

## *The Singspiels of Hans Iver Horn: Nuances of Dano-Norwegian patriotism during the Napoleonic Wars*

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*Abstract:* This article focuses on two singspiels that were created in the intersection of professional and amateur production in Denmark-Norway during the Danish-Swedish war of 1808–1809, namely *Kapertogtet* (*Kapertogtet*) and *Fredsfesten* (*Fredsfesten*). Both were written by the Danish-Norwegian physician Hans Iver Horn, with music by Friedrich L.Æ. Kunzen and Hans Hagerup Falbe, respectively. They are among the rare examples of plays in this period where the setting, characters and action are presented from a Norwegian point of view.

During the years of war leading up to 1814, questions of nationality and national identity became increasingly significant in Denmark-Norway. The article examines the representation of Norwegian identity and self-perception, ideals of patriotism, and political tendencies in Horn's scripts, seen within their historical performance context.

The analyses demonstrate an ongoing negotiation between an established twin-state patriotism and a separate Norwegian nationalist identity, with an early Scandinavianist interest in Sweden as a possible liaison. The national character probably found expression through staging and music as well as in the written dialogue. The article argues that singspiels and occasional dramas produced within amateur circles should be seen as part of a politically charged discourse, reflecting and affecting issues of historical significance.

*Keywords:* Hans Iver Horn; singspiel; *Kapertogtet*; *Fredsfesten*; Denmark-Norway; Napoleonic Wars; Hans Hagerup Falbe; state patriotism; national identity.

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## Introduction

The dramatic form of the *singspiel* (*syngespil*) was popular in the twin-realms of Denmark and Norway both before and after the countries were separated in 1814.<sup>1</sup> Plays in this genre were produced and performed by the Royal Theatre in Copenhagen as well as by the widespread private amateur dramatic societies in both countries. The Danish *singspiel* emerged within a relatively small, dynamic production framework in the capital of Copenhagen, responsive to the varied impulses and demands set by the absolutist court, a growing bourgeois audience and emerging public discourse of taste, and by the immediacy of current events.<sup>2</sup> In the Norwegian provinces, *singspiels* previously shown in Copenhagen were performed, as well as a few locally written pieces. While closely related to the traditions of representative, occasional theatre, the genre was influenced both by the satirical *esprit* of rationalism as well as by a new mode for sentimentality, which in Denmark-Norway found its particular expression in the scenic rendition of a recognizable, bourgeois life-world. These dynamics contributed in making the *singspiel* a form of theatre imbued with references to Danish-Norwegian society and politics.

This article focuses on two rarely discussed *singspiels* that were created in the intersection of professional and amateur production during the long eighteenth century, namely *Kapertoget* (*Kapertoget*) and *Fredsfesten* (*Fredsfesten*). Both were written by Danish-Norwegian physician Hans Iver Horn (1761–1836), with music by Friedrich L.Æ. Kunzen and Hans Hagerup Falbe, respectively. Horn was one of many amateur writers of the period, and his dramatic writings have never, to my knowledge, been the subject of research.<sup>3</sup> Both of his plays were printed in 1810 but performed prior to this year. While the former was staged at the government-sanctioned Royal Theatre in the capital, the latter was performed by private dra-

<sup>1</sup> While I refer to the genre known as ‘syngespil’ in Denmark-Norway with the German term ‘Singspiel’, it is necessary to separate between the Dano-Norwegian and the German *singspiel* traditions. For a more thorough discussion of the concept of *syngespil* and related terms in Denmark-Norway, see Cecilie Louise Macé Stensrud, ‘Syngespillet i nytt lys: Opera i Norge fra 1790 til 1825’, *Studia Musicologica Norvegica*, 41 (2015), 106–125 (esp. pp. 107–111).

<sup>2</sup> Denmark and Norway may in many regards be considered one cultural area, both before and after the separation in 1814. I will use the term Dano-Norwegian to describe phenomena relating to the joint cultural sphere of the twin-realms. I use the term Danish-Norwegian to describe a geographic location, or to address the relationship between the two nations.

<sup>3</sup> In *Mellom europeisk tradisjon og nasjonal selbevissthet: Det norsk-klassiske drama*, ed. by Rolf Gaasland and Hans Erik Aarset (Oslo: Spartacus, 1999), the ‘forgotten’ Norwegian drama from this period is the topic of investigation. The Danish-born Horn might have fallen outside the scope of that study.

matic societies in the Norwegian towns of Christiania (today's Oslo) and Trondhjem (Trondheim).<sup>4</sup>

Written during the Napoleonic wars, *Kapertoget* and *Fredsfesten* are among the rare examples of Dano-Norwegian singspiels – or plays in general – that take place in Norway and present the setting, characters and action from a Norwegian point of view.<sup>5</sup> In this article, I will investigate how Hans Iver Horn's two singspiels relate to the genre conventions of the Danish singspiel, particularly with regards to the ideology of state patriotism and the representation of a Norwegian national character. Which theatrical conventions, patriotic ideals and conceptions of national identity were expressed in the plays within their performance contexts?

### *Article structure and research method*

I will begin with a reflection on my methodical approach, followed by an introduction to the ideology of state patriotism and the idea of the fatherland in Denmark-Norway before 1814. In the next section, I give a short presentation of the genre of the Danish singspiel, emphasizing expressions of patriotic ideals and ideas of national identity, through the examples of two central works, *Fiskerne* (*The Fishermen*), written by Johannes Ewald and *Høstgildet* (*The Harvest Festival*), by Thomas Thaarup. Hans Iver Horn's *Kapertoget* and *Fredsfesten* are then introduced, on the background of the Danish-Norwegian involvement in the Napoleonic wars and the Danish-Swedish war of 1808–1809. I present each play in the context of its historical staging, followed by an outline of the respective plots and analysis of the dramatic action. Finally, I give a discussion of the plays' major tendencies with regards to the representation of patriotism, national identity and political strategies.

My methodical approach will be an analysis of dramatic contents, means and ideologies in Horn's plays, with *Fiskerne* and *Høstgildet* as cultural points of reference, and in the historical context of the productions, or theatrical events.<sup>6</sup> Al-

<sup>4</sup> As of 1931, the modern spelling is Trondheim. In this article, I prefer to use the historical form of Trondhjem, reflecting the Danish influence of the period.

<sup>5</sup> Other examples are Johan Nordahl Brun's singspiel *Endre og Sigrids Brøllup* (*The Wedding of Endre and Sigrid*), first presented in 1790, but possibly written in the late 1760s, and Niels Henrich Weinich' play *Kield Stub, Sognepræst paa Ullensager* (*Kield Stub, Vicar at Ullensager*) from 1808.

<sup>6</sup> According to theatre researcher Thomas Postlewait, the theatrical event informs, as well as is informed by, its historical context. Through representation, the performance refers both to the fictional events and to the world outside; it is both an aesthetical and an historical event, making it necessary for the theatre historian to address both. Postlewait, *The Cambridge Introduction to Theatre Historiography* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), pp. 100, 119.

though the scripts of the *Kapertøget* and *Fredsfesten* were printed after the actual performances, I will argue that textual analysis remains a relevant approach to historical performance. Even if the text-on-page will invariably differ from the text-on-stage, both the historical practice of manual copying of scripts into individual parts for memorization, as well as the generally short rehearsal period, make it likely that the performed text was strongly informed by the written script.

