CHAPTER 6

OPÉRA-COMIQUE AND PARODIES

JOHAN DAVID ZANDER

and the Swedish opéra-comique

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THIS PAPER IS A short survey of an aspect of Gustavian theatre until now little dealt with or even investigated. All we have are a few writings from the end of the last century and the beginning of our own, the most important being *Stenborgska skådebanorna* ("The Stenborg Theatres") by Johan Flodmark (1893). It had been preceded by studies by Levertin and was to be followed by Personne's books. On the music itself there is only one study, by Sven Lindström on Carl Stenborg's lyrical drama *Gustaf Eriksson i Dalarna* ("Gustaf Eriksson in Dalecarlia"), in STM 1942. But apart from articles in the dictionaries of Höijer, Norlind and Sohlman and in Norlind's "Swedish Music History" and my own book on "The Swedish Symphony" there is nothing written on Zander and his music as a whole. The 1950s saw something of a minor Zander renaissance, with a performance of his first opera, *Kopparslagaren* ("The Coppersmith"), of which I shall have something to say below.

In his book Flodmark has given a detailed history of the Stenborg Theatre from 1768 onwards. The company was led by Petter Stenborg, who from 1746 onwards was engaged as an actor at *Kongliga Svenska Skådeplatsen* ("The Royal Swedish Theatre"). After the disbandment of this Swedish-speaking company in 1753, Stenborg organized a new one of his own. Though mostly obliged to tour the provinces, in the autumn of 1768 he managed to open his theatre in Stockholm, in what today is called the Old Town, in Stora Nygatan, on the corner of Riddarhustorget, where it staged twice weekly performances of all kinds of drama, from major tragedies to little musical comedies. His performance in the presence of the king in 1772 is well known. Gustaf III, who had just dismissed his deceased father's French company, was interested to hear a troupe play in Swedish; and it's said

that, in spite of the comparatively poor quality of these Swedish actors, the Stenborg company's performance at least inspired him to decide on the establishment of a Swedish theatre and "to adapt the Swedish language for the theatre through the music". Within the year Gustaf had founded his Swedish Opera.

In the same year, 1773, Petter Stenborg, who had hitherto divided his time between Stockholm and the provinces, was able to open a new theatre in a small rotunda in Humlegården park, where however his company could only perform in summer—the winter still being spent touring smaller towns. But his Stockholm seasons were quite successful, particularly after he had enlisted a very talented collaborator in the person of Carl Israel Hallman, a writer with a special gift for parody and travesty. In 1775, Hallman made his début with *Casper och Dorothea*, a malicious, burlesque—and rather crude—parody on Handel's *Acis and Galathea*, the second Swedish "grand" opera. This parody was an instant success! Nor was it played only for the populace, but also for the more distinguished audiences enjoying opera at the Bollhuset, and which came to take more and more interest in Stenborg's theatre. Next year, 1776, Hallman invented a very popular comic, or rather farcical, figure called Finkel. No little vulgar of mind, not to say tipsy, this fellow would be the hero (or perhaps anti-hero) of many applauded comedies.

Petter Stenborg's son, the eminent opera singer Carl Stenborg, who had often provided the music for his father's productions, also arranged for Hallman's plays. In 1777 he composed the music to *Konung Gustaf Adolfs jakt* ("King Gustavus Adolphus' Hunt"). A lyrical comedy or, more properly, an *opéra-comique*, it was only performed twice before being banned by the police because of the impropriety of representing a Swedish monarch on stage in the person of a simple guardsman! Carl Stenborg also wrote and/or arranged the music for Hallman's next two popular parodies, *Skeppar Rolf och Gunnild* ("Skipper Rolf and Gunnild"), 1778, modelled on Gyllenborg's drama *Birger Jarl,* and *Petis och Thelée*, 1779, a parody of course on *Thetis och Pelée*, the first Gustavian opera, by Uttini, which was just then very much in vogue in its new 3-act version.

In 1780, the year when Carl Stenborg took over the management from his father, he wrote a new and—this time—authentic *opéra-comique*, *Don Micco och Lespina*, to his own libretto, after an Italian original. It was a notable success. He also began to put on such more elaborate musical plays as *Böhmiskan* ("The Bohemian Girl") by Di Capua—and even more importantly—was able to rent a new and better

hall for his company, where it could also play during the winter months. This theatre stood on the Eriksberg estate, where a public house had earlier been established and where concerts and other public entertainments were often arranged upstairs. After Stenborg's departure a fellowship called *Timmermansorden* (Order of Carpentry) in 1788 bought the estate, and its big stone building is still situated there, on Eriksbergsplan.

By now Stenborg was performing regularly. As before, the repertoire was made up of the great plays of Molière and Holberg and other classics, as well as little comedies and musical plays. The first two years show *opéras-comiques* by Duni, Audinot, Monsigny, Philidor, Grétry and Pergolesi, all highly typical of this company's repertoire. And in 1781 a young Swedish composer, Johan David Zander, made his début with his one-act *opéra-comique Kopparslagaren*. By this time the theatre evidently had a better orchestra, mainly made up of members of the Royal Court Orchestra. It was also about now that Johann Christian Friedrich Hæffner, the Royal Opera's new singing master, was appointed to be its conductor. Hæffner, apparently in 1784, also wrote for it a musical comedy; but this piece *Sängkammareko* ("Echo from a Bedroom"), was never performed. Stenborg himself, it should be added, neither sang nor acted in his own theatre until 1788, and even after that his appearances were rather rare. He was simply its manager, responsible for its organization and economy.

Having obtained permission to engage good voices—not soloists, only chorus members—from the royal theatre, Stenborg went on writing music. In 1782 came a new operetta, an occasional play entitled *Så blevo alla nöjda* ("So Everyone Was Pleased"), celebrating the birth of Gustaf III's youngest son, and had fair success.

Flodmark says Zander succeeded Hæffner as the Stenborg Theatre's conductor as early as 1783 (other sources say 1785); and from now on its history would be so intimately bound up with Zander's life and destinies that we must take a retrospective look at his early years.

The future operatic composer Johan David Zander was probably born in 1753. Though his day of birth is nowhere noted, according to the church register at his death in 1796 he was then 43; so since he died in February, the only possible alternative for his birth would be 1752. He was the son of a court musician with the same name. This Johan David Zander senior had come to Sweden with Adolf Fredrik's court orchestra in 1743 and, later, was enrolled in the court orchestra. A prominent oboist and bassoonist, according to Vretblad he was heard at many concerts in Stockholm during the 1758–72 period. He

married a Swedish girl, Katarina Molin, and died in 1774. His son Johan David junior, meanwhile, not yet 20 years old, had in 1772 been engaged as a violinist in the royal orchestra, where he rose to be third leader in 1787, and to second leader in 1788. From 1785 he was violin teacher at the music high school of the Royal Academy of Music, of which he (in 1788) was "selected and summoned" to be a "virtuoso" member. He married Anna Elisabet Strömbom (b. 1755, d. 1787).

In his catalogue raisonné *Konsertlivet i Stockholm under 1700-talet* ("Concert Life in Stockholm during the 18th Century"), Patrik Vretblad has listed 38 appearances by Zander in public concerts between 1776 and 1794. No doubt even more could be added, as we lack conductors' and composers' names for several concerts. And in fact he appeared more often than that, often playing solos between the Stenborg Theatre's plays, or their acts—appearances not listed by Vretblad. At the earlier concerts Zander had played violin or viola; and as early as 1777 he performed a viola concerto of his own composition; in the same year "his own violin solos"; and in 1780 "new violin solos", also of his own composition. In the concert list we find, further, a Violin Concerto (1780), a Sonata for "alto-viola" (1783) and a complete Zander concert (1784) with many vocal works, violin solos and choruses. An oboe concerto by Zander is listed in 1787, and two 'cello concertos in 1792 and 1793, his old—or perhaps a new?—viola concerto being played by himself at the last named concert in 1794. Zander played several compositions by other named composers, such as Davaux, Fodor, Jarnovitch and Czernovichi, as well as—perhaps more importantly—conducting several concerts from 1788 onwards.

At the first where we find his name as conductor he performed one (or perhaps two) Haydn symphonies (there is one at the beginning of the programme and another at the end, though this may have been the same symphony divided into two parts, as was common at this time). In 1792 he conducted a symphony by Mozart—indeed Vretblad catalogues Zander as the first conductor known by name to have performed a Mozart symphony in Stockholm. Only on two earlier occasions, in 1789 and 1792, are Mozart symphonies said to have been played, and as the latter concert took place at the Stenborg Theatre it seems likely that Zander conducted then too.

Though some of his string quartets were recovered some years ago in a private collection, the solo concertos referred to are unfortunately nowhere to be found. The quartets make him one of the pioneers of

the quartet in Sweden, if not our first real quartet composer. Wesström's quartets are really more in the nature of ensemble music, in the older sense, and Kraus had written his while still in Germany, and Zander must be said to have anticipated Wikmanson. His quartet style, however, is little developed, and though both composers emulated Haydn, Zander's are simpler than Wikmanson's.

