

# "Klappern und wieder klappern! Die Leute glauben nur was gedruckt steht."<sup>1</sup>

## Andréas Hallén's Letters to Hans Herrig. A Contribution to the Swedish–German Cultural Contacts in the Late Nineteenth Century

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It is beyond question that the composer Andréas Hallén (1846–1925) never stood in the front line of Swedish musical life. Nevertheless, the ways he composed and promoted his music have to be regarded as very advanced for his time. As this study reveals, Hallén's work as a composer and music critic may have served as a model for the next generation of composers in Sweden. Moreover, his skills as an orchestra-tor as well as his cleverness in building up networks on the Continent can hardly be overestimated. Hallén turns out to have been quite a modern composer in that he took over the latest music technologies and adapted them to a certain music market. The study of Hallén and his work exposes certain musical and cultural developments that were characteristic for Sweden at the turn of the century. Documents that just recently became accessible to research indicate that it is time to re-evaluate Hallén's role in Swedish musical life.

Correspondence between opera composers and their librettists provides us with a wealth of details about the genesis of these interdisciplinary art works and sometimes even, like the correspondence Strauss–Hofmannsthal, about the essence of opera itself. In the case of the Swedish composer Andréas<sup>2</sup> Hallén, his first opera *Harald der Wiking* was not only an interdisciplinary but also an international project because he worked together with the German dramatist Hans Herrig (1845–1892). Hallén, who is today still known as a music organizer and teacher of composition in late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century Sweden,

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1 "Blow your own horn and blow it even louder! People only believe in printed stuff." All translations from German and Swedish into English are the author's. For music terms I have used Leuchtman: *Wörterbuch Musik*.

2 Although his given name is written "Andreas" in all articles about him, he obviously changed it to "Andréas" in the early 1880s as can be seen on the front pages of his scores.

"Klappern und wieder klappern! Die Leute glauben nur was gedruckt steht."

belongs, like his contemporary Ivar Hallström (1826–1901), to a generation of Swedish composers who have not been in the focus of musicological research – unlike the previous generation, which included, among others, Adolf Fredrik Lindblad (1801–1878) or Franz Berwald (1796–1868) and even less like the so-called 1890 generation, which consisted of Wilhelm Stenhammar (1871–1927), Hugo Alfvén (1872–1960) and Wilhelm Peterson-Berger (1867–1942), among others. Nonetheless, this 'intermediate' composer generation has left its footprint in Swedish music history, and particularly in Hallén's case, his organizing, compositional and journalistic work was forward-looking for its time. He founded a music society in Gothenburg and philharmonic societies in Stockholm and Malmö, he 'invented' the genre of the Swedish rhapsody, and he introduced the genre of the symphonic poem in Sweden. He was the first to develop a Swedish music idiom by combining elements from the New German school and from Swedish folk tunes, a method also used by the composers of the 1890 generation. He performed as a conductor many large-scale continental works for the first time in Sweden, including Bach's *Matthäuspassion*, Brahms's *Deutsches Requiem* and – maybe most remarkably – Heinrich Schütz's *Die 7 Worthe Jesu am Kreuze*.<sup>3</sup> Finally, he was a prolific music critic who learned his craft in Germany and introduced the German habit of distributing short biographies of composers among concert audiences in Sweden.<sup>4</sup> Until now his role in Swedish music history has not been defined exactly by music research,<sup>5</sup> for different reasons. About his life, for instance, only scant biographical information was available. Just a few letters and manuscripts as well as reviews from his hand and some short contemporary articles about him – which often contain contradictory information – were accessible and these served as primary sources for research about him. One cannot claim that that scattered information has constituted any kind of firm image of this person so far. This situation has however now changed.

### I. The sources

In September 2009, a collection of documents written in German by Hallén was donated to the Statens musikbibliotek in Stockholm by Rüdiger Pohl, who bought it from the granddaughters of Herrig in Strasbourg in the early 1980s.<sup>6</sup> The collection consists of fifty-two letters, eleven postcards, two concert programs and three reviews, plus two photograph portraits that may depict Hallén himself. It was part of the estate of Her-

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3 This performance took place in Gothenburg in 1891; the next time Schütz's music was performed in a concert in Sweden was four decades later (Wallner, pp. 31–32).

4 Ibid.

5 Larsen, p. 14.

6 Many thanks to Rüdiger Pohl, Berlin, Joakim Tillman and Ulrik Volgsten, Stockholm, for comments, help and information.

rig. All letters and postcards are addressed to him and were written between 1878 and 1890.<sup>7</sup> They contained the programs as well as the reviews enclosed in the collection and probably represent the entire correspondence from Hallén to Herrig, although some letters might have been lost and a few are only preserved in fragments.

When the collection arrived in Stockholm, the letters and postcards were not in chronological order, so I had to restore that first. Several undated letters, which I was subsequently able to date, and at least one obviously erroneously dated letter are included, as well as several single manuscript sheets. I have attributed all those single sheets to certain letters. The deciphering of Hallén's handwriting was relatively easy, although he wrote sometimes in incorrect German interspersed with Swedish idioms and had a habit of writing names of persons and works sloppily. The documents will be quoted in this article verbatim, without any corrections.

## II. Approach and methods

Hallén's letters are not only an exceptional collection of documents concerning one of the most important figures in Swedish musical culture around the turn of the century<sup>8</sup> but also illustrative of the entire milieu of Swedish-German cultural contacts in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. The main question of this article is how Hallén acted as a composer and as the promoter of his own work in this international context. To this end, I will apply a model which I have developed to investigate the mutual reception of Nordic and continental art music and art music discourse.<sup>9</sup> This model sorts the historical facts according to a three-step scheme:

- Step 1: Nordic composers study on the continent, mainly in Germany, Austria and France. Among them 'national composers' like Edvard Grieg (1843–1907) or Jean Sibelius (1865–1957) can be found.
- Step 2: Northern composers import continental techniques to their home countries, merging them into or blending them with local musical traditions and...
- Step 3: ... try to establish their acculturated works on the continent, mainly in Germany, Austria and France.

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7 The presumably oldest letter of this collection is a fragment without a date. Hallén reports in this letter, that he is supposed to be ready with the composition of the second act of *Harald der Wiking* by 31 December. He was busy with the instrumentation of the second act in spring 1879. So, it is likely that he is referring to the outlining – not the instrumentation – of this act, which would imply that the letter was written before the end of the year 1878. Maybe one of Hallén's portrait photographs enclosed in this collection was added to this letter, signed by him on Christmas Eve 1878.

8 *MGG*, vol. V, c. 1371.

9 I have presented this model at several international conferences, among others in May 2010 in Yokohama (Knust 2010).

"Klappern und wieder klappern! Die Leute glauben nur was gedruckt steht."

About step 1 research is available. About steps 2 and 3, however, no research has been done systematically so far. In my own research, I evaluate the musical contacts and exchanges from around 1900 to the present. In this article I present the chronological starting point of this ongoing study.

Let us take a closer look at the approaches related to step 2: Nordic composers faced challenges and problems different from their continental colleagues. This is my hypothesis. The main aim of their study excursions into the South is evident: their studies were supposed to give them deeper insights into historical and new compositions on the continent. It was expected from them that they become familiar with the most recent compositional developments and genres of music which were not present in the North due to the musical infrastructure. Main questions are: What did these composers do with their freshly imported new music technologies? Did they use them to lift, so to say, the art music of their home countries to a continental level? Or did they seek for a characteristic national idiom? In the case of Grieg and Sibelius the exceptional historical situation has to be stated that composers of art music helped to forge a national identity even before their nations became independent states. Obviously the Nordic zeitgeist of that time was looking for musicians to take the rank of a national composer. But what about their music? Can it be described as 'Norwegian' or 'Finnish' objectively – or as basically continental, interspersed with some personal elements or 'exoticisms', which then became representative for a whole nation? An astounding fact in this context is, that Sweden is a Nordic state which lacks such a national composer.<sup>10</sup> But even though they didn't succeed, several Swedish composers tried to get acknowledged as such by developing special 'national strategies' to promote and create their music. Among them was Hallén.

While the 'national strategies' of Nordic composers were quite homogenous around the turn of the century, the continental reception – step 3 – of their music was highly selective, very individual and often ideologically or politically influenced. Important questions in this context are: Can a certain 'international strategy' be stated as being different from the national? If so, how did Nordic composers adapt their music to the continental market? What were their networks and continental contacts? How did they try to gain a continental success? What can be said about the political and ideological background of their attempts? What differences between national and international reception of Nordic composers can be stated?<sup>11</sup> Hallén is, as I will show, a very interesting object in this aspect since he aimed more at a continental than at a Swedish career. To

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10 Knust 2011a.

11 Those are still relevant today as Aulis Sallinen claimed in: "Mistä musiikkiteos kertoo?" in: Eerola, p. 185.

show the deep impact of German art music and of promoting art music after the German model on Hallén, his works as well as his aesthetics, marketing tactics and German networks will be described thoroughly, because it seems as if his continental ambitions have determined the very nature of his music and even its creator profoundly. His life and work can be regarded as directed into one single direction: towards Germany.

### III. The relation between Hallén and Herrig

Hallén and Herrig met for the first time in Berlin in the autumn of 1878. They were introduced to each other by the Jewish journalist Julius Rodenberg (1831–1914).<sup>12</sup> The oldest letter of the collection was in all probability written in late 1878 (see footnote 7). It is remarkable that Hallén and Herrig addressed each other as "Sie" during the first three or even four years of their correspondence, i.e. during their work on *Harald*.<sup>13</sup> Thus, despite their common large-scale project and the fact that both were around the same age, their relations remained quite formal during that time.

The correspondence between Hallén and Herrig was not steady. Most of the letters and postcards were written in the years 1879/80, 1883/84 and 1889. There is no letter dating from 1881 in this collection, owing to the fact that Hallén stayed in Berlin at the beginning of the 1880s and could easily meet Herrig in person. After his return to Sweden, the contact becomes more infrequent. In the years 1887 and 1888, only three letters and one postcard were sent to Herrig. It is evident that Hallén used his German contact only if he had some concrete requests and this may have annoyed Herrig. We do not have his letters to Hallén, but they are supposed to be few and brief, since a leitmotif of Hallén's letters is the complaint about waiting for Herrig's answers, often in vain. Herrig remained quite indifferent towards him. It is a matter of fact that he did not mention *Harald* in his articles about his own works nor did he use *Deutsches Tageblatt*, whose editor-in-chief he was, to get publicity for their opera.<sup>14</sup> His disinterest persisted after 1885, when the volume of correspondence from Hallén's side fell off significantly. Herrig's disengagement might have had the same cause as his lack of productivity as a writer after 1888. In early 1891, he was diagnosed with a brain sickness and the symptoms were noticeable some years before.<sup>15</sup> It is likely that Hallén realized on his visit to Wei-

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12 Vretblad, p. 7. Rodenberg was editor-in-chief of *Deutsches Magazin* between 1860 and 1862, of *Salon für Literatur und Gesellschaft* between 1867 and 1876 and of *Deutsche Rundschau* after 1874 (DBA).

13 Until 1880 they used "Sie". There is no letter preserved from the year 1881. On a postcard sent on 25 July 1882 Hallén addresses Herrig for the first time in their correspondence as "Du".

14 Just a few lines were reported about the world première (*Deutsches Tageblatt* no. 192, 18 October 1881, p. 2) and on 23 October, a correspondent "W.H." wrote some short positive comments about the work (*ibid.* no. 199, p. 3). Also, about the Stockholm première, the reader of Herrig's newspaper was given only little information (*ibid.* no. 56, 26 February 1884, p. 1).

15 Fränkel, p. 235.

"Klappern und wieder klappern! Die Leute glauben nur was gedruckt steht."

mar in November 1889<sup>16</sup> that Herrig would not be able to help him anymore because it turns out to be his last visit to Herrig, and five months later he stops his correspondence altogether. This coincides with Hallén abandoning his endeavors to get their opera *Harald* performed in Germany. Meanwhile, he had found a new German librettist and translator for his works, Eugen Freiherr von Enzberg (1858–1908),<sup>17</sup> who would write a dedication poem for the orchestra rhapsody *Todteninsel*, included in all prints of this piece, as well as the libretto for Hallén's fourth and last opera *Valborgsmässan/Walpurgisnacht*, which premièred in 1902.

#### IV. The content of the letters – A survey

Mainly Hallén's letters tell the story of the origin of the work which he and Herrig created together, the opera *Harald der Wiking*. This little-known opera will be presented extensively in this article. Because both of them adopted a recently invented musical-dramatical form, their correspondence is a valuable contribution to libretto research. The letters contain much information about the way German and Swedish cultures interacted in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, in general, and about the Swedish 'Wagnerism' – or more precisely, its origins – in particular.

Since the reception of Wagner's works was very different in the European countries – a phenomenon like the French wagnériens can hardly be compared with the German Wagnerianer, the Italian wagneriani or the British Wagnerites<sup>18</sup> – the question will be raised if also traces of a genuine Swedish Wagnerism can be defined in Hallén's case.<sup>19</sup> Was it to be an elitist-aesthetic party like in France or merely some kind of nationalistic mass movement like in Germany? Or was it something else?

Hallén's letters are first-rate sources for the performance practice of opera singers during the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. This applies not only to the performance of music but also to the stage. Moreover, Hallén's compositional technique, which was different from that of his Swedish predecessors, becomes evident in his letters. Finally, the correspondence reveals some plans he had with respect to a career as a continental composer. To this end he built up a multipronged network of German music journalists and publishers, which will be reconstructed in detail in this article, because it seems to have been the hitherto largest continental press network of a Swedish composer.

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16 Mentioned in his letter to Herrig, 17 December 1889, p. 4.

17 He lived in the Berlin suburb Friedenau, as did Herrig, was a freelance writer and traveled a lot, among other places in Scandinavia. He wrote two opera libretti (Kosch, p. 400).

18 See bibliography in: *MGG2, Personenteil*, vol. XVII, c. 365–366; Shaw; Jung; Fauser/Schwartz.

19 For some major differences in the Wagner reception in the different parts of Europe see: Knust 2011b.

The common projects of the Swedish-German team Hallén/Herrig constitute the core of this article (section 2). These projects will be interpreted in the context of contemporary Wagnerism in search of a specific Swedish type of Wagnerism (section 3). Besides these, Hallén's letters show us a highly sophisticated composer when it came to the marketing and promotion of his work (section 4). As an introduction, a short biographical sketch of Hans Herrig will be presented (section 1). Thus, the description of their pieces, the core of this article, is embedded into the presentation of the personal and historical circumstances of their genesis and distribution. Since this text is the first to go deeper into this chapter of Swedish music history and because of the commitment to scientific honesty, I have chosen to show the reader also the scope of interpretation of Hallén's letters, which requires sometimes a relatively close look at the sources themselves.