In addition to the (con)textual readings of the plays, I will use as an analytical tool what I refer to as *performative gestures* or *performative scenic elements* suggested by the scripts. My understanding of performativity relates both directly to what is being executed on a theatrical stage, and to a more general understanding of cultural development as a series of situations being made to happen – i.e. *performed*.<sup>7</sup> Political ceremonies, rituals and public festivals are examples of situations where historical change is made manifest through action, or performance. In this way, the theatrical event contains the power of constituting meaning which is made manifest during each new performance.<sup>8</sup> Certain expressive gestures, visual elements or props – performative gestures or scenic elements – inferred in the written dialogue or the stage instructions are a point in case. These scenic means had the power to establish significant relationships and values and imbue them with a sense of reality, not just within the dramatic fiction, but also in relationship to the audience.<sup>9</sup>

### *State patriotism and the fatherland in Denmark-Norway*

In the years leading up to 1814, questions of nationality and national identity were becoming increasingly significant in Denmark-Norway. Although a political unity, Denmark and Norway were perceived as separate countries. In the conglomerate state of Denmark, which in addition to Norway (with Iceland, Greenland, and the Faroe Islands) included the German duchies of Schleswig and Holstein, as well as several colonies abroad, state patriotism, love of the fatherland, was a well-established, officially sanctioned ideology.<sup>10</sup> By the latter half of the eighteenth century,

<sup>7</sup> Peter Burke, *What is Cultural History?* (Cambridge: Polity, 2004), pp. 90–91.

<sup>8</sup> For a fuller representation of this argument, I refer to my doctoral thesis: 'Fra grevens gård til Prinsens gate: Teater i Trondhjem 1790–1814' (Norwegian University of Science and Technology, 2015), p. 40. <http://hdl.handle.net/11250/2374749>

<sup>9</sup> Although we cannot know to what extent stage directions were followed, their frequency indicates a theatre culture where lines and gestures were closely interconnected. Also, there were no directors in the modern sense of the word, making it likely that stage directions formed an important basis for the *mise-en-scène*.

<sup>10</sup> Tine Damsholt, *Fædrelandskærlighed og borgerdyd* (Copenhagen: Museum Tusulanum, 2000).

the relation between the people and the monarch was understood to be founded on a mutual contract, where the citizens had voluntarily surrendered their original or 'natural' freedom to the sovereign's enlightened rule, in the best interest of all – that is, for the common good.<sup>11</sup> Within this contractual framework, love of the fatherland – *patriotism* – was an essential civil virtue.

The idea of the 'fatherland' did not initially rely on a national or nationalist orientation.<sup>12</sup> The fatherland was not necessarily the country of one's birth, ancestors or mother tongue. Instead, the fatherland was understood as the country where one resided as a citizen, and to which one's loyalty was owed. The loyalty inspired by patriotic love was cosmopolitical in nature, transcending national identities. The object of patriotic affection was the *state*, in the personification of the absolutist king. Ingrained in the idea of the fatherland was a conception of the sovereign who loved his subjects as his own children, and was loved in return as the child loves the father.<sup>13</sup> The relationship between sovereign and subject was construed as characterized by personal and mutual affinity, regardless of rank or national adherence.

By the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, the idea of the fatherland increasingly came to include potentially contradictory impulses. Among these was a budding nationalist orientation, where the term 'fatherland' or 'country' was associated with the place of one's birth. Within this strain of thought, a particular and authentic 'national character' would develop in close unity with the particular land – or nation – of one's birth and upbringing.<sup>14</sup> This tendency was made manifest in 1776 with the legislation of the naturalization policy (*indfødsretten*), stating that public office could only be given to those born within the lands belonging to the Danish state.<sup>15</sup>

### *The Danish singspiel: Fishermen and farmers at the festival*

When the theatrical scene reopened in Copenhagen after the death of Christian VI in 1746, the main form of musical theatre in Copenhagen was Italian opera.<sup>16</sup> The

<sup>11</sup> Damsholt, pp. 80–81.

<sup>12</sup> Rasmus Glenthøj, *Skilsmissen: Dansk og norsk identitet før og efter 1814* (Odense: Syddansk Universitetsforlag: 2012), pp. 65–67.

<sup>13</sup> Damsholt, pp. 112–117.

<sup>14</sup> Glenthøj, p. 215.

<sup>15</sup> This legislation was introduced in the aftermath of the Struensee-scandal in 1772, in answer to a long-standing complaint of the strong German influence in Danish government and bureaucracy.

<sup>16</sup> For a general overview of the development of the Danish singspiel, see for instance Torben Krogh, *Zur Geschichte des dänischen Singspiels im 18. Jahrhundert* (Copenhagen: Levin &

first attempt at creating an opera in the Danish language was made by the young Norwegian Niels Krog Bredal (1733–1778). His libretto *Gram og Signe* (Gram and Signe) was given as a private performance in 1756 with existing music by the Italian opera composer Giuseppe Sarti (1729–1802), kapellmeister to the Danish court. While Bredal initiated the writing of libretti in Danish, and was named by posterity as the creator of the Danish national singspiel, it would be more than twenty years before the genre flourished in Danish theatre.

In 1766, a French acting troupe was installed in the court theatre at Christiansborg Palace, introducing *opéra-comique*, a genre where spoken dialogue was interchanged with songs more simplified than those of Italian-style opera. Together with subjects reflecting the new flair for sentimentality, the *opéra-comique* was more adapted to popular taste than the opera.<sup>17</sup> During the last quarter of the century, impulses from North German opera and *Singspiele* were added to the tradition of the *opéra-comique*, as German-born composers Johann Ernst Hartmann (1726–1793), Johann Abraham Peter Schulz (1747–1800) and Friedrich Ludwig Æmilius Kunzen (1761–1817) developed the Danish singspiel into an independent form. Among their contributions was Schulz' advocacy of the *Lied* – a simple, folk-tune based song, which he argued had the power to unite the population across divisions of rank and education.<sup>18</sup> The introduction of musical elements inspired by Danish and Norwegian folk-music was instigated by Hartmann, whose song 'Liden Gunver' (Little Gunver) from the singspiel *Fiskerne* (*Fiskerne*) from 1779 achieved great popularity.<sup>19</sup>

From the 1770s and onwards, French and other translated play-texts formed an important framework for the formation of a domestic Dano-Norwegian singspiel, written in Danish and imbued with Dano-Norwegian conceptions and sense of identity. Closely related to a tradition of representative theatre for festive occasions, the themes frequently included a patriotic depiction of the absolutist state, as well as a picturesque rendering of the state's inhabitants, particularly the peasantry. The Dano-Norwegian singspiel often depicted a recognizable, if idealized (or occasionally satirized) world, which the largely bourgeois audiences were able to relate to from the everyday experience of their own lives. Two particular plays that were important in establishing the genre are the aforementioned *Fiskerne*, written by Johannes Ewald (1743–1781) and performed at the Royal Theatre of Copenhagen in 1780, and Thomas Thaarup's (1749–1821) *Høstgildet* from 1790,

Munksgaard, 1924), or Nils Schiørring, *Musikkens Historie i Danmark*, vol. II: 1750–1870 (Copenhagen, Politikens forlag, 1978).