Apart from his stage works, Zander's Symphony in B flat major must be counted as his most important extant composition. Composed in 1785, it was dedicated to the eminent "Utile Dulci" society, to which, like most of the good Stockholm instrumentalists, he belonged as a member of the music section. Though specified as "for large orchestra", the symphony is only scored for two oboes, two horns and strings (the violas often divided). As a whole it is a work in Haydn's style, with sonata forms in the two outer and simple three-section ones in the two middle movements. The Haydn it reminds us of is the immediately pre- and post-*Sturm und Drang* composer. The finale obviously has some strains in common with the corresponding movement in Haydn's Symphony No. 35 in the same key. The first movement has a very appealing slow introduction, and its main theme gets its profile, tensions and elasticity from several tied accented notes, like those in the first movement of Wikmanson's first E minor quartet, frequently played today. Like many of Haydn's slow movements, Zander's is scored for strings only, and in character is very "singing" and aria-like. Not only for him, but also for Stenborg in his *opéras-comiques*, Haydn and the French *opéra-comique* were the prime models, and the latter's overture to *Så blevo alla nöjda*, is extremely Haydnesque.

Zander is also represented by some piano pieces and a violin solo in Åhlström's magazine *Musikaliskt Tidsfördriv* ("Musical Pastime"), 1789–92, and with one song in the same publisher's collection *Skaldestycken, satte i musik* ("Poems, set to music," Part II, 1794). There are also four of Zander's songs in the collection *Glada kväden* ("Cheerful Ditties"), published by Johan Elers in 1792. All this shows how popular Zander was at that time.

Stenborg's theatre, renamed "The Swedish Theatre at Eriksberg ", went on playing the same repertoire, and in 1783 we also find works by Sacchini and Piccini. In the same year Hallman wrote a new parody, this time of Piccini's *Roland*, called *Donnerpamp* ("Thunder-Dunder"), with music by Stenborg and Zander in collaboration. And in 1784, on January 17, the first night of *Njugg spar och fan tar* ("The Niggard Saves and the Devil Takes")was a great success out at Eriks-

berg. That same year Zander also wrote music for *Herrgårdshögtiden*, ("The Feast at the Manor"), a short play on the occasion of the king's return from his long Italian journey. As for *Kopparslagaren* and *Njugg spar*, the libretto was furnished by Carl Envallson, a fluent and talented writer, who from now on also was the translator most in demand by the company for its texts,

In 1784, Stenborg opened a new theatre, this time in the house of a Mrs Nyman, widow of a wealthy brewer, on the Munkbro Quay, in the Old Town. Christened "The New Swedish Comedy Theatre", it was inaugurated on October 29 with Stenborg's own *Gustaf Eriksson i Dalarna*, the text being by the ever-active and lively Envallson. In this new building everything was better and more comfortably arranged, both for personnel and audience, and it was much easier of access (in those days the Eriksberg area lay outside town, and was generally and rightly known as "The Marsh"). The king had his special places, as at Drottningholm, behind grilles . . .

The next few years saw few new lyric plays put on—in 1785 only two: *De bägge girige* ("The Two Misers") by Grétry, and *Alexis, eller Desertören* ("Alexis, or The Deserter") by Monsigny, both of which had already been put on at the Royal Opera. Of new works staged in 1786, Gluck's *Pilgrimerna* ("The Pilgrims") and Benda's famous melodrama *Ariadne på Naxos* ("Ariadne on Naxos") are worth a mention.

In 1787 the Stenborg Theatre added two special novelties to its repertoire, both entitled *opéras-comiques en vaudevilles*—a peculiar form in which the whole play went to already existing, "borrowed" music, without any dialogue at all. The plays in question were *Colin och Babet* and *Slåtterölet, eller Kronofogdarna* ("The Harvest-Home, or The Royal Bailiffs"). For the latter piece Zander had written an extensive and well-worked out overture, and had as usual arranged some of the borrowed tunes. Though the overture is perhaps not very substantial, being partly built up of loosely linked "potpourri sections", it is a fresh and appealing work. Both these vaudevilles went in a popular vein, with many of the tunes which we mainly associate with Bellman. *Kronofogdarna* was an especial favourite (when it was given for the hundredth time, in 1797, it was as a special benefit performance for Envallson). In a word, it was to be *the* Swedish national lyric play before Dahlgren's and Randel's *Vermländingarne*. The characters in *Colin och Babet*, too, gained a certain popularity, and in 1788 the play gave the theatre a sequel: *Mor Bobi*. That year the company also performed the popular *Tillfälle gör tjuven* ("Opportuni-

ty Makes the Thief"), likewise a vaudeville, and the first in Sweden, having originally been put on in 1783. This time Zander had written a new polska. Zander's *Lisette*, his next *opéra-comique*, went on in 1789; and in the following year he made a new version of the old opera *Syrinx*, a compilation originally staged in Stockholm back in the 1740s. In 1791, Stenborg put on *Äventyraren* ("The Adventurer"), a play by Lannerstjerna with music by many composers, including Kraus, Frigel and himself and likely also Zander.

In that same year Zander wrote the music to *Den tokroliga natten* ("The Farcical Night"), an *opéra-comique* which is nothing other than Dittersdorf's legendary play *Doktor und Apotheker*, and was indeed performed from time to time under its original title. Just why Zander was asked to write new music to it we do not know; clearly it wasn't as popular as his other works. Perhaps he thought he could write music with greater audience appeal to his own audiences—sometimes, like all composers at this time, he'd write new arias or choruses to imported operettas, in lieu of those which had come with them. In 1790, for example, he composed a new song finale for Philidor's *Tom Jones*. Both Stenborg and Zander sometimes seem to have orchestrated imported operas from their vocal scores only, adapting the scores to the size of their orchestra. We have many such orchestral scores in autograph.

In 1792, Zander wrote some very successful couplets to *Qvinnorna och förtroendet* ("Women and Confidence"). Though not very important musically—at this time his output was restricted just to couplets—it would be the most performed of all his lyric plays. His next and last work for the Stenborg Theatre was *Den förförda flickan* ("The Girl Seduced") 1793, which two years earlier had been put on as a spoken play by Didrik Gabriel Björn, another of the company's own text writers. Zander's music, turning it into an operetta, enhanced its audience appeal.

The Swedish Comedy Theatre (as it was renamed in 1788) went on performing plays and operettas right up to 1796, the year of Zander's death; but soon thereafter its operatic productions began to decline—possibly because his successor (whose name we do not know) lacked his capacities. When, in 1798, the Royal Dramatic Theatre (at the Arsenal Theatre) was given permission to put on operettas and light operas, the story of Stenborg's theatre came to an end, and in 1799 he dispersed his company.

When Flodmark came to write his book on Stenborg and his theatre, he attempted a description of his and Zander's musical works,

and also to get them revived. The only practical outcome was some freshly written vocal parts. But the 1950s did see a minor Zander renaissance when the Huddinge Orkesterförening, on the initiative of its chairman Anders Edgren, had some of his works written out and performed. In 1953 both his symphony and his overture to *Den förförda flickan* were played in a church—where the latter was billed simply as "Overture in D major", for decency's sake! Some years later I was responsible for a stage performance of *Kopparslagaren* in collaboration with the former Opera School (director Isa Quensel, with Birgit Nordin among the singers); also of a performance of the overture and entracte of *Njugg spar* ... (once again in the church, obliging me to bill the work under its subtitle *Åldrarnas dårskaper* ["Follies of Age"]) to eliminate the original's offensive reference to the devil!). By this time I had become interested in Zander's music, and around 1960 I wrote out his symphony and some of his overtures, which have since been played by some of our major orchestras. From time to time I have myself conducted them, and I also recall a fine version of the symphony by Sten Frykberg at one of his legendary "symphony matinées" in the hall where *Njugg spar* ... had been put on the previous day. But to claim that Zander's music is really well-known either to musicians or audiences is to exaggerate. He has suffered much the same fate as all older Swedish composers ...

Neither very personal nor original, his music sounds like most of the period's *opéras-comiques*, and his stylistic models transpire all too clearly. In his orchestral pieces he often invokes Haydn: e.g. when, as in the overture to *Njugg spar* ..., he uses an ABA-form, with a slow middle section. The slow introduction is briefly echoed in the exceptionally extended development of the overture to *Den förförda flickan*. The overtures to *Kopparslagaren* and *Den tokroliga natten*, with their lively hustling forms, are more concentrated (the latter being followed by another orchestral number intended for an introductory dance or pantomime).

The overture to *Lisette* is directly connected with one of the song numbers in that opera's first act; and there is also a small but evident connection between the overture's bass movement and the last section of the final sextet in *Njugg spar* ..., and a brief motif from *Kopparslagaren's* first aria being heard in its overture. The final numbers of most of Zander's operas (*Kopparslagaren*, *Njugg spar* ..., *Lisette*, *Den förförda flickan*, and *Qvinnorna och förtroendet*) are socalled "vaudevilles", though this time in another sense of that expression, here indicating a strongly strophic form, where each of the play's main

characters sings his or her verse to the audience, at least one verse being directly addressed to the audience ("if you've enjoyed the play, we hope you'll applaud it and us"). *Den tokroliga natten* too has a similar finale, though this time sung by the whole company.

From all this it will be seen that Zander's music is not very complex, and he is overfond of certain clichés, e.g., the "buffa" bass movement, with *tremoli* in the higher string parts and sustaining chords in the winds. Such prescriptions for codas are to be found in all his overtures and in many of his vocal numbers. Many sections are nothing but "melody with simple accompaniment".

