterize the person: 'Thral', 'Goodheart' and 'Huntingdon' in *Kærligheds Nytte* still go for some of the minor characters: A beautiful girl is called Louise Ynding (remove the 'n' and she's 'Yndig' (Danish for 'lovely'); one of the bad guys is a nobleman called 'Junker Nusling' (again – remove the 'n' and you have Usling (Danish for 'villain'), but the main characters are called common bougeois names like 'Maria Catharine Carstensen', 'Trine Florian' and 'Eugenius Melfsen'.

In *John Thral* the primary theme was "freedom vs. oppression" and the focus was on the social inequality. *Kærligheds Nytte* puts the focus on love and subsequently 'men vs. women' and 'vice vs. virtue' and does so in a complicated plot with a number of sideplots. Where Pram needed only 11 chapters and 65 pages to get his message through, *Kærligheds Nytte* spreads over 95 chapters on 230 pages. And where *John Thral* had a straight on third-person narrator, *Kærligheds Nytte* introduces a first-person narrator, the old and rich man Procopius, who has made it his joy to help young people in "troublesome situations" in order to "secure their happiness" as he puts it. In short the plot goes like this:

Procopius sees a young student from Tønder (in Southern Jutland) arriving in Copenhagen. He witnesses some villains trying to con the student, and some pimps trying to sell him whores, and as he looks "young, beautiful and fresh but at the same time naïve and provincial" he decides to help him. He does so, they become friends and he learns that the young man, called Melfsen, is troubled because he is in love with a girl (called Trine) from his home town, Tønder. But she has mysteriously vanished. On his wanderings around in Copenhagen, at the Royal Theatre, in The Royal Garden, on the ramparts of Copenhagen, at the Bourse, no matter where he goes, he meets another beautiful girl who looks very much like his Trine from back home and he learns that this girl, whose name is also Trine, is the daughter of a wealthy Secretary of State, living in Copenhagen. He falls in love with her, but suffers greatly from a guilty conscience because he is not faithful to Tønder-Trine, and he is constantly tormented by the fact, that he is an illegitimate child. The situation gets more complicated as Tønder-Trine suddenly appears in Copenhagen, but every time Melfsen tries to get close to her or speak to her she vanishes, At the same time two other women fall in love with Melfsen: one of them a beautiful, sinful, voluptuous widow and the other a young, beautiful and rich girl. Our hero, Melfsen, is thus placed between four women: the two Trines whom he loves, but finds it most difficult to distinguish between, and two he would rather be without. Procopius helps him to avoid the latter two. This leaves room for a great deal of complications – and these take place over a number of small funny chapters, and the narrator (and the reader!) grow very anxious to know how it will all turn out in the end.

It turns out that the two girls called 'Trine' actually are one and the same Trine. Trine just wanted to try Melfsen's loyalty and faithfulness and wanted to see whether he really loved her and not her money (that Melfsen actually did not know she had come into possession of and had subsequently moved to Copenhagen). Luckily, Melfsen has resisted all attacks on his virtue and has remained faithful to his beloved Trine, the Trine he fell in love with in Tønder. When this is revealed it turns out, that Procopius has cleverly managed to match practically all the other characters in the novel, and the novel ends with a heap of marriages – including Melfsen's mother and his biological father, who turns out to be a wealthy man. So all's well that ends well – as long as it ends in a marriage.

Thus the novel claims, that marriage is the only sound foundation for society – but marriage has to be secured by material funds (i.e. money) and love, and one has to respect the differences between the two genders. The novel outlines the bourgeois marriage, where the husband represents the outgoing, industrial life, and the women guarantee the happiness within the four walls of home. Melfsen represents the bourgois virtues in a man: he is useful to society, works hard, is kind and respects other people, and the young couple's

mutual chastity expresses the high moral of the upcoming bourgeoisie. Trine and Melfsen belong to this bourgeoisie, which is praised by the novel. Throughout the book Melfsen is characterized as being handsome, wearing plain clothes, leading a chaste life, attending to his duties, being honourable and cordial and showing his feelings. This stands contrary to the description of one of the noblemen in the novel, who is ugly, looks abnormal, lives a wreckless life, wears sumptous outfits, is unfaithful and promiscuous, does not work, is not useful for society, uses empty platitudes and has no feelings.

Thus both novels criticize the organization of the old society and its values and render an optimistic view on a new order of society, where diligence, kindness, honesty, faithfulness and common sense prevail. The critique is often communicated by means of humour. Both authors arrange the situations in a way that makes the reader laugh at the preposterous and silly barriers and their administrators the main characters meet, and thus persuade the readers to take side with them.

Authors who have created new modes of expression generally dominate literary history. That is one of the reasons why Ludvig Holberg, Jens Baggesen, and Johannes Ewald are the best and most famous prose writers in Denmark in the 18th century. That is not to say about Pram and Tode. They imitate Fielding, Smollet, Richardson, Voltaire, Marmontel and other foreign writers, whom we know they have read. They are not 'geniuses' and they do not engage in presenting themselves as 'outstanding egos amongst the chosen few' as romanticism would soon demand. They were not front-runners, but they were workers in the vineyard and filled a great need by producing what one might call 'the joyful, trivial literature of the 18th century'.

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[1] The title is a qoutation of the first verse in a poem by the Danish writer Johan Herman Wessel (1742-1785). Translated it means *To be useful and to please*. All titles and quotations throughout this paper have been translated by the author

[2] In Danish: *Kærligheds Nytte*

Cutting off the limb

About castrates and laughing at others' expense in Danish clandestine satire

by Christina Holst Færch

In 1719 the chief constable in Copenhagen reported that a melancholic 45-year-old bachelor with a razor had cut off his penis with appendage in chandler Ole Brock's house. To make matters worse he also stabbed himself with a penknife in the left side of his chest under the nipple. The report tells us that the bed was terribly bloody and that the man was in a critical state.[1] A manuscript in Karen Brahe's collection in Odense informs us further that "this Castrate was against everybody's expectation cured [in the sense: the bleeding had been stopped] by the brave and famous surgeon Mr. Hendrick Schalck and […] brought to the hospital in Elsinore where he died after a couple of years".[2] This is not surprising, as pictures by William Hogarth from Bedlam Hospital in London reveal that sanitary conditions in hospitals at the time were not particularly hygienic. The hospitalisation indicates that the Copenhagen castrate has been regarded as somewhat disturbed, as hospitals housed physically as well as mentally ill persons. The episode was an extraordinary event that tickled the imagination among a number of Danish poets who wrote anonymous manuscript poems about the self-castrate.