<sup>17</sup> Stensrud, pp. 116–117.

<sup>18</sup> Krogh, *Zur Geschichte*, p. 177.

<sup>19</sup> Krogh, *Zur Geschichte*, p. 137.

with music by Schulz.<sup>20</sup> These two plays will serve as a frame of reference for my analysis of Hans Iver Horn's two plays.<sup>21</sup>

While Dano-Norwegian singspiels largely have a prose dialogue, both *Fiskerne* and *Høstgildet* are written in a pattern generally recognized as blank verse, a non-rhyming iambic pentameter with an extra syllable added to the end of every line (giving each stanza a total of eleven beats). This verse form was introduced onto the Danish stage by Ewald in his singspiel *Balders Død* (The Death of Balder), first performed in 1778. Thaarup copied Ewald's use of the eleven-beat blank verse for *Høstgildet* and its sequel, *Peters Bryllup* (Peter's Wedding, 1793).

### *Fiskerne* (1780)

*Fiskerne* was first performed at the Royal Theatre on the occasion of King Christian VII's birthday in 1780.<sup>22</sup> Based on an historic event, the play takes place in the Danish village of Hornbæk, where, in 1775, a small group of fishermen rescued an English sea-captain during a storm, after his vessel had stranded on the coast.<sup>23</sup> While the story of *Fiskerne* was taken from a collection emphasizing virtue among all the subjects in the state of Denmark, namely *Store og gode Handlinger af Danske, Norske og Holstenere* (Great and Good Deeds by Danes, Norwegians and Holsteiners), written by the Danish civil servant Ove Malling in 1777, the play concentrates on portraying the virtues of the Danes.

The play depicts a family of poor but noble-minded and courageous fishermen, headed by a steadfast father and loyal mother. While the family's two sons-in-law show unflinching courage and selflessness, the daughters struggle with their fears of losing their livelihood and loved ones, but ultimately overcome these human shortcomings. Two moral themes are highlighted during these negotiations: the universal sanctity of a human life, and the unflinching courage of all Danes.

<sup>20</sup> A further example of the on-stage depiction of the working classes in the Dano-Norwegian singspiel, adding a critical perspective of their often dire life circumstances, can be found in the Norwegian writer Enevold de Falsen and F.L.Æ. Kunzen's *Dragedukken* (The Fortune Puppet) from 1797.

<sup>21</sup> For a more extensive analysis of *Høstgildet*, see Ellen Karoline Gjervan, 'Staging state patriotism: *Høstgildet* of 1790', in *Tracing Operatic Performances in the Long Nineteenth Century: Practices, Performers, Peripheries*, ed. by Anne Kauppala, Ulla-Britta Broman-Kananen and Jens Hesselager, DocMus Research Publications, 9 (Helsinki: University of the Arts, 2017), pp. 249–268.

<sup>22</sup> Krogh, *Zur Geschichte*, pp. 103–104.

<sup>23</sup> Johannes Ewald, *Fiskerne: Et Syngespil i tre Handlinger* (Copenhagen: Christian Gottlob Probst, 1780).

After the rescue, the grateful English captain offers his rescuers a substantial reward, which is declined by the poor but proud and righteous fishermen. However, a visiting Danish nobleman makes sure the family is amply rewarded by the state of Denmark, acting on behalf of Heaven's providence – making it impossible for the family to refuse. Denmark is likened to a mother, embracing her worthy children, the subjects. In this way, absolutist rule is seen as sanctioned by divine influence, while simultaneously enfolding its brave offspring in its familial, motherly arms. The play finishes with a musical finale where a chorus and the characters join in celebratory praise of the king, the mighty Danish seas, and the Danes themselves, followed by a dance. The end chorus makes a connection between the ocean's force and the coastal dwellers' fiery hearts, underlining the relationship between the land and the distinctions of its people. Ewald has been perceived as a forerunner of the romantic movement in Denmark, a viewpoint which resonates with *Fiskerne's* emphasis on sentimental feeling, moral struggle, and ideas of national identity.<sup>24</sup>

### *Høstgildet (1790)*

Ten years after the first production of *Fiskerne*, Thomas Thaarup's *Høstgildet* was staged at the Royal Theatre on the occasion of Crown Prince Frederik's wedding to his cousin Marie Sophie.<sup>25</sup> While the printed text only places the action in a village in Zealand (*Sjælland*), the scenography of the Copenhagen performance gave away the location as Gentofte, a rural area outside Copenhagen.<sup>26</sup>

In this short, one-act singspiel, two farmer brothers, one from Holstein, the other a naturalized Dane, try to negotiate between their own wishes and those of their children with regards to whom the children should marry.<sup>27</sup> While the father from Holstein initially insists on the young people's obedience, the Danish father realizes that their wishes are wise, and convinces his brother to agree. As a result, the two Danish sisters will marry, respectively, their Holstein cousin and a young Norwegian soldier, whose father Tord has come to Denmark to witness the royal newly-weds' entrance. As the Danish and Norwegian fathers shake hands, sealing

<sup>24</sup> Liv Bliksrud, *Den smilende makten: Norske Selskab i København og Johan Herman Wessel* (Oslo: Aschehoug, 1999), pp. 41–43.

<sup>25</sup> Krogh, *Zur Geschichte*, pp. 162–166.

<sup>26</sup> The lands surrounding Gentofte, where the action is situated, were owned by minister Andreas Peter Bernstorff (1735–1797); the particular location could be construed as a tribute to Bernstorff's support of the ongoing land reforms. Torben Krogh, *Danske Teaterbilleder fra det 18de Aarhundrede: En teaterhistorisk Undersøgelse* (Copenhagen: Levin & Munksgaard, 1932), pp. 143–144.

<sup>27</sup> Thomas Thaarup, *Høst-Gildet: Et Syngespil i een Act* (Copenhagen: P.M. Høpffner, 1790).



their accord and their children's future in a performative gesture, the Holsteiner declares they are all countrymen after all; sons to one father, subjects to one king.<sup>28</sup> In this way, the state patriotic image of the loving father-king and his justly treated children, the three brother-countries, was made into scenic reality.

In the finale, the three farmer-fathers – Dane, Holsteiner and Norwegian – each sing a tribute in their own vernacular language to their respective homelands, while professing their unswerving loyalty to the king. The effect of the different vernaculars seems to have been emphasized by the music. Although Dano-Norwegian musical compositions of the period were generally in a European, rather than 'national' style, elements of folk-style music were occasionally used in the theatre. Schulz' melody for the Norwegian farmer's song carries a clear accent of Norwegian folk-music. According to music historian Randi M. Selvik, this 'is the only song [...] in a minor key, and it has a characteristic 3/4 metre, common to several Norwegian folk dances.'<sup>29</sup> *Høstgildet* is a primary example of how the Dano-Norwegian singspiel might portray national character within the frame of state patriotism.