The conventional ABA-form, on the other hand, is not common in his arias and other vocal numbers. *Kopparslagaren* has in all only three such numbers, none of which, though "nearly" ABA, is a regular *da capo* aria. *Njugg spar* ... has only two real *da capo* arias, one of them being given, typically, to the play's "opera primadonna", together with a *fermata* for her *cadenzas*! The other is old Jeremiah's aria about his shipwreck: and here, in my performance, I made a cut in the *da capo*, to spare him having to sing his prayer all over again—illogically, as it seems to us today. On the other hand you can find many more developed song numbers with disparate sections in different tempi piled up on one another, as in two of the duets in *Njugg spar* ..., and very extended rondo forms, as in two big arias in *Kopparslagaren*. Zander's later works—*Den förförda flickan* and *Den tokroliga natten*—contain some even more highly elaborated sections; and the latter play has a second act virtually composed throughout, and a grand finale to its fourth and last act. These two scores (unfortunately written down with only *Violino I* and *Basso* and no middle parts) contain any amount of stage directions, indicating that Zander had by now become fully aware of his music's dramatic effects, character and timing. One very special effect, in *Njugg spar* ..., is the idea of combining Gertrud's minor and Jeremiah's major couplet (at the ending of the long recitative) to form a simultaneous major-minor duet!

A special grouped form found in Zander's arias has two, directly corresponding, sections: A-A^1, where the first part ends in the parallel tonality and the second in the basic one. Such is Arwed the servant's aria, actually taken from *Kopparslagaren* (where it had been Zander's first real hit song); likewise, in *Njugg spar* ..., Urban's aria (where the initial theme is not repeated) and Bengt's little aria to strings only. The same fundamental idea also lies behind other song numbers in that opera, as for example Nora's little cavatina. Present-day produc-

ers find this dual form, with identical words in the two halves, something of a problem, as it holds up the action. Such an A-A^1 form, however, is neither new nor unusual. On the contrary, the principle is found in old dances by Bach and his contemporaries; but here it is seemingly adapted to suit the text, on which it becomes wholly dependent. It would be interesting to know whether the composer was able to influence the librettist in this respect. Probably Zander had to compose to already written libretti, and he certainly did it with both gusto and imagination, and as a good craftsman.

Himself a good violinist, Zander gives the orchestra violins many demanding passages. The winds are given many solo phrases and other characteristic—or characterizing—touches, as well as having to fill up the harmony. Then, compared with Mozart, for example, the horns are frequently sounding. Zander convincingly balances his fine orchestral sense against the vocal parts, which can also be most demanding on singers—for *Njugg spar* ... he must have had at his disposal four high sopranos and two good tenors! At its best his music is vivid, melodious, intense and charming: and, I both think and hope, well worth playing and listening to today.

CARL ENVALLSSON AND SWEDISH "NATIONAL MUSIC"

James Massengale

THE NAME CARL ENVALLSSON (Fig. 1) is not a household word in Sweden. He is representative of that talented, hard-working, self-effacing aspect of the extraordinary flowering of theatrical originality that blossomed under the aegis of Gustaf III. Along with countless others of the historical footnote class who created and arranged texts, music, scenery, costumes and all the other amenities of an entertainment-hungry Stockholm, Envallsson has "gone to history" in the anonymous sense. The waves of cultural change have closed over his head, leaving hardly a trace of his energetic, knowledgeable and witty activity. So much talent and so much labor, and so little to show for it in terms of personal comfort! This prolific carpenter of comedies had left the one surrealistic tragedy—his own—unwritten when, prematurely old at age 50 and complaining of blindness and indigence, he faded like a shadow of the defunct Stenborg theater.

But Stenborg's "Swedish Comic Theater," during the period 1781–1799, and the Gustavian theatrical scene in general would have appeared much different, and immeasureably poorer, without Envallsson's steady flow of translations and original or semi-original scripts. One might venture to guess that the group at the Munkbro Theater might even have collapsed at an early point if it had not been for the popularity of Envallsson's work. No other playwright of the age produced the quantity of material that Envallsson did, and while a goodly number of his shows were clearly potboilers designed for immediate and temporary consumption, several of his comedies became enormously and deservedly successful for decades. Theatrical historians have made much of the landmark successes of the Gusta-

Fig. 1. Carl Envallsson (1756–1806). Silhouette cutout by unknown artist. NM.

vian theater: *Thetis och Pelée* (1773) and *Gustaf Wasa* (1786), the latter called "an incomparable success in the annals of [Swedish] opera."[1] But the undeniable artistic peaks that these productions represented are put in better perspective if one compares the statistics of their popularity with those of Envallsson's vaudeville comedy from 1787, *Kronofogdarne* ("The Royal Bailiffs", a freely conceived adaptation of Piis and Barré's *Les Vendangeurs, ou les Deux Baillis*). This latter song play ran up a remarkable 112 performances at the Munkbro (Fig. 2), and continued long after the Gustavian era to be the most-played Swedish theater piece until Dahlgren's *Vermländingarne* ("The People of Värmland", 1846) eventually overtook it. From the time of their original productions until 1860, the number of performances of *Kronofogdarne* was almost double that of *Gustaf Wasa*.

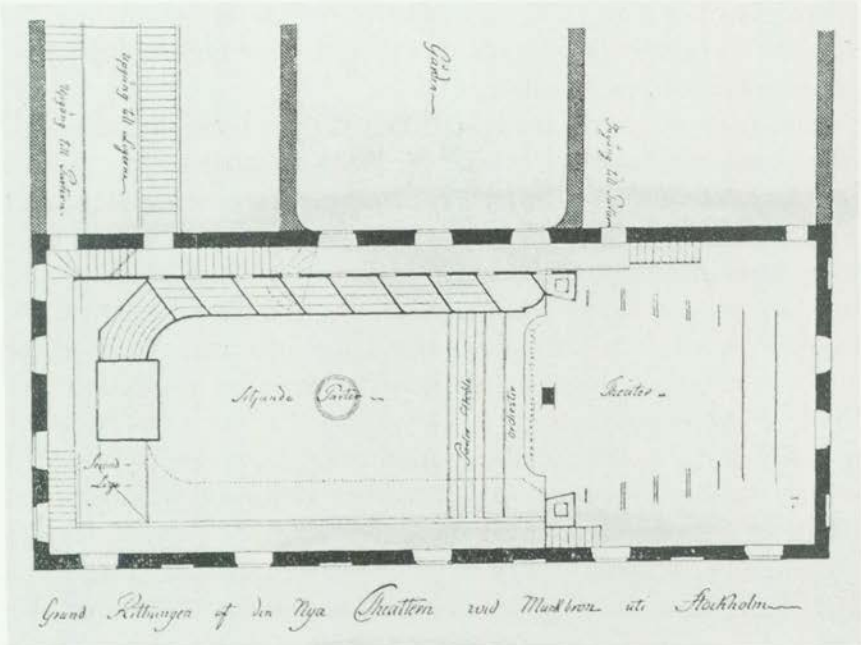


Fig. 2. "Ground plan of the new theatre on Munkbron in Stockholm." KB.

It is not Envallsson the librettist, however, that is my subject here. It is rather that musical side of his activity for which he himself offered apologies, as merely a necessary prerequisite for his attempt to make his comedies more musical, and more inherently Swedish, as he transported the scene from France to Sweden.[2] The prerequisite concerned his knowledge about music in general, and specifically his understanding and collection of Swedish folksong and -game material. How Envallsson became a musical expert and a contributor to our stock of folktunes is not a matter which can be solved in a few pages. So little is known about his artistic development that tracing the impulses which guided his inquisitive mind may not be possible at all.[3] He was clearly an educated and literate man when he joined the War Office as a junior clerk without regular pay in 1776. As he states in a bankruptcy declaration from 1788, he had supported himself through school at Uppsala University without any parental inheritance.[4] Undoubtedly, his interminable duties at the War Office comprised a boring drudgery that he first suffered in hopes of getting ahead, and finally neglected in favor of the taste of glamour from the theater—an attitude that may have sealed the fate of his hopes for any normal

promotion. Not until 1802 was he finally made notary public, and his eyesight apparently failed soon after that, making the job difficult, if not impossible to carry out.

Envallsson was undoubtedly introduced into the theatrical world, or at least got his early encouragement in writing for it, by Carl Stenborg. The young and vibrant Stenborg Theater owed its source of inspiration and much of its claim to fame and to reasonably good taste to its many-talented and influential director. Stenborg himself was a reliable, and, it would seem, reasonably well-liked leader of the troupe.[5] He was one of Sweden's best actors and singers, played the violin and composed music and translated texts for production. But the busy entrepreneur could not have had the time to provide the quantity of material that his enthusiastic audiences needed. How the contact between Stenborg and Envallsson was made is not certain. But from January 1781 on, much of the burden of adapting foreign texts for the Stenborg troupe in its several venues was entrusted to Envallsson. From the very beginning (*Tunnbindaren* ["The Keg Maker"], 17 January 1781, for the Eriksberg Theater), Envallsson's specialty was that of the *opéra-comique*, lyrical comedy, or the vaudeville—the various types of musical comedy in which the setting of new texts to given tunes was a crucial part of the translator's or adaptor's art. Once his technique had become polished, Envallsson found few rivals. But possibly because of a fear of ramifications for his work in the War Office, he emerged only slowly, perhaps reluctantly, from anonymity: his full name appears on the theater's posters for the first time on 18 February 1787, in the seventh year of his creative activity, in spite of the fact that he had been mentioned well before then in the newspapers.[6]

But his artistic awareness and a willingness to please his public and to learn from it, are definitely, if sparsely, documented in the few personal statements we have from his pen. At the end of a little critical polemic in Stockholmsposten on 29 November, 1784, he wrote:

> That writer who will not listen to intelligent people's comments never deserves the honorable name of *author*, but should never be deemed anything more than a copyist; on the other hand, one should not forget: *que la critique est aisée, mais l'art est difficile.*[7]

In defense of the validity of his fluffy comic style thirteen years later, he wrote in answer to an irate critic of his little farce *Casper och Lona*:

> Any honorable and reasonable person accepts a thing for what it is and ought to be. He knows that when you write a little theater piece intended for

satire, humor and good fun, you cannot sharpen your pen for the composition of a tender and moving play with a finer style and more elevated thoughts . . .[8]

That is to say, Envallsson was well aware both of the duties and the limitations of his charge, and he strove to fulfill these conscientiously. His condescending attitude toward Stenborg's other major text-author, Björn, was apparently motived more by these principles than by simple rivalry. Neither Envallsson nor Björn had any unusual dramatic power, nor were the French originals from which Envallsson drew his comedies suppliers of great dramatic inspiration. Most of them are variations on the dramatic scheme: boy loves girl, boy loses (or thinks he loses) girl, boy regains girl. But the setting was always tasteful and charming, and the mood was underscored by the popular tunes, many of which were used over and over until they became synonymous with the standard expression of a specific mood or situation. This quickly became a rather developed musical-poetic system, based upon the reuse of popular tunes, and a consensus among most of the composers of French operetta to add to this stock of melodies. Not only did Envallsson master the art of setting a new text to the given melodies, he transferred its whole frame of reference to Sweden, retaining French melodies which had already become popular in Stockholm and substituting local melodic material where it better served his purpose. Since old prejudice against the use of the Swedish language on the stage was by no means a dead issue in his time, he had to approach the adaptation of new verse to old melodies of both Swedish and French extraction with some delicacy. He has also left a little statement to show that he was aware of this problem:

How successful I have been in my choice of melodies, only the performances can show. This playful and charming type of drama has many difficulties, which are not immediately apparent: each and every melody has to express the exact moment, and the writer has to write without the assistance of any particular composer. The melodies have to function together with the poetry, and often the latter must bend to accommodate the former . . .[9]

It would be misleading to represent the effort and art that Envallsson poured into his lyrical adaptations as an exercise in futility. He did after all produce the most successful musical theater vehicle of his day in "The Bailiffs". But one senses that his considerable talent was nonetheless squandered on his contemporaries. His labor of love for his public lasted to the end of the Gustavian Age and beyond, but the decade following the death of Gustaf III found him in increasingly

difficult circumstances, artistically as well as financially. As he gradually showed signs of "burn-out," or at least a slackening of pace in his translations and adaptations, he also found himself in increasing conflict with the changing taste of his audience. The public was warming to the "*drame*", and was less interested in the bucolic French style or the *commedia dell'arte*-based adaptations at which Envallsson excelled.[10] The old playing style, with its exaggerated and highly stylized gesticulations and easily parodied clichés, gave way rapidly to a more nuanced range of expression used in the contemporary family plays—a development in its own way rather like that of the realistic breakthrough of the 1880's. And Envallsson's attempt to produce a typical Swedish atmosphere in his work was at times met with a snobbish attitude, resulting in public criticism not only of his work, but by implication, of his own character. Envallsson did however enjoy a few genuinely satisfying moments: he requested from Stenborg, and received, a benefit performance at the 100th representation of "The Bailiffs" in 1797. And his *Colin och Babet* also passed the same mark a little later that year. But the Stenborg theater, already heading toward its demise, was itself increasingly plagued by financial difficulties. Our author of some eighty plays and libretti, of which 62 had been performed, found himself by 1802 virtually without a theater to write for, nor the means to support himself in any other way.[11]

During the last four years of his life, Envallsson produced a number of non-theatrical publications, of which one has its rightful place as a milestone in Swedish musical history: his *Svenskt Musikaliskt Lexikon* (Stockholm: Marquard, 1802). Based upon, but not simply "freely translated from" the *Dictionnaire de Musique* by J. J. Rousseau, the work stands as the first Swedish musical dictionary.[12] Not only is it generally useful as a clearly expressed indicator of musical tradition of the time, it also contains a number of articles on subjects close to Envallsson's chosen field of theater and theatrical resources that are of unusual interest to scholarship in the field. One of these, entitled "*National-Musik*", deserves a closer look, since it precedes by a decade those early Romantic notions about the nature of "Folk music" in Sweden, and reflects the attitudes and usages of such material by an older generation, apparently free from the influence of Herder or the Neo-Platonic theory current in Germany. The quaint article reads in greater part as follows:

NATIONAL-MUSIC. Such music or song that most commonly is used by a particular nation, and corresponds to its character and its temperament.

People have been quite mistaken about the Swedish National music, espe-

cially when they have wished to represent the so-called *Hönsgummans visa* ("the Old Hen-lady" song) and similar songs as such; because the aforementioned song has its origin in [the province of] Södermanland, where one often finds church parishes with their own parish melodies, e.g., "Wingåker's Dance".

One should thus differentiate Provincial melodies from National music. *Dalkars-Wisan* ("the Dalecarlians' song") is another such, and, like numerous Provincial melodies, goes in the minor. But it would be hard to deny that the genuine Swedish National music has been in the major mode ... It is true that many melodies are also found in minor. But could it not be that the reason for this lies in the disposition of the collector,[13] his taste and other occasional matters; for it is known that many of these minor melodies are not so extremely old, but were compiled in greater part by King Erik XIV in his melancholy days. The reason for the minor mode in many can also be sought in the location of the area and the loneliness of the shepherd's lot, as in the case of *Daldansen* (the "Dale-dance"). But as far as the more common festival melodies of the Swedes are concerned, the description of their music's strength and gaiety, their "bear-struck" and tumultuous harp-playing with gloves, etc., gives us considerable reason to believe that the major mode must have been most employed ... What melody is more common around the whole country than *Mina getter och mina bockar* ("My Nanny-goats and my Billy-goats"), etc.? How many bridal chambers are there not in the towns and in the country, where, when the crown is taken from the bride's head, the well-known dance is played: *Aldrig blir den bruden* ... ("The Bride shall never be [a virgin again]")? ... The author has as large a collection of these [Swedish National melodies] as he has been able to collect. But in the count, the major melodies are very much greater in number.

Mixed in with the amusing nonsense from Sjöberg's *Afhandling om de Nordiska Antiqviteterna* ("Dissertation on Nordic Antiquities") that the bards played their harps so vigorously that they had to wear gloves (and this as proof that they played in major keys), can be found some information of genuine interest. Envallsson's distinction between "national music" and "provincial music," as two differing aspects of what the Swedish Romantics would soon call "folk music," is worth noting. His notion that the most widely spread folk music of Sweden was predominantly in the major mode would not hold up under close scrutiny today. But the dancing game melodies and the humorous songs built on "*polska*" (mazurka) melodies, marches and contredances might well show this trait. When the "provincial melodies" were sought out by collectors a generation later and were published, they became, *de facto*, "National" Swedish melodies, and retained their "provincial" origins only as part of the researchers' notes.

Envallsson shows a curious lack of concern for the songs "collected

by Erik XIV in his days of melancholy": if they were not "old" by Envallsson's apparently condescending standard, they certainly would be by ours, and in any case would include older songs than "My She-goats and my He-goats they chew Bark from the Trees"! If indeed such material were to resurface, it would constitute a national treasure.[14]

Meanwhile what, one wonders, could have happened to Envallsson's *own* collection of folk tunes? If indeed he was engaged in collecting songs and dances during his years as a librettist for the Stenborg theaters, he might well have put together the first major body of folksongs in Sweden. Where did it go? The declining author took it upon himself to publish several volumes of anecdotes and miscellany between 1802 and his death; but no "national tunes." In 1806 his estate was listed in detail, but it reflects only the pitiable condition into which he had fallen: besides a few items of clothing, "three napkins and one curtain," and so on, there were a few books: some of his publications of anecdotes, fifteen of his plays and the manuscript to his Musical Dictionary. No collection of folk music was apparently found at that time.[15]

In an oblique way, however, it is possible to reconstruct at least a sample of the Envallsson folksong collection. "Envallsson melodies" have been used by Bellman scholars for the last hundred years to reinforce and supplement our knowledge of the tunes to which Bellman set his own poems. The procedure used for this is based upon Envallsson's adherence to the so-called "timbre" system of references to old tunes by name. Such "timbres" are found in the following published plays by Envallsson:

Hofslagaren ("THE BLACKSMITH"), OPÉRA-COMIQUE ("MUSIC ARRANGED BY C[ARL] S[TENBORG]"), 1782

Bajocco och Serpilla ("BAJOCCO AND SERPILLA"), OPERETTE ("MUSIC BY SODI; BUT ONLY PARTIALLY RETAINED. THE OTHER AIRS ARE TAKEN FROM OTHER GOOD COMPOSERS' WORKS AND MIXED WITH VAUDEVILLES"), 1784

Colin och Babet ("COLIN AND BABET"), OPÉRA-COMIQUE, 1787

Slåtter-Ölet, eller *Kronofogdarne* ("THE BAILIFFS"), LYRICAL COMEDY, 1787

Sorgen för Glädjen Går, eller *Mor Bobi och Skolmästaren* ("MOTHER BOBI AND THE SCHOOLMASTER"), "ORIGINAL" LYRICAL COMEDY, 1788

Bobis Bröllop ("BOBI'S WEDDING"), "ORIGINAL" LYRICAL COMEDY, 1788

Sven och Maja, eller *Kärleken på Landsbygden* ("SVEN AND MAJA"), LYRICAL COMEDY, 1789