## 1. Hans Herrig, the receiver of the letters

Herrig was a now-forgotten German writer, who had his biggest success with the folk play *Luther. Ein kirchliches Festspiel*. It was written in 1883 to celebrate the 400<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the birth of Martin Luther. During the following years, this theatrical play became really popular in Germany – by 1891, it reached its 20<sup>th</sup> edition – even though it is not very dramatic in the conventional sense but rather consists mostly of theological reflections and contemplations. A Festspielhaus was erected to perform Herrig's drama.<sup>20</sup> The great success of this piece was, according to Hallén, also noted in the Swedish press.<sup>21</sup>

Herrig was born in Braunschweig in 1845, moved to Berlin in the 1860s to study law and stayed there for more than two decades before settling down in Weimar in 1888, where he remained until his death. In 1872, he began a career in journalism in Berlin, becoming an editor at the liberal *Berliner Börsen-Courier*. From 1881 to 1888, he was the editor-in-chief of the national-conservative daily newspaper *Deutsches Tageblatt*, which was published between 1881 and 1892 at Friedrich Luckhardt. He also wrote books about historical subjects, as well as some dramas. As a dramatist, he was strongly influenced by Wagner. This is evident first and foremost of his three opera libretti, *Harald der Wiking*, *Alexius* and *Geminianus*. Herrig had some further affinity with music as a re-

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20 Fränkel, pp. 237–238.

21 "Alle schwedischen Zeitungen haben sehr viel über die [*Luther*-]Aufführung gebracht. Ich habe selbst aus d. Deutschen Tageblatt Übersetzungen für eine hiesige Zeitung (Göteborgsposten) gemacht. Der Artikel der Cölnischen Zeitung ist von allen Stockholmer Zeitungen gebracht worden." (Letter to Herrig, 21 November 1883, p. 1).

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sult of being the son of a piano teacher and "Kammermusikus" in Braunschweig, as well as the husband of a professional harpist.

As a journalist and poet, he focused on German history, Richard Wagner, Arthur Schopenhauer, the early church and Protestantism. But except for *Luther*, his dramas had no lasting impact. This piece is exceptional because it was to be performed by non-professional actors. It was commissioned by Friedrich Schön, a prominent member of the Bayreuther Patronatsverein, which was founded to support the Bayreuth festival financially. Herrig's other poems were not so successful for a number of reasons. First, he failed to generate any kind of dramatic tension, as even his biographers stated.<sup>22</sup> In his dramas, he relied on the content of the actors' speech to convey the psychological dynamics rather than upon the action itself and his mono- and dialogues are often anything but convincing. Second, Herrig cultivated an image of himself that was far too great to be true. He declared himself to be a regenerator of art,<sup>23</sup> and, thus, some kind of genius – which he definitely was not.

Herrig was part of the Bayreuth periphery and corresponded with Wagner and Friedrich Nietzsche. This probably made him interesting to Hallén. In April 1870, Herrig wrote his first letter to Wagner and from the very beginning, this enthusiastic admirer seemed a bit odd to Wagner. As Cosima reports: "R. shows me a letter of the poet Hans Herrig who seems to be really obsessed by R.'s ideas."<sup>24</sup> Nonetheless, the correspondence between Wagner and Herrig intensified during the following months<sup>25</sup> – they met for the first time in spring 1871<sup>26</sup> –, and though it cooled down afterwards, it lasted until Wagner's death in 1883. Wagner's opinion of Herrig is representative of his contemporaries. He considered Herrig to be too egocentric as a man, too speculative as an artist and to lack the theatrical practice necessary to be a true dramatist.

## 2. The project: Text and music of *Harald der Wiking*

*Harald der Wiking* is classified as an "opera" on the first page of the vocal score as well as in the prints of the libretto, not as a music-drama or the like, even though Hallén called *Harald* a "tone drama" in his dedication of the printed vocal score. Despite this fact, the model of *Harald*, i.e. Wagner's music and poetry, is omnipresent. Its libretto

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22 Fränkel, p. 237.

23 Fränkel, p. 242.

24 Entry 18 April 1870: "R. bringt einen Brief des Dichters Hans Herrig, welcher wirklich von R.'s Ideen bis zur Besessenheit erfüllt zu sein scheint." (Cosima Wagner, vol. I, p. 222).

25 Pohl; Cosima Wagner, vol. I, pp. 225, 227, 231, 233, 239, 245–246, 248, 260, 269, 280, 293, 302, 306, 311, 320–321.

26 Pohl, vol. XIII, no. 3–4, p. 144.



often appears to be a montage of Wagnerian verses and a combination of requisites, actions and even symbols after the Wagner model.<sup>27</sup>

Just some examples: Harald's defiant and pessimistic nature resembles the Flying Dutchman as much as his ship does. Also Harald's ship has black sails<sup>28</sup> and he introduces himself to the audience by a monologue reminiscent of the monologue of the Dutchman.<sup>29</sup> As with the *Flying Dutchman*, in *Harald* a ballad is sung in the second act, namely by Gutmund, to auger future events – in this case, the heroic death leading to Walhall.<sup>30</sup> This ballad exposes the leitmotif of the orchestral postlude of the third act.<sup>31</sup> The entrance of the Vikings in the first act accompanied by a *Dutchman*-like dissonant horn motif (a tritone instead of a perfect fifth), while the Zealanders are celebrating the spring with song and dance, resembles the awakening of the Dutchman's crew in the third act of Wagner's opera.<sup>32</sup>

The macrostructure of Herrig's opera libretti is the same as Wagner's. All of them consist of three acts, as they do in the lion's share of Wagner's works. The similarities between their poetic styles are obvious, too. Herrig employs excessive alliteration just like Wagner did, particularly in his *Ring*. Sometimes he took characteristic words or phrases straight from Wagner's textbooks, and even the dramatic context of their quotation is often similar. For instance, the beginning of the last scene of the third act in *Harald* resembles the dramatic situation and diction of *Tristan II*, 2.<sup>33</sup> The same applies to requisites like the torch of Siegrun in the final tableau. Models for this scene could be the extinction of the torch by Isolde in the second act of *Tristan*, as well as the final scene of *Twilight of the Gods*.

Martin Tegen has pointed out the structural and instrumental similarities and differences between Hallén's and Wagner's music as well as the influences from other composers such as Liszt, Grieg and Meyerbeer.<sup>34</sup> He claims that the Wagnerism of both Herrig and Hallén fit very well together.<sup>35</sup> This claim receives further support when Hallén's technique of reminiscence is taken into consideration. Just as Herrig took verses, symbols and dramatic situations from Wagner's textbooks, so did Hallén allude to Wag-

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27 Synopsis of the action in: Tegen, pp. 48–51.

28 *Harald*, vocal score, p. 199.

29 *Ibid.*, pp. 11–15.

30 *Ibid.*, pp. 106–112; the ballad also accompanies the duel between Harald and Erich (*ibid.*, pp. 121–123).

31 *Ibid.*, pp. 205–206.

32 *Ibid.*, pp. 57–58.

33 The final verses of the duet Harald/Siegrun in III sung by both figures synchronically are "Seelen fließen süß zusammen! / Wonig jauchzt es Brust an Brust – Namenlose Liebeslust!" (*Harald*, vocal score, p. 186) while Tristan's and Isolde's last verses in *Tristan II*, 2 are: "endlos ewig / ein-bewußt: / heiß erglühter Brust / höchste Liebes-Lust!" (Wagner: *Gesammelte Schriften*, vol. VII, p. 75).

34 Tegen, pp. 55–56, 65 and 73.

35 Tegen, p. 72.

"Klappern und wieder klappern! Die Leute glauben nur was gedruckt steht."

ner's scores or even quote them directly. He took small units of music from Wagner's scores, like themes and motifs, or orchestral techniques – for instance, the fast violin arpeggio after the model of Donner's "Heda, hedo" in *Rhinegold*<sup>36</sup> – or even the formal structure like the leitmotific organization. Concerning the vocal declamation, Hallén, who was a singing teacher, in general wrote more cantabile than Wagner. Even though Hallén was familiar with the declamatory style typical for middle-period Wagner, the 'Sprechgesang',<sup>37</sup> it cannot be found in *Harald*. Instead, Hallén uses a more recitative-like musical declamation in his dialogues.

Certainly, both the composer and the librettist were familiar with Wagner's music dramas, something that cannot be taken for granted generally in the 1870s and 1880s. But even though both of them openly quoted Wagner, they also tried to modify their model slightly. The duration of the whole opera *Harald* is about two and a half hours. It is thus considerably shorter than the operas or music dramas of Wagner, except for the *Flying Dutchman*. The action and changes of scenery are faster with Herrig/Hallén than with Wagner. At the same time, the plot is not as spectacular as Wagner's, but rather concentrated on psychological events.<sup>38</sup>

Herrig's and Hallén's modification of the Wagnerian model deserves a closer look. It is the subject of several of Hallén's letters to his librettist. Maybe *Harald* can be regarded as some kind of prototype for a genuine Swedish Wagnerism. This question, however, requires further study on another occasion. I can here present just a selection of *Harald's* musical-dramatical features, which might be relevant in this context. Hallén's relation to his musical fixed point Wagner will be evaluated in section 3 of this article. Prior to that, the information about *Harald* gleaned from his correspondence will be presented. I have selected two subjects from Hallén's letters, namely information about the genesis and revisions of this opera and his reports about the performance of it. First, the genesis of his first opera will be evaluated, i.e. initially those documents, which reveal details about the development of the project (section 2.1.). This point is of special interest because Hallén adapted not only the New-German idiom but also the very composition technique of Wagner (see section 2.1.1.). After finishing the score, he revised the work at least twice, as I will show in section 2.1.2. Second, Hallén's reports about the first Swedish performances of his opera,<sup>39</sup> which Herrig couldn't attend, will be present-

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36 *Harald*, vocal score, pp. 169, 171, or 205–206.

37 Hallén: *Musikaliska kåserier*, p. 56.

38 Tegen, p. 72.

39 *Harald* had its world première in 1881 in Leipzig, at which composer and librettist were both present; Hallén was responsible for the rehearsals of the opera choir (Hallén: "Minnesblad", p. 14). For this reason we don't get much information about the Leipzig première from his letters because they had the occasion to discuss it in person.

ed in section 2.2. They are frankly written records about the standard of operatic singing at the Stockholm opera at that time, skipping the conventions of review writing. Finally, *Harald* was not the only project of Hallén and Herrig. Thus, a short overview, section 2.3., about their other common projects will conclude this selective summary of the letters.

## 2.1. The genesis of *Harald der Wiking*

### 2.1.1. The composition of the original version

Herrig got the material for his opera libretto from the five-act drama *Hagbard og Signe* (published 1815) of the Danish poet Adam Gottlob Oehlenschläger (1779–1850). The initial idea to choose this text was Hallén's.<sup>40</sup> Soon after they had become acquainted with each other in 1878, the idea for this project – with the preliminary title *Hagbarth und Signe* – was born. As Hallén was busy with the composition in the autumn of 1878, shortly after being introduced to Herrig, the libretto might have been written right before the beginning of the composition.

Hallén's correspondence with Herrig gives us deep insights into his composition workshop. We get information about the exact chronology of the work's genesis, his technique of creating and writing down music and about some revisions of the text during and after the composition. His letters reveal that Hallén composed the music in two steps: Initially, he made a sketch of the whole opera – probably writing it down as some sort of draft or particell – from autumn 1878 to spring 1879. Using drafts meant in those days to compose a work from the beginning to the end, not number-wise like opera composers used to do before. As his letters prove, Hallén was working in that way. After being ready with the draft, he created the instrumentation so it could be ready by spring 1880. His compositional strategy is identical with Wagner's in these respects.

Hallén was busy sketching the second act at the turn of the year 1878/79. The draft of the third act was written in spring 1879. On 29 April, Hallén reports that he had outlined the prelude for the third act and included the leitmotif of Bera's grief and revenge.<sup>41</sup> (On another occasion, Hallén also stressed the fact that this opera was composed in a leitmotivic manner: he got angry when he was not mentioned as a leitmotif composer in an article in *Musikalisches Wochenblatt*.<sup>42</sup>) The full score of the first act was finished on 20 September 1879<sup>43</sup> and the full score of the whole opera in spring 1880.

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40 Herrig: *Drei Operndichtungen*, p. XII.

41 "[...] ich bin aber jetzt sehr fleissig an den Arbeit. Den Dritten Akt fängt mit ein längeres Vorspiel mit sehr düsteren Colorit und Benutzung von (à la Volzogen [sic! i.e. Hans von Wolzogen's concept of leitmotif]) 'Beras Trauer und Rachemotiv'." (Letter to Herrig, 29 April 1879).

42 Letter to Herrig, 18 September 1883, pp. 1–2.

43 Letter to Herrig, 28 September 1879, p. 1.

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Thus, the composition of the opera took about half a year and the instrumentation of each act about four months or so. About the musical substance itself, only one letter of the Hallén-Herrig correspondence, written in April 1879, in which some music examples were inserted, gives any hint.<sup>44</sup> Text changes he wanted were due to problems with the overall proportions of the work as well as to address some musical concerns.

Please would you be so kind and enlarge the monologue of Hagbard [i.e. the beginning of the second picture of the third act M.K.] a little bit, and the beginning of the duet of H. and Signe should be more excited. I want to have the beginning of this scene in pianissimo and then to increase the tension until the appearance of Signe. There the fortissimo should be dominant (like in Tristan [act 2, beginning of scene 2. M.K.]) to express the happiness of their reunion and then they ought to calm down afterwards. After that, another intensifying development follows until the 'Actum est' [i.e. the attack of Bera's people and the mortal injury of Harald. M.K.]. It is absolutely necessary, I think, that Hagbard's monologue is prolonged because otherwise the act becomes too short.

The second act takes only 40 minutes and the third act may well last for one hour? [...] Please do me that favor and make Hagbard a little more 'solo-communicative'. I need such points of musical rest. I want some exciting verses in between

Hagbard:

For Signe's love

I renounce everything

and

Say how it came, etc.

because after this they come into some brooding Schopenhauer mood. That's fine as soon as they have calmed down a little.<sup>45</sup>

Until now, the exact dates of the finishing of the full score and its revisions were not known. In an undated letter, written probably in March 1880, Hallén informs his librettist

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44 An electronic copy of this letter is accessible on: [http://www.muslib.se/hand/manadens\\_raritet/raritet0911.html](http://www.muslib.se/hand/manadens_raritet/raritet0911.html)

45 "Etwas muß ich Sie auch freundlichst bitten, daß Hagbards Monolog etwas vergrößert wird und, daß der Anfang des Duettes zwischen H. und Signe etwas aufgeregter wird. Ich habe gedacht daß diese Scene sollte sehr pp anfangen und sich immer mehr und mehr steigern sollte durch eine unruhige Stimmung bis Signe auftritt, wo das ff (wie in Tristan) doch wenigstens einige Tackte vorherrschend sein soll, nachdem sie über die Freude des Wiedersehens sich wieder etwas beruhigt haben, dann wieder eine andere Art Steigerung bis zum 'Actum est'. Das Hagbards Monolog verlängert wird ist meiner Ansicht geradezu nothwendig, denn der Akt wird sonst zu kurz.

