

RUED LANGGAARD

ANTIKRIST



ANTICHRIST

Opera i prolog og seks billeder

Opera in a prologue and six scenes

Tekst af komponisten

Text by the composer

Kritisk udgave ved
Bendt Viinholt Nielsen

Critical edition by
Bendt Viinholt Nielsen

Kommentar

Commentary



Rued Langgaard Udgaven

The Rued Langgaard Edition

EDITION SAMFUNDET

RUED LANGGAARD
ANTIKRIST
(BVN 192)

Kommentar

Tekst og redaktion: Bendt Viinholt Nielsen
© 2008 Edition.SAMFUNDET, København

Hovedredaktør for Rued Langgaard Udgaven på Edition Samfundet:
Bendt Viinholt Nielsen

Rued Langgaard Udgaven blev etableret 2000 med støtte fra
Carlsbergfondet

Engelsk oversættelse: James Manley (*About "Antichrist"*)
og Michael Chesnutt (det øvrige)

Forlagsredaktion: Christine Canals-Frau

Grafisk tilrettelæggelse: Finn Evald

Skrift: Haarlemmer

Tryk: Rosenberg Bogtryk

Bogbinding: Bogbinderiet Dakabo

ISBN 87-90056-25-6 (Kommentar alene)

ISBN 87-90056-27-2 (Partitur og kommentarbind samlet)

Printed in Denmark 2009

Edition Samfundet
Gråbrodrestræde 18
1156 København K
www.samfundet.dk
www.ruedlanggaardedition.dk

Redaktionsråd:

Lektor, ph.d. Michael Fjeldsøe (Københavns Universitet)
Førstebibliotekar Niels Krabbe (Det Kongelige Bibliotek, København)
Amanuensis Øyvind Norheim (Nasjonalbiblioteket, Oslo)
Professor, ph.d. Anders Wiklund (Göteborgs Universitet)

Projektmidlerne blev administreret af forskningsafdelingen ved
Det Kongelige Bibliotek

Udarbejdelse og udgivelse af *Antikrist* er muliggjort af
en donation fra Lundbeckfonden

Der er modtaget supplerende støtte fra Kunstrådets Musikudvalg
og Forskningsrådet for Kultur og Kommunikation



RUED LANGGAARD
ANTICHRIST
(BVN 192)

Commentary

Authored and edited by: Bendt Viinholt Nielsen
© 2008 Edition.SAMFUNDET, Copenhagen

General editor of the Rued Langgaard Edition published by Edition Samfundet:
Bendt Viinholt Nielsen

The Rued Langgaard Edition was established in 2000 with the support of the
Carlsberg Foundation

English translation: James Manley (*About "Antichrist"*)
and Michael Chesnutt (rest of the volume)

Publisher's editor: Christine Canals-Frau

Graphic design: Finn Evald

Font: Haarlemmer

Printing: Rosenberg Bogtryk

Bookbinding: Bogbinderiet Dakabo

ISBN 87-90056-25-6 (Commentary only)

ISBN 87-90056-27-2 (Score and commentary volume)

Printed in Denmark 2009

Edition Samfundet
Gråbrodrestræde 18
DK-1156 Copenhagen K
www.samfundet.dk
www.ruedlanggaardedition.dk

Editorial board:

Associate Professor, Ph.D. Michael Fjeldsøe (University of Copenhagen)
Head of Department Niels Krabbe (The Royal Library, Copenhagen)
Amanuensis Øyvind Norheim (The National Library, Oslo)
Professor, Ph.D. Anders Wiklund (University of Gothenburg)

Project funding was administered by the research division of
the Royal Library, Copenhagen

The editing and publication of *Antichrist* have been made possible by
a donation from the Lundbeck Foundation

Additional subsidies have been received from the Danish Arts Council
Committee for Music and the Research Council for Cultural and
Communication Studies