Surprisingly, one of these poets was the highly learned Frederik Rostgaard (1671-1745) who – apart from being a royal archivist, member of the Supreme Court, and later First Secretary of the Danish Chancellery – was married to the Queen's half-sister.[3] Rostgaard was *the* honnête homme of the time and defining for the decorum of writing.[4] Rostgaard himself normally wrote tasteful – though not particularly good – panegyric poems and was a patron of poets. Rostgaard's poem about the castrate therefore seems to be completely out-of-character for the highly distinguished gentleman. The poem was written in Latin and circulated in great numbers under the title *Castrator Eligiæ.* It was translated into several Danish versions and published in Germany in a Latin journal – so the tale of the self-castrating fellow was widely spread in literary circles throughout the kingdom. The circulation of the poem seems to indicate that in certain circles of readers a learned person of rank could submit himself to satirical and erotic pranks.

Another and rhetorically more interesting poem about the castrate is *The crying Dina over the disfigured Sichem* – supposedly written by the satirical poet Hans Nordrup (1681-1750). The poem circulated anonymously and cannot positively be attributed to Nordrup. It has only once and in a rather dubious manuscript been connected to Nordrup but it is not difficult to imagine why he was linked to the poem.[5] He was Rostgaard's direct opposite: He was an unemployed master, a notorious libeller, and by contemporaries said to be "a Player, a lecherous Person, and a drunkard".[6] This reputation was amplified by Nordrup himself and in his poems he declared himself to be a rogue.[7]

Nordrup was a notorious critic of the corruption among the clergy and high officials. Most of his verses are crude and pornographic satires and of course they were never published but circulated in hundreds of copies in the erudite circles of clerks and officials.[8] In 1706 Nordrup was master of theology but the bishop of Zealand Christen Worm declared that he personally would make sure that Nordrup would never get a living as a cleric. And indeed, almost 20 years passed before Nordrup finally received a small living in his old home village.[9]

Baroque eloquence in *The crying Dina*

The Crying Dina over the Disfigured Sichem is a mock-heroic tribute poem and in 400 verses it tells the tale of a sailor who – like the real Copenhagen self-castrate – cuts off his penis in melancholy. The poem is written in the heroic alexandrines that evoke the whole tradition and decorum of the tribute poem. At first sight, the poem appears to be serious: It has the typical long title with Greek words and references to the Bible: Everything needed to give the impression of a highly learned author. But in Nordrup's poem the erudite appearance of the poem is soon subverted in a Bakhtinian sense. Following the long title is a small note that reads: "Copied out on Shrovetide Monday" which indicates that the relationship between the poem and its subject is subversive.[10] The title contains a reference to the Bible which is traditionally a key to the text. But here we are told, that the circumcision in the old Testament is not transformed into the mercy of the New Testament but is rather converted into "The New Testament's painful cutting off as he [the self-castrate]/ like an *autocheiros* ["self-killer"] hates his own flesh and because of/ the thoughtlessness of the mind and by the fast speed of the hand/ cut off the ornament of the body./ So there is now:/ a capon for a cock,/ a hog for a boar,/ a wether for a ram."[11] The discrepancy between the Old and the New Testament is not overcome in the poem. Instead, it is hinted at already in the title that the allegorical meaning and the genre conventions are disturbed.

When Nordrup writes a poem about the lowest of the low in the highest possible rhetorical style, he transgresses the formal poetic rules that demand that form and content must match each other. The poem begins with a classical apostrophe: "Alas Muses, I here will court your favour".[12] After the first verses the wooing of the muses is turned around. It is now the muses who urge the narrator to tell his story and they promise to protect him: "What news did you hear, that you so shy might be/ and does not your errand audaciously offer/ You are used to be free to talk/ and our spirits have assisted you before".[13] The poetic I is bold yet fearful but the hesitation is pure coyness. Throughout the rest of the poem the topic is scrutinized in every detail.

The rhetorical I that speaks here is a stereotypical I and does not resemble a specific person, but rather a formal modus of speech. The poem thus embeds a distance in the discourse that resembles the rhetorical modus of the formal poetry of the period. In this way Nordrup gives authority to the poetic voice but at the same time this is undermined by the playful jesting tone. Moreover, the discourse constantly changes and blurs the narrative structure of the poem. The first part of the poem is a complex arrangement of examples of men that *almost* castrated themselves. The point is that never before has anyone carried the deed through. Here the narrator is not a single person but apparently a multitude of voices. This means that the poetic I momentarily looses the privileged position as the narrator.

The poetic I has indeed heard the story about the self-castrate from two sisters in Peder Madsens alley – which was a real alley in Copenhagen, notorious for its hags and prostitutes. The poetic I is standing on a corner listening to the sisters' gossiping. Gossip is, according to Melinda Rabb, a non-hierarchical discourse that challenges established hierarchies and has a potentially destabilizing effect.[14] The decentralized narrative of the poem indeed appears to undermine the authority of the poetic I as he passes on the gossip and thus engages in a feminine discourse. However, the actual description of the castrate carries the viewpoint of the male poetic I who on the one hand covers himself behind the gossip and on the other ruthlessly orchestrates the tale of the castration. But not only the form is radical – the same goes for the humour.

The women in the poem cry because of the lost limb which not only implies a loss of pleasure but also a loss of income. Their profession as prostitutes is insinuated by the word "split-Rytre" which is a patronizing term for an unvirtuous woman.[15] Therefore they are afraid that the idea will spread. The women's regretful tears are at the same time contrasted with the men's uncompassionate laughter.