Der zweite Akt dauert nur 40 Minuten und der 3<sup>te</sup> muß wohl eine Stunde dauern? [...] Thun Sie mir nun den großen Gefallen und machen sie den Hagbardchen etwas mehr 'sologesprächig' sientemalen solche Ruhepunkte für mich sehr gesund sind. Dann möchte ich ein paar aufgeregte Verse haben zwischen/ Hagbard: Für Signes Liebe/ Entsag ich Allem/ und/ Sag wie es kam etc./ denn nachher werden sie etwas Schopenhauerisch grübelnd. Das können Sie ja auch recht gut sein wenn sie sich etwas beruhigt haben." (Letter to Herrig, 29 April 1879, pp. 1–2 and 5–6).

that he should be ready with the opera score within one week.<sup>46</sup> But this was not yet the final state of the work. As Herrig reports in his foreword to *Drei Operndichtungen*, after the composition was finished, he and Hallén became aware of the existence of another opera *Hagbarth und Signe*, finished 1874 by the Hungarian Ödön von Mihalovich (1842–1929).<sup>47</sup> Unfortunately, Mihalovich had also composed his work in the Wagnerian style. For this reason, Hallén suggested changing the title of their opera and consequently also the names of the main characters.<sup>48</sup> This happened at the end of June 1880, as one letter proves. In three Gothenburg concerts in February, March and April 1880, Hallén had presented parts of his opera and at that time the characters still bore their original names.<sup>49</sup> To preserve the alliteration and the number of syllables, "Hagbard" became "Harald" and "Signe" became "Siegrun". The latter was subject to a discussion between composer and librettist. Hallén insisted that "Siegrun", not "Siegrune" as Herrig claimed, was an authentic Nordic name, namely that of the wife of the god Loke.<sup>50</sup>

His letters reveal that Hallén wrote a vocal score of *Hagbarth und Signe* – which then became *Harald der Wiking* – while writing the full score. On a sheet of paper, which might have been part of an undated letter written probably in 1879, he reports to Herrig that he was unable to send him his only copy of the vocal score and that he was continuing to compose the fight between Harald and Erich in the second act.<sup>51</sup> As his letters to Herrig display, Hallén traveled several times to visit some German opera directors, conductors and opera singers in summer and autumn 1880 to play parts of his opera to them and to initiate a performance (see section 4). For these 'promotional' tours, he needed a vocal score. The full score of *Harald* was finished in March or April 1880. The unpreserved vocal score of the original version of *Harald* must consequently have been finished also in spring 1880, because Hallén started to promote his new work immediately after being ready with the score.

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46 "Nächsten Mittwoch gebe ich mein drittes Concert und am 10 Apr., so Gott will, mein Abschiedsconcert. Mit der Oper bin ich wohl in 8 Tagen fertig" (Undated letter to Herrig, probably from March 1880, p. 2).

47 Herrig: *Drei Operndichtungen*, pp. XII–XIII.

48 Ibid.

49 Tegen, p. 14.

50 Letter to Herrig, undated fragment, written after 21 June 1880, p. 1.

51 "Ich kann Ihnen kein Clavierauszug schicken weil ich nur eins habe [...]. Mit der Instrumentation geht es langsam. Ich bin jetzt an der ‚Kailerei‘ [...] oder textlich: – ‚Heerrufer ruft‘ – [i.e. the fight between Harald and Erich in the second act; *Harald*, vocal score, pp. 120–123 M.K.]" (Undated letter to Herrig, pp. 7–8; it was probably written in late summer or autumn 1879 because Hallén mentions on p. 1 the 9<sup>th</sup> edition of H. Naudh's alias Heinrich G. Nordmann's *Die Juden und der deutsche Staat*, which was published in 1879. He mentions this book also on a postcard to Herrig, written 18 October 1879.)

"Klappern und wieder klappern! Die Leute glauben nur was gedruckt steht."

### 2.1.2. The revisions

After finishing the full score of *Harald*, Hallén continued to negotiate with Herrig about revisions of the drama. In one instance, Hallén presented the work in summer 1880 to Anton Seidl (1850–1898) in Leipzig who suggested changing the fight scene in the second act. According to Herrig's stage directions, the fight between Harald and Erich ought to be invisible to the audience.<sup>52</sup> When Hallén prepared the publication of the vocal score of *Harald* in early 1883, he deleted some verses and inserted slight changes of the action.<sup>53</sup> These modifications were made without asking Herrig, who took offence. Hallén defended his decision to abridge the last words of Signe:

You seem to be annoyed about me refusing to restore the finale of the opera to its original form. But I think that it does not matter if one cuts out these few measures [6 measures (*Harald*, full score manuscript, vol. III, p. 210); compare *Harald*, vocal score, p. 205 with Herrig: *Drei Operndichtungen*, pp. 69–70 M.K.]. It is certainly not necessary that Siegrun emphasizes her decision to follow Harald into death by singing 'What should I do lonesome as a widow' etc. Everything requires quick action here and her quick, keen decision is expressed in the best way by her last lines, 'If the courage of the men survives forever' etc. – Yesterday, I sent the manuscript to Raabe [Ët Plothow, Hallén's publisher in Berlin. M.K.], and I ask you firmly to leave it as it is. It is very important for me that the vocal score is published during my stay in Stockholm.<sup>54</sup>

Hallén went to Stockholm at the beginning of March 1883 to organize the first Swedish performance of the entire *Harald* opera and received 300 kronas from the Royal Opera to pay the Swedish translator of the libretto, Adolf Lindgren (1846–1905). In May, the individual roles were translated into Swedish<sup>55</sup> and Lindgren was ready with the Swedish

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52 Letter to Herrig, 14 July 1880, pp. 1–2; see *Harald*, vocal score, pp. 120–123.

53 "Die erste Correctur vom 2<sup>ten</sup> und 3<sup>ten</sup> Aufzuge habe ich gestern an Raabe und Plothow abgeschickt ebenso die zweite Correctur des ersten Aufzuges. Die Striche habe ich unverändert stehen lassen weil eine Änderung jetzt viel zu kostspielig sein sollte. Ich glaube auch, daß der Sprung im zweiten Aufzuge einigermaßen berechtigt ist denn sonst würde die Ohnmachtsscene Siegruns gar zu lang werden [Hallén deleted Siegrun's fainting after the death of Erich, consisting of 41 measures (*Harald*, full score manuscript, vol. II, pp. 118–125; compare *Harald*, vocal score, p. 124 and Herrig: *Drei Operndichtungen*, pp. 40–41) M.K.]. Sollte nun aber meine Bühnenanweisung Dir nicht konveniren, so kannst Du ja selbst bei der zweiten Correctur die Änderungen machen, welche Du für gut findest. Dagegen hast Du ganz Recht daß der Übergang im letzten Aufzuge etwas gar zu unvermittelt klingt. Ich habe aber ganz vergessen wie die Stelle ursprünglich componirt war." (Letter to Herrig, 2 February 1883, pp. 1 and 3).

54 "Du scheinst etwas ungehalten darüber zu sein, daß ich den Schluß der Oper nicht wieder originaliter herstellte. Ich habe aber jetzt gefunden, daß es nichts schadet daß die paar Tacte wegfallen. Es ist doch gewiss nicht nöthig daß Siegrun ihren Entschluß, Harald in den Tod zu folgen, dadurch verdeutlicht, daß sie singt 'Was soll ich allein die einsame Wittwe' etc. Es drängt hier alles zur raschen That und ihr rascher, kühner Entschluß wird am besten illustriert durch die letzten Zeilen. 'Wenn ewig der Männer Muth fortlebt etc.' – Ich habe gestern das Manuscript an Raabe geschickt bitte aber entschieden die Sache jetzt beruhen zu lassen. Es liegt mir sehr viel daran, daß der Clavierauszug herauskommt während meiner Anwesenheit in Stockholm." (Letter to Herrig, 27 February 1883, pp. 2–3)

55 Letter to Herrig, 28 May 1883, p. 1.

version of the first act.<sup>56</sup> Maybe he was not the best choice as a translator. According to Hallén, he was decidedly inimical to Wagner's art.<sup>57</sup> Lindgren criticized Wagner's aesthetics in his book *Om Wagnerismen* (Stockholm 1881) and in his article "Richard Wagner's Kunst-Philosophie, kritisch beleuchtet", in the *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung* no. 15 (1880).<sup>58</sup> He also wrote a negative evaluation of the *Harald* libretto. Tegen states that Lindgren often replaced the symbolic dimension of Herrig's verses by a more conventional, uninspired opera jargon in his translation.<sup>59</sup>

The vocal score with these revisions was published in late April 1883, as is proved by one letter.<sup>60</sup> It contains only the German text and documents the Swedish version of *Harald*, which is slightly different from the German original. Thus, the Swedish *Harald Viking* is a revised version of the German *Harald der Viking*. Hallén's changes concerning the text and the action can be seen when the printed vocal score is compared with the two prints of Herrig's *Harald* libretto from 1881 – that is, with the separate print of the *Harald* textbook published at Luckhardt and with the *Drei Operndichtungen* published at Bloch the same year; both prints of the textbook are congruent. Hallén made many small modifications of the text by changing single words,<sup>61</sup> the order of words or verses,<sup>62</sup> by replacing some words by synonyms,<sup>63</sup> by deleting verses<sup>64</sup> and stage directions<sup>65</sup> and even by creating new stage directions on his own.<sup>66</sup> Hardly surprising, the choral passages required most of the textual changes.<sup>67</sup> Only rarely did Hallén insert additional verses into the solo parts, for instance by repeating them, which he did with some verses of Siegrun and Harald confessing their mutual love in the third act.<sup>68</sup>

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56 Tegen, p. 46.

57 Letter to Herrig, 18 January 1884, p. 1.

58 *Svenskt biografiskt lexikon*, vol. XXIII, p. 428.

59 Tegen, pp. 45–46.

60 The vocal score bears no printing date. In a letter to Herrig, written 28 April 1883, p. 1, Hallén informs him that a copy of the print has been sent to the famous Wagner tenor Albert Niemann (1831–1917) by Raabe & Plothow.

61 Sometimes Hallén's modifications produce wrong meanings – for instance "Büsse" ("Do penance!") instead of "Buße" ("repentance") (*Harald*, vocal score, p. 194; Herrig: *Drei Operndichtungen*, p. 67). The modified verse of Erich "Frühlingsrosen blühen des Blut!" (*Harald*, vocal score, pp. 79–80) is completely incomprehensible. But sometimes Hallén corrected Herrig's verses, for instance by using "Deck" ("ship deck") instead of "Dach" ("roof") (*Harald*, vocal score, p. 199; Herrig: *Drei Operndichtungen*, p. 68).

62 Compare, for instance, the first reply of Harald in the first act (*Harald*, vocal score, p. 6; Herrig: *Drei Operndichtungen*, p. 3).

63 Compare the adjectives in Gutmund's ballad (*Harald*, vocal score, p. 26; Herrig: *Drei Operndichtungen*, p. 8).

64 In Herrig's original version, Harald represents himself as the vanguard of a Viking invasion. Hallén deleted all those verses of the title role (*Harald*, vocal score, p. 66; Herrig: *Drei Operndichtungen*, p. 15).

65 Hallén often deleted stage directions that merely restated the information given by the verses (*Harald*, vocal score, p. 120; Herrig: *Drei Operndichtungen*, p. 38).

66 Compare *Harald*, vocal score, p. 56 with Herrig: *Drei Operndichtungen*, p. 13.

67 For instance, in the first act (*Harald*, vocal score, pp. 42–43 and 46; Herrig: *Drei Operndichtungen*, p. 12).

68 Compare *Harald*, vocal score, pp. 178–179 with Herrig: *Drei Operndichtungen*, p. 33.

"Klappern und wieder klappern! Die Leute glauben nur was gedruckt steht."

The print of the vocal score is dedicated to the city of Gothenburg. Hallén had quite unsentimental reasons for doing this, as he admitted in a letter to Herrig. He wanted to show gratitude towards the sponsors of the printing but at the same time he hoped to get some kind of financial support, such as a scholarship from the city, so he could continue with his composing activity.<sup>69</sup>

The score of *Harald* was never printed, either in the German or in the Swedish version, and Hallén's autograph of his first opera is also missing.<sup>70</sup> On 23 May 1883, he wrote to the Stockholm opera director Per Anders Willman (1834–1898),<sup>71</sup> telling him that a manuscript copy of the score used at the Leipzig première was available at his Berlin publisher, Raabe & Plochow.<sup>72</sup> Five days later, Willman had already ordered that manuscript.<sup>73</sup> In all probability, it is this copy of the full score that is preserved in Statens musikbibliotek. That manuscript has been bound in three volumes – each act in one volume – and each volume was written by a different writer. The writer of the first volume has used German letters; the other two volumes were written in Latin letters. The whole text is in German – that is, the text to be sung by the actors, the directions for stage and musical execution as well as the names of the instruments. Everything is written in ink except the measure lines, which are drawn with a pencil. The Swedish translation of Lindgren was inserted in ink afterwards. It is written into the manuscript in a squeezed way.

Some measures or even pages of the score manuscript are crossed out in ink. These abridgements are consistent with Hallén's abridgements described in his letter of 27 February 1883 (see above) and can be regarded as authorized by him. Besides that, some short remarks written down with a thick blue pencil in Swedish and referring to the stage technique exclusively,<sup>74</sup> prove that this manuscript really was used for the Stockholm performances. This score, however, is not the version used in Stockholm in 1884, when *Harald Viking* was performed in a slightly abridged version. Mainly, the lyrical moments were cut out.<sup>75</sup> As already mentioned, the vocal score of the original German version, which was used by Hallén on his promotional tour through Germany in 1880, is

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69 "Harald muß die Stadt Gothenburg gewidmet werden, erstens weil ich doch einzelne Macenaten zu verdanken habe, daß die Oper überhaupt im Druck erscheint, und zweitens weil ich doch hoffe von der Stadt eine jährliche Unterstützungssumme zu erhalten, damit ich mich mehr ungestört nur das Komponiren widmen kann." (Letter to Herrig, 18 January 1883, pp. 1–2).

70 *Pipers Enzyklopädie des Musiktheaters*, vol. II, p. 655.

71 Willman was the director of the Stockholm opera from 1883 to 1888 (*Svenska män och kvinnor*, vol. VIII, p. 388).

72 Tegen, p. 46.

73 Letter to Herrig, 28 May 1883, p. 1.

74 For instance, at the end of the acts, the falling curtain is marked by the Swedish word "Ridå" (*Harald Viking*, full score manuscript).

75 The abridgements are listed in: Tegen, p. 47.



"Klappern und wieder klappern! Die Leute glauben nur was gedruckt steht."

The image shows a page of handwritten musical notation for the finale of Act I of the opera *Harald*. The score is written on multiple staves. At the top, there are several staves of piano accompaniment, including a grand staff (treble and bass clefs) and a separate bass line. Below the piano part, there are vocal staves for various characters, each with their name written to the left: *Nathan*, *Hörner*, *Legtun*, *Lera*, *Gutmund*, *Exeth*, *Frauen*, and *Mannen*. The vocal lines include both the original German lyrics and a Swedish translation. The notation is dense and characteristic of 19th-century manuscript notation, with many accidentals and complex rhythmic patterns. The page is numbered '182' in the top left corner.