In addition to the celebrations of a royal wedding and harvest home, the historical backdrop for the farmers' joy in *Høstgildet* was the ongoing political reforms emancipating the peasants from a system which for generations had kept them bound to the land (*hjemstavnsbåndet*).<sup>30</sup> Several references to these reforms are made, both in the scenography and the dialogue, insisting on the farmers' gratitude to the King for their new liberty.<sup>31</sup> In this way, the image of the wise, enlightened father, freeing his children to act voluntarily in the interest of the common good, was projected from the Danish farmer-father onto the royal country-father (*landsfader*). During the finale, the Norwegian father recalls how he, as a young man, once laid eyes on the legendary King Frederik V, the sight bringing him to tears. This memory, relived on the stage, emphasizes the personal nature of the bond between sovereign and subject. The play ends with the chorus and characters dancing and praising the Crown Prince, his bride, and the King.

As occasional pieces, making explicit references to the royal persons being celebrated, and with the dramatic action dependent on recent or ongoing historic events, the singspiels *Fiskerne* and *Høstgildet* helped establish that same political reality with which they were concerned, projecting state patriotic ideals and con-

<sup>28</sup> Thaarup, p. 36.

<sup>29</sup> Randi M. Selvik, 'Høstgildet by J.P.A. Schulz: A national Singspiel?', in *Tracing Operatic Performances*, pp. 215–248.

<sup>30</sup> Ole Feldbæk, *Nærhed og adskillelse 1720–1814*, vol. IV: *Danmark-Norge 1380–1814* (Oslo: Universitetsforlaget, 1998), pp. 231–235.

<sup>31</sup> See above, n. 26.

ceptions of national character through the themes of fatherhood, loyalty and familial love.

*War drama: The plays of Hans Iver Horn and their historical context*

*Kapertogtet* and *Fredsfesten* were written by the Danish-Norwegian physician Hans Iver Horn during Denmark-Norway's involvement in the Napoleonic wars, 1807–1814, and performed and printed in the same period. Son of a Danish father and Norwegian mother, Horn grew up in Denmark and settled in Norway as a young man.<sup>32</sup> Known for his career as a medical inspector for the then-widespread *radesyke* or 'rade disease', Horn was also an occasional writer.<sup>33</sup> In combining his life as a public servant with literary production, he was typical for Norwegian writers of the period.

*The Napoleonic Wars in Denmark-Norway*

After the attack of the British fleet on Copenhagen in 1801, the government tried to remain neutral during the first years of the war.<sup>34</sup> In August of 1807, the British fleet attacked the capital again, bombarding the city and capturing almost the entire Danish fleet. This left the Danish prince regent, Crown Prince Frederik (1768–1839), no choice but to enter the war on Napoleon's side. The British then instigated a naval blockade of Denmark and Norway. As a result, the contact between the twin kingdoms was impeded. Robbed of its navy, an important Danish war strategy involved authorizing civilian ships to capture British enemy ships, a practice known as privateering (*kaperfart*). This pursuit offered great financial rewards but was dangerous, as the crews themselves risked capture and imprisonment by the British.

Denmark's allies, France and Russia, pressured Denmark into waging war on its neighbouring country of Sweden. The resulting Danish-Swedish war took place between March of 1808 and December of 1809, when a peace treaty was signed. In Norway, the war efforts against the Swedes were led by the Danish prince Chris-

<sup>32</sup> See Horn's autobiography in *Eyr: et medicinsk Tidsskrift*, 11 (1836–1837), pp. 108–111, and Tor Weidling, *Eneveldets menn i Norge: Sivile sentralorganer og embetsmenn 1660–1814*, Riksarkivaren: Skriftserie, 7 (Oslo: Riksarkivaren, 2000), p. 204.

<sup>33</sup> The 'rade disease' might have been a variation of a syphilitic infection. Bjarne Bjorvatn and Arthur Danielsen, 'Radesyken – en norsk tragedie', *Tidsskrift for den norske legeforening*, 24 (2003), 3557–3558.

<sup>34</sup> For a general description of Denmark-Norway's role in the Napoleonic Wars and the Danish-Swedish war of 1808–1809, see Feldbæk, pp. 311–351.

tian August (1768–1810). Christian August was well-liked among the Norwegian soldiers. He was perceived as down-to-earth and loyal, harbouring a particular fondness for Norway. By the time of the peace treaty, however, the Prince had accepted his election as the adopted heir to the Swedish throne. In January 1810 he left Norway, a celebrated hero.

During the later years of the war, a certain Norwegian dissatisfaction with Danish rule was beginning to make itself apparent.<sup>35</sup> As time went by, the country experienced isolation, food shortages and financial difficulties. Loyalty to the state seemed to grow increasingly at odds with loyalty to national interests, influencing the impact of the war on Norwegian patriotic sentiments. While the public consensus remained loyal to the Danish monarchy, Norway's isolation from Copenhagen contributed to a new interest in alternative futures for the kingdom. Sweden stood out as a possible ally, an idea that was nourished with the election of Christian August as the Swedish royal heir.<sup>36</sup> The orientation towards Sweden was particularly strong among certain prominent circles in the South-Eastern parts of the country, but also had its defenders in Trondhjem.<sup>37</sup>

While one of Hans Iver Horn's plays was presented at the Royal Theatre in Copenhagen, the other was presumably only performed in Norway, by local theatre amateurs. Written almost thirty and twenty years after *Fiskerne* and *Høstgildet*, respectively, how did Horn's plays relate to existing conventions of the state-patriotic Dano-Norwegian singspiel? How did they present the relationship between the Norwegian subjects and the Danish sovereign during the war? How was Norwegian self-conception and identity expressed, and how was the relationship between the Scandinavian countries projected?

### *Kapertoget (1808)*

The three-act singspiel *Kapertoget* was performed six times at The Royal Theatre in Copenhagen during the theatre season of 1808/1809, and then published in Copenhagen in 1810 with the subtitle 'A National Singspiel'.<sup>38</sup> The music was written by the naturalized German-born theatre composer Friedrich Ludwig Æmilius

<sup>35</sup> Knut Mykland, *Trondheims historie 997–1997*, vol. III: *Fra Søgaden til Strandgaten: 1807–1880* (Oslo: Universitetsforlaget, 1996), pp. 55–61.

<sup>36</sup> Glenthøj, pp. 359–360.

<sup>37</sup> Magne Njåstad, 'Stiftsstedene: de regionale politiske sentra', in *Riket og regionene: Grunnlovens regionale forutsetninger og konsekvenser*, ed. by Ida Bull and Jakob Maliks (Trondheim: Akademika, 2014), 175–202 (p. 189).

<sup>38</sup> Niels Jensen, *Dansk Forfatterleksikon: Det kongelige Teaters repertoire 1748–1975*. <http://dansk-forfatterleksikon.dk/1850t/tnr1284.htm> [accessed 11 November 2019]. Hans Iver Horn, *Kapertoget: Et nationalt Syngespil i tre Akter* (Copenhagen: Fred. Schulz, 1810).