The humour of the poem is centred on male effeminacy and de-masculinized men in a sexual vacuum. It is the rejection to be a man with all that implies that is depicted as ridiculous. In the poem the lecherous life of the sailor triggers the castration as he reads the Bible – Matthew chapter 19, 12:

> For there are some eunuchs, which were so born from [their] mother's womb: and there are some eunuchs, which were made eunuchs of men: and there be eunuchs, which have made themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven's sake. He that is able to receive [it], let him receive [it].[16]

But unfortunately, the sailor is no cleric and therefore he misinterprets the allegorical meaning of the Bible. This literal reading of the passage has, according to Eusebius, not only been practised by the sailor but also by the Christian theologian Origen (ca. 185-254) who castrated himself as a token of his faith.[17]

The corruption of the holy text in *The crying Dina* is already anticipated in the title that refers to the story about Sichem who raped Dina. In the Bible, Dina's brothers took revenge by convincing all the men in Sichem's village to be circumcised. When they were ill with fever from the operation, Dina's brothers killed them. In Nordrup's poem, however, the revengefulness is replaced by guilt, melancholy, and self suffering. Therefore, the title raises the question: why does Dina cry? In the biblical story Dina cries because of the shame and violence, but in the Nordrup-poem she cries because Sichem has parted with his "breeding-branch", his "grafting-twig", his "secret thing" and "he who was as the cock bold and jaunty/ he now as the capon is bloody and painful / and can never again go to the marriage bed/ because he has lost his best limb like that".[18]

After the castration the landlord rushes into the chamber where he thinks a fire has broken out. He is therefore obviously relieved to find the "poor wretch" in bed. A doctor is summoned but he has no comfort for the castrate: "Even if you live you will be a disfigured man".[19] The cleric arrives but does not make matters better. Instead, he scorns the castrate as a blind interpreter of the Bible. There is no hope for him and the decay is already mercilessly visible in the body-metaphors: "the sausage was bloody and two raisins hang/ at the end when he threw it on the floor" and "The hot limb still wriggled like a fish/ He tossed it like a cloth and a wisp".[20] Death is breathing the castrate down the neck but is comically balanced by the landlord who triumphantly resurrects the human *disjecta membra* by placing it on a dish surrounded by bay leaves and box tree. As a confectionary the landlord puts it in the cabinet of curiosities among other "delicate dishes" and then lectures the reader that here it must be observed *right*… The limb is thus reborn in the carnal joys of haute cuisine.

The limb is in Nordrup's poem objectified and eroticized under the gaze of the male visitors who now arrive to see the "wonder". The visitors, however, show no compassion with the castrate as they joke on his expense. Here, the lonely agony of the castrate is contrasted with the raw laughter from the visitors. According to Bakhtin in *Rabelais and his World* this "drama of laughter [is] presenting at the same time the death of the old and the birth of the new world".[21] Laughter and mockery indeed develop into a competition of erotic creativity where the usefulness of the limb is at the centre of attention. One man says that it should be pickled, another that it should be gilded, a third that it should be put in a museum, a fourth that it should be used for tricking the girls at the Christmas party, a fifth that it could be used as a spice in the beer barrel, a sixth that it could serve as a signboard for a brothel, a seventh that it could be a lure on the fishing rod and so on.[22] Thus the guests objectify the dying body and the limb undergoes a feminization under the desirous gaze from the visitors. The castrate himself is made an object for homoerotic pleasure as the doctor penetrates the wound with a wound plug to stop the bleeding. As Thomas Laqueur has pointed out in *Making Sex* until around the 18th century the sexes were re-

garded as a continuum where boys could turn into girls if they did not manifest their masculinity.[23] The so-called "one-sex-model's" way of regarding sex as a scale seems to characterize the way the castrate goes from masculine and virile male to effeminate monstrous in-between in the poem: "He damaged himself so much that you could say/ he was not like a boy but more like a girl/ for only on this one thing nature distinguishes/ a man that wears long pants from a woman."[24]

The transformation of and interest in the instability of sex can be located not only to Nordrup but to other poets of the period. In 1665 Thomas Kingo – who was the most valued Danish baroque poet – wrote the poem *The Cow Complaint at Sæbye Farm* about a great bull that forsakes the worldly life and looses his limb. In Kingo's poem the loss of the limb also means loss of position at the farm and the bull eventually drowns himself in a pond.[25] In Nordrup's poem, the sailor cuts off the limb and thus loses the defining sign of his masculinity. The body is effeminate both in shape and in expression. The castrate whines like a girl and cries inappropriately in pain and grief: "Like a crane he whined and gave a pathetic wail/ Perhaps he thought before that it [the limb] was made of steel".[26] In the poems by Kingo and Nordrup the loss of the limb also means the loss of identity. Here the baroque poets are merciless as there is no new insight born out of the existential crisis: Without the limb the castrates are no longer of any value or use in society. Sympathy and compassion is not present in Nordrup's poem.

Instead, the visitors' laughing at the expense of the castrate becomes a way of manifesting their own virility. One might claim that clandestine satire has a desire to establish a feeling of secret community through laughter that defines people in and outside the community in terms of who is and who is not laughing. Here the ones not laughing are the ones without a limb. And in that way, laughter becomes a way of defining masculinity. Clandestine laughter is exclusive and represents an alternative authority contrasting the formal authorities. But this does not mean that the patriarchy is challenged – it is more than anything strengthened at the expense of the castrate. At the end, the masculinity of the castrate is sought to be re-established with a silver pipe as prosthesis so that he is able to pee with dignity. But this only increases the grotesque shape of the castrate: the women in town shut him out of their houses and he is rejected in every social order. There is no hope of re-establishing a new kind of normality or order.

The raw laughter is also a way of manifesting the author's own potent rhetoric at the expense of the castrate. The poetic I through wit and eloquence in the poem exposes the effeminacy of the castrate and thus highlighting his own virility. In Antiquity, rhetoric was part of the education of male youths and especially satire was regarded as an arena where one could manifest his masculinity and civilised behaviour. This image of the highly potent author or *rhetor* is at the same time undermined by the fact that the satire originates in women's gossip from the streets which hardly gives the poem authority. According to Melinda Rabb both satire and gossip have a potential killing effect on its subjects that can destabilize authorities. But where satire is masculine, gossip is feminine. Where satire is high-status, gossip is low-status. Rabb elaborates: "That gossip and slander are traditionally associated with women opens satire to feminization of various kind".[27] This feminization of satire seems to characterize *The crying Dina*. Nordrup's poem draws on both a feminine and masculine rhetorical strategy. So why is the poem at the same time building up and undermining its own authority?