*Harald*, finale of act I (*Harald der Viking*, full score manuscript, vol. I, p. 182).

missing. Consequently, the printed vocal score from 1883 and the full score manuscript are the only documents containing the music of *Harald*, but only the latter displays the original German version. Because this is supposed to be the only copy of the full score available at Raabe & Plothow, we can presume that the opera was not performed any-

"Klappern und wieder klappern! Die Leute glauben nur was gedruckt steht."

where else other than Stockholm and Leipzig. In any case, up to late 1884, the theater in Leipzig was the only place in Germany where this opera was performed<sup>76</sup> and there is no report from Hallén's side of any other German performance.

## 2.2. Hallén's reports from the Swedish Harald performances

The *Harald der Wiking* world première in Leipzig did not become Hallén's hoped-for breakthrough in Germany, although he thought the scenic and musical realizations were fine<sup>77</sup> – and some contemporary reviewers agreed.<sup>78</sup> It took place under the direction of Angelo Neumann (1838–1910) and was conducted by the young Arthur Nikisch (1855–1922). Anna Sachse-Hofmeister (1853–1904), a specialist for Wagnerian youthful soprano parts,<sup>79</sup> played Siegrun and was the best singer of this production,<sup>80</sup> while in the part of Harald, the tenor Georg Lederer (1843–1910), who had a large range of roles in his repertoire including heroic and lyrical tenor parts as well as parts demanding declamatory and histrionic qualities,<sup>81</sup> was a good singer but not quite as good an actor.<sup>82</sup> Also, Vilmos Basch's (1849–?) Gutmund did not satisfy the composer<sup>83</sup> and perhaps not the audience either (see below). Because of the lukewarm response to the *Harald* première in Germany, Hallén sought successfully to have the opera performed in his home country after his return to Sweden in 1882. This was not a matter of choice, because the only opera house in Sweden at that time was the Royal Opera in Stockholm.

Before being staged there, Hallén presented parts of his first opera in some Gothenburg concerts. In 1880, he conducted some unknown parts<sup>84</sup> and in 1882, Siegrun's monologue from the third act, "Fand sie die Wahrheit?", in German. Finally, on 23 April 1883, he conducted the scene and ballad of Gutmund from the second act in Lindgren's Swedish translation.<sup>85</sup> Five days later, he sent the program of this concert to Herrig, comparing the performance with the Leipzig première three years earlier. "The choir sang

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76 Letter to Herrig, 22 September 1884, p. 3.

77 Hallén: "Minnesblad", p. 14.

78 *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik*, vol. XXVII, 1881, p. 444.

79 She had the parts of Elsa, Sieglinde and Senta in her repertoire (*SL*, vol. IV, p. 3022 and vol. VI, p. 587).

80 "[...] en i varje hänseende fulländad Sigruntyp" (Hallén: "Minnesblad", p. 14); *Allgemeine deutsche Musik-Zeitung*, vol. VIII no. 43, 28 October 1881, p. 389.

81 *SL*, vol. III, p. 2022 and vol. VI, p. 456.

82 Hallén: "Minnesblad", p. 14.

83 The Hungarian baritone Vilmos Basch had an international career and was engaged at the Leipzig Opera from 1880 to 1882. His repertoire included such Wagner roles as Telramund, the flying Dutchman and Beckmesser (*SL*, vol. I, p. 201), which are more declamatory than the lyrical part of Gutmund in *Harald*. For this role, a singer with experience as Wolfram would be more useful.

84 Tegen, p. 14, fn. 3.

85 He sent the programs of the latter two concerts to Herrig. They are included in the letter collection.

excellently and the baritone was by far better than Dr. Basch in L.[eipzig]," he writes. "I still don't understand why the Leipzig audience remained so unmoved by this number!"<sup>86</sup>

This remark sheds some light on the formal structure of the work. Actually, three 'numbers' were composed so they could be performed separately, as Hallén did in those concerts: Gutmund's spring song in the first act, his ballad in the second and Siegrun's monologue in the third act. On the frontispiece of the printed vocal score, these three parts are offered for sale as separate arrangements. Also, other numbers, such as solo and choir scenes, can easily be distinguished in the opera. This further supports the idea that Hallén's models were Wagner's operas, the works composed before 1848, in the first line *Flying Dutchman*, *Tannhäuser* and *Lohengrin*, rather than his music dramas in which the traditional number structure was widely abandoned. But it is a matter of fact that Wagner also composed a few 'numbers' in his later works to be presented in concerts and sold separately as chamber music arrangements, numbers like Siegmund's or Walther's songs, the Ride of the Valkyries etc.<sup>87</sup> Popular opera numbers were of course also performed in concerts or in arrangements for chamber music before Wagner. But in Wagner's case the approach was vice versa: he expected the conducting of separate numbers in concerts to pave the way for his works, as Hallén did too. Both conducted their own opera numbers in concerts. According to Wagner, however, his music was no concert music at all and should not be played any longer as such after the breakthrough of a certain work. Concerning chamber music arrangements his position was different. Easy arrangements of Wagner's music were played and sung a lot by German amateurs, something that was of course not possible with the vocally demanding arias of, for instance, Meyerbeer, Donizetti or Rossini. Because of the introduction of the royalty system, music-making in the home became economically interesting also for opera composers at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. In these respects, Hallén took over not only the musical structure of numbers embedded into a – sometimes only on the surface – through-composed work but also the 'merchandising' strategy of Wagner.

The rehearsals of *Harald Viking* began in early 1884, and Hallén went to Stockholm to supervise them.<sup>88</sup> On 18 February of the same year, the première took place and Hallén files a glowing report about it to Germany eight days later. According to him, the crown prince Gustav, the prince Carl – the Swedish king Oscar II was in Norway at the time – the court and the audience appreciated the work more with each act. After the

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86 "Der Chor sang ausgezeichnet und der Baryton war unvergleichlich besser wie Dr: Basch in L. Mir ist es immer noch ein Räthsel daß das Leipzigerpublikum sich bei dieser Nummer so kühl verhielt!" (Letter to Herrig, 28 April 1883).

87 *Wagner-Werkverzeichnis*, pp. 368–369, 479 and 482.

88 Letter to Herrig, 22 September 1884, p. 3.

"Klappern und wieder klappern! Die Leute glauben nur was gedruckt steht."

first scene of the third act, the performance was interrupted to applaud the musicians and the composer. Also, during the second performance, the composer was celebrated in this manner, which Hallén considered to be exceptional. He singles out the excellent stage and lighting technique and the scenic decoration, praises the soloists and rates the overall quality of this performance far higher than the Leipzig première three years earlier,<sup>89</sup> with the exception of Anna Sachse-Hofmeister as Siegrun. His assessment matches other contemporary reports about the Swedish *Harald* première.<sup>90</sup> Tegen found that the large-scale setting of the performance, as well as the thorough rehearsals, were really exceptional and that even the repertoire of the Royal Opera was arranged in a way – specifically, by delaying the first Swedish performance of Wagner's *Mastersingers*, a work, which surely might have competed with *Harald* for the audience's favour – that would make Hallén's opera a lasting success. *Harald Viking* was to be the only new large-scale opera presented during the Stockholm season of 1883/84.<sup>91</sup>

A serious problem arose when the first tenor of the Stockholm opera, Leonard Labatt (1838–1897), breached his contract in November 1884 and left for The Netherlands.<sup>92</sup> In Hallén's eyes and according to an anonymous reviewer of the première, Labatt was the ideal singer for the title role.<sup>93</sup> Indeed, he had an excellent résumé. He was an experienced Swedish Wagner-tenor who had Tannhäuser, Lohengrin and Tristan as well as the main Grand opéra tenor roles in his repertoire. He had been engaged at the Vienna Hofoper from 1869 to 1883<sup>94</sup> and in November 1875 was instructed in the correct embodiment of Tannhäuser by Wagner himself.<sup>95</sup> Because of the lack of a heroic tenor after his departure from Stockholm, *Harald* could not be performed there anymore.<sup>96</sup>

The main female role of *Harald Viking* was sung by the experienced dramatic soprano Selma Ek (1856–1941). She had a large repertoire which included popular French and Italian opera roles but also Wagnerian parts like Elisabeth and Eva.<sup>97</sup> She was engaged by the Stockholm opera between 1878 and 1896. Hallén described her voice as not sufficient for the part of Siegrun, even though he admitted that she was an excellent actress.<sup>98</sup> Maybe he had imagined a more dramatic soprano voice for Siegrun, while

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89 Letter to Herrig, 26 February 1884, pp. 1–4.

90 For instance, *Svensk musiktidning*, 1 March 1884, vol. IV, no. 5, p. 38.

91 Tegen, pp. 46 and 53.

92 Letter to Herrig, 22 November 1884, p. 2; *SL*, vol. III, p. 1955.

93 Letter to Herrig, 26 February 1884, p. 3; the review was cut out of a Swedish newspaper and sent to Herrig probably together with this letter.

94 *SL*, vol. III, p. 1955.

95 Knust 2007a, pp. 287–288.

96 Letter to Herrig, 24 November 1884, p. 2.

97 *SL*, vol. II, p. 1015.

98 Letter to Herrig, 26 February 1884, p. 3.

Selma Ek was rather specialized in lyrical soprano parts. (See cover for a contemporary portrait of Selma Ek as Siegrun.)

The career of the first Swedish singer of Gutmund, Carl-Fredrik Lundquist (or Lundqvist) (1841–1920), was very unusual. Lundquist started as a heroic tenor at the Royal Opera in 1869, but became a baritone in 1874 and sang many major roles, such as Otello and Hans Sachs, until he retired in 1904, after 35 years of engagement at the Stockholm opera. Hallén was quite enthusiastic about his Gutmund.<sup>99</sup> Lundquist had also created the role of Björn in Ivar Hallström's *Vikingarne* in 1877.<sup>100</sup> Even though Hallén often calls Hallström his worst enemy and rival,<sup>101</sup> *Vikingarne*, which was performed about one year before Hallén caused Herrig to write *Harald*, could definitely have inspired him to write a Viking opera himself. The end of *Harald* is similar to the end of *Vikingarne*.<sup>102</sup> Maybe the part of Gutmund was even composed by Hallén after the model of Lundquist's voice.

In 1884, *Harald* was performed eleven times in Stockholm.<sup>103</sup> In a letter to Herrig written probably in the second half of April 1884, the last *Harald* performance of that season is described. It had been arranged for the Russian composer and pianist Anton Rubinstein (1829–1894) and, according to Hallén, the opera house was fully booked.<sup>104</sup> *Harald Viking* was performed again some five years later in Stockholm, on 27 March 1889, this time with Hallén himself conducting. This performance was not well rehearsed, the singers were not as good as they were five years earlier, and public interest in the piece was not as enthusiastic. Hallén concluded that his opera would not become part of the Stockholm repertoire,<sup>105</sup> a prediction that proved correct. Wagner's works had become popular in the north of Europe after the mid-1870s.<sup>106</sup> *Harald* was now pushed into the background by its Wagnerian models.

### 2.3. Hallén's and Herrig's other common projects

*Harald* is the main issue of Hallén's and Herrig's correspondence, but it is not the only project on which they worked together. Hallén's letters tell us about the beginning of some other compositions for which Herrig provided him with the text. In a review in the *Allgemeine deutsche Musik-Zeitung* about the *Harald* world première in October 1881, it

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99 Ibid.

100 Tegen, pp. 20–21.

101 For instance, in his letter to Herrig, 26 March 1885, p. 3.

102 Andersson, p. 193.

103 Tegen, p. 47.

104 Fragmentary letter to Herrig, undated, written probably in the second half of April 1884, p. 4; the eleventh performance took place on 14 April 1884 (Tegen, p. 47).

105 Letter to Herrig, 30 April 1889, pp. 1–3.

106 After 1865 Wagner's works were performed occasionally in Sweden. The *Lohengrin* première on 22 January 1874 marks Wagner's breakthrough in Sweden (Salmi, pp. 126 and 149).

"Klappern und wieder klappern! Die Leute glauben nur was gedruckt steht."

is reported that Hallén had started to compose another one of the three opera libretti of Herrig, *Geminianus*.<sup>107</sup> This information could very well have come from the composer himself. His letters from 1883 report about the continuation of this work, even though it did not proceed all that quickly.<sup>108</sup> He and Herrig had probably already thoroughly discussed the realization of this new opera project by 1881 or before, because Herrig describes the leitmotifs required for it in remarkable detail in his foreword to *Drei Operndichtungen*.<sup>109</sup> This might be a reflection of Hallén's ideas about this textbook. (About his third libretto in his *Drei Operndichtungen*, *Alexius*, Herrig offers far less advice for the music – and what he does offer is far less specific.<sup>110</sup>) In September 1884, Hallén wrote to Herrig that he intends to apply for the Jenny Lind scholarship so he can finish *Geminianus*.<sup>111</sup> We do not get to learn much more about it. The opera was never finished<sup>112</sup> and nothing is known about the music.<sup>113</sup>

Furthermore, Hallén composes music for a small-scale fairy tale opera for which Herrig writes the text in 1884.<sup>114</sup> The work is commissioned by the Stockholm opera and ought to be performed there at New Year. The piece is to include spoken text, like a Sing-spiel. A first version of the text is written by Herrig in late spring 1884. Obviously, he had asked Hallén for a list of Swedish names for his libretto, which Hallén sends him in June. Among the chosen names are Hans, Agnes and Holda.<sup>115</sup> Hallén informs Herrig about the requirements for this occasional work in spring 1884:

Willman, the director in Stockholm, wants to have a piece for New Year, i.e. a fairy tale opera in one act. The action has to take place in Sweden, of course, and should allude

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107 *Allgemeine deutsche Musik-Zeitung*, vol. VIII, 1881, no. 43, p. 369; *Alexius* and *Geminianus* were written twelve years before *Harald* (Pohl, vol. X, no. 1–2, p. 5).

108 "Ich habe heute schon mit dem Marsch (Aufzug des Mamilius) angefangen und wenn ich die Skizze fertig habe werde ich dieselbe sofort instrumentieren" (Letter to Herrig, 18 January 1883, p. 1). Hallén refers to the entry of Mamilius in the first act of *Geminianus* (Herrig: *Drei Operndichtungen*, p. 148). This implies that he had only composed the very beginning of the opera. Hallén did not keep his promise to orchestrate this march "immediately". More than one year later, he wrote that he had just finished the sketch: "Den Marsch aus Geminianus habe ich jetzt fertig skizzirt, kann aber nicht so ungestört fortarbeiten da ich immer durch [Gesangs-] Stunden und Besuch gestört werde" (Letter to Herrig, 27 February 1883, p. 4).

109 Herrig: *Drei Operndichtungen*, pp. XIV–XVI.

110 He concludes the passage about *Alexius* with the resigned statement that hardly any composers for this libretto will be found (Herrig: *Drei Operndichtungen*, pp. XIII–XIV). Maybe Hallén had signaled that he was not interested in the work.