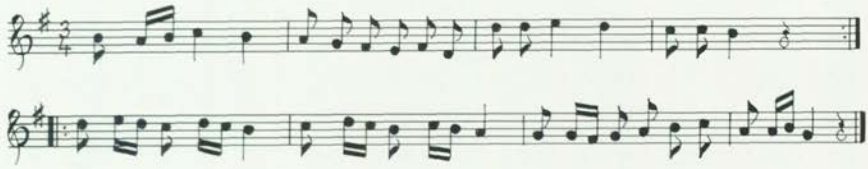
Den Ädelmodiga Princessan, eller *Nybyggarne i Norrmandiet* ("THE MAGNANIMOUS PRINCESS"), LYRICAL COMEDY, 1796

Raton och Rosette, eller *Den segrande kärleken* ("RATON AND ROSETTE"), LYRICAL COMEDY-PASTORALE, 1799

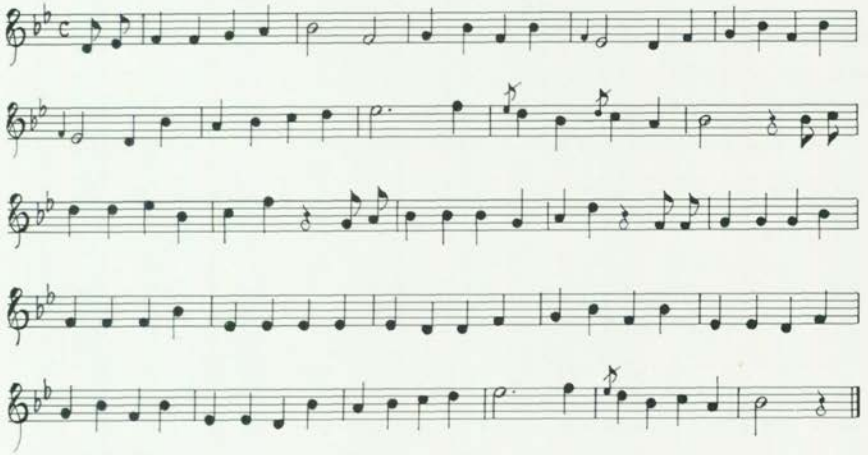
Iphigenie den andra, eller *De gamla Grekiska Historierna* ("IPHIGENIE THE SECOND"), OPÉRA-COMIQUE ("MUSIC CHOSEN BY THE TRANSLATOR"), 1800.[16]

From the references given by Envallsson in these libretti, about 380 melodies in the works can be identified. Since many of the scores for the operettas have been preserved in the Library of the Royal Musical Academy in Stockholm (MAB) or in the holdings of the Royal Dramatic Theater (also available through MAB), the actual melodies corresponding to many of these references may be found. Examples of Envallsson's Swedish "national" or folk material include the following:

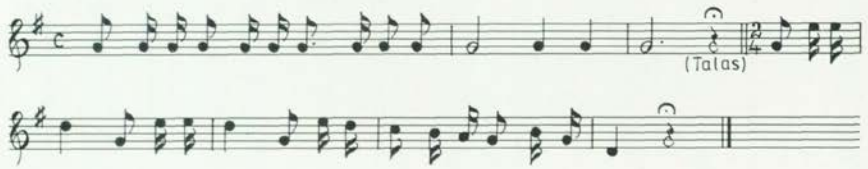
Aldrig blir den bruden jungfru mera (FOUND IN *Colin och Babet*, ACT II SCENE 4, AS A REFERENCE FROM THE SONG, "Aldrig är du Bobis dotter mera").



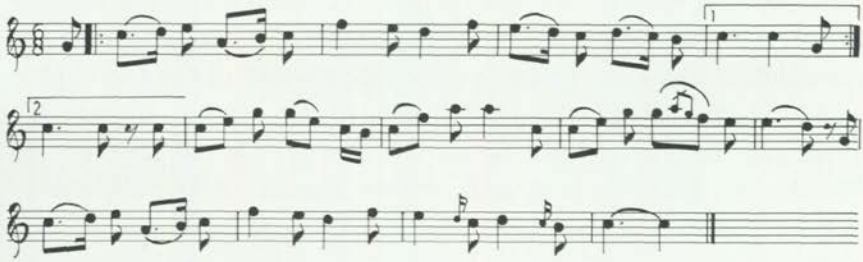
(En gammal) Brudmarsch (FOUND IN *Kronofogdarne*, ACT II SCENE 6, AS A REFERENCE FROM THE SONG, "Åh, fy, fy! mit vackra barn!")



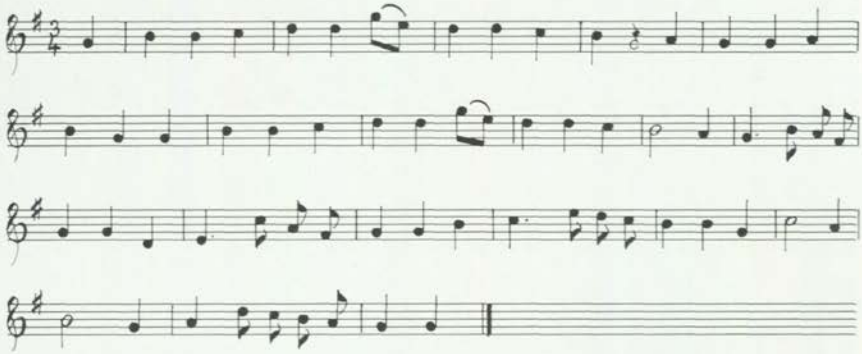
Bulleri-bulleri-bock! (SONG-GAME USED IN *Colin och Babet*, ACT II SCENE 3)



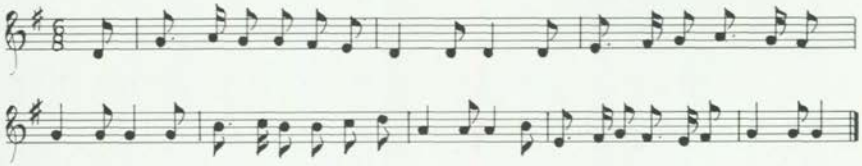
Du lilla Gud, som hjertan bryr (FOUND IN *Hofslagaren,* ACT I SCENE 2, AS A REFERENCE FROM THE SONG, "Jag ej mit hjerta bort vil ge", AND IN *Iphigenie den andra*, ACT III SCENE 1, AS A REFERENCE FROM THE SONG, "Ack, hvilka olycksfulla dar")



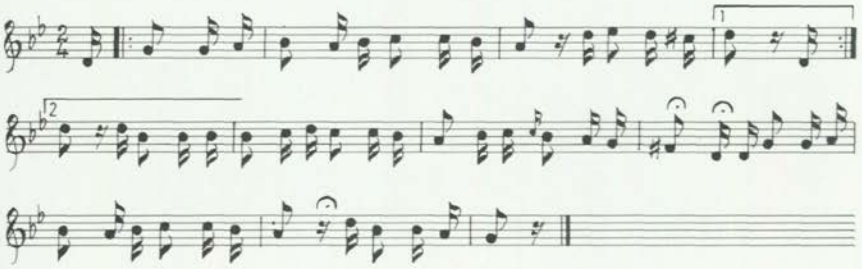
Der stodo tre pigor *(*planterade kål*)* (FOUND IN *Iphigenie den andra*, ACT III SCENE 2, AS A REFERENCE FROM THE SONG, "Diana! vänd åter med alt tyranni")



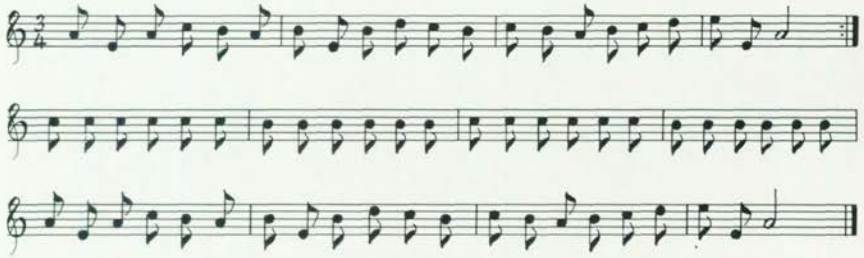
Här komma två fattige Spelemän (FOUND IN *Kronofogdarne*, ACT III SCENE 6, AS A REFERENCE FROM THE SONG, "Välkommen, min Herre! det artigt var")



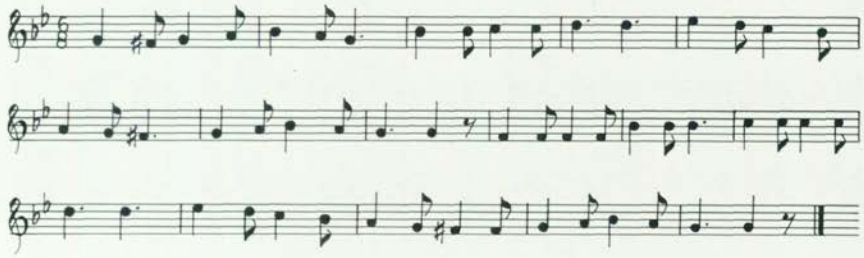
Hönsgummans visa (FOUND IN *Bobis Bröllop,* ACT I SCENE 2, AS A REFERENCE FROM THE SONG, "Du lilla Magister! ... pusslustige tok!")