The point is that Nordrup is beyond conformity: He breaks the rules and he does so intentionally. His poems are highly dependent on the decorum of absolutism but the genre conventions are always violated. If the baroque poetry and art have been characterized as being "too much" Nordrup is beyond that.[28] His poems decompose and destabilize the baroque decorum by a subversive strategy that refuses to connect any meaning to the form. The allegorical potential of the story of the limb is rejected. Eunuchs as a metaphor of the political insufficiency of Louis XIV's reign can, according to

Elizabeth Henckendorn Cook, be found in Montesquieu's *Lettres Persanes* (1721).[29] But Nordrup has no such political agenda. There is no transcendence in the *sensus spiritualis* and no other lesson to be learned than not to part with your worldly body however sinful it is. The poem is a prank and the 400 alexandrines have no other justification than being an eloquent and erotic game.

What makes the poem radical is the rejection of a didactic meaning and a moral stand. This makes the poem suspect in the rhetorical tradition. The poem is also radical in the mocking and shattering of the authoritative genres. The moral purpose of literature to *docere, movere et delectare* is absent and the poem thus rejects being anything but a poetic jest.

Literary critics have almost completely buried Nordrup and the main part of the clandestine manuscript poetry as infantile and useless.[30] But Nordrup's poem shows that the manuscript literature contains a kind of texts that rebel against conformity of genre and insist on their aesthetic or literary value. The clandestine manuscript poems that circulated among a great number of clerics and officials throughout the 18th century can be seen as an experimental form, free of the censorship of absolutism and regulated only by the taste of the readers of the community. Far from all manuscript poems are experimental but the clandestine satires manifested Nordrup as part of the literary canon among his contemporaries and thus show the literary field to be much more diverse and experimental than what is the impression when reading the printed anthologies of the time.

1 "Historiske Meddelelser Om København", in Københavns Rådhus Københavns Stadsarkiv, 1919-20, 7, p. 367.

2 Odense, *Karen Brahes Samling,* E II, 6.

3 Conradine Revenfeld was the illegitimate but ennobled daughter of Queen Sophie Amalie's father Conrad Reventlow and Anne Cathrine von Hagen. She was the half-sister to Anna Sophie Reventlow whom Frederik 4. in 1712 had wed to his left hand and who would later become queen.

4 In a small article ("Smaae Erindrings-Poster om Danske Vers til en flittig og lærvillig Discipel i Sorøe-Skole den 29. Mai 1717", in Minerva 1790, III p. 52ff.) Rostgaard formulated a poetics for his illegitimate son Verville which pinpointed rules of eloquent writing.

5 The manuscript is from the Royal Library of Copenhagen: Add. 147, in folio. The manuscript is from 1740 and has originally attributed the poem to another poet. However, this name has been crossed out and replaced by the attribution: *"Hans Nortrup"*. The poem does not figure in any of the manuscript collections of Nordrup's works, and Add. 147, in folio also omits the poem in the register. Even though the attribution of the poem is insecure I chose to maintain that Nordrup is the author as the literary criticism and history treats it as such – see for e.g. Peer E. Sørensen: *Dansk litteraturhistorie,* bd. 3, Gyldendal 1984, Per Stounbjerg: "Afskærelse. – Om Hans Nordrup: "Den Grædende Dina Over Den Skamskaaren Sichem"" in *Passage* nr. 8 1990, pp. 45-48, Eira Stor-stein & Peer E. Sørensen: *Den barokke tekst,* Dansklærerforeningen 1999 and Niels Simonsen: *Verdslig barok. En antologi 1667-1756,* Borgen 1982.

6 E.C. Werlauff: *Holbergiana,* Copenhagen 1855, p. 74.

7 See e.g. *Skiemt Udi alvor,* NKS 2736, 4to, p. 235ff.

8 Nordrup wrote a few panegyric poems that were printed – e.g. a poem published as the celebra-tion of the marriage of the Danish crown prince Frederik and Louise of England in 1743, in *Dannemarks Glæde, Og Engelands Fornøyelse Tilkiende givet I en Samling, Af alle de saa vel trykte som skrevne Vers, hvilke til denne Høy-Prinsselige Indtogs-Fest Ere komne for Lyset,* Copenhagen 1743.

9 Wiberg: *Almindelig dansk Præstehistorie,* Odense 1871, vol. 3, p. 313.

10 I use my own transcription and translation of Collin 538, II, 4to.

11 *"Det Nye Testamentis Smertelige afskiærelse, i det hand/ som en* Ἀυτόχειρος *hader sit eget Kiød, og formedelst/ Sindetz Ubetenksomhed ved Haandens ilende/ hastighed afsnittede Legemetz Ziirlighed,/ At der nu findes:/ En Kapun for en Hane,/ En Galt for en Orne,/ En Bede for en Veder".* From the title of the poem. The greek word is slang and is found in Lodewijk Meyers *Woortenschat Verdeelt in 1. BASTAARDT-WOORDEN. 2. KONST-WOORDEN. 3. VEROURDERDE WOORDEN.* Amsterdam 1731, p. 277.

12 *The crying Dina,* Collin 538, II, 4to, (from now on 'Dina'), verse 1: "Ak! Musæ jeg vel her om Eders Gunst vil beyle".

13 Dina, verse 33-36: "Hvad hør du vel for Nyt, men du saa sky mon være/ Og dristig ikke tør dit Ærende frembære/ Du vel for Tunge-baand er vant at være fri/ Og voris Geist med dig vel før har staaet bi.".

14 Melinda Alliker Rabb, *Satire and Secrecy in English Literature from 1650 to 1750,* Palgrave Macmillan, 2007, p. 52ff.

15 Dina, verse 51.

16 *King James' Bible,* Matth. 19,12. From the *Blue Letter Bible-*

concordance: http://www.blueletterbible.org/search/translationResults.cfm?Criteria=eunuchs&t=KJV&sf=5

[17] See e.g. Henrik Tronier: "Den historisk-kritiske eksegese som allegorisk bibelfortolkning?" in *Historie og konstruktion: Festskrift til Nils Peter Lemche,* Museum Tusculanum 2005, p. 396ff.