INDHOLD

FORKORTELSER 6

OM „ANTIKRIST“ 9

OPERAENS TILBLIVELSE
OG MODTAGELSE 9

Introduktion 9

Operaens oprindelige version 9

Intermezzo 19

Operaens omarbejdede version 20

Efterspil 27

LANGGAARDS

VÆRKKOMMENTARER 28

SCENOGRAFISKE ANVISNINGER,
HANDLINGENS TID OG STED 35

KILDER OG KRITISK
BERETNING 37

KILDERNE TIL „ANTIKRIST“ 39

Kildematerialets omfang og lokalisering 39

Oversigt over kilderne 39

Om referencer til takttal 41

Kildebeskrivelser 44

Faksimiler 76

Kronologi 93

Operaens tilblivelsesfaser og kildernes relation
hertil 97

Musikkildernes indbyrdes relationer (stemma I) 98

Tekstkildernes indbyrdes relationer (stemma II) 100

Operaens titler 102

Forholdet mellem operaens oprindelige og omarbejdede
version (konkordans) 104

OPERAENS ENDELIGE FORM
– VURDERING AF KILDERNE 107

UDGAVEN

– KRITISK BERETNING 112

Redaktionsgrundlag 112

Redaktionelle retningslinjer 112

Noter til musikken 114

Noter til teksten 172

APPENDIKS 185

LIBRETTOEN TIL „ANTIKRIST“
I ‘LÆSEVERSION’ 187

CONTENTS

ABBREVIATIONS 6

ABOUT “ANTICHRIST” 9

GENESIS AND RECEPTION
OF THE OPERA 9

Introduction 9

The original version of the opera 9

Intermezzo 19

The altered version of the opera 20

Postlude 27

LANGGAARD’S

COMMENTS ON THE WORK 28

STAGE DIRECTIONS AND TIME
AND PLACE OF THE ACTION 35

SOURCES AND CRITICAL
APPARATUS 37

THE SOURCES FOR “ANTICHRIST” 39

Extent and location of the source material 39

Survey of the sources 39

References to bar numbers 41

Descriptions of sources 44

Facsimiles 76

Chronology 93

The genesis of the opera: its various phases and their relationship
to the sources 97

Relations between the musical sources (stemma I) 98

Relations between the sources of the text (stemma II) 100

The titles of the opera 102

Relationship between the original and altered versions
of the opera (concordance) 104

THE FINAL FORM OF THE OPERA
– EVALUATION OF SOURCES 107

THE PRESENT EDITION

– CRITICAL APPARATUS 112

Textual basis of the edition 112

Editorial guidelines 112

Notes to the music 114

Notes to the text 172

APPENDIX 185

THE LIBRETTO FOR “ANTICHRIST”
IN A ‘READING VERSION’ 187

FORKORTELSER

A = contralto (alt)
 B = basso (bas)
 BVN = Bendt Viinholt Nielsen: *Rued Langgaards Kompositioner. Annoteret værktørgtegnelse.* (Odense Universitetsforlag, 1991)
 Camp. / camp = campane (klokker)
 Cb. / cb = contrabbasso (kontrabas)
 Cel. / cel = celesta (celeste)
 Cfg. / cfg = contrafagotto (kontrafagot)
 Cl. / cl = clarinetto (klarinet)
 CL = Constance Langgaard, komponistens hustru
 Cl. b / cl b = clarinetto basso (basklarinet)
 Cmplli. / cmplli = campanelli (klokkespil)
 Cor. / cor = corno (horn)
 Cor. ingl. / cor ingl = corno inglese (engelskhorn)
 cresc. = „cresc.“ / „crescendo“
 cresc. = <<
 cresc.-dim. = <>
 dim. = „dim.“ / „diminuendo“
 dim. = >>
 DR = Danmarks Radio
 Fg. / fg = fagotto (fagot)
 Fl. / fl = flauto (fløjte)
 fol. = folieret
 G. cassa / g cassa = grancassa (stortromme)
 Grøndahl = dirigenten Launy Grøndahl
 GST. EKKO = GAADESTEMNINGENS EKKO
 GAADEST. = GAADESTEMNINGEN
 lh = højre hånd, dvs. øverste system i klaver-, orgel-, celesta- og harpestemmer
 Kbh. = København
 KT = Det Kongelige Teater, København
 Lahn = Karl Lahn, Langgaards kopist i Karlsruhe
 marc. = „marc.“ / „marcato“
 marc. = >
 martellato = Λ
 Ob. / ob = oboe (obo)
 omarb. = omarbejdet version af operaen (1930)
 opr. = oprindelig version af operaen (1923)
 Org. / org = organo (orgel)
 pag. = pagineret
 ped = pedalsystem i orgelstemmer
 Picc. / picc = flauto piccolo (piccolofløjte)
 Pno. / pno = piano (klaver)
 Ptti. / ptti = piatti (bækkener)
 r = recto (et blads forside)
 RL = Rued Langgaard
 RLP = Rued Langgaards Privatararkiv, Håndskriftafdelingen, Det Kongelige Bibliotek, København. *Tilg. 554 (Utilg. 554)*
 RLS = Rued Langgaards Samling, Musikafdelingen, Det Kongelige Bibliotek, København
 S = soprano (sopran)
 stacc. = „stacc.“ / „staccato“
 stacc. = ·
 str = strygere
 t. = takt
 T = tenoro (tenor)
 Tamb. / tamb = tamburo (tromme)
 Tb. / tb = tuba
 ten. = „ten.“ / „tenuto“
 ten. = –
 Timp. / timp = timpani (pauker)
 Tmbno. / tmbno = tamburino (tamburin)
 Tr. / tr = tromba (trompet)
 Trbn. / trbn = trombone (basun)
 Trgl. / trgl = triangolo (triangel)
 v = verso (et blads bagside)
 vh = venstre hånd, dvs. nederste eller andet system i klaver-, orgel-, celesta- og harpestemmer
 Vl. / vl = violino (violin)
 Vcl. / vcl = violoncello (cello)
 Vla. / vla = viola (bratsch)
 Xil. / xil = xilofono (xylofon)