111 Letter to Herrig, 22 September 1884, pp. 3–4.

112 Norlind, p. 5.

113 Felix von Weingartner (1863–1942) composed the libretto with the title *Genesisius* after Herrig's death (*MGG*, vol. XIV, c. 409). Obviously he was already in contact with Herrig in 1884: "Wer ist Weingartner? Wohl so ein langhaariger, schwülstiger Liszt-Schwärmer!?" (Letter from Hallén to Herrig, 26 February 1884, p. 5).

114 Letter to Herrig, 22 September 1884, p. 3.

115 Letter to Herrig, 14 June 1884, p. 1.

in a symbolic way to the shift of the years./ The decorative and poetic lyrical moment is crucial.<sup>116</sup>

The music is supposed to illustrate the scenic processes and might be partly through-composed. As a composer I would appreciate very much such a piece of medieval romantic.<sup>117</sup>

The libretto is to be translated into Swedish by Carl Henrik Christiernsson (1845–1915).<sup>118</sup> The work is preliminarily titled *Sylvesternachtszauber*, and Hallén starts to compose the first scene in summer 1884. This opera also remained unfinished.<sup>119</sup> The correspondence between Hallén and Herrig intensifies for one last time in 1889. At the end of that year, Hallén asks Herrig to help him with the German translation of his choral ballad, *Styrbjörn Starke*. Hallén adds an exceptional document to a letter. It is a word-for-word translation of the Swedish text into German with marks of the trochaic verse meter. He wants to have alliteration in the German version, which is supposed to be published in Germany.<sup>120</sup> The vocal score of *Styrbjörn Starke* was published at J. Schuberth & Co. in Leipzig in 1889, with the German title *Nordlandskampf*.<sup>121</sup> But it was probably not Herrig who did the translation. In the print, no translator is mentioned. The German verses are not so much alliterated but have final rhymes and the literary style is different from Herrig's.

Finally, in what is probably his last letter to Herrig, Hallén asks him if he wants to arrange parts of his Christmas play, *Christnacht*,<sup>122</sup> as a short text for an occasional cantata. This composition is to be made to order.<sup>123</sup> If Hallén ever wrote such a piece, it was surely with the text of another author, because Herrig stopped writing and publishing texts in 1888. Hallén's short composition *Christnacht / Julaften* op. 41 could refer to Herrig's text in some way. That, however, is difficult to determine, because it consists only of six verses before the piece ends in an arrangement of Luther's Christmas song *Vom Himmel hoch da komm ich her* for eight voices.

Thus, all their common projects after *Harald* remained unfinished or got stuck in the beginning. It seems as if this had been partly the fault of Herrig who neither de-

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116 "Willman, der Direktor in Stockholm, wünscht ein Neujahrsstück, d.h. eine einaktige Märchenoper. Die Handlung muß natürlich in Schweden spielen und symbolisch den Jahreswechsel andeuten./ Das Dekorative und rein poetisch Lyrisch muß hervortreten." (Letter to Herrig, 11 May 1884, pp. 2–3).

117 "Die Musik muß die scenischen Vorgänge illustriren und kann ja stellenweise durchkomponiert werden. So ein Stück mittelalterliche Romantik sollte mir als Komponist sehr willkommen sein." (Letter to Herrig, 17 May 1884, p. 1).

118 He was stage director of the royal theaters from 1881 to 1889 (*Svenska män och kvinnor*, vol. II, p. 101).

119 Norlind, p. 5.

120 Letter to Herrig, 1 October 1889, pp. 1–2.

121 Letter to Herrig, 17 December 1889, p. 1.

122 Hans Herrig: *Gesammelte Schriften*, vol. IV. Berlin: Friedrich Luckhardt, <sup>2</sup>1894. (In this article, I use a raised figure to the left of the year of edition to indicate a second edition or later.)

123 Letter to Herrig, 28 April 1890, p. 4.

"Klappern und wieder klappern! Die Leute glauben nur was gedruckt steht."

livered the texts very quickly nor motivated his Swedish collaborator to continue with a large-scale work like *Geminianus*. On the contrary, he reacted, obviously offended, if Hallén dared to change his texts. But also Hallén seems to have been a difficult person to deal with. So, if their personal interest in each other clearly was limited, what can be said about their common goal, i.e. their fight for Wagner's artistic and aesthetic ideas?

### 3. Hallén's relation to Richard Wagner

It has often been claimed that Wagner's music had a strong impact on Hallén as a composer, earning him the nickname "the Swedish Wagner", despite the fact that the exact range of this influence upon him has not been evaluated by music research so far. However, until late in life, he stuck to the model of the so-called New German school. The form as well as the instrumentation technique of Wagner's compositions of the 1840s and 1850s is to be found in many orchestral works of Hallén – for instance, in his late symphonic poem *Sphärenklänge* (world première 1905). Here Hallén evokes the atmosphere of the *Lohengrin* prelude (composed 1848) and quotes its sound, noticeably in the beginning and in the end with its thematic reprise played by the violins divisi.<sup>124</sup>

We don't know when Hallén came in contact with Wagner's music for the first time. There is no hint that he attended one of the 1868 *Mastersingers* performances in Munich when he studied composition there with Joseph Rheinberger (1839–1901), who, by the way, was anything but a Wagnerian. The same can be said about Moritz Hauptmann (1792–1868), his former teacher in Leipzig. And Julius Rietz (1812–1877), Hallén's teacher in Dresden in the years 1870/71, was even a well-known enemy of the New German school. So, considering his choice of teachers, when did Hallén become an admirer of Wagner? Actually, Hallén's letters to Herrig don't give any information about an enthusiastic relation to Wagner's music before Hallén and Herrig met in 1878. Maybe he became a Wagnerian as late as 1878,<sup>125</sup> but his 'conversion' to the New German school happened already during or right after 1871, as a contemporary German reviewer claimed, when Hallén started to write the first Swedish symphonic poem *Frithjof och Ingeborg*.<sup>126</sup>

Although Herrig was in contact with Wagner over some thirteen years, he made no attempt to introduce the Swedish composer of his opera libretto to him. Wagner did not know anything about Hallén, and Hallén, for his part, had quite an unsentimental relation to the person of Wagner. For instance, he mentioned Wagner's death in 1883

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124 Hallén: *Sphärenklänge*, pp. 3–7 and 30–31.

125 Vretblad, p. 8.

126 Quoted in: Norlind, p. 2.



just en passant<sup>127</sup> and I have found no evidence that Hallén ever went to the Bayreuth festival though he wrote on several occasions to Herrig that he aimed to do so.<sup>128</sup>

It may look a little questionable for us and even for many of their contemporaries to create a work like *Harald*,<sup>129</sup> which often strives toward direct quotation. Why did Hallén and his librettist decide to follow Wagner so closely? The answer to this question can be found in Hallén's "Minnesblad",<sup>130</sup> in a letter to Herrig, as well as in Herrig's foreword to his *Drei Operndichtungen*. Hallén pointed out that it was crucial for him to refute Nietzsche's statement that Wagner was the final stage of a cultural development. That would imply that Wagner had failed to create a style or a school to prolong his ideas into the next generation.<sup>131</sup> Herrig explains his imitation of Wagner in the same way. For him, it is absolutely necessary to continue Wagner's new concept of dramatic artwork and to prove thereby its robustness – something that no one had yet done according to Herrig.<sup>132</sup> Obviously, both Hallén and Herrig feared that Wagner's work and theory would be forgotten. Their point of view illustrates the Wagner reception at the end of the 1870s: Wagner's music dramas – that is, his works composed after *Lohengrin* – were at that time not as established as his operas, not even in Germany.<sup>133</sup> Of Wagner's works written after 1849, only *Mastersingers* was a success from the beginning. It became part of the standard German opera repertoire right after its Munich world première in 1868. The situation changed drastically during the 1880s and 1890s when Wagner's music dramas became popular and towards the end of the century even dominant in the opera repertoires of the German-speaking countries. Ironically, the sweeping breakthrough of Wagner's works, which Hallén and Herrig were striving for, minimized Hallén's chances of making a career as a composer. Since the model of his orchestral and operatic music became obvious to the audience, he was now regarded as nothing more than another of many other Wagner epigones, who started to imitate the Bayreuth master at the same time, i.e. after the late 1870s. Possibly Herrig and Hallén consciously ignored those Wagner followers when they stated that nobody tried to follow Wagner's footsteps. Or did they first become aware of them after beginning their work on *Harald*?

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127 Letter to Herrig, 27 February 1883, p. 4.

128 For instance, in a letter written on 18 June 1884.

129 *Musiken i Sverige*, vol. III, p. 406.

130 Hallén: "Minnesblad", p. 16.

131 According to Hallén the situation looked as if "Wagner allein da steht ohne Nachfolger, ohne eine Schule oder ein Styl gemacht zu haben". Thus he would have "auch für die folgende Zeit kein Bedeutung!! –" (Undated letter to Herrig, probably from late summer or autumn 1879, p. 6).

132 Herrig: *Drei Operndichtungen*, pp. IV–VII.

133 This applies in the first instance to *Tristan*, which was only performed in a few theaters until 1882 (Wagner: *Sämtliche Werke*, vol. XXVII, p. 15).

"Klappern und wieder klappern! Die Leute glauben nur was gedruckt steht."

Hallén describes himself as "the only Wagnerian in the entire North",<sup>134</sup> an assessment which would be confirmed by posterity. According to Moses Pergament, he was also "the first Swedish Wagnerian".<sup>135</sup> This does not mean, however, that Hallén was orthodox or uncritical towards the works of the Bayreuth master. On the contrary, he judges them in his letters to Herrig quite severely and sometimes even harshly, for instance, in his reports about a Leipzig performance of the *Ring*. It is the first time that Hallén saw the *Ring*, or at least this is the impression the reader of his letters gets. He was fascinated by the "total effect" of the Leipzig production, but one thing Hallén disliked extremely is the main character of the whole tetralogy, Wotan. Hallén considered him to be "not interesting" because of his all-too-human behavior, his greed and his egoism.<sup>136</sup> Of the *Ring* he likes the *Valkyrie* best, especially the first act and the fourth scene of the second act, while in *Siegfried*, the *Norne*-scene and the conspiring scene in the second act of *Twilight of the Gods* are too long for his taste. Besides that, he was not fond of Wagner's idea that Siegfried had to kill Fafner on stage; this was for him an unacceptable case of "cruelty to animals".<sup>137</sup> *Siegfried* appeared to him as the poorest part of the *Ring*.<sup>138</sup> Of course, Hallén was fully aware that his opinions about the *Ring* should be kept private at all costs. "If the true believers in Wagner should read these lines they would seek for revenge, for sure, and then 'Oh, oh, my poor miserable Hagbard'."<sup>139</sup>

Other Wagnerian dramas are also problematic in Hallén's eyes. Even though his own opera *Harald* resembles *Tristan and Isolde* musically and in many other respects, Hallén did not like Wagner's opus metaphysicum. In a letter from 1882, he describes the music of *Tristan* as "extremely bombastic and boring".<sup>140</sup> His favorite drama among Wagner's works was *The Mastersingers*,<sup>141</sup> which most of the Wagnerians of that time preferred – notably the young Nietzsche. All in all, Hallén distances himself from the

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134 "[...] da ich der einzige Wagnerianer bin hier im Norden" (Undated letter to Herrig, probably from spring 1880, p. 2).

135 Pergament, p. 59.

136 "Er ist mir zu wenig göttlich, es regt sich in ihm alles mögliche menschliche schlechte und gute Eigenschaften, er ist absolut nichts von beidem und kann mich als solcher nicht interessiren. Als Gott betrachtet ist er nur ein sehr langweiliger und griesgrämiger Egoist, der an sich alles rafften möchte und gar nicht weiß wie er es erreichen soll." (Letter to Herrig, 14 June 1880, p. 1–2).

137 "Daß ist ja gar zu abscheulich realistisch gemacht die ganze Wurmszene. Warum nicht solche Thierplagerei hinter der Scene aufführen?" (Letter to Herrig, 18 June 1880, p. 2). Here, Hallén displays the clichés of a (German) Wagnerian who, according to Eduard Hanslick, not only had to be an expert in Wagner's works but also a "Schopenhauerian, pessimist, enemy of vivisection, anti-Semite, vegetarian, true believer in Christ and whatever else the 'master' prescribes". ("Wagner-Kultus" in: Hanslick, p. 312).

138 Letter to Herrig, 18 June 1880, p. 2.

139 "Lesen die notengläubigen Wagnerianer dies, so wäre ich verfallen ihrer sicheren Rache, und dann weh, owaih, owaih, du armer elender Hagbard." (Letter to Herrig, 18 April 1880, p. 3).

140 "Die Musik [of Mihailovich's *Hagbarth* M.K.] ist ganz tristanisch, äusserst schwülstig und langweilig." (Letter to Herrig, undated fragment, probably from 1882, p. 1).

141 Letter to Herrig, undated fragment, probably from 1882, p. 3.

orthodox Wagnerians, i.e. the community of readers of and writers for Hans von Wolzogen's *Bayreuther Blätter*, which he described as "Ultras";<sup>142</sup> Herrig had also warned in an article against worshipping Wagner too much.<sup>143</sup> Hallén, who claimed he got a negative review from von Wolzogen,<sup>144</sup> despised his arrogant attitude as a writer and worried that the aggressively pro-German attitude of the *Bayreuther Blätter* would alienate potential audiences in non-German countries.<sup>145</sup>

Nonetheless, Hallén's first opera is full of Wagner reminiscences, something already noticed by his contemporaries.<sup>146</sup> All Swedish newspapers and magazines which report on the *Harald* première in Stockholm – whether critical or not – regretted that the composer imitated or alluded to Wagner's music so closely.<sup>147</sup> As has been stated, it was mainly Wagner's romantic operas, *The Flying Dutchman*, *Tannhäuser* and *Lohengrin*, as well as the music dramas *Tristan* and *Valkyrie*, which served as models for *Harald*. To do justice to its music, it has to be kept in mind that the latter two were performed for the first time just thirteen and eight years, respectively, before Hallén starts to compose *Harald*, and that these dramas were rarely performed outside of Munich until the 1880s. In theory, Hallén had the chance to attend performances of *Mastersingers* during his Munich stay in 1868, but he had definitely no opportunity to see *Tristan* then<sup>148</sup> and he didn't see a *Valkyrie* performance before June 1880 (see above). By this time, the score of *Harald* was already finished. This fact is astounding because of the quotations taken from *Valkyrie* into *Harald*, which are done not only with compositional but also with orchestral exactness. For instance, the so-called "Schicksalskudemotiv" – which is exposed in the beginning of the fourth scene of the second act in the *Valkyrie* when Brünnhilde announces Siegmund's imminent death – appears at the end of the third act of *Harald*, after the lethal injury of the title character,<sup>149</sup> establishing not only a musical but also a dramatic link between these two opera figures. Hallén quotes the Schicksal-

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142 "Die Herren 'Ultras' dulden nicht daß im Style Wagners componirt wird denn nach Wagner ist ja der Tod." (Letter to Herrig, 10 December 1884, p. 2).