[18] Dina, verses 69-72: "Hand der nu nylig var som Kokken Kiek og Moodig,/ Hand som Kapuen er nu Smertefuld og Blodig/ Og duer aldrig meer i Brudeseng at gaa/ For hand sit beste Lem har vildet miste saa."

[19] Dina, verse 216: "Men om du lever, er dog en Skamferet Mand".

[20] Dina, verses 141-142, 159-160: "Kiødpølssen blodig var, og toe Russiner hengte/ Ved Enden da hand dend paa Gulvet fra sig slengte" and " Det varme Lem endnu laa Sprellet som en Fisk/ Det hand bortsmitted som en Karklud og en Visk".

[21] M. Bakhtin, *Rabelais and his world,* Indiana University Press 1984 (1965) p. 149.

[22] The cut-off limb in the barrel refers to old superstition, where the finger of a hanged thief in the beer barrel was thought to give the beer an extra good taste.

[23] Thomas Laqueur: *Making Sex. Body and Gender from the Greeks to Freud,* Harvard 1990.

[24] Dina, verses 133-136: "Hand reedte sig saa til, at mand snart Kunde sige,/ Hand var ey liig een Karl, men ligere en Pige;/ Thi Kun dend eene plet Naturen skieldner paa/ En Mand fra Qvinder, som i lange Buxer gaa".

[25] The poem is printed in: Erik Sønderholm: *Dansk barokdigtning 1600-1750,* vol. 1, Copenhagen 1969, p. 252f.

[26] Dina, verses 139-140: "Hand som en Trane peeb, og gav et ynksom Skraal,/ Maaskee hand tenkte før at dend var giort af Staal."

[27] Rabb: *Satire and secrecy,* p. 10, 48.

[28] The description of the baroque style as decadent classicism was coined by Heinrich Wölfflin: *Renaissance and Baroque,* (org. 1888) Fontana Library 1966, p. 15ff and E.R. Curtius: *Europäische Literatur und lateinisches Mittelalter,* Bern 1948, chapter. 15, §1, p. 275.

[29] See Elizabeth Henckdorn Cook: *Epistolary Bodies. Gender and Genre in the Eighteenth Century Republic of Letters,* Stanford University Press 1996, p. 30ff.

[30] See e.g. Rahbek & Nyerup: *Den danske Digtekunsts Historie,* Copenhagen 1808. The newest Dan-ish literary history only mentions Jacob Worm (1642-93) among the radical baroque poets but does not deal with the whole manuscript tradition.

A Distortion of Natural Order

Body and reproduction in French counter-revolutionary satire, 1789-1791

by Nan Gerdes

A huge output of pamphlets and newspapers during the early years of the French Revolution marks one of the key moments in the history of political satire. The convocation of the assembly of the States General in 1788 had already caused a loosening of royal censorship and when a booming, less regulated book market came into existence, the number of pamphlets and libels[1] increased, especially in the years 1789-1791. This span of time covers the phase from the assembly of the States General in 1789 to the passing of the French constitution in the autumn 1791. In this period France was still a constitutional monarchy. Taking place before the foundation of the Republic in 1792, the Terror in 1793-94 and the silencing of the royalist press, the first two years of the Revolution were the most liberal phases of the Revolution

Although obscene works – and anonymous works too – remained forbidden throughout the Revolution, the number of obscene libels increased and the contents of them tended to become more and more aggressive. In these libels fictitious representations of royalty's sexuality or that of the deputy of the National Assembly were brutally put on display as a means of satire and ridicule. In other words, one can find both pro- and counter-revolutionary attacks in the libels from 1789-91.

As the satirical debasement of royalty, especially Queen Marie-Antoinette, has already been subject to thorough research[2], I shall instead explore how sexual satire formed part of counter-revolutionary critique of the new revolutionary political, constitutional system. Accordingly, this article focuses on how these often very coarse satirical prints used humour and laughter to debase the new institutional political culture of the Revolution by means of the body. The kind of laughter provoked by such satires, however, was one of joy but also one of mock. I suggest that this kind of satire was a response to the shifting political basis[3], especially regarding the idea of the revolution as a regeneration of a society that wanted to distance itself from the old regime (monarchy). However, in the opinion of those critical of the revolution, pro-revolutionaries' attempt to replace the traditional old regime hierarchy with principles of liberty and equality seemed more like a distortion of the natural order than a regeneration.

Bodily images of the revolution

Revolutionary culture was rich in images of the body, also those of a sexual kind. As Vivian Cameron states, such images not only express a pornographic content but are polysemous, thus operating on many levels and being conflated with a number of different discourses such as morality or politics[4].

In general, European erotica before 1800 were intimately connected with politics. The close connection between sex and politics was rooted in a tradition, in which early modern obscene texts had often attacked those in power[5].

Furthermore, one of the reasons why politics, sex and the body were intertwined was the idea of a body politics, of the habit of connecting the human body and the political system with one another by way of analogy, a tradition dating from antiquity of imagining society as an anthropomorphic system, as a human body, hence making the hierarchy of society a natural system based on rank. The absolutist society of the Sun King matched the body analogy: obviously the King was the head or the heart of the body of society, the military nobility the arms, etc., etc.

With the Revolution and the abolishment of absolutism one could think that the body analogy would fail. Doubtlessly, the flux of bodily images in the revolutionary period reflects an iconographic lack of stability but, still, the analogy between body and society prevailed – also in satire. In the critique of the revolution the body-society analogy seems to diagnose the unnatural or perverted parts of revolutionary society. A carnivalesque twist is evident in this use of the body. However, in contrast to the medieval carnival described by Bakhtin where the carnival was a temporary liberation from hierarchy and rank[6], the carnivalesque attitude of counter-revolutionary imagery aimed at ridiculing the new principles of equality and freedom.