ABBREVIATIONS

A = contralto (alto voice)
 alt. = altered version of the opera (1930)
 b. = bar
 B = basso (bass voice)
 bb. = bars
 BVN = Bendt Viinholt Nielsen: *Rued Langgaards Kompositioner. Annoteret værktørgtegnelse. / Rued Langgaard's Compositions. An Annotated Catalogue of Works. With an English Introduction.* (Odense Universitetsforlag, 1991)
 Camp. / camp = campane (bells)
 Cb. / cb = contrabbasso (double bass)
 Cel. / cel = celesta
 Cfg. / cfg = contrafagotto (contra bassoon)
 Cl. / cl = clarinetto (clarinet)
 CL = Constance Langgaard, the composer's wife
 Cl. b / cl b = clarinetto basso (bass clarinet)
 Cmplli. / cmplli = campanelli (glockenspiel)
 Cor. / cor = corno (horn)
 Cor. ingl. / cor ingl = corno inglese (English horn)
 Cph. / Cphgn. = Copenhagen
 cresc. = „cresc.“ / „crescendo“
 cresc. = <<
 cresc.-dim. = <>
 dim. = „dim.“ / „diminuendo“
 dim. = >>
 DR = The Danish Broadcasting Corporation
 Fg. / fg = fagotto (bassoon)
 Fl. / fl = flauto (flute)
 fol. = foliated
 G. cassa / g cassa = grancassa (bass drum)
 Grøndahl = the conductor Launy Grøndahl
 KT = The Royal Theatre, Copenhagen
 Lahn = Karl Lahn, Langgaard's copyist in Karlsruhe
 lh = left hand, i.e. the lower system in piano, organ, celesta and harp parts
 marc. = „marc.“ / „marcato“
 marc. = >
 martellato = Λ
 M. MOOD = MYSTERY MOOD
 M. M'S ECHO = MYSTERY MOOD'S ECHO
 Ob. / ob = oboe
 Org. / org = organo (organ)
 orig. = the original version of the opera (1923)
 pag. = paginated
 ped = pedal stave i organ parts
 Picc. / picc = flauto piccolo (piccolo)
 Pno. / pno = piano
 Ptti. / ptti = piatti (cymbals)
 r = recto (the front page of a leaf)
 rh = right hand, i.e. the upper system in piano, organ, celesta and harp parts
 RL = Rued Langgaard
 RLP = Rued Langgaard's Private Archive in the Manuscript Department of the Royal Library, Copenhagen. *Serial no.: Tilg. 554 (Utilg. 554)*
 RLS = Rued Langgaard's Collection in the Music Department of the Royal Library, Copenhagen
 S = soprano voice
 stacc. = „stacc.“ / „staccato“
 stacc. = ·
 str = strings
 T = tenoro (tenor voice)
 Tamb. / tamb = tamburo (drum)
 Tb. / tb = tuba
 ten. = „ten.“ / „tenuto“
 ten. = –
 Timp. / timp = timpani
 Tmbno. / tmbno = tamburino (tambourine)
 Tr. / tr = tromba (trumpet)
 Trbn. / trbn = trombone
 Trgl. / trgl = triangolo (triangle)
 v = verso (the back page of a leaf)
 Vl. / vl = violino (violin)
 Vcl. / vcl = violoncello (cello)
 Vla. / vla = viola
 Xil. / xil = xilofono (xylophone)