143 "Freilich bei den Ultra's [sic!] der Wagnerianer verdarb er [sich] es etwas mit einem Aufsatz in der 'Gegenwart' [...], indem er [...] vor dem ausschließlichen Wagnerkultus die Zeitgenossenschaft warnte." (Bernhard Vogel: review of *Harald der Wiking*, in *Leipziger Nachrichten* quoted in: *Deutsches Tageblatt* no. 192, 16 October 1881, p. 1).

144 *Vretblad*, p. 3, and two letters of Hallén to Herrig (10 December 1884, p. 2 and 7 January 1887, pp. 3–4) state that von Wolzogen wrote a negative review of *Harald* in the *Bayreuther Blätter*. I have browsed all volumes published in the years between 1881 and 1889 and cannot verify this information.

145 Letter to Herrig, 7 January 1887, pp. 3–4.

146 This applies to reviews of the German and Swedish premières as well, for instance to [Jean F. ?] Schucht's review in: *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik*, vol. XXXVII, no. 44, 28 October 1881, p. 453, or Adolf Lindgren's review in *Svensk musiktidning*, vol. IV, no. 5, 1 March 1884, p. 37.

147 Letter to Herrig, 26 February 1884, pp. 2–3.

148 There was no *Tristan* performance between summer 1865 and summer 1869 (Wagner: *Sämtliche Werke*, vol. XXVII, pp. 14–15).

149 *Harald*, vocal score, pp. 197 and 202.

"Klappern und wieder klappern! Die Leute glauben nur was gedruckt steht."

skundemotiv also in the beginning of the *Gustav Vasa Suite*.<sup>150</sup> He possessed enough talent as an orchestrator to be able to imagine the highly differentiated and subtle Wagnerian blending of instrumental sounds without having heard them performed by an orchestra.

Hallén is recognized worldwide for his orchestrations of Brahms's *Hungarian Dances* no. 2, 4 and 7, arranged in 1894. His instrumentation of the no. 2 is the most common orchestra version of this piece today. The fact that he wrote these arrangements underscores that Hallén was not one of those close-minded Wagnerians of that time who typically despised Brahms's 'academic' music.

Tegen has shown that Hallén's musical style is more laconic than Wagner's.<sup>151</sup> This was also the case with the Swedish composers of the 1890 generation, who all admired Wagner but did not simply copy his style but tried to write with less complexity than the late Wagner. Wilhelm Peterson-Berger states in his book *Richard Wagner som kulturföreteelse* (Richard Wagner as a Cultural Phenomenon) that the Scandinavian mentality demands shorter, clearer and more concise music than German listeners. Maybe he was influenced by Hallén's works and texts about music.

#### 4. Hallén's continental ambitions and his promotional strategy

Hallén's letters to Herrig are written in a grammatically imperfect<sup>152</sup> but idiomatically sophisticated German. His German connections were many. He studied and worked several years in Germany,<sup>153</sup> he was married to a native German (his first wife)<sup>154</sup> and there are many hints that he regarded himself to be quite 'Germanized'. "I am much more German than all the Germans [in Sweden] taken together. I have heard that very often here in Stockholm."<sup>155</sup> Hallén had already emphasized his German affinity during his time in Gothenburg in the 1870s<sup>156</sup> and he continued to do so during his first years in Stock-

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150 *Gustav Wasas Saga. Suite für Orchester*, full score, p. 3.

151 Tegen, pp. 65–66.

152 Typical mistakes are the use of "daß" instead of "das" and vice versa, wrong cases or genus and the use of Swedish orthography for words of Latin or Greek origin. Some sentences or words become comprehensible only if they are translated into Swedish.

153 He studied at the Leipzig Konservatorium in 1866/67, at the Munich Konservatorium in 1868 and in Dresden in 1870/71. Again he traveled to Germany and Austria in 1876/77 to receive additional education in singing (Vretblad, pp. 4–7). In the years between 1878 and 1883, he lived in Berlin, according to *MGG*, vol. V, c. 1371 and *Svenskt biografiskt lexikon*, vol. XVIII, pp. 25–26.

154 The marriage with his wife Anna Fredrique Margaretha Schloss (born 1847 in Breslau) lasted from 1873 to 1886 (Hallén, p. 18).

155 "Ich bin viel mehr Deutscher wie alle diese geborenen Deutschen zusammen. Ich habe das oft genug hier in Stockholm zu hören bekommen." (Letter to Herrig, 26 June 1885, pp. 2–3).

156 He complained to have only three students who came to him for singing lessons because of his German education: "Daß kommt von meine deutschen Sympatien und gediegene Richtung." (Fragmentary letter to Herrig, written before 31 December [1878], p. 2). The Gothenburg Musikföreningen and Hallén had crossed their swords already in 1875 about this issue (Öhrström, p. 151).

holm, i.e. in the second half of the 1880s, when he stated that he felt much more affinity with Germany than with his own country.<sup>157</sup> The final aim for his demonstrative affinity with German culture was, as some letters prove, to establish himself as a composer in Germany. This wish lasted until the late 1880s. Quite desperately, Hallén writes to Herrig that he wants to leave Stockholm to become a teacher of singing or music theory in Germany.<sup>158</sup> *Harald* was composed in German to be performed in Germany, of course, not in Sweden.<sup>159</sup> In fact, Hallén identified himself not with the country as a whole but with a particular German region, Berlin. There are plenty of expressions in his letters which imitate the Berlin dialect, and once he complains about the "lazy Saxons" who were traditionally mocked in Prussia. It has to be kept in mind that a German national identity could only be created after defining the borders of the country, which didn't happen before the Franco-German war in 1870/71. For this reason, regional identity has always played an important role in modern Germany and continues to do so today.

Hallén as a composer joined the party of the New German school. His identification with this part of the nationalist movement in Germany embraced not only artistic but also political ideas. This would explain Hallén's notorious hatred of French culture<sup>160</sup> and the ardent anti-Semitism especially articulated in his first letters to Herrig. Whether this was part of his strategy of assimilation with German nationalists or whether those passages in his letters actually reflect his 'real' opinion is beyond the scope of this paper. On the one hand, Hallén does imitate the violent rhetoric of the German anti-Semitic propaganda when he states that he wants "to take part in an extermination war against the Jews".<sup>161</sup> On the other hand, he tries to encourage his librettist to act in a pragmatic way when it comes to asking Jewish editors for some favors and not to stress his anti-Semitic opinions too much.<sup>162</sup> Possibly, Hallén may have taken on his New German sympathies including his anti-Semitism for strategic reasons. It seems as if he tried to accommodate Herrig's political opinions to encourage him to take actions for his Swedish companion. It has to be taken into consideration that Hallén dwelled in Germany when the Franco-German war broke out in 1870, which in Bismarck's words ought to unite the country by "blood and iron" and which gave rise to the fervent German nationalism that was prevalent until the end of WW II. It is easy to understand why Hallén found the

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157 Letter to Herrig, 27 August 1889, p. 3.

158 Letter to Herrig, 15 June 1889, pp. 2–4.

159 Letter to Herrig, 21 November 1883, p. 2.

160 See, for instance, his letter to Herrig, 26 March 1879, p. 1; it is remarkable that Hallén, despite his admiration for Wagner and Liszt, did not like Berlioz's music at all. In the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, Berlioz's *Damnation du Faust* became quite popular in Northern Europe. Hallén severely criticized the work and its composer in his reviews (letters to Herrig, 22 March [December; probably wrong dated] 1886, pp. 2–3 and 28 April 1890, p. 2).

161 Undated letter to Herrig, probably written in summer/autumn 1879, p. 1.

162 Letter to Herrig, 28 April 1883, p. 4.

"Klappern und wieder klappern! Die Leute glauben nur was gedruckt steht."

atmosphere of the birth of a powerful European nation seductive, since at the same time he realized that this represented the coming-into-being of a large and lucrative German-speaking music market, embracing Germany and Austria. It would be the largest music market of its time.

He made several attempts to conquer this market. In June 1880, Hallén toured Northern Germany to promote his new opera, introducing himself as a Wagnerian composer. He went to Dresden, Leipzig, Hanover and Hamburg and also requested expertise from the Berlin opera, contacting prominent conductors, singers and opera directors.

In April or May 1880, receiving a recommendation from the Swedish minister Gillis Bildt (1820–1894),<sup>163</sup> Hallén played his new work for two members of the Berlin court opera, the master of the chapel, Robert Radecke (1830–1911), and the master of the choir, Heinrich Kahl (1840–1892). Although their opinion was according to Hallén very positive, the opera was not put onto the program by opera general director Botho von Hülsen (1815–1886).<sup>164</sup> It is interesting to note that he asked Herrig about the expertise of Radecke in a letter from Leipzig written in the middle of June right before traveling to Dresden,<sup>165</sup> because in a letter to Karl Warburg (1852–1918), written three months later, Hallén claimed that he had already got the Berlin expert opinion at this time.<sup>166</sup> In June, Hallén went to Dresden to present his work to the master of the royal Saxon chapel, Franz Wüllner (1832–1902), and tried to get a recommendation for the director of the Munich court opera, Karl Freiherr von Perfall (1824–1907).<sup>167</sup> Hallén claimed in 1912 that Wüllner offered to get the opera performed in Dresden,<sup>168</sup> something that cannot be proven by his letters to Herrig. He continued with his promotional activity. In July 1880, he went to Leipzig to play *Harald* for the conductor Anton Seidl, who was not fully satisfied with the opera,<sup>169</sup> and he went there again in September to play it for the conductor of the Hamburg opera, Joseph Sucher (1843–1908). Sucher praised the solo parts of the work but criticized Herrig's and Hallén's all-too close imitation of Wagner.<sup>170</sup> Directly after that, Hallén traveled to Hanover to play *Harald* for the theater director Hans Bron-

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163 He was Swedish "ministre plénipotentiaire" and envoy in Berlin from 1874 to 1886 (*Svenskt biografiskt lexikon*, vol. IV, p. 318).

164 Letter to Karl Warburg, written 9 September 1880, quoted in: Tegen, pp. 43–44. Botho von Hülsen was a mighty figure in Germany's opera life and a well-known enemy of Wagner. He was "Generalintendant" of the Berlin Royal theater after 1851 and, after 1866, also of the theaters in Hanover, Kassel and Wiesbaden (Wagner: *Sämtliche Briefe*, vol. IV, p. 512).

165 Letter to Herrig, 14 June 1880, p. 2.

166 Quoted in: Tegen, pp. 43–44.

167 Undated letter to Herrig, probably early June 1880, pp. 2–3; Perfall was director of the Munich court opera from 1867 to 1893 and a champion of Wagner.

168 Hallén: "Minnesblad", p. 14.

169 Letter to Herrig, 14 July 1880, pp. 1–2.

170 Letter to Herrig, 7 September 1880, pp. 1–2.

sart von Schellendorf (1830–1913), who was not at all fond of the work.<sup>171</sup> Hallén now continued on to Hamburg, contacting the singer Eugen Gura (1842–1926), who was the first Bayreuth Donner and Gunther<sup>172</sup> and who had, according to Hallén, some influence upon the director of the Hamburg opera, Maurizio Pollini (1838–1897). Additionally, he played *Harald* for the Hamburg music publisher Hugo Pohle (?–1897), who did not like the piece.<sup>173</sup> Hallén returned disappointed to Berlin, without any concrete result. He did not go to Schwerin as originally planned, where he aimed to meet Karl Hill (1831–1893), Wagner's Bayreuth Alberich and Klingsor,<sup>174</sup> whom Hallén pretended to know well.<sup>175</sup> Thus, his 1880 promotional tour was anything but promising. Moreover, his letters raise another question: In his letter to Warburg, and on some other occasions, Hallén claims to have gotten a recommendation from Franz Liszt in Weimar in August 1880.<sup>176</sup> But it cannot be proven that such a recommendation was ever written. Hallén does not give a single hint about it in his letters to Herrig, and Hallén is not mentioned in any of Liszt's published letters. It is true that Liszt was in Weimar in August where – as Hans von Bülow reported – he received many young visiting musicians. Liszt may have written plenty of recommendations during that month.<sup>177</sup> But why did Hallén have such difficulties getting his opera accepted, as was the case with Bronsart who was not only the director of the Hanover theater but also of the Weimar theater, as well as an admirer and friend of Wagner<sup>178</sup> and Liszt and married to the Swedish composer and Liszt pupil Ingeborg Stark (1840–1913)? In any event, when the Leipzig theater finally agreed to mount a production of *Harald*, Hallén attributed it to Liszt's recommendation.

As can be seen, Hallén tried eagerly to get his opera performed for the first time in one of the large and renowned opera houses in Germany. He started to doubt if this strategy was perhaps too ambitious after receiving the first negative expert opinions and wondered if it might be better to offer it to a smaller opera house.<sup>179</sup> But in the end *Harald* was accepted by the Leipzig theater. Even though the conductor, stage director and singers were well experienced in performing Wagner and even though the audience, according to Hallén, was quite enthusiastic about the opera,<sup>180</sup> his attempts to make *Harald* a lasting success in Germany failed. After five performances in Leipzig, the work

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171 Letter to Herrig, 11 September 1880, pp. 2–4.

172 Knust 2007a, p. 185.

173 Letter to Herrig, 15 September 1880, pp. 2–4.

174 He was the only singer for whom the elderly Wagner created and composed a part (Knust 2007b, pp. 126–127).

175 Letter to Herrig, 7 September 1880, p. 3.

176 Quoted in: Tegen, p. 44.

177 Watson, pp. 155 and 329.

178 Wagner: *Mein Leben*, p. 824.

179 Letter to Herrig, 7 September 1880, p. 3.

180 Hallén: "Minnesblad", p. 14.

"Klappern und wieder klappern! Die Leute glauben nur was gedruckt steht."

was put into the archive there and no other theater in Germany was willing to put it onto the program. Maybe for this reason, Hallén saw no chance to stay in Germany any longer and returned to Sweden in 1882. After his return, he got a divorce and moved from Gothenburg to Stockholm in early 1884,<sup>181</sup> but his ambition to succeed in Germany persisted.

Herrig continues to be one of his most important contact persons on the continent. There are plenty of requests from Hallén's side for help with his career as a composer in his letters written after 1882. Now his ambitions to proceed as a composer are slightly modified. At this point in his career, a continental success would help to establish himself in his home country, as he explains to Herrig: "Please, do your old friend this favor. It is of great importance for my position here [in Sweden] that my compositions are played and performed in Germany. Please, do something in my interest."<sup>182</sup> It seems, however, as if Herrig does not do much for his Swedish friend. In 1885, Hallén's letters become progressively more resigned: "It's a pity about this work! I give up almost every hope to get it performed in Germany."<sup>183</sup> He complains more bitterly in 1887: "Harald is dead, but I am, alas, still alive! You are in Berlin, in the center of the world, but I am sitting here far away from everything and rot."<sup>184</sup> Even after he establishes himself in Stockholm as an organizer and conductor of concerts in 1884/85, Hallén constantly repeats in his letters that he wishes to leave the city<sup>185</sup> – or even the country – as soon as possible.<sup>186</sup>

We can presume that his return to Sweden in 1882 is not meant to be for good but that his final goal, until at least the early 1890s, is still to settle down on the continent because he continues trying to gain attention as a composer in Germany. He persists until the first years after the turn of the century, when he is in his late 50s. Germany, which he knew quite well, might have appeared to him as an interesting alternative to his life in Stockholm, though this could have begun to change after his engagement as the master of the royal chapel in 1892. Also, as a composer Hallén starts to gain popularity in Stockholm in the 1890s.<sup>187</sup> As already mentioned by other researchers, his

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181 Tegen, p. 47.