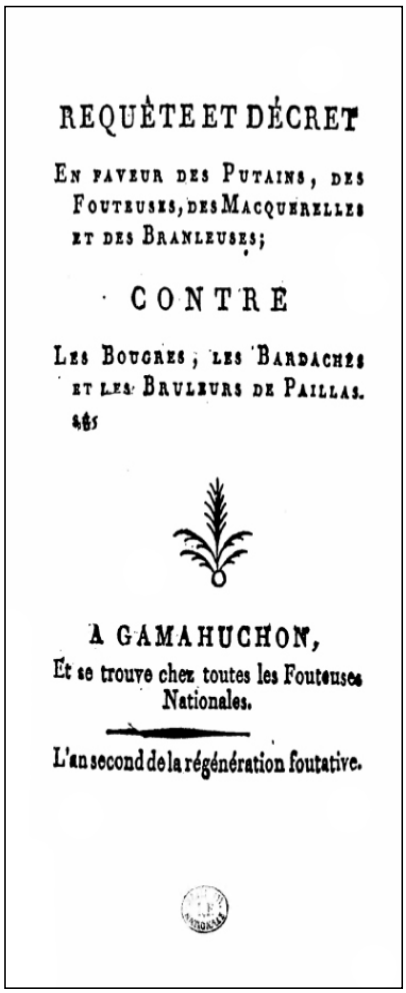
Regeneration as degeneration

In the libels' critique of the revolution serious pro-revolutionary discourse is turned upside-down and debased to a bodily stratum. Through language and a reading attentive to puns the revolutionary project is made sexual. Sex and politics are mixed by means of polysemy.

As the obscene libels were illegal they were published anonymously and anonymity became a starting point for a play with language constituting a perverted image of revolutionary culture. E.g. this is the case in the mock petition *Requête et décret en Faveur des Putains, des Fouteuses, des Macquerelles et des Branleuses* (Petition and Decree Favouring the Tarts, the Female Fuckers, the Brothel Keepers and the Female Wankers against the Sodomites, [1790])[7].

The title page bears no author's name and the indication of the printer/bookseller is clearly a jest, "À Gamahuchon" meaning "the place where we perform cunnilingus" which "is situated in all the places of the national female fuckers". The year of the libel is stated as "l'an second de la régénération foutative" (the second year of the fucking regeneration). Evidently, this is a comment on the pro-revolutionary idea of a regenerated France. The regeneration of culture was a crucial topic for the pro-revolutionaries since they wanted to break away from the old regime, considering its type of ruling despotism, and the culture it had nourished depraved. Yet to the counter-revolutionaries such a regeneration obviously meant degeneration.

Already in 1789 – four years before the republican calendar was introduced in 1793 – pro-revolutionary pamphlets and journals had been referring to 1789 as "l'an de la liberté" (the year of liberty), meaning the year of the Estates General and the Storming of the Bastille. "L'an de la régénération" (the year of regeneration) would refer to the same year. "L'an second de la régéneration foutative" clearly debases this new calendar to a vulgar stratum playing on the double entendre of *régénération.*


REQUÊTE ET DÉCRET

EN FAVEUR DES PUTAINS, DES FOUTEUSES, DES MACQUERELLES ET DES BRANLEUSES;

CONTRE

LES BOUGRES, LES BARDACHES ET LES BRULEURS DE PAILLAS.

A GAMAHUCHON,

Et se trouve chez toutes les Fouteuses Nationales.

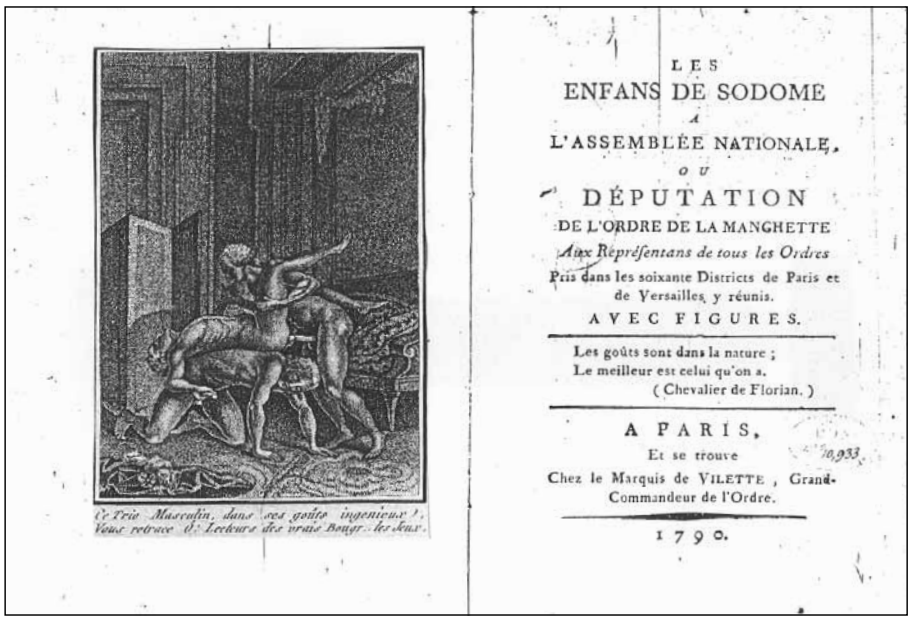
L'an second de la régénération foutative.

Figur 1:
Anonymous: Requête et décret en Faveur des Putains, des Fouteuses, des Macquerelles et des Branleuses (À Gamahuchon, Et se trouve chez toutes les Fouteuses Nationales, L'an second de la régénération foutative), [1790]

In *Requête et Décret en Faveur des Putains* the attitude towards revolutionary regeneration is obviously ironical. In the pamphlet a group of prostitutes bitterly complain to The National Assembly that since the revolution began their business has been practically ruined. The reason for this is not that the customers have become more virtuous, due to the revolutionary moral regeneration, but instead, that the revolutionary ideas of liberty and equality have become a male to male relationship in politics as well as in bed. Transferred to the sexual stratum, fraternal equality becomes equivalent with homosexuality or sodomy. Hence, the prostitutes' declining number of customers is due to the liberty of men to choose men instead of women as sex partners. Or as the text says: "Everything is subject to revolution: \ soon man left the cunt behind" … "the taste for buttocks, \ this taste that has been dominant, \ leaves us [the prostitutes, NG] with nothing to do."[8]. Thus, by placing the political process on an equal footing with a sexual one and adding a tongue-in-cheek attitude the pamphlet mocks political procedures as well as revolutionary regeneration.

The same kind of parodying of the principles of liberty and equality can be found in the libel *Les enfans de Sodome à l'Assemblée nationale ou députation de l'ordre de la manchette* (The children of Sodome to the National Assembly or The Deputation of the Order of the Cuff), (À Paris, 1790)[9].