OM
„ANTIKRIST“

7

ABOUT
“ANTICHRIST”

OPERAENS TILBLIVELSE OG MODTAGELSE

INTRODUKTION

Rued Langgaard (1893-1952) skrev kun én opera, *Antikrist*. Den fremstår som et kraftcenter i Langgaards produktion, og hans skæbne som dansk komponist er nært knyttet til dette værk. Operaen findes i to meget forskellige versioner – den oprindelige fra 1923 (BVN 170) og den omarbejdede fra 1930 (BVN 192). Hertil kommer, at Langgaard inddrog passager fra tidligere komponerede værker i sin opera og genanvendte dele af *Antikrist*-musikken i flere senere kompositioner, bl.a. korværket *Endens Tid* (BVN 243).

Den første version af *Antikrist* blev til i en koncentreret arbejdsproces, der forløb over halvandet år, fra sommeren 1921 til februar 1923. Det lykkedes ikke Langgaard at få operaen opført, og i 1930 forelå så en ny version med en ganske anden libretto, der ligesom den oprindelige var forfattet af komponisten selv. Den oprindelige versions forholdsvis traditionelle persongalleri og fremadskridende handlingsforløb var erstattet af et ukonventionelt operakoncept uden hovedperson og uden handling. Musikken var forkortet, og specielt var værkets begyndelse og slutning betydeligt omarbejdet. Men heller ikke denne version kom på scenen i Langgaards levetid, og han opnåede kun at høre slutningen, som i 1940 blev studieopført i radioen. Det nævnte korværk *Endens Tid*, som udelukkende består af musik fra *Antikrist*, blev dog også opført i radioen i komponistens levetid (1945). Operaen blev uropført i sin helhed i Danmarks Radio i 1980 som en studieproduktion.¹ En koncertopførelse og den første fonogramindspilning fulgte nogle år senere, men først så sent som i 1999 fandt den første sceniske opførelse sted, ikke i Danmark, men i Innsbruck.² Opførelsen i Østrig viste, at værket kunne fungere på en scene, og en skandinavisk urpremiere fulgte snart efter – i 2002 i København, hvor *Antikrist* fik en særdeles positiv modtagelse af presse og publikum.³

Den følgende fremstilling omhandler værkets komplekse tilblivelse og dets skæbne fra sommeren 1921, hvor Langgaards første vision blev materialiseret i form af en libretto, og indtil han, næsten 30 år senere, nåede frem til den udformning af operaen, som publiceres her. Desuden belyses komponistens intentioner med værket og hans fortolkning af det, sådan som det kommer til udtryk i interviews og breve samt i de mange efterladte papirer med relation til operaen. Afslutningsvis findes et uddybende kapitel om Langgaards scenografiske anvisninger og om handlingens tid og sted.⁴

1. Studieproduktionen blev foretaget 1979 og udsendt 28.6.1980; dirigent var Michael Schönwandt.

2. Ole Schmidt stod i spidsen for Sjællands Symfoniorkester og en række solister ved koncertopførelser i København 10. og 11.12.1986 (en indspilning udsendes på lp og cd i 1988). – Premieren på Tiroler Landestheater i Innsbruck var 2.5.1999; dirigent var Niels Muus, iscenesætter: Juha Hemäus (produktionen udsendes samme år på cd).