Kunzen. The play had six performances, and the theatre historian Thomas Overskou writes, somewhat dismissively:

‘The Capturing Raid’ was a three-act singspiel by Professor Dr. Hans Iver Horn, physician of Norway, in the pattern of Thaarup, but not of Thaarup’s talents, and accepted primarily because it was written ‘in a patriotic spirit, fortifying that sentiment which one would desire in every Danish man’; but it was unable to win particular acclaim, either by itself or by Kunzen’s music, which was also not among the best works of this man of genius.<sup>39</sup>

As for the composer, Kunzen is known to have mastered a wide range of styles, influenced by the French *opéra-comique* as well as the German *Singspiel*. Kunzen’s music has been called both ‘melodious and dramatically powerful’, successful in ‘moulding the many varying elements of the eighteenth century’s rich storage of musical drama into one, unusually well-constructed, whole.’<sup>40</sup> Kunzen’s music to *Kapertoget* survives in manuscript form at the Royal Library in Copenhagen, in addition to a few printed extracts, making a musicological examination of this material an interesting future possibility.<sup>41</sup>

The play’s expressly ‘patriotic spirit’ is made clear already in the listing of the *dramatis personae*, with its explicit references to the ongoing war. The old skipper Ole Pedersen is ‘at the present time the captain of a capturing ship’.<sup>42</sup> His son-in-law Halvor, head of the Coast Guard, ‘excelled in the battle of April 2nd 1801, and wears his medal on his chest’, a reference to the British attack on Copenhagen of that year.<sup>43</sup> The action is set in a specific time and place, in Ole’s house in a small

<sup>39</sup> “‘Kapertoget’ var et af Professor, Dr. hans Iver Horn, Læge i Norge, efter thaarupsk Mønster, men ikke med thaarupsk Talent forfattet Treactssyngespil, der meest blev antaget fordi det “var i patriotisk Aand og styrkede den Stemning, hvilken maatte ønskes hos alle Danne-mand”; men det kunde hverken ved sig selv eller ved Kunzens Musik, der heller ikke hørte til denne geniale Mands bedste Arbejder, vinde synderligt Bifald.’ Thomas Overskou, *Den danske Skueplads, i dens Historie fra de første Spor af danske Skuespil indtil vor Tid*, 7 vols (Copenhagen: Samfundet til den danske Literaturs Fremme, 1852–1876), IV (1862), p. 152.

<sup>40</sup> ‘den baade melodjøse og damatisk slagkraftige Musik’; ‘Det er virkelig lykkedes K[unzen] at sammensmelte de mange forskellige Elementer fra det 18. Aarhundredes rige musik-dramatiske Forraadskammer til en sjældent fasttømret Helhedsvirkning.’ Torben Krogh, ‘Kunzen, Friedrich Ludwig, Aemilius’, in *Dansk Biografisk Leksikon*, 2nd edn, ed. by Povl Engelstoft and Svend Dahl, 27 vols (Copenhagen: Gyldendal, 1933–1944), XIII (1938), pp. 455–460 (p. 457).

<sup>41</sup> Friedrich Ludwig Aemilius Kunzen, ‘Kapertoget en Oper i 3 Akter sat i Musik’, Copenhagen, The Royal Danish Library, C II, 116.

<sup>42</sup> ‘For nærværende Tid Kaperkapitain’. Horn, *Kapertoget*, p. 2.

<sup>43</sup> ‘Han har udmærket sig i Slaget den 2den April 1801, og bærer Medaillen paa Brystet.’ Horn, *Kapertoget*, p. 2.

port between Færder and Christiansand (Kristiansand), along Norway's southeastern coastal archipelago. It is early November 1807, a few months into the war. The action unfolds within a single, interior stage picture. The spoken dialogue, written in an eleven-beat blank verse, is interspersed with songs expressive of the characters' emotions.

### *Dramatic action*

The play opens in the afternoon, while a storm is raging outside. **Ole** is getting ready to go out to sea on a capturing raid, as British enemy ships have been observed in neighbouring Swedish waters. Ole is a self-professed patriot who has entered the capturing trade strictly to aid the war effort, not for personal gain. He is driven by an urge to protect his fatherland and take revenge for the harms inflicted by the British, willing to risk even his own life. His patriotic ideals are shared by his wife, **Stine**. The couple's two daughters, **Karen** and **Lise**, are both engaged to be married. Karen's medal-wearing fiancé **Halvor** is an officer with the Coast Guard whose duties demand he remain safely at home, whereas Lise's sweetheart **Anders** is a war prisoner with the British. The sisters' younger brother, **Iver**, persuades his father to allow him to join *Kapertoget*, arguing that he is born a Norwegian and shares his father's urge to avenge his country. Father and son shake hands on their solemn vow to defend their homeland and take revenge on the British. The handshake may be seen as a performative gesture, a scenic manifestation of their common purpose, the son taking on his father's mission. In establishing this patriotic intent through scenic performativity, Horn's purpose might have been to make it both an instigator and a reflection of similar sentiments in the audience.

As Ole and Iver say goodbye, the family sings of the Norwegians' devotion to the Danish flag and king. The image of the simple, yet uncompromisingly brave and loyal sea-faring family strongly resembles the family of *Fiskerne*. The immediate difference is that in *Kapertoget*, the image of bravery is unequivocally associated with the characters being Norwegian. The identification of bravery with national character, whether Danish or Norwegian, seems to be a common strategy of both plays.

The second act opens the following morning. The storm has died down, but fog now shrouds the entire fjord. Stine has spent the night in prayer, but the optimistic Karen comforts her with words of the bravery of the Sons of Norway:

'For Norwegian men, who will fight unto the death

For king – fatherland – for home – for hearth –  
For wife – children – for property – for Norway!<sup>44</sup>

While in *Fiskerne*, the moral issue was whether to risk one's life for a stranger, the idea of willingly committing the ultimate sacrifice for the love of one's country was an established ideal of patriotic virtue, connected with a notion of a Nordic national character.<sup>45</sup>

When news arrives that two approaching enemy ships have been spotted on the fjord, Halvor takes his leave, possibly to go to battle. He ensures Karen that if his blood is to be spilt, it will spill for Norway – and for her. Karen and her mother compare the vile actions of the British to the noble soldiering of the gallant Norwegians. They are paragons of virtue, models of the humanist ideal even in the heat of battle; virtuous warriors who refrain from burning and plundering innocent civilians. As in *Fiskerne*, universal humanist ideals are lifted up alongside those of state patriotism – while still connected to a particular national character. After it is reported that the British ships are getting nearer, and that all able-bodied men have gathered on the beach to fight, the act ends with the characters forming a chorus, praising the Norwegians' courage and their willingness to cheerfully give their lives in defence of home, king and country.

When the third act opens, it is reported that two British ships are approaching, followed by a smaller, armed vessel. The women are anxious that more enemies are coming, but finally, three shots from a cannon are heard – fired as Ole triumphantly enters the harbour, bringing in the two captured enemy ships. The women are stunned when they hear that one of the British vessels was captained by Lise's fiancé, Anders. Could he be a traitor? It turns out that Anders, escaping his imprisonment, took on the assignment as captain of the British ship in the hope of landing it in Norway. Halvor and Anders clasp hands, while Halvor declares: 'Friend, you are a Norwegian! And of a noble heart!'<sup>46</sup> The following song once more ensures the audience of the courageous Norwegians' willingness to sacrifice everything for Norway, and of their constancy and unswerving loyalty: 'Ere Norwegians would fail, the mountains would render!'<sup>47</sup>

The Norwegian privateers declare that all their winnings will go directly to the King – a parallel to the Hornbæk fishermen refusing the offer of reward from the English captain. The only things Ole will keep are two Danish flags he has brought home – one for Iver, and one that will serve as his own pillow, and, eventually, his

<sup>44</sup> 'For norske Mænd, som indtil Døden værge | For Konge – Fødeland – for Huus – for Arne – | For Husfrue – Børn – for Eiendom – for Norge!' Horn, *Kapertoget*, p. 35.