As the frontispiece and title page show, new fraternal political bonding was associated with sodomy. *L'ordre de la manchette* was slang for being a sodomite and the text contains a mock declaration of the rights of the sodomites and other groups with deviant sexual inclinations. The over-all aim of the libel is to ridicule persons from the upper classes who supported the ideas of the revolution instead of supporting the royalists. One of these was the Marquis de Villette (1736-1793) who, despite of being born a nobleman, was a sworn adherent of the revolution and the abolishment of the privileges of the nobility – and allegedly a homosexual. Villette was the butt of many libels as he was the incarnation of both a sodomite and someone who had abandoned his obligations to the class he belonged to by birth. As was the case with the mock petition of the prostitutes, the pamphlet states that the revolution had brought with it an increase in sodomy, and for that reason it mocks a pretence of claiming that the rights of the sodomites should be included in the French constitution. Hence, the libel is mocking the over-all revolutionary politicizing of society and the idea of equality. Altogether, both pro-revolutionary language and practices are transmitted to a sexual level, thus striping the new political organization of any kind of legitimacy and authority as it is guilty of ruining traditional, natural hierarchies.



Figur 2:
Anonymous: Les enfans de Sodome à l'Assemblée nationale ou députation de l'ordre de la manchette (À Paris, 1790)

Body politics

Turning back to the body-society analogy, sodomy, in this context, was interpreted as a vulgar and degrading way of expressing how the parts of a political body were united by a desire considered by some to be against nature, the point of this being that lust and private interest were the only things the characters in this kind of libels shared with one another. The defence of the rights of man, which formed the basis of freedom, was, according to these libels, only a pretext for individual freedom distorting natural order.

One of the most pregnant statements of this idea can be found in the libel *The Patriotic Brothel* (*Bordel patriotique*)[10] from 1791 (which is an almost identical version of a libel from the year before, *The National Brothel* (*Bordel national)*[11]. The statement is uttered by one of the men in the picture – the mayor of Paris, Bailly. In a soliloquy he outlines the success he has had because of the revolution:

> Dans l'heureuse révolution de l'empire François, révolution si douce, si avantageuse pour ma fortune et mon élévation, je conçois le dessein d'opérer une autre révolution dans la fouterie. Le peuple étoit l'esclave des grands, il étoit assujetti aux caprices des femmes, il avoit beau s'évertuer à les foutre en con jour et nuit, les bougresses n'étoient pas contentes, et les pauvres maris, toujours trompés, ne manquaient pas d'être cocufiés.[12]

In the mayor's opinion men in *ancient régime* were subordinated to women. According to the mayor, the revolution has been hugely advantageous for his fortune and his elevation in society. His private interests and the social and political changes went hand in hand. To further underline this aspect, Bailly had conceived a plan for a revolution when it came to sex as well. He insisted that under the old regime people were slaves to the nobles [*les grands*] and suppressed by the caprice of women. Day and night men were compelled to sleep with women only. Nevertheless, women were never completely satisfied even though they cheated their husbands. Now the revolution had liberated men like Bailly from the domination of despotic women. Implicitly, this liberation was feasible by means of sodomy, thereby breaking the chains of sexual slavery in the old regime. What this indicates is a change from a feudal power structure based on heredity and biological reproduction to a more abstract power structure consisting of assemblies with elected male members.

The language of biological reproduction and political procedures intermix. Bailly was well aware of the downside of his turning his back on women: the French nation would not be reproduced; there would be no children to grow up in freedom in the revolutionary utopia. But he could not care less. His individual freedom to be a sodomite is more important than the future of France. As regeneration was a key term in the revolutionary vocabulary, then what Bailly says through this sexual symbolism is of course that the instauration of the new political organization will evidently lead to the death of France. The new political organization, according to these satires, is a perversion of the political order, thus ripping it away from accordance with nature. Such an organization can never lead to a regenerated society but rather to its end.

Figur 3: Anonymous: Bordel patriotique institué par la reine des Français (Aux Tuilleries, Et chez les Marchands d'Ouvrages galans, 1791)

One can trace indications of a perverted body politics in *Bordel patriotique* in several ways. In the libel we meet diverse actors of the political spectrum who join together in the national brothel, being a parallel to revolutionary France.
One illustration shows the actors in the pamphlet: the Queen, her valet, and Comte d'Artois, (the King's brother). Behind Marie-Antoinette we see Le Chapelier, deputy in the National Assembly. In the middle of the print we have Mirabeau's (who also figures in the text) mistress, Madame Le Jay spanking the Comte d'Artois and caressing Bailly. He is embraced by Mlle Théroigne, who runs the patriotic brothel with the Queen. Below her, we see Danton.

As a counter-image to official iconography this is a satirical depiction of the political situation in 1790. Here the political scene is turned into a brothel, not a virtuous congregation. At that time France was a constitutional monarchy, and in this libel the different parts of the mixed government – monarchists and pro-revolutionaries – are united in a big orgastic feast.

Satires mix fact and fiction. The historical context referred to here is probably the big *Fête de la Fédération*, the feast of the federation, organized by the mayor of Paris, Bailly. The celebration took place a year after the Storming of the Bastille, on July 14th 1790 on the Champ de Mars. It was meant as a celebration of the French community as a federation after the end of absolutism, thus celebrating a nation regenerated by the revolutionary changes. During the feast representatives from the whole country, including the king, the deputies of the National Assembly and a vast number of visiting federates from the 83 regions of France swore alliance to one another. As such the feast was a ceremony symbolically uniting the political bodies of France into one unity.

The first edition of this libel was printed the same year as *Fête de la Fédération* and in my opinion the fictional orgy could very well be satirizing this event. In that sense, the libel pulls the symbolic unification of the country down to the level of the sexual – and debauched – body. Hence, the ceremony and the taking the oath on the Champ de Mars is turned into harsh satire in the grand finale of the libel. It ends with an act of sexual intercourse between all the political characters and the inscribed audience while they all sing a cheerful song. In that way the brothel – meaning federal France – is united not by virtue or solidarity but instead by lust, perversion and self-interest, thus mocking the federal alliance.