3. Opførelserne fandt sted i Ridehuset, Christiansborg Slot, 17.8. – 2.9.2002 med Thomas Dausgaard som dirigent, iscenesætter var Staffan Valdemar Holm (produktionen udsendes på dvd i 2005 og cd i 2006).

4. Fremstillingen suppleres af kronologien s. 93 ff. og konkordansen s. 104 ff. – Oplysninger om RL generelt findes i Bendt Viinholt Nielsen: *Rued Langgaard. Biografi* (Kbh., 1993) samt på Internet på adressen www.langgaard.dk (på dansk og engelsk).

GENESIS AND RECEPTION OF THE OPERA

INTRODUCTION

Rued Langgaard (1893-1952) wrote only one opera, *Antichrist*. It is the centre of gravity in Langgaard's output, and his destiny as a Danish composer is closely linked with the work. The opera exists in two very different versions – the original from 1923 (BVN 170) and an altered version from 1930 (BVN 192). It should also be mentioned that Langgaard included passages from some earlier works in his opera, and that he on the other hand recycled parts of the *Antichrist* music in several later compositions including the choral piece *The Time of the End* (BVN 243).

The first version of *Antichrist* came into being in the course of a concentrated work process which lasted eighteen months, from the summer of 1921 until February 1923. Langgaard did not succeed in having this version performed, and by 1930 a new one had been produced with a quite different libretto written, like the original text, by the composer himself. The relatively traditional cast of characters and sequential plot of the original version had been replaced by an unconventional opera concept, with no main protagonist and no plot. The music had been abridged, and in particular the beginning and end of the work had been considerably altered. This version was never staged during Langgaard's lifetime either, and all he ever heard of it was the conclusion, which was performed in 1940 in a studio version on the radio. However, the above-mentioned choral work *The Time of the End*, which consists entirely of music from *Antichrist*, was also performed on the radio during his lifetime (1945). The opera was premiered in its entirety by the Danish Broadcasting Corporation, Danmarks Radio (DR), in 1980 as a studio production.¹ A concert production and the first gramophone recording followed a few years later, but it was not until 1999 that the opera was seen for the first time in a theatre – not in Denmark but in Innsbruck, Austria.² The production there showed that the work could function on stage, and a Scandinavian premiere followed soon after. This was in the year 2002 in Copenhagen, where *Antichrist* enjoyed a particularly favourable reception by press and public.³

The following account deals with the complex genesis of the work and its subsequent fate, from the summer of 1921 – when Langgaard's first vision materialised in the form of a libretto – until he arrived almost 30 years later at the form of the opera published here. It further elucidates the composer's intentions with the work, and his interpretation of it as expressed in interviews and letters as well as in the numerous papers relating to the opera that he left behind. Finally there are sections elucidating Langgaard's stage directions and the time and place of the plot.⁴

1. The studio production took place in 1979 and was broadcast on 28 June 1980; the conductor was Michael Schönwandt.

2. Ole Schmidt conducted the Copenhagen Philharmonic and a number of soloists in concert performances in Copenhagen on 10 and 11 Dec. 1986 (a recording was released on LP and CD in 1988). The premiere at the Tiroler Landestheater in Innsbruck was on 2 May 1999; the conductor was Niels Muus and the production was directed by Juha Hemäus (a recording of the music was released the same year on CD).

3. The performances were given at Ridehuset, Christiansborg Palace, on 17 Aug. – 2 Sep. 2002 with Thomas Dausgaard conducting. The production was directed by Staffan Valdemar Holm (a DVD was released in 2005 and a CD in 2006).

4. Additional information can be gleaned from the chronology on p. 93 ff. and the concordance on p. 104 ff. Information on RL in general can be found in Bendt Viinholt Nielsen: *Rued Langgaard. Biografi*. Copenhagen 1993; see also the Internet address www.langgaard.dk (in Danish and English).