<sup>45</sup> Damsholt, p. 107.

<sup>46</sup> 'Norsk er Du, Ven! og ædelt er Dit Hierte!' Horn, *Kapertoget*, p. 78.

<sup>47</sup> 'Før Normænd blev utroe, før revnede Fielde!' Horn, *Kapertoget*, p. 81.

own burial shroud. This conjured-up image might be understood as a performative element, the flag symbolically enfolding the loyal subject, his most treasured reward in life as well as death. A final chorus celebrates the Danes' and the Norwegians' loyalty to their two, joint countries and to the queen and king.

In this final chorus, the king's name is given as Frederik. Frederik VI was indeed king at the time of the performances at the Royal Theatre in 1808/09. But in November 1807, when the play takes place, Frederik was still technically the crown prince.<sup>48</sup> In the first act of the play, Ole even mentions his concern for the 'noble Crown Prince'.<sup>49</sup> Here the spoken lines stay true to the dramatic space/time-continuum. But in the final celebratory chorus, the events on stage seem to make a shift to the here and now of the audience, naming Frederik not as crown prince, but as king, while his wife Marie is named as queen.

I have previously described how the transition from dramatic world to 'real-life' was common for the seventeenth and eighteenth century representative theatre associated with royal festivals and celebrations.<sup>50</sup> Typically towards the end, the dramatic world on stage would open up to reveal its actual object – the political reality of the court.<sup>51</sup> Although not staged for a particular royal occasion, this trait of representative theatre underlines *Kapertoget's* function of reflecting the official political values of absolute monarchy. This also holds true for the printed play's subtitle, A National Singspiel. The term 'national' can be understood to mean 'Danish' or 'Dano-Norwegian'. However, the play's strong emphasis on Norway and Norwegians might open the subtitle to an interesting ambiguity about its intended reference.

In this context, it is also relevant to note that the lead role of Ole was performed by one of the Royal Theatre's star actors, Hans Christian Knudsen (1763–1816). Knudsen had already made a name for himself as a fervent Dano-Norwegian patriot who had staged patriotic tableaux around the country during the war, in memory of Denmark-Norway's fallen soldiers.<sup>52</sup> He also played the role of another patriotic Norwegian on the stage of The Royal Theatre, namely that of

<sup>48</sup> Frederik's father was the mentally unstable King Christian VII, whose reign 1766–1808 was largely in name only. Frederik served as the actual sovereign from 1784, when he turned 16. Feldbæk, pp. 182–184.

<sup>49</sup> 'den ædle Kronprinds vaager'. Horn, *Kapertoget*, p. 9.

<sup>50</sup> Annabella Skagen, 'Residensteater i 1790-årenes Trondhjem: Mellom privat selskapelighet og offentlig festspill', in *Lidenskap eller levebrød? Utøvende kunst i endring rundt 1800*, ed. by Randi M. Selvik, Ellen Karoline Gjervan and Svein Gladsø (Bergen: Fagbokforlaget, 2015), pp. 211–234.

<sup>51</sup> This type of dramaturgy is well-known from the traditions of European court festival theatre in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.

<sup>52</sup> Thomas Lyngby, *Den sentimentale patriotisme: Slaget på Reden og H.C. Knudsens patriotiske handlinger* (Copenhagen: Museum Tusulanum, 2001).

Tord in *Høstgildet*. The play was extremely popular, and Knudsen kept performing this part until the separation of Denmark and Norway in 1814.<sup>53</sup> It is not impossible that these associations would colour the impression of the character of Ole, ensuring his credibility as the essential, patriotic Norwegian father-figure.

When *Kapertoglet* first opened, the war against Sweden was well-established. That was, however, not the case within the dramatic timeframe, where the action takes place in 1807: 'Yes – as we are not at war with the Swede. | But surely – soon we will be – so I believe.'<sup>54</sup> An implicit reference to the current state of war was made, without compromising the dramatic here-and-now. Otherwise, there are only a few casual references to Sweden or the Swedes, and the relationship with Sweden seems unresolved.<sup>55</sup>

### *Fredsfesten (1810)*

An important factor in the impact of the singspiel in Denmark-Norway was the strong tradition for dilettante, or amateur, performance during the decades around 1800.<sup>56</sup> The dramatic societies in the provinces often staged works previously presented at The Royal Theatre, but occasionally pieces were written especially for them. Composers and librettists would include local, proficient amateurs as well as professionals. Occasional performances, celebrating royal or other significant events, were sometimes given. Hans Iver Horn's short one-act play, *Fredsfesten*, is an example of this. It must have been written around the turn of 1809–1810, when a peace treaty between Denmark-Norway and Sweden had just been signed. The play celebrates Prince Christian August's efforts to protect Norwegian interests and bring about peaceful relations in Scandinavia.

There is no evidence this play was ever performed professionally or at all in Denmark. Rather, it was circulated by the Norwegian amateur dramatic societies, which were run by civil servants and merchants. It was performed by the Dramatic Society of Christiania (today's capital of Oslo), on January 16th of 1810.<sup>57</sup> It was

<sup>53</sup> Jensen, *Dansk Forfatterleksikon*.

<sup>54</sup> 'Ja – siden vi har ikke Krig med Svensken, | Men sikkerlig – vi faae den snart – det troer jeg.' Horn, *Kapertoglet*, p. 74.

<sup>55</sup> These mentions refer to British ships seeking refuge from the storm in the nearby Swedish port of Strömstad, and Anders taking hire aboard a Swedish ship to escape his captors.

<sup>56</sup> Ellen Karoline Gjervan, 'Privat teateraktivitet, dilettanteri eller amatørteater? Dramatiske selskaper i Norge 1780–1830', in *Lidenskap eller levebrød? Utøvende kunst i endring rundt 1800*, ed. by Randi M. Selvik, Ellen Karoline Gjervan and Svein Gladsø (Bergen: Fagbokforlaget, 2015), pp. 191–210.

<sup>57</sup> Roderick Rudler, 'Det dramatiske Selskab i Christiania 1799–1839' (unpublished graduate thesis, Universitetet i Oslo, 1957), p. 85. According to Gunnar Rugstad, there was also a



also performed by the United Dramatic Society in Trondhjem on April 10th, as a charity event to raise money for Norwegian sailors imprisoned in Britain.<sup>58</sup> It was published in Christiania later the same year, after the sudden death of Christian August, as a tribute to his memory. Its full title was: *Fredsfesten – A Homely Scene on the Occasion of the Peace Treaty in Jönköping, December 10th 1809*.<sup>59</sup>

*Fredsfesten* is a short, one-act play presenting a few musical numbers, rather than relying on musical elements to convey its dramatic content. This may open the question of whether it ought to be classified as a singspiel at all. Here I take as my frame of reference the music historian Stefano Castelveccchi's contextual and dynamic understanding of genres as culturally constructed *families*, based in various practices, processes, conventions, and institutions.<sup>60</sup> In the context of Hans Iver Horn's occasional patriot dramas, I choose to investigate *Fredsfesten* within the same 'genre-family' as *Kapertoglet*.