The paternal birth of the convention

A year after the celebration of the federation, when the National Constitutional Assembly in September 1791 had finished the new constitution of France, the counter-revolutionary press once again picked up the theme of the revolution as a disturbance of natural order. First, the completion of the constitution was transferred to the body: the constitution was, of course, a new-born child. Hence, the counter-revolutionaries applied the well known way of reproducing power from hereditary monarchy. However, as the constitution-child was not the child of a King and a Queen but instead the result of the work of an assembly with only male members, the child could have nothing but fathers and accordingly it was a disturbance of nature. Consequently, the caricature *Les couches de mr. Target* (Mr. Target's Childbirth) shows the constitution-child as the result of a paternal birth. The caricature is from November 1791, a couple of months after the completion of the constitution, and it shows one of the main agents behind the convention: the lawyer and deputy from the Third Estate, Gui-Jean-Baptiste Target, as the farther who has obviously given birth to the constitution-child, who is now being baptised. The bishop performing the baptism, Claude Francois Fauchet, and the Duc d'Aiguillon, had both actively supported the revolution despite their belonging to the First and Second Estate. The other two characters are a deputy from the Third Estate, Populus, and the woman is Théroigne de Mericourt, as she was called. Théroigne also figured in *The Patriotic Brothel* but in real life she was a young woman who had al-

ready from 1789 embraced the revolution and the thoughts of liberty. She had observed the assembly of the States General and later the convocations of the National Assembly at close hand and she was also involved in political clubs. The royalist press often depicted Populus as her lover, due to the pun on Populus' name making Théroigne a promiscuous woman sleeping with all the French people, its populus, embodied in one person: the deputy Populus.

That said, the caricature of the childbirth of the convention ridicules the work of the Constitutional Assembly – the French Constitution – by putting it into the frame of traditional reproduction. In that way the caricature is in line with the theme of unnatural reproduction that I have wanted to highlight in this article. Opponents of revolutionary ruling and democracy used the body as a comical devise to convey the idea that the new revolutionary government was at best a disturbance of hierarchies and gender roles and at worst an inversion of the order of nature. Iconographically, in the 18th century the body was loaded with symbolic meaning as an image of the state, thereby giving a representation of a harmonious hierarchy. To the counter-revolutionaries, the revolution

Figur 4: Anonymous: Les couches de Mr Target in Journal de la cour et de la ville (chez Webert, 30.11.1791)

meant a disturbance of the natural order. Accordingly, they mocked the revolutionary political organization by reusing and remodelling traditional analogies between the human body and society, thus showing what they found was the perverted body politics of the revolution. Consequently, the political organization looked like a brothel, the political assemblies would look like congregations of sodomites, and the French Constitution a child of unnatural birth as it had only fathers.

Thus, in the long history of political satire the examples shown here pinpoint a change of the use of the carnivalsque humour. By using a carnivalesque strategy in converting serious ideas and events to the lower bodily stratum, the critique of the revolutionary organization was not a temporary liberation of hierarchy and rank, as in the medieval carnival, but instead an attack on the new principles of liberty and equality underlying the formation of a modern, democratic society.

[1] Defamatory, injurious pamphlet

[2] See e.g.: Thomas, Chantal: *La reine scélérate. Marie-Antoinette dans les pamphlets* (Paris: Éditions du Seuils, 1989), Hunt, Lynn: *The Family Romance of the French Revolution* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, California: University of California Press, 1992), Dena Goodman (ed.): *Marie-Antoinette. Writings on the Body of a Queen* (New York, London: Routledge, 2003), Burrows, Simon, *Blackmail, Scandal, and Revolution: London's French Libellistes, 1758–92* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2006). On the topic in general, see also the works of Robert Darnton, e.g. *The Forbidden Best-Sellers of Pre-Revolutionary France* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1996) or *The Devil in the Holy Water, or the Art of Slander from Louis XIV to Napoleon* (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2009) and the works of Antoine de Baecque, e.g. Baecque, Antoine de: *Le corps de l'Histoire : Métaphores et politique (1770-1800)* (Paris: Calmann-Lévy, 1993). "Pamphlets: Libel and Political Mythology" in Robert Darnton and Daniel Roche (ed.): *Revolution in Print. The Press in France 1775-1800* (Berkely, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 1989), or "The "Livres remplis d'horreur": Pornographic Literature and Politics at the Beginning of the French Revolution," in Peter Wagner (ed.): *Erotica and the Enlightenment* (Frankfurt am Main, Bern, New York, Paris: Peter Lang, 1991). Wagner, Peter, *Eros Revived: Erotica of the Enlightenment in England and America* (London: Martin Secker & Warburg Limited, 1988).

[3] Cameron, Vivian,"Political Exposures: Sexuality and Caricature in the French Revolution" Lynn Hunt (ed.), *Eroticism and the Body Politic* (Baltimore and London, The John Hopkins University Press), p. 103.

[4] Cameron, op.cit., p. 91

[5] Peakman, Julie, *Mighty Lewd Books: The Development of Pornography in Eighteenth-Century England* (London, Palgrave, 2003), p. 7.

[6] Bakhtin, Mikhail, Rabelais and his world, translated by Hélène Iswolsky (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1984), p. 10

[7] Anonym: *Requête et décret en Faveur des Putains, des Fouteuses, des Macquerelles et des Branleuses* (À Gama-huchon, Et se trouve chez toutes les Fouteuses Nationales, L'an second de la régénération foutative),[1790] in Michel Camus: *Œuvres anonymes du XVIII^e siècle (IV), L'Enfer de la Bibliothèque Nationale,* vol. 6 (Paris: Fayard, 1987).

[8] *Requête et décret,* op.cit, p. 390

[9] Anon.: *Les enfans de Sodome à l'Assemblée nationale ou députation de l'ordre de la manchette* (À Paris, 1790), Bibliothèque nationale de Paris (BnF), Enfer-638

[10] Anon.: *Bordel patriotique institué par la reine des Français* (Aux Tuilleries, Et chez les Marchands d'Ouvrages galans, 1791), BnF Lb39-10258

[11] Anon.: *Bordel national* (À Cythère, Et dans tous les bordels de Paris 1790), BnF Enfer-603

[12] *Bordel patriotique,* p. 30

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