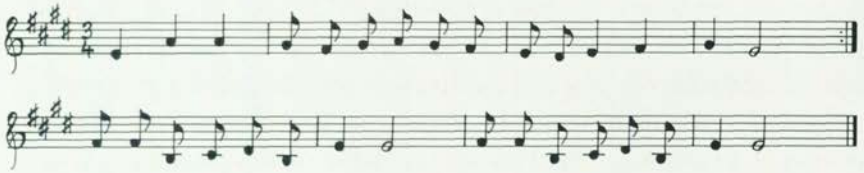
Hör du sparfver lilla (FOUND IN *Bobis Bröllop*, ACT I SCENE 7, AS A REFERENCE FROM THE SONG, "Tror ni mig så fånig")



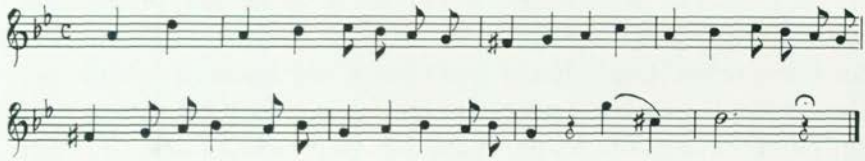
Jag är född i Westergylln, ej långt från Kinnekulle (FOUND IN *Kronofogdarne*, ACT III SCENE 2, AS A REFERENCE FROM THE SONG, "Nå, min Herre! nå jag ber")



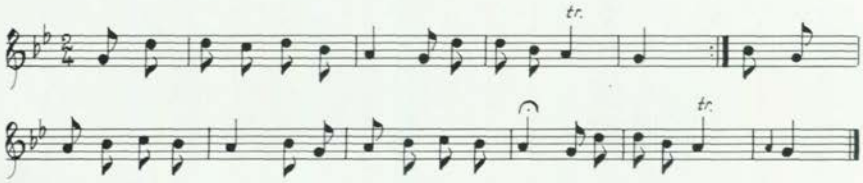
Qvarndansen (FOUND IN *Kronofogdarne*, ACT III SCENE 8, AS A REFERENCE FROM THE SONG, "Vassherr! hvad det mörknar til")



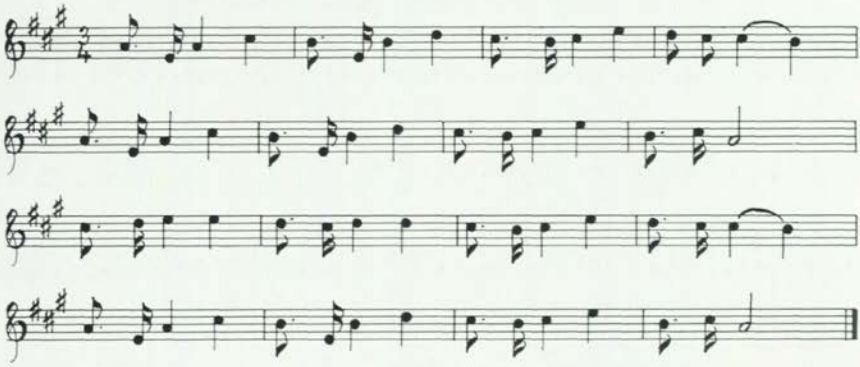
Min far var en Wästgöthe han, han (FOUND IN *Raton och Rosette,* ACT II SCENE 6, AS A REFERENCE FROM THE SONG, "Nå! utaf lutter harm må jag spricke!")
Stegdansen (FOUND IN *Sven och Maja*, ACT I SCENE 6, AS A REFERENCE FROM THE SONG, "Håll Fader Ingmar! och lär er at veta")
Tri trå trenne (SONG-GAME USED IN *Colin och Babet,* ACT II SCENE 3)



Tussalulla litet barn (FOUND IN *Iphigenie den andra,* ACT II SCENE 3, AS A REFERENCE FROM THE SONG, "Sen jag utstått alt besvär")



Vackra Jomfru, lilla vänsko (FOUND IN *Colin och Babet,* ACT I SCENE 5, AS A REFERENCE FROM THE SONG, "Ack! mit caput hvad det lider!")



Vallmars-Dansen (FOUND IN *Raton och Rosette*, ACT I SCENE 7, AS A REFERENCE FROM THE SONG, "Nå nå, vår kära grannas far").[17]

In Envallsson's songs we find musical representatives of lyrical and humorous "younger" balladry, dances and lullabies. There is hardly a trace of medieval ballad tunes or older material in general. Part of the reason undoubtedly lies in Envallsson's predilection for the sorts of song material which would lie within the compass of his perceived notion of what his public wanted: *Le Public seul est aujourd'hui mon étude, mon Dieu, mon Père,* as he said.[18] Envallsson was not such a poetic snob that he would have considered true medieval balladry to be inadequate as a musical-poetic vehicle. He might, of course, have considered it useless as a vehicle for most of his comic scenes. But given the evidence before us, there is reason to believe that Envallsson had little or no access to the old ballads, despite his intense interest in musical sources of all types. From his economically pressed and untraveled position in Stockholm, he was apparently unaware that anything resembling a living tradition of old balladry existed; and those ballads that had undergone literary and satirical treatment in the hands of poets like Dalin would only be a proof of this.[19] Envalls-

son's genuine interest in Swedish folklore and Swedish national traits, with which he imbued his adaptations, reflects the cosmopolitan and genteel modicum of knowledge which was sufficient for the working and administrative class—*medelståndet*—which was his public. His dictionary article and the fragmentary evidence of his own collection of folk material, then, are reflections of what the intellectuals and townpeople of 18th-century Sweden believed to constitute their own folk music.

Envallsson's material is not to be understood only for what it is *not*, however. While only fragmentary bits of his collection can now be reassembled from the operatic scores, and while one must be careful in analyzing them to allow for possible distortions that may have crept in the melodies' adaptation to new texts and to the necessities of stage performance, the music of Envallsson is at least worthy of comparison to what is found in the later—in some cases much later—collections by Afzelius and Arwidsson.[20] In his choice and in his use of folksong and folkdance, we can observe some of the earliest collected versions of these melodies, as well as the attitude of the Gustavian Age toward such national resources—a glimpse of the Enlightenment on the songs and games that were sung and played in Sweden before the Romantics declared these things to be "folk music" and elevated them to orphic status.

NOTES

1. This quote from Beijer, A., in *Gustavianskt: Ny svensk historia*. Stockholm: Wahlström och Widstrand, 1945 p. 266 reflects common opinion about the work. Cf. Georg Nordensvan, *Svensk Teater*. Stockholm: Bonnier, 1917, p. 16 f.
2. In the introduction to his Musical Dictionary (about which more will be said below), Envallsson claimed that he only compiled it after waiting for a considerable time for someone more competent to do the job.
3. Johan Flodmark speaks of Envallsson's particular flair for and education in music, which made him particularly capable of handling the idiom of opéra-comique (see "Carl Envallsson och hans *Kronofogdar*" in *Sveriges Teaterhistoriska Samfundets Årsskrift*, 1914, p. 4). The flair is undeniable; but where the education came from, besides a modicum of coaching by Stenborg, is simply unknown.
4. From a document in Rådhusarkivet, cited in Flodmark, J., *Stenborgska Skådebanorna*. Stockholm: Norstedt, 1893 p. 510.
5. Marie-Christine Skuncke has noted that Envallsson "sometimes quarrelled violently with Stenborg" (*Sweden and European drama 1772–1796*. Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell, 1981, 73 f.). But Envallsson's major claim against Stenborg—a financial one—came only after the collapse of the Svenska Komiska Teatern, and was probably an act of desperation on the writer's part. In earlier dealings the tone between the men appears cordial, although a formal and impersonal tone is maintained throughout.
6. Flodmark, J., *Stenborgska Skådebanorna*, p. 245; cf. also quotation from Dagligt Allehanda in the same work, p. 187.
7. Cited in Flodmark, *Stenborgska Skådebanorna*, p. 193.
8. Stockholmsposten, 12 June 1797; cited in Flodmark, *Stenborgska Skådebanorna*, p. 475.

9. Introductory notes to *Sorgen för Glädjen går, eller Mor Bobi och Skolmästaren* ("Mother Bobi and the Schoolmaster"). Stockholm: Zetterberg, 1788.
10. See especially Skuncke, op. cit., p. 144 ff., on the progress of the *drame* in Sweden.
11. The count of 62 is taken from Flodmark, *Carl Envallsson och hans "Kronofogdar,"* p. 1.
12. Cf. art. "Envallson, Carl," in *Biographiskt Lexicon öfver Namnkunnige Svenska Män*. Uppsala: Leffler och Sebell, 1838, bibliography: "Andra Arbeten: Musikaliskt Lexicon af Rousseau. Fri Öfvers."
13. Envallsson actually uses the word "*sammansättare*" = composer, compiler.
14. "A catalog of King Erik's library made in 1568 includes no less than 22 books of music," notes Tobias Norlind in *Svensk Musikhistoria*. Stockholm: Wahlström & Widstrand, 1918, 69 f.
15. From Förmyndarkammarens arkiv, cited in Flodmark, *Stenborgska Skådebanorna,* p. 512.
16. Other plays by Envallsson, such as *Casper och Lona* from 1797 and *Det Indiska Campementet* from 1784, used "vaudevilles" in whole or part; but the printed text does not contain "timbres" or verbal references to the melodies, and the author therefore does not himself identify any of the music as coming directly from a "national" or folk source.
17. In the case of three of these: "Min far var en Wästgöthe han, han", "Stegdansen" and "Vallmars-Dansen", the scores have not been preserved.
18. In the introductory apology for *Sorgen för Glädjen Går* cited in fn. 7.
19. A similar picture of the "active" musical culture of the 18th century is found in the tune references in Swedish broadsides. See the comprehensive list of these in Jersild, M., *Skillingtryck*. Stockholm: Svenskt visarkiv, 1975, p. 229–443.
20. For example, *Traditioner af Swenska Folk-Dansar,* ed. (Afzelius, A. A. and Åhlström, O.) Stockholm: Kgl. Not-Tryckeriet, 1814–15 and *Svenska Fornsånger*, ed. Arwidsson, A. I., Stockholm: Norstedt, 1834–42.