The music for *Fredsfesten* was written by the Danish-Norwegian civil servant Hans Hagerup Falbe (1772–1830), an accomplished amateur composer. Falbe came to Christiania in 1809 and quickly became an active contributor to the Dramatic Society of Christiania as a dedicated actor, director, musician and composer.<sup>61</sup> Of his theatre music, three songs from the singspiel *Geheime-Overfinantsraaden* from 1825 survive, and, notably, the music for *Fredsfesten*. During my research for this article, I was able to identify three pieces of music in the National Library of Norway already ascribed to Falbe as the original singspiel score; a lullaby ('Romance'), a dance, and the end chorus.<sup>62</sup> There is no indication in the script that more music was ever composed for *Fredsfesten*.

performance in Christiania on February 12th the same year: 'Hans Hagerup Falbe', *Norsk musikkgranskning: Årbok* (1956–58), 12–77 (p. 29). Hans Iver Horn himself claimed the play had been successfully performed several times in Christiania. See Morgenstjerne's 'Forerindring', in *Christian Augusts Mindekrands*, ed. by Bredo Henrik von Munthe af Morgenstjerne (Christiania: Berg, 1810), pp. iii–vi (p. iv).

<sup>58</sup> There might have been a repeated performance on April 12th. Liv Jansson, *Teater i Trondhjem 1800–1835* (Oslo: Gyldendal, 1965), p. 122.

<sup>59</sup> Hans Iver Horn, 'Fredsfesten: Et Husligt Opttrin; I Anledning af Fredsslutningen i Jönköping, den 10 December 1809', in *Christian Augusts Mindekrands*, ed. by Bredo Henrik von Munthe af Morgenstjerne (Christiania: Berg, 1810), pp. 1–20.

<sup>60</sup> Stefano Castelveccchi, *Sentimental Opera: Questions of Genre in the Age of Bourgeois Drama* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), pp. 6–9. DOI: [Crossref](#)

<sup>61</sup> Rudler, p. 79.

<sup>62</sup> Hans Hagerup Falbe, '5 dandse og 2 sange', Oslo, The National Library of Norway, Mus. ms. 293, box 35, 6–9. Permalink: [https://urn.nb.no/URN:NBN:no-nb\\_digimanus\\_227674](https://urn.nb.no/URN:NBN:no-nb_digimanus_227674), and ['Fredsfesten'], Oslo, The National Library of Norway, Mus.ms. 658, box 55. Permalink: [https://urn.nb.no/URN:NBN:no-nb\\_digimanus\\_228179](https://urn.nb.no/URN:NBN:no-nb_digimanus_228179).

Falbe's music was in general strongly influenced by the singspiel genre.<sup>63</sup> Among these influences was the occasional use of folk-style elements. In a cantata written in honour of King Karl Johan's birthday in 1816, a tenor voice expresses a farmer's love for the land. Music historian Gunnar Rugstad points to its similarities with Tord's song in *Høstgildet*, and suggests that 'the melancholy Norwegian folk-tune' may have been a model for Falbe's cantata.<sup>64</sup> Again, further musicological research into the music written for Horn's singspiels might throw additional light onto the scenic expression of national character in his plays.

### *Dramatic action*

*Fredsfesten* is set inside a farmer's house in Oppland in central Norway, a mountainous area associated with a traditional rural lifestyle. It is December, 1809. As with the other plays described, both the dramatic space and time are given as fairly exact geographic and historic references. The dialogue is written in the same form of blank verse as *Kapertoget*. The play opens just after Sunday mass, with the young farmer's wife **Kari** and her little daughter **Sigrid** at home. Sigrid asks for her father and is told that he is a soldier, gone to war for the sake of his country and family. Kari sings Sigrid to sleep, the lullaby's lyrics reflecting on a Norwegian child's longing for a father off to war. Sigrid's grandfather, the old farmer **Guttorm**, returns from church with the happy news that King Frederik has signed a peace treaty with Sweden. The play's occasional nature is made explicit, while the situation of the loyal women awaiting the return of the men from the dangers of war are recognizable from *Kapertoget* as well as *Fiskerne*.

While Kari rejoices in the expectant return of her husband, Guttorm grows wistful at the thought of his son Halvor, who fell in battle and will never return. When Kari carries Sigrid off to a bed in the next room, Guttorm delivers a soliloquy in honour of all Norwegians who went to battle for king and country. The concept of 'country' seems consistently to refer to Norway; the 43 lines of the soliloquy give 11 references to the words 'Norway', 'Norwegian', and 'Norwegians'.<sup>65</sup> The major part of his speech, however, is an unabashed salute to Prince Christian August, now lost to Norway, as he is to be heir to the Swedish throne.

Guttorm conjures up an image of himself, the old man, skiing to the Swedish border to see the Prince off. When he reaches the inlet of Svinesund (the sound which separates the two countries), he will push through the crowds and offer

<sup>63</sup> Rugstad, pp. 38, 44, 52, 64–65.

<sup>64</sup> 'For Falbes vedkommende er det ikke urimelig å anta at den vemodige norske folkevise har vært modell i dette tilfellet'. Rugstad, p. 64.

<sup>65</sup> Horn, 'Fredsfesten', pp. 10–11.

the Prince his hand as proof that the blood still runs warm in an old Norwegian's veins. He then imagines the Prince's eyes filling up, and the tear rolling down his cheek, at which point Guttorm declares: 'Prince! You love Norway'.<sup>66</sup>

While the imagined tear on the Prince's face echoes that of the Norwegian father Tord in *Høstgildet*, it is now the Prince's cheek, rather than the subject's, that bears proof of authentic emotion. The imagined handshake is not a token between family members (as in *Høstgildet* and *Kapertoget*), but a symbol of mutual loyalty between the Prince and his steadfast soldier – in their love of Norway, the two are equal.

At this point, the local **vicar** enters, hoping it will benefit Norway that Sweden will be ruled by this noble man 'who loves us so deeply'.<sup>67</sup> He insists that two such worthy men as Frederik VI and Christian August, united by friendship, must be fortunate for both countries – indeed, for the Nordic countries as a whole.<sup>68</sup> Here, a well-known image of the united twin-realms of Norway and Denmark is boldly extended to encompass a vision of a close-knit Scandinavia. The thought of Christian August as King Frederik's friend reminds Guttorm to hail the King. A long time ago, Guttorm beheld Frederik's grandfather, Frederik V – again echoing the experience of Tord in *Høstgildet*. Both of these 'royal sightings' presumably refer to King Frederik V's grand tour of Norway in 1749, repeatedly connecting the dramatic life-worlds to historic reality. Through Guttorm's mental images, the idea of a continuous, personal relationship between sovereign and subject spanning three royal generations is conjured up on stage.

In the final scene, Kari's husband **Ole** and a gathering of farmers enter. To celebrate the family's reunion and the peace treaty, Guttorm takes out an old wooden cup which his grandfather made, used only for special occasions. While the characters join the chorus celebrating the peace, King Frederik and Prince Christian August, the cup is passed around, signifying fellowship. The cup might be seen as a scenic manifestation of the presence of Guttorm's forefathers, a manifestation on the stage of heritage and national identity. The final stage direction reads: 'Now national dances are performed, arranged and interchanged in the loveliest fashion'.<sup>69</sup> Although the end chorus contains dancing both in *Høstgildet* and in *Kapertoget*, this is the only one of the plays which specifies the expectation

<sup>66</sup> 'Prinds! Du elsker Norge'. Horn, 'Fredsfesten', p. 11.