182 "Thue Deinen alten Freund doch diesen Dienst. Es wäre doch für meine hiesige Stellung von großer Wichtigkeit, daß meine Compositionen in Deutschland gespielt und aufgeführt werden und bitte Dich daher in meinem Interesse zu handeln." (Letter to Herrig, 26 October 1884, p. 3). "Bitte jetzt recht laut in d. Reklame-trompete zu blasen damit ich zu etwas komme." (Letter to Herrig, 26 February 1884, p. 5).

183 "Schade um das Werk! Ich gebe jetzt fast alle Hoffnung auf eine Aufführung in Deutschland auf." (Letter to Herrig, 26 March 1885, p. 4).

184 "Harald ist tod, ich aber, leider, lebe! Du bist doch wenigstens in Berlin, d.h. Du lebst mit[ten] in der Welt, ich sitze hier in einem Krähwinkel und verkomme!" (Letter to Herrig, 18 March 1887, p. 6).

185 For instance, in his letter to Herrig, 26 June 1885, p. 3.

186 For instance, in his letters to Herrig, 22 March 1886, p. 1 and 15 July 1889, pp. 2–3.

187 Norlind, p. 3.



musical style changes during these years and becomes more 'Nordic' by integrating Nordic folk tunes, and thus more independent from the continental models.<sup>188</sup> It seems as if Hallén is aware of the existence of two different musical markets, one in Sweden and one on the continent, which demand different musical products. He wrote music in the New German style, which he expected to be successful in Germany, and he uses Nordic idioms and folk tunes in his pieces for the music market of his home country. So, the market he wrote for determined the nature of his pieces.

Hallén's way of marketing his music is strategic and well thought-out in other respects as well. He uses several methods to get a good reputation on the continent, namely

- to get into personal contact with theater directors and conductors of famous opera houses and orchestras or with well-known Wagnerian singers
- to collect recommendations<sup>189</sup>
- to be referenced in music journals<sup>190</sup> or books – he manages to be mentioned as a "gifted Swedish composer" in the third edition of Hugo Riemann's *Musik-Lexikon*<sup>191</sup> and *Harald* would be included in Riemann's *Opern-Handbuch*<sup>192</sup>
- to publish works in Germany<sup>193</sup> – mostly composed in German or with German titles
- to dedicate his pieces to famous German persons or institutions. He dedicates the print of his *Drei Lieder* op. 21 to the editor Wilhelm Henzen (1850–1911), the print of the vocal score of the *Rhapsodie No. 2* to Franz Liszt, the print of the full score of the *Gustav Wasa Suite* to Queen Carola of Saxony, and the vocal score of *Nordlandskampf*, that is the German translation of *Styrbjörn Starke* op. 34, to the German emperor Wilhelm II, who was a prominent advocate of the so-called 'Nordlandbegeisterung' in late 19<sup>th</sup>-century Germany. Hallén's dedications to Swedes

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188 Halén, p. 19.

189 See above; also, in the late 1880s, his continued efforts resulted, for instance, in a recommendation of the Swedish crown prince, which was supposed to help him to get his works performed in Germany (Letter to Herrig, 23 February 1888, p. 4).

190 Hallén was especially keen on getting a positive review in the *Allgemeine Musik-Zeitung*, because this journal was, according to him, the most popular German music journal in Sweden (Letter to Herrig, 2 June 1883, p. 2).

191 Riemann: *Musik-Lexikon* (31887), p. 385; this emphatic statement was deleted from the next edition, never to be restored (Riemann: *Musik-Lexikon* 41894, p. 418; 51900, p. 447; 61905, p. 520; 71909, p. 557; 81916, p. 428; 91919, p. 454; 101922, p. 498; 111929, vol. I, p. 697; 121959, pp. 722–723). In the new four-volume edition (*Brockhaus Riemann Musiklexikon* 1979) the article about Hallén was deleted completely. In the first edition of 1882, Hallén was not mentioned. He asked Herrig to recommend that Hugo Riemann mention him in the second edition of his *Musiklexikon* (Letter to Herrig, 13 September 1883, p. 2) but this did not happen (Riemann: *Musik-Lexikon* 21884, p. 358).

192 Riemann: *Opern-Handbuch*, p. 205.

193 See work list in: Norlind, pp. 4–7, and prints listed at the end of this article.

"Klappern und wieder klappern! Die Leute glauben nur was gedruckt steht."

show the same pattern: He dedicates the print of the vocal score of *Vineta* to Ludvig Norman (1831–1885), the print of *Svenska folkvisor och dansar* op. 37 to Axel Burén (1842–1923), who was the director of the Royal opera from 1892 to 1902,<sup>194</sup> and the print of the vocal score of *Vom Pagen und der Königstochter* op. 6 to the Swedish king Oscar II, whom, by the way, he did not worship at all.<sup>195</sup> In 1885, Hallén writes to Herrig that he wants to dedicate a collection of three Latin motets *Peccari, Gloria* and *Requiem*, written "in the most severe manner", to the Berliner Domchor.<sup>196</sup> That Hallén is serious about it is proven by the dedication on the title page of the autograph manuscript of these three pieces, written in German.<sup>197</sup> They were never published. Hallén thus dedicated his works in two ways: Either he wanted to motivate some influential journalists like Henzen to acknowledge or promote his works<sup>198</sup> and some important ensembles to perform them. Or, he would choose prominent German and Swedish aristocrats to showcase, so to speak, the patriotic value of the compositions.

Hallén's strategy towards German music journals was especially clever. Being a music critic himself, he was fully aware of the importance of publicity for a composer in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. Of course he knew how to check the press coverage of his works properly<sup>199</sup> and he used his personal contacts for gaining publicity. Often he asked Herrig to contact some music critic or publisher in Germany on his behalf. In exchange, he offered to help get reviews of Herrig's works published in Swedish magazines and newspapers or to translate and publish positive German reviews about Herrig's works himself.<sup>200</sup> It could hardly be a coincidence that he repeats those offers in a very energetic manner when he submits *Harald* to the Stockholm opera in spring 1883 to get it performed there. In his letters to Herrig written during this time, he demands a press campaign in Germany with articles and reviews about himself and his work published in such music journals as *Musikalisches Wochenblatt*, *Deutsche Musiker-Zeitung*, *Allgemeine Musik-*

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194 *Svenskt biografiskt lexikon*, vol. VI, pp. 732–734; many Halléniana in the archive of Statens musikbibliotek were part of Burén's private music collection.

195 He complains about the king's indifference towards the Royal opera, which the king wanted to convert into a private theater company (Letter to Herrig, 2 June 1883, p. 3).

196 Letter to Herrig, 26 June 1885, p. 4; probably he became acquainted with the works of the late renaissance master Orlando di Lasso during his studies in Munich, where Cecilianism was virulent at that time.

197 The manuscript is preserved in Statens musikbibliotek.

198 In Henzen's case, this attempt failed. He did not even thank Hallén for the dedication (Letter to Herrig, 2 June 1883, p. 1).

199 For instance, after the Swedish *Harald* première: "Die Zeitungen sind in zwei Lager getheilt. Post och Inrikes Tidning, Dagens Nyheter, Figaro, schimpfen wie die Rohrspatzen dagegen Dagbladet, Aftonbladet, Dagligt Allehanda, Wikingen, Svensk Musiktidning, Illustrerad Tidning das Werk lobend erwähnen" (Letter to Herrig, 26 February 1882, p. 2).

200 For instance, on a postcard to Herrig, 18 April 1888.

*Zeitung* and *Dramatische Blätter*, whose editors Herrig knew well (see below), and also in the German newspapers.<sup>201</sup> Maybe it was really due to his good reputation in the German press that the opera was accepted in November of the same year.<sup>202</sup> Again, right before the Stockholm première of *Harald* is to take place, Hallén wants Herrig to secure reviews in as many German newspapers and magazines as possible, even though he had already succeeded in getting two positive reviews published in the *Deutsche Musiker-Zeitung*, which were translated into Swedish and published in "almost every newspaper" there.<sup>203</sup> When the Stockholm première turns out to be a success, Hallén insists that publicity efforts in Germany increase even more.<sup>204</sup> We can guess that he used this kind of you-help-me-I-help-you tactics among his circle of writers and artists even during his years in Germany. If so, his 'quid pro quo' efforts paid dividends when it came to press coverage of his work. In his "Minnesblad", for example, he mentions a positive review of the *Harald* Leipzig première written by Karl Stör (1814–1889),<sup>205</sup> the former master of the Weimar court chapel – and Herrig's stepfather.<sup>206</sup> The fact that he used some friends or relatives of friends in Germany to write positive reviews about him ought not to become publicly known, Hallén tells Herrig when he reminds him to write a positive review about their common work, but of course not under his real name.<sup>207</sup>

In 1878, Hallén became part of a publisher and writer network in the German capital through his acquaintance with Herrig. This network embraced such publishers as C. A. Challier & Co. in Berlin,<sup>208</sup> Friedrich Wilhelm Grunow in Leipzig<sup>209</sup> and Raabe & Plothow (formerly Friedrich Luckhardt Musikverlagshandlung) in Berlin, who printed the vocal score of *Harald der Wiking*, the full and the piano score of *Todteninsel* op. 45, *Schwedische Rhapsodie* op. 23 and *Gustav Wasas Saga. Suite für Orchester* – the latter was even available at Raabe & Plothow in an arrangement for infantry music, made by Hermann Voigt – and also purportedly the vocal score of *Waldemarsskatten*.<sup>210</sup> Moreover, Herrig knew many music journalists. These included Otto Leßmann (or Lessmann) (1844–1918), the owner and editor-in-chief of the *Allgemeine Musik-Zeitung* from 1881

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201 See, for instance, letter to Herrig, 28 April 1883.

202 On 20 November 1883, he got the message from the director Willman. (Letter to Herrig, 21 November 1883, p. 2.)

203 Letter to Herrig, 18 January 1884, p. 2.

204 Letter to Herrig, 26 February 1884, pp. 4–5.

205 Hallén: "Minnesblad", p. 14.

206 Pohl, vol. X, no. 1–2, pp. 6–7.

207 "Jedenfalls darfst Du aber nicht unter Deinem eigenen Namen schreiben, das versteht sich eigentlich von selbst!" (Letter to Herrig, 18 January 1884, p. 2).

208 Letter to Herrig, 2 June 1883, p. 4.

209 Letter to Herrig, 2 February 1883, p. 2.

210 Anders Wiklund writes in his article about this opera that it was printed at Raabe & Plothow in 1899 with the plate number 1706 (in: *Pipers Enzyklopädie des Musiktheaters*, vol. II, p. 657). I cannot confirm this information.

"Klappern und wieder klappern! Die Leute glauben nur was gedruckt steht."

to 1907,<sup>211</sup> Ernst Wilhelm Fritzsch (1840–1902), editor-in-chief of the *Musikalisches Wochenblatt* after 1870 and publisher of Wagners *Gesammelte Schriften und Dichtungen* (1871/73),<sup>212</sup> Walter Lackowitz (1837–1916), who was the editor at the *Berliner Zeitung* until 1883, editor of an opera guide focusing on contemporary composers, as well as editor-in-chief of the *Deutsche Musiker-Zeitung* between 1877 and 1897.<sup>213</sup> Also, among his influential editorial friends are the dramatist Wilhelm Henzen, who was the editor-in-chief of the *Dramatische Blätter* between 1877 and 1880, as well as a theater critic in Berlin between 1880 and 1882,<sup>214</sup> Wilhelm Tappert (1830–1907),<sup>215</sup> and maybe even Paul Lindau (1839–1919).<sup>216</sup> In addition, Herrig's former employer,<sup>217</sup> George Davidsohn (1835–1897), was part of this network. He was editor-in-chief of the *Berliner Börsen-Courier*, which had well-respected coverage dedicated to the theater and is considered to be valuable publicity for *Harald*.<sup>218</sup> Moreover, Hallén asks Herrig to contact Ferdinand von Strantz (1822–1907), the director of the Royal opera in Berlin from 1876 to 1887, who should help him to perform *Harald*.<sup>219</sup> Also Benjamin Bilse (1816–1902), who founded and directed a symphony orchestra in Berlin – a kind of predecessor of the current Berliner Philharmoniker – from 1868 to 1884, is mentioned in Hallén's letters as a valuable contact to maintain.<sup>220</sup> Bilse performed Hallén's *Rhapsodie No. 2 (Schwedische Rhapsodie)* once in Berlin.<sup>221</sup> Possibly, that was the 1882 world première of the piece.<sup>222</sup> In 1884 Hallén wants Herrig to send a recommendation to Georg von Rauchenecker (1844–1906), who became conductor of the Berliner Philharmonie the same year,<sup>223</sup> to

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211 *Brockhaus Riemann Musiklexikon*, vol. III, p. 33; Hallén and Herrig knew Leßmann personally (Letter to Herrig, 28 April 1883, p. 4). In the *Allgemeine deutsche Musikzeitung*, vol. VIII, no. 43, 28 October 1881, p. 369, a positive review of the *Harald* world première was published.

212 *Brockhaus Riemann Musiklexikon*, vol. II, p. 83; Pohl, vol. XII, nos. 3–4, p. 123, fn. 2.

213 *DBA*; Hallén is not mentioned in Lackowitz's *Opernführer*.

214 Letter to Herrig, 2 June 1883, p. 1.

215 Tappert was a prolific music journalist and wrote in the years 1876–1880 for the *Allgemeine Deutsche Musikzeitung*. He was both a personal friend and champion of Wagner (*MGG*, vol. XIII, c. 112–113). In the Staatsbibliothek Preußischer Kulturbesitz zu Berlin, a copy of the textbook of *Harald der Wiking* is preserved with the shelfmark Mus. Th 156. It was part of the impressive private music collection of Tappert. He is mentioned several times in Hallén's letters to Herrig in a way that suggests that Herrig could contact him easily (Letters 26 March 1879, p. 4, and 29 April 1879, p. 6).

216 Letter to Herrig, 2 September 1884, p. 1; Lindau was a famous theater critic, dramatist and theater director in Meiningen and Berlin. He lived in Berlin during the 1870s and 1880s and was during that time editor-in-chief of several magazines (*DBA*).

217 Fränkel, pp. 234–235.

218 Postcard to Herrig, 19 March 1880.

219 Letter to Herrig, 14 June 1880, p. 2. Strantz published his memoirs and an *Opernführer* after 1900; Hallén is not mentioned in them.