PARODIES

The Gustavian mirror

Alan Swanson

THE GENERAL HIGH-MINDEDNESS of the Gustavian stage could not forever be sustained without an occasional puncture to let in fresh air. Petter Stenborg's private theatre in Humlegården (Fig. 1) provided some ventilation on August 31, 1775, when it staged Carl Israel Hallman's (Fig. 2) and Carl Stenborg's *Casper och Dorothea. Heroisk Djurgårds-Ballet i Tre-Acter* ("Casper and Dorothea. A Heroic Ballet of Djurgården in Three Acts").[1] This parody of an arrangement by Lars Samuel Lalin and others of John Gay's and George Frederick Handel's masque, *Acis and Galathea*, almost equalled its model in popularity, to judge by the number of recorded performances.[2] It was even played at court and, though some were offended, the king apparently liked it.[3]

In *Casper och Dorothea*, Hallman generalized the parody. That is, he travestied the characters of the Swedish version—Galathea/Dorothea is a barmaid (*Krog-Nymf*), her Acis/Casper is a journeyman cobbler with a thick German accent (itself apparently considered amusing), Polyphemus/Dunderbom is a teacher on Djurgården, and there is a plethora of extra characters who wander around the action, including Catrinken, "a somewhat older waffle-girl"—and he followed loosely the action of the masque.[4] His technique here is more in the line of travesty than strict parody, but the hallmark is clear. The rather rough humour comes largely through the reduction of the high and pompous to the low and ridiculous, a step perhaps not so very far. Like his good friend, Carl Michael Bellman, Hallman subverts the pastoral intentions of the original by urbanizing it and therein lies at least a part of our comic pleasure. Furthermore, by making his hero a Casper, and giving him a German accent, Hallman clearly ties him to the German *Kasperle* (Punch and Judy) tradition of physical humour.

Fig. 1. Main entrance to Humlegården Park and Lusthuset *("the Pleasure Pavilion"), the so-called Rotunda. Engraving by unknown artist.*

Linguistically, *Casper och Dorothea* works more by burlesque than by parody. The famous trio of the original,

The Flocks shall leave the Mountains, / The woods the Turtle Dove, The Nymphs forsake the Fountains / Ere I forsake my Love,

became in Lalin's version,

Förr skall en dufva drifva / Sin maka bort från sig, / Förr'n jag kan öfvergifva / Att troget älska dig

("A dove will sooner drive away its mate before I can cease loving you faithfully"). In Hallman, Casper begins,

Färr schall ein stifel plife, / Färpittedt till ein schu, / Färrn jach schall äffergife, / Tich red undt hwit wallmu[5]

("A boot will sooner be cut down to a shoe before I will leave you, my red and white poppy"). This is not particularly subtle.[6] The use of such homely imagery was probably important to its success at Stenborg's theatre. When the high language and precious striking of attitudes of the original were interpreted in everyday terms, the parodist needed do little more.

Far better technically is his *Plägning till Casper och Dorothea, eller Corporal Ölbom* (A bonus to ...), a drastic parody of Gustaf Philip Creutz' "Elegie" ("*Vid midnattstid uti en skog, ...*"), 1754, printed as an extra piece in the first edition of the play, of which Creutz is asserted to have said he would rather have written the parody than the original.[7] There is no obvious reason why this generally unrelated parody of a poem was published together with the play, but its imitation is close to true parody in that it keeps much nearer the original than is the case in much of Hallman's version of the play itself. In that sense, the "*plägning*" represents an important stage in the development of Hallman's parodic skill.

The printed text of *Casper och Dorothea* contains, as well, a brief address "To the Reader", wherein Hallman exclaims with mock surprise that he was astonished when someone pointed out the similarities between his work and "our winsome (*täcka*) opera Acis and Galathea." He then goes on to assert that

> daily experience demonstrates that love exerts itself with equal effect in all estates, and the language of the heart is probably spoken much purer, less artificially and with better results by sailors than by fops and philosophers. With respect to customs (sederne), a ridicule of vice often does more good than the best rules of conduct ...

In the propriety-loving theatre of Gustaf III, such a justification made good political sense. There is no reason to doubt that Hallman meant anything other by it than what he said, just as there is also no reason to think that audiences took him at his word.

Hallman concludes his short argument by comforting the author of *Acis and Galathea* that even Virgil suffered similarly at the hands of

Fig. 2. Carl Israel Hallman (1732–1800). Copper engraving by unknown artist.

Scarron and others. Indeed, imitation, adaptation and parody are close to the heart of the eighteenth-century theatre, as the king and his court poets well knew.[8] To his foreword, Hallman prefaced a mischievous epigraph from Plautus' *Mostellaria* (I: i,41), "*Non omnes possunt olere unguenta Exotica*" ("Not all can smell foreign perfumes"), which serves as a sign that he knew very well what he was about.

Casper och Dorothea led, eventually, to other Hallman parodies, which the excitable pre-Romantic poet and polemicist, Thomas Thorild, likened favourably to Hogarth's social-critical paintings.[9] The next mainpiece to be worked-over was Gustaf Fredrik Gyllenborg's worthy, but stuffy, *Birger Jarl och Mechtild* (1774), a three-act play with musical numbers and a divertissement by Gudmund Jöran Adlerbeth (music by Francesco Uttini and Hinrich Philip Johnsen). As with so much performed on the royal stages, this was to a plan by the king.[10] That fact did not prevent Hallman and Stenborg from producing *Skeppar Rolf* ("Captain Rolf", 1778").

Technically, this parody is a considerable advance over *Casper och Dorothea*. It adheres closely to the original, allowing the humour to work both generally—through the reduction of characters to the level of ordinary people and the place to a location accessible to anyone —and specifically—through the close modelling of the language of the parody upon the original. A great part of the comic effect comes from

this recognition of the original text lying just under the surface, though it is a fair question to ask how many of the spectators at the Rotunda in Humlegården actually knew *Birger Jarl*, or knew it well enough to make such a recognition.[11] The nature of parody seems to demand that *some* recognition of the original be made, even as the parody must also have a life of its own. That this latter was certainly the case here is demonstrated by the fact that *Skeppar Rolf* had far more (known) performances than *Birger Jarl*.[12]

Skeppar Rolf mimics its model at every point. Gyllenborg's play runs its entire action around the heroine's difficulty with her *amour propre:* Mechtild (also called Mathilda in the play), having given her heart to Birger Jarl (then disguised as a simple knight), has been married and then widowed by King Abel. Fleeing her brother-in-law, she is rescued by Birger Jarl, again in disguise, and taken to his castle, Bjälbo. Unaware of this disguise, her love is rekindled, but she fears the awful Birger Jarl and cannot bring herself to wed her "knight" because he is of lower rank now than herself. Despite sweet delaying tactics, she is determined to push on to Norway. At long last, her fears about the Jarl put to rest, the disguise is cast aside, love acknowledged and all ends in yet another, even larger, pastoral divertissement.

Hallman takes all this in stride. The action and the characters are reduced to the bourgeois level. Gunild, for instance, is the widow of Rådman Snabel from (Söder)Telje (a city constantly the butt of jokes throughout the Gustavian theatre), and the story proceeds from there, divertissements and all. On the whole, the humour is not as coarse as it was in *Casper och Dorothea*, though there are moments of simple burlesque. More interesting to us are two aspects of this parody that lift it from the conventional travesty.

First, the language is a brilliant overlay of the original at most points (though Hallman is not dogmatic on this matter when a joke is at hand). We see how this works in the first lines of the play.

Birger Jarl

SIXTEN SPARRE

Den tapre Birger Jarl, som Sveriges sälhet grundat
Och i sin Ätt et vördadt namn,
Ser äntlig för sit hopp en efterlängtad hamn.
En lycklig tid för honom stundat:
Han går at hemta lön, i kärleks liufva famn.

BIRGER JARL

Ack Sixten, til mit mål jag fruktar fåfängt sträfva.

SIXTEN

Mathilda i ert slott! Hvad kan er låga quäfva?[13]

(*Six*. The brave Birger Jarl, who founded Sweden's happiness / and (who) is an honoured name in his family, / finally sees his hope in a yearned-for harbour. / A happy time has come for him: / He goes to get his due, in the sweet bosom of love. / *Bir*. Ah, Sixten, I fear I strive in vain for my goal. / *Six*. Mathilda (is) in your castle! What can quench your flame?)