<sup>67</sup> 'naar denne Ædle styrer Nabøeriget, | Som elsker os saa varmt'. Horn, 'Fredsfesten', p. 11.

<sup>68</sup> 'og disse Gode | Forenedes ved evig billigt Venskab | Til Held for begge Stater – Held for Norden'. Horn, 'Fredsfesten', p. 15.

<sup>69</sup> 'Nu dandses nationale Dandse, som ordnes og afvexle paa det smukkeste'. Horn, 'Fredsfesten', p. 20.

of ‘national’ dances, although this term might be understood simply as traditional, or folk-style.

Thomas Overskou’s view of *Kapertoget* was that it was written in the pattern of Thaarup, but I would like to argue that rather than Thaarup’s idyllic scenes, Ewald’s *Fiskerne* appears to have served as its model. By 1809/10, this ‘pattern’ was nevertheless somewhat outmoded – the use of blank verse being an obvious example. *Kapertoget*, with its static stage-picture and conventional plot, only had six performances in Copenhagen. *Fredsfesten*, written for amateur performance in Norway, seems to have been more in touch with the political issues and sentiments of its audiences. The ‘homely scene’ appears more contemporary than *Kapertoget*, partly in its various forms of national characterization and expression of sentimental emotion, but primarily in the radical political ideas to which it alluded.

### Discussion

Hans Iver Horn’s singspiels are unique dramatic manifestations of Norwegian perceptions of the war. In both plays, the direct references to the extra-dramatic world and ongoing political situation are a pronounced trait, marking them as occasional drama intended to reflect and comment on current events, in the tradition of patriotic festival theatre. The fact that the performance of *Fredsfesten* in Trondhjem was staged as a fundraiser for imprisoned Norwegian sailors serves to underline this point. The specific references to particular moments in historical time and geographical locations are also in accordance with this tradition, accentuated by the immediacy of events unfolding during the war years.

Seen together, the two most pronounced political tendencies within the plays are state patriotism and the accentuation of Norwegian national identity. However, there are also significant differences between the plays, particularly relating to the perception of Norwegian identity and the Norwegians’ position within the conglomerate state. In *Fredsfesten*, a third political theme is also introduced, namely an interest in Sweden as a possible future liaison.

State patriotism was an official ideology of the conglomerate Danish state. It is expressed in both plays through the repeated praise of King Frederik VI and the adoration of the Danish flag, as well as through the insistence on the highest virtue being personal sacrifice for crown and country. The idea of ‘country’, however, is ambiguous. For instance, the term ‘national singspiel’ in the printed title of *Kapertoget* might be understood as a reflection of Dano-Norwegian identity, but with the accentuation of Norway and Norwegians throughout the play, it could also be viewed as pointing more specifically towards Norway.

Both plays make use of well-established representations of Norwegian identity and Norwegian-ness previously seen in Dano-Norwegian singspiels. The image of the honourable and brave Norwegian farmer-soldier, whose loyalty was based on his cultural heritage as a free-born man, was accepted and idealized.<sup>70</sup> A case in point is the observation that in *Høstgildet*, Tord's Norwegian son is the only of the young people who seems free to decide by himself whom to marry. In *Kapertoget*, Horn managed to hail the Norwegian national character without becoming politically controversial. This reflects a 'double ideology', where loyalty to the twin-state could co-exist with a sense of an independent, Norwegian national identity. Tucked safely under the wings of twin-state patriotism and adoration of the royal family, however, it was possible to nourish a conception of Norwegian qualities and a Norwegian national character harbouring a nationalist potential.

In *Fredsfesten*, the projection of Norwegian-ness is even more distinct than in *Kapertoget*. In addition to the frequent verbal references to Norwegian qualities, physical manifestations of Norwegian cultural heritage are described in the stage directions; the traditional long wooden bench in the living room, the hand-carved ceremonial wooden cup, and the 'national dances' in the final scene. The cup, being sent from hand to hand in the celebratory scene, had the potential of performatively establishing on the stage a traditional Norwegian society of free farmers, its identity literally handed down through generations, awakening sentiments of national self-awareness and patriotism.

Equally important is the changed relationship between the Norwegian rural characters and the mental figures of royalty. In *Fredsfesten*, the present Danish king is remembered almost as an afterthought, in clear contrast to the emotional proximity of Prince Christian August. The absolutist kingly father-figure is remarkably absent in this play. The close bond exists between the emigrating officer Prince and his loyal, Norwegian soldier. While in the other plays discussed, the family fathers serve as reflections of the royal, omnipresent 'country-father', Guttorm's position is that of the *bereaved* father. His son is dead, lost while fighting in the war on Danish side. While the analogy should not be drawn too far, it is possible to consider this in lieu of Norway during the war, cut off from Copenhagen by the British blockade, lost to the father in the Danish court.

The third political theme coming to the surface in *Fredsfesten* is the idea of Sweden as a possible friend of Norway. The years of the Napoleonic wars were characterized by a turn towards Scandinavism, where the Scandinavian countries were seen as 'naturally' connected.<sup>71</sup> This strain of thinking is clearly expressed in *Fredsfesten*, as opposed to *Kapertoget*. While the latter was performed at The Royal

<sup>70</sup> Damsholt, pp. 200–201.

<sup>71</sup> Glenthøj, pp. 359–360.

Theatre in Copenhagen, approved by the theatre's board of directors, the former was probably written with Norwegian dilettantes in mind, maybe eighteen months further into the war, as frustrations with the naval blockade were on the rise. In this situation, some were entertaining thoughts of other possible liaisons. Sweden was an obvious candidate, with Christian August seen as a Norwegian asset within a Swedish-Norwegian alliance. Without going that far, *Fredsfesten* expressed the hope of renewed relations between the Nordic countries through Christian August, implicitly leaving the door open to alternative political futures.

There is an overarching tendency between the two plays, where the case for Frederik VI seems to be subtly weakening over time and with changing performance venues and places of print. While Frederik is hailed as crown prince and king in *Kapertogtet*, in *Fredsfesten* the interest revolves around the Prince Christian August. *Fredsfesten*'s association with the theatre amateurs among the country's elite groups underscores that it was part of a politically charged discourse during a time where the existing political framework was being challenged in ways that were to prove historically significant.<sup>72</sup> While seemingly fitting the traditions of patriot festival theatre, and showing no outright signs of disloyalty, Hans Iver Horn's locally written, amateur Dano-Norwegian singspiel was starting to serve another purpose than its predecessors, easing away from the twin state as something God-given and unchangeable.

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<sup>72</sup> By 1814, Norway's and Denmark's stakes in the Napoleonic wars had been settled through Napoleon's defeat at Leipzig, followed by the Treaty of Kiel. Here, Denmark was forced to surrender Norway to Sweden. King Karl II had by that time adopted a second grown-up heir – Napoleon's former general Jean-Baptiste Bernadotte, who under the name of King Karl III Johan would ascend the Swedish and Norwegian thrones in 1818.