220 Letter to Herrig, 21 November 1883, pp. 2–3.

221 In a letter to Herrig, written 22 September 1884, Hallén writes that he heard that Bilse wanted to perform it again; this did not happen. (Letter to Herrig, 26 October 1884, p. 3.)

222 According to Norlind, p. 6, the world première was in autumn 1882 in Berlin.

223 Riemann: *Musik-Lexikon* 71909, p. 1146.

perform the *Schwedische Rhapsodie*.<sup>224</sup> Furthermore, Hallén asks Herrig to send a copy of his choral rhapsody *Vineta* to Friedrich Schön, who had commissioned Herrig's *Luther*, and to ask him for a recommendation.<sup>225</sup> It is obvious that Hallén tries to get access to all the cultural circles to which his German librettist belongs.

Conversely, Hallén would make some efforts to help Herrig get his works established in Sweden, even though Hallén's influence is limited. He translates German reviews of Herrig's pieces into Swedish for the *Göteborgsposten* and he asks Swedish journalists, such as his brother, editor at the *Aftonbladet*,<sup>226</sup> Dr. Sandberg from *Nya Dagligt Allehanda*<sup>227</sup> and Karl Warburg, to write a review about *Luther* in November 1883;<sup>228</sup> Warburg was editor for the art and literature pages of the Gothenburg *Handels- och Sjöfartstidning* between 1877 and 1890.<sup>229</sup> The latter request appears to be a bit strange since Hallén had already reported to Herrig in February of that year that Warburg, who was Jewish, might have known about Herrig's anti-Semitic propaganda and was not willing to review his pieces.<sup>230</sup> Hallén also suggests that Viktor Rydberg should write some reviews, although he did not know him personally.<sup>231</sup> Hallén's marketing credo about "real advertising", as he calls it,<sup>232</sup> is to be found on a postcard to Herrig: "Blow your own horn and blow it even louder! People only believe in printed stuff."<sup>233</sup> Hallén refers here to the German proverb "Klappern gehört zum Handwerk" ("Blowing your own horn belongs to every craft"), implying that every work has to get attention by making noise, otherwise it might be done in vain. That he knew this proverb is proven by the fact that he used it in its original German form in an article written in Swedish about the famous singer Pauline Lucca.<sup>234</sup> We can conclude that Hallén succeeded in his attempts to appear to the Swedish public as a successful composer in Germany. Likewise, his Swedish recommendations and press portfolio may have created a similar impression in Germany that he was as successful a composer in his home country. But it is a matter of fact that – at least until the early 1890s – this was not the case in either country.

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224 Letter to Herrig, 26 October 1884, p. 3.

225 Letter to Herrig, 21 November 1883, p. 3.

226 Letter to Herrig, 2 June 1883, p. 2.

227 Undated letter to Herrig, probably written in early 1884, p. 2.

228 Letter to Herrig, 21 November 1883, p. 1.

229 *Svenska män och kvinnor*, vol. VIII, p. 215.

230 Letter to Herrig, 27 February 1883, p. 3.

231 Letter to Herrig, 28 April 1883, p. 3.

232 "Wir dürfen diesmal nichts versäumen was zu einer anständigen Reklame gehört, denn das Publikum ist nun einmal so dum nur daß zu glauben was gedruckt ist." (Letter to Herrig, 18 January 1883, p. 3).

233 "Klappern und wieder klappern! Die Leute glauben nur was gedruckt steht." (Postcard to Herrig, 18 April 1888).

234 Hallén: *Musikaliska kåserier*, p. 114.

"Klappern und wieder klappern! Die Leute glauben nur was gedruckt steht."

Finally, Hallén's letters to Herrig inform us of another strategic maneuver to gain – or rather, to keep – his reputation as a serious composer in the New German tradition. After moving to Stockholm in 1884, Hallén barely earns enough to live on, giving singing lessons and conducting or organizing concerts. Therefore, he decides to compose incidental music for Svenska teatern in Stockholm in late 1888, and he chooses the pseudonym Jahn Ander for those pieces since, as we can presume, he did not want to endanger his reputation as a composer of serious orchestral music and music drama.<sup>235</sup> By joining the New German party as demonstratively as he did, he must keep the aura of an idealistic, non-materialistic artist who produces his works out of an inner necessity, as opposed to for money, and fights a permanent struggle for his works,<sup>236</sup> i.e. an artist in the Wagner or Beethoven mold who despises the press and the public taste. His letters to Herrig, however, prove him to be the exact opposite of that.

## 5. Conclusions and summation

On the one hand, there can be no doubt that Hallén's relation to Herrig was almost pure business. The main subject of the entire correspondence is their common work and its promotion. In almost every letter and postcard, Herrig is asked or reminded by Hallén to do him some favor by contacting critics, publishers or musicians in Germany, but we get hardly any information about Hallén's private life. On the other hand, his relationship with Herrig seems to have been very important to him, not only because of his need of a native German speaker to write recommendations and texts for composition. In a letter, probably written in 1884, Hallén expresses his gratitude for a birthday letter from Herrig, who was allegedly the only one to remember his birthday.<sup>237</sup> Maybe this really was true, because Hallén often reported from Stockholm that he lived a quite isolated life there. Surely, this was due to his impatient and rough character, which is even mentioned in his necrology.<sup>238</sup> In his letters to Herrig he always shows a decidedly arrogant attitude towards his environment, i.e. the Swedish music milieu, an attitude which he imported from Germany.<sup>239</sup> As a critic, he generated a lot of enemies, and it is said that he was choleric as a teacher.<sup>240</sup> Actually, his handwriting gives an impression of his often shifting and upset temperament.

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235 In his letter to Herrig, 13 February 1889, p. 2, he talks about his music to *Den vandrande juden* of Eugène Sue (1803–1857) as an example for such pieces. This incidental music, however, was included in his printed work list as were three other compositions for Svenska teatern (Norlind, p. 5).

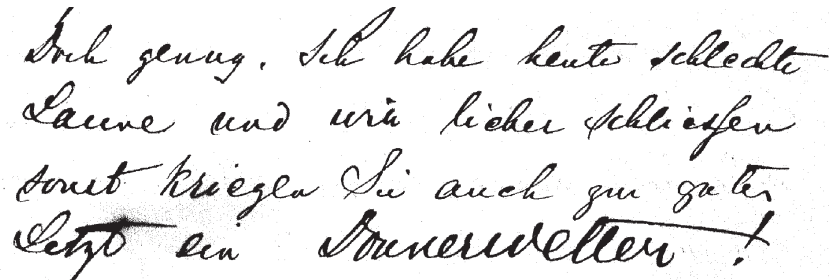
236 "Solche Menschen wie Du und ich, welche für eine gute Sache eintreten, haben immer Pech und es hilft alles nichts – wir werden nie zu etwas kommen." (Letter to Herrig, 7 January 1887, p. 1).

237 Undated letter to Herrig, p. 1, probably written at the beginning of 1884.

238 "Under en kanske något kärv och sträv yta bodde hos honom en gedigen personlighet" (Schröderheim, p. 3).

239 Öhrström, p. 112.

240 Jacobsson, p. 5.



Doch genug. Ich habe heute schlechte  
Laune und will lieber schließen  
sonst kriegen Sie auch zu guter  
Letzt ein Donnerwetter!

"Doch genug. Ich habe heute schlechte Laune und will lieber schließen sonst kriegen Sie auch zu guter Letzt ein Donnerwetter!" ("But now it is enough. I am in a bad mood today and it is better to finish my letter. Otherwise even you will be on the receiving end! [literally translated: 'you will get a thunderstorm' M.K.]") Undated letter to Herrig, probably from spring 1880, p. 3.

Hallén's letters show us a dramatic composer who is aware of the importance of networking with critics, publishers, conductors and singers. His way of marketing his works has to be considered as exceptionally pragmatic and well planned. Toward that aim, he joined an aesthetic-political movement, the so-called New German school. He and his librettist saw themselves as the only champions of Wagner even though they were in fact part of a broad Wagner movement. This movement, however, lacked solidarity and Hallén considered Wagnerian composers like Edmund Kretschmer (1830–1908), Ödön von Mihalovich, August Friedrich Klughardt (1847–1902) and Karl Goldmark (1830–1915) to be rivals.<sup>241</sup> Hallén's and Herrig's opera *Harald* is a highly imitative product, which would soon be regarded as epigonic. Indeed, Hallén's artistic and personal attitude as a whole during the years around 1880 can be described by one single word: assimilation. His assimilationism extended beyond his work as a composer into his jargon, aesthetics and political thoughts vis à vis the nationalist Berlin circle of which Herrig was a prominent member. In his letters to him, Hallén presents himself as a defiant and stubborn artist who is fighting a ruthless struggle for his ideals; the figure of Harald shows in this respect some idealized traces of his creators. Hallén imitated thereby the genius attitude of people like Wagner, Nietzsche and Herrig, sometimes by glorifying himself, which explains some manipulations of his biographical facts. For instance, his letters to Herrig do not prove that he got the famous recommendation by Liszt. Quite the opposite. Furthermore, his correspondence with Herrig reveals that he also modified his biography in later years. Most of the articles about Hallén state that he stayed in Berlin from 1880 to 1883 and worked there as a singing teacher.<sup>242</sup> Besides the fact that he obviously had

241 See Hallén's statements in his letters to Herrig from 11 September 1880, p. 4, 15 September 1880, p. 3, 2 March 1883, p. 2, 17 December 1889, p. 2, and in an undated letter written probably around late June 1880, pp. 1–2.

242 MGG, vol. V, c. 1371; *Svenskt biografiskt lexikon*, vol. XVIII, pp. 25–26.

"Klappern und wieder klappern! Die Leute glauben nur was gedruckt steht."

very few pupils in Berlin,<sup>243</sup> he regularly wrote letters and postcards from Gothenburg to Berlin all through the year 1883.<sup>244</sup> In none of them is a journey to Germany even mentioned. In theory, Hallén could have visited Berlin in between the letters but because a journey from Gothenburg to Berlin was expensive and took up to four days,<sup>245</sup> this is highly unlikely. His letters show that his Berlin stay was in fact no longer than from April 1880 to late 1882 and perhaps even shorter.<sup>246</sup> And there are more of those small modifications of facts to be found. For instance, according to the work list published in 1922 and checked by Hallén himself,<sup>247</sup> his *Rhapsodie No. 2 (Schwedische Rhapsodie)* was published at Simrock in Leipzig,<sup>248</sup> the renowned publisher of Mozart, Beethoven and Brahms. But in fact Hallén's *Schwedische Rhapsodie* was published at Raabe & Plothow – the full as well as the piano score – as were most of his works.

Hallén was a person full of contradictions and ambition. Although he claimed to be a person fighting for his ideals, the evidence reveals him to be a composer steeped in the imperatives of promotion and marketing. Much like we see in today's popular music, he adapted his pieces to the target group he was writing for and he had no compunction about using Herrig's attractive and extensive Berlin network to get access to a promising continental music market. The letters reveal details about his compositional technique. Hallén created his first opera the way Wagner did, by writing a draft first and then dealing with the instrumentation. He seems to have planned three numbers of the through-composed opera to be published and sold separately, just as Wagner used to do, and he is supposed to have requested them at the outset from his librettist. That Hallén inserted many Wagner allusions into it and used many sound blends from *Tristan* and *The Ring* without having heard them before is amazing. He hoped *Harald* would open the door to a career as a professional composer. But the opera failed to do so, which explains Hallén's sometimes angry and desperate attitude towards his indifferent German librettist.

We can presume that the reason for his continental ambitions was the wish to become a professional dramatic composer and/or a composer of orchestral music,<sup>249</sup>

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243 In the letter to Herrig, written 22 March 1886, pp. 1 and 3, he complains that he had as few singing pupils as he did during his Berlin stay.

244 Letters, postcards and an envelope were sent to Herrig from Gothenburg on 18 January, 2 and 27 February (announcing to stay in Stockholm for about two weeks), 15 March, 18 and 28 April, 18 and 28 May, 2 June, 13 September, 21 November and 30 December 1883.

245 Letter to Herrig, 27 March 1879, p. 1. In those days one had to stay overnight in Aalborg, Flensburg and Hamburg.

246 In late May 1882, Hallén had already traveled to Gothenburg from Berlin. (Postcard to Herrig, written 25 May). There is no further Berlin journey mentioned in his letters, so maybe he did not return.

247 Halén, p. 19.

248 Norlind, p. 6.

249 In his oeuvre, the pieces for orchestra with or without vocals dominate; except for his piano songs, he wrote hardly any chamber or piano music (see work list in: Norlind, pp. 4–7).



an aim that could not be fulfilled in Sweden. It is interesting to see how Hallén uses his different identities. He tried to make a continental career using his image as a Swede in Germany by composing a Viking opera and choral pieces about Nordic subjects like *Styrbjörn Starke*. At the same time, he tried to show that he was able to compose according to the continental zeitgeist and the high technical standards of German music by writing symphonic poems and contrapuntal motets "in the most severe style". It has been shown in this article that notwithstanding his reputation as the 'Swedish Wagner', his decision to align himself with the New German school was probably strategic, if not downright opportunistic. Hallén was able to imitate Wagner's music but he did not like either Wagner's music-dramas or the Wagnerians very much; he was definitely not a Wagnerian after the German model. His continental attempts failed. These efforts are similar to those of other Scandinavian composers at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, such as Christian Sinding (1856–1941), who succeeded with this strategy. Once Hallén returns to his home country in 1882, he reverses his image by presenting himself as a severe, technically advanced composer, teacher and critic, well-known in Germany. Now stressing his musical insights and skills imported from Germany, he also emphasizes his Swedish patriotism by inserting folk tunes in his music and writing music about such Swedish subjects as Gustav Vasa. In this respect, *Harald* functions as an ideal musical product because of its suitability for both markets, Sweden and Germany.

Upon the question why *Harald* did not become a success – despite Hallén's good relations to journalists and musicians and the compositionally flawless texture of the opera – two answers can be given: First, Germany turned out to be a difficult market for a composer from abroad. Second, this opera was the wrong product to promote in Germany and Sweden in the 1880s because it had to compete with its Wagnerian models. The breakthrough of Wagner's works in both countries was not helpful at all for "the Swedish Wagner". Hallén did not succeed in developing a characteristic personal style and stuck close to works which already existed. His first opera shows only some cautious approaches towards a 'Nordic tone' and is Nordic mostly only because of the subject. Its text and music appear to be a compilation of different Wagnerian works and show even influences from an opera like Hallström's *Vikingarne*. Assimilation was more important for Hallén than originality.<sup>250</sup> The reactions of his contemporaries were, as I have shown in this article, mostly negative because of this fact. Differently from his music, the composers of the next generations developed more personal and more 'Nordic' styles. Maybe they learned from his mistakes. But maybe they did even profit from his continental experiences. How his publicity, compositional strategy and his German network were

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250 Letter to Herrig without date, written in second half of April 1884, pp. 2–3.

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interesting or useful to the Nordic composers of the next generations – for instance, to Hallén's composition students, such as Wilhelm Stenhammar or Kurt Atterberg – might be a fruitful matter for further research.

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