Gyllenborg's versification is more than competent: the hexameters and tetrameters alternate with ease and allow the rhyme scheme to exercise its appropriate control without dominating the verse. The rhetoric is rather stiff and the action hopeless, but there are some good set-pieces. Hallman takes a different tack in:

Skeppar Rolf

HÅKAN

Den raska Skeppar Rolf, som styr så wäl sin skuta
At af Capitaine han bör ha namn;
Nu pejlat hoppets djup, och nådt en önskad hamn;
Han får til lands sit bräde skjuta,
Och går at dreja bi, i kärleks ljufwa famn.

ROLF

Nej, Håkan, sådan hopp, jag tror mig fåfängt skapa.

HÅKAN

Gunilda i er by, hwad kan ert hopp afkapa?[14]

(*Håk*. The clever Skeppar Rolf, who steers so well his barge / that he ought to be called Captain; / has now sounded the depths of hope, and reached a wished-for harbour; / he points his boat towards land / and goes to heave to in the sweet bosom of love. / *Rolf* No, Håkan, such hope I think I seek in vain. / *Håk*. Gunilda on your farm, what can lop off your hope?)

We can see here that Hallman, if not as smooth as Gyllenborg at hexameters (there's more than a little padding here) can make the important rhymes work in his favour by using Gyllenborg's own and leading up to them in unexpected ways. Where he uses a different one (*skapa*), he rhymes it with a word that is not quite as elegant as we might expect (*afkapa*), and thereby produces a comic effect. Time and again, Hallman echoes Gyllenborg's very words, but the context is always not quite the same. The result is something like a template that does not quite fit over the original pattern.

The second interesting aspect of this parody is its use of genuine folk elements. This works in part through the use of everyday characters throughout the play, as Bellman uses them in his songs, but it is also through more specific references. Hallman and Stenborg likely took their cue for this from the original play, for there, the final divertissement, heavily populated by court ladies, introduces "groups of peasants from different provinces in Sweden ... during country

music and dancing. After a ballet, which expresses their common joy, a few dances usual in some provinces are danced."[15] During this piece, a chorus alternates with solos, among which are two specified to be by a girl from Dalarna and a girl from Vingåker. At the parallel moment in *Skeppar Rolf*, Stenborg's music accompanying the Dalkulla and the Vingåkerspiga uses genuine folk melodies of those places. Where Adlerbeth, Uttini and Johnsen conclude their divertissement with a "general ballet", Hallman and Stenborg bring down the curtain with nothing less than a *slängpolska*, a particularly energetic, and very Swedish, dance.

At some point, *Skeppar Rolf* attracted the notice of someone at court and it was played by the pages before the king, with Hallman himself in the title role. According to the story, Gyllenborg objected to this travesty of his work and the king thereupon assigned Hallman to parody *Thetis och Pelée*, the piece by Johan Wellander and Francesco Uttini with which the Royal Opera began in 1773, a piece also worked out in detail by the king.[16]

The new parody, *Petis och Telée,* once again with music by Carl Stenborg, opened in Humlegården on September 27, 1779, and played six times in the remaining three weeks of Stenborg's season and altogether thirty-three times, a good record, though not as good as that of the original opera, which played forty-five times.[17]

This time, Hallman brought a new boldness to his work. *Thetis och Pelée* had not been played for three years and was not to be played again for over another year. It is reasonable to assume that it was essentially out of the public memory, except in its larger shapes. Hence, Hallman had to write a parody that, while clearly having some relationship with the original, must stand completely on its own. He worked from the drastically shortened version of the opera played from 1775 on, and took a much looser approach to his material than previously.

The general level of his characters is not reduced as low as formerly: Petis is a *dame d'honneur* in a noble household and Telée is a "Phoebic" poet, madly in love with her, as are two other men, both vastly wealthier than he.[18] Nor does Hallman hesitate to add characters to the comedy. The final arrangement is like something out of W. S. Gilbert, complete with a chorus of "maidens and poets."

Hallman's parody is looser, too, in its treatment of Wellander's text. As a general rule, Hallman parodies incipits and repeats key words in new contexts, but feels quite free to go in a new direction when he needs to: he does not slavishly follow either the meter or the

Fig. 3. "Petis with the tall cap", final vignette to Petis and Telée, *comedy with songs and divertissement in three acts (parody of* Thetis och Pelée) *by Carl Stenborg, libretto by C. I. Hallman. First performance at the Humlegården Theatre on Sept. 27 1779. Engraving by unknown artist.*

length of the original poetry. He generally follows the entrances and exits of the original as required but includes a grand surprise at the end.

Telée has pawned his brass sword to buy Petis a wig, which, according to the vignette appended to some copies of the first edition of the play, was vastly tall and itself a parody of the current fashion for tall wigs (Fig. 3). During the finale, when everyone is congratulating everyone else, the wigmaker rushes in and demands immediate payment or her wig back. Refusing to be put off, she snatches it from

Petis' head and storms out. Petis thereupon selfishly throws Telée over, whereupon he asks Love (here dressed in harlequin) what time it is. Love looks at his watch and says it is nine o'clock, and Telée, picking up the abandoned sword, declares he will be on Charon's ferry by ten and leaves. Love closes the play by saying that his plans don't always work out:

I intended to make a tragic comedy ... I ought to call it a ridiculous tragedy."

Hallman's parodies filled several functions in the theatre of the time. First, of course, they provided a link between the private theatre and the royal one, a link already present in the activity of Carl Stenborg in both. The king clearly encouraged the private theatre, especially after 1780, when Carl Stenborg took over his father's privilege and eventually moved (1784) to more permanent quarters at Munkbron. That link worked the other way, too. By allowing these parodies, the king substantiated the general view of himself as a tolerant, human, monarch, capable of laughing at that which he had officially promoted. It breathed some life into the otherwise heavily formalised view of culture exemplified by court routine. Second, the parodies were great fun in themselves. The number of performances suggests that audiences enjoyed them. Third, they were importantly seen as contributions to a *Swedish* theatre, something the king was eager to promote. Fourth, their often coarse realism was a strong propellant to such a move in the comic, and ultimately the serious, theatre of the coming decades, a realism that was to bear fruit in the comedies of Olof Kexél, Carl Envallsson and others.

NOTES

1. See Blomkvist, M., *Nöjeslivet i Stockholm 1773–1806. En förteckning via dags- och veckopressen, (Trebetygsuppsats)*. Stockholm: Stockholm University, Department of Theatre and Film Studies (stencil), 1972 for the most complete listing of all known performances. This list is meant to be used in conjunction with Dahlgren, F. A., *Förteckning öfver svenska skådespel* ... Stockholm: Norstedt, 1866.
2. Blomkvist finds records of 45 for *Acis och Galatea* and 43 for *Casper och Dorotea*.
3. The source of most of the anecdotal information about Hallman and his parodies is Personne, N., *Svenska teatern under Gustavianska tidehvarfvet*. Stockholm: Wahlström och Widstrand, 1913, where this information appears on page 239.
4. Lalin's version was divided into three acts and added a considerable number of extra characters. The music was arranged and added to by Hinrich Philip Johnsen and others.
5. This text taken from the second edition of the play, in Hallman's *Skrifter*. Stockholm: Deleen, 1820, pp. 35–70.
6. Thomas Thorild, however, thought it even better than the original and cites it in his *Critik öfver critiker* (see below, note 9).
7. See Stjernstolpe, J. M., "*Företal*," in Hallman's *Skrifter*. Stockholm: Carl Deleen, 1820, p. iii.
8. In this context, see Nicoll, A., *History of English Drama 1660–1900*, 6 vols., 2nd ed., Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1952, III: 110–124, and similarly in the other volumes. See also

Skuncke, M.-C., *Sweden and European Drama 1772–1796*, Acta universitatis upsaliensis, Historia litterarum 10. Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell, 1981, pp. 13–16, and many other places in the study.

9. See his *En Critik öfver critiker* (1791–92), Part 2, in *Samlade skrifter*, in *Svenska författare*, Vol. XV: 3, ed. by Stellan Arvidson. Stockholm: Bonniers, 1944, pp. 35–37. The larger passage, especially pp. 31–44, contains Thorild's exposition of the nature of "true parody", of which he finds Hallman the best Swedish example.
10. The extent of the king's involvement with plays on his stages is detailed in Levertin, O., *Gustaf III som dramatisk författare*. Stockholm, Bonniers, 1894, 2nd ed. 1911.
11. The question of audience, especially at Stenborg's private theatre, is one of the most vexing in the history of the theatre of this period. All assessments are essentially guesses.
12. Blomkvist notes 19 for *Birger Jarl* (with a large gap between 1775 and 1791) and 44 for *Skeppar Rolf*.
13. This text taken from the second edition, in *Kongl. Svenska Theatern*, Vol. II. Stockholm: 1778, pp. 1–70.
14. This text taken from the first edition. Stockholm: Lars Kumblins enka, 1778.
15. *Birger Jarl*, Act V, "Divertissement," p. 68.
16. This story is told, without reference to sources, in Flodmark, J., *Stenborgska skådebanorna* (Stockholm: Norstedt, 1893, pp. 94–95, and repeated, also without a source (but probably Flodmark), by Personne, p. 242.
17. Statistics from Blomkvist and from Strömbäck, K. G., and Hofsten, S., *Kungliga teatern. Repertoar 1773–1973,* Skrifter från Operan 1, Stockholm: Kungl. Teatern, 1974.
18. Just as we saw Casper lodged with a German accent, so here are the two other suitors provided with linguistic peculiarities, the one occupying Neptune's slot is instructed to speak with a Finnish accent and the other, in Jupiter's role, is a count who litters his Swedish with French words and phrases, an affectation derived from court usage and much lampooned.