OPERAENS OPRINDELIGE VERSION

Teksten

Rued Langgaard forfattede ifølge egne opgivelser librettoen til *Antikrist* fra 6. juni til 16. juli 1921.⁵ Skitser eller forarbejder til teksten kendes ikke. Renskriften fra juli 1921 er udfærdiget med en særpræget, kalligrafisk skrift og er betitlet *Antikrist, Orgiastisk Musikdrama*.⁶ Tekstens første billede findes her kun i fragmentarisk, præliminær form, men nodeeksempler i marginen tyder på, at denne kilde blev anvendt af Langgaard under kompositionsarbejdet. At Langgaard fra starten havde en flerleddet serie af musikdramaer efter wagnersk model i tankerne, fremgår af teksthæftets udskrift, hvor det hedder: *Antikrist (Første Aften af en Trilogi)*. Ifølge samme kilde skulle anden del være betitlet *Døden i Venedig*, men længere end til denne titel kom Langgaard øjensynlig ikke med planen.⁷

I teksthæftet oplyste Langgaard oprindelig blot, at dramaet var en fri udformning af det ældgamle kinesiske skuespil *Sol og Maane*.⁸ I en senere tilføjelse opregnede han yderligere fire inspirationskilder: Robert Hugh Bensons apokalyptiske fremtidsroman *Verdens Herre*, P. E. Benzons dramatiske digt *Antikrist*, Ernesto Dalgas' visionære *Dommedags Bog* samt Johannes' åbenbaring.⁹ I en påskrift på et senere teksthæfte, som indeholder librettoen i dens færdige form, vedgår komponisten, at hans operatekst står i direkte gæld til Benzons versificerede skuespil *Antikrist*.¹⁰ Handlingsskemaet og visse af personerne (med andre navne) samt flere replikker og udtryk fra 3. og 5. akt af Benzons dramatiske digt genfindes således hos Langgaard.

Selve navnet Antikrist finder man fire steder i bibelen, alle i Johannes' første og andet brev.¹¹ I Paulus' andet brev til thessalonikerne (kapitel 2, vers 4) omtales denne skikkelse også, og ikke mindst er det den traditionelle opfattelse, at „dyret“ i Johannes' åbenbarings 13. kapitel er et billede på Antikrist. I Langgaards libretto optræder denne „mørkets Kristus“ som et menneske og som operaens dominerende rolle under det græske navn Apollyon (oprindelig betegnet Apollos).¹² Et af Langgaards selvstændige bidrag i forhold til Benzons drama er indførelsen af en kvindelig modpart til Apollyon, nemlig Helena, en personificering af „den store skøge“ fra Johannes' åbenbaring. Navnet Helena lånte Langgaard utvivlsomt fra Dalgas' *Dommedags Bog*, hvor Antikrist ledsages af en kvinde med dette navn.¹³ Samme litterære kilde synes at have inspireret til, at en historisk person, Ignatius af Loyola (1491-1556; jesuiterordenens grundlægger) i første omgang kom med på Langgaards rolleliste.¹⁴ Ignatius skiftede dog snart navn til Exterminans, Afgrundens Engel (det er den rolle, som i operaens omarbejdede version og til en anden tekst synges af Hadet). Ud over

THE ORIGINAL VERSION OF THE OPERA

The libretto

According to his own statements, Rued Langgaard wrote the libretto for *Antichrist* between 6 June and 16 July 1921.⁵ No sketches or preliminaries for the text are known. The fair copy from July 1921 was executed in a distinctive calligraphic script and is entitled *Antichrist, Orgiastic Music Drama*.⁶ The first scene of the libretto is only present here in a fragmentary, preliminary form, but music examples in the margin suggest that this source was used by Langgaard during the process of composition. That Langgaard from the outset had a whole series of music dramas on the Wagnerian model in mind is evident from an annotation on the title page of the libretto: *Antichrist (First Evening of a Trilogy)*. According to the same source, the second part was to be entitled *Death in Venice*, but Langgaard appears to have got no further with this plan than the title.⁷

In the libretto Langgaard originally merely stated that the drama was a free adaptation of the ancient Chinese play *Sun and Moon*.⁸ In a later addition he listed four further sources of inspiration: Robert Hugh Benson's apocalyptic, futuristic novel *Lord of the World*; P. E. Benson's dramatic poem *Antichrist*; Ernesto Dalgas's visionary *Doomsday Book*; and the Revelation of St. John.⁹ In an annotation on a later text booklet, which contains the libretto in its finished form, the composer admits that his opera libretto is directly indebted to Benson's verse play *Antichrist*.¹⁰ The skeleton of the plot and some of the characters (with other names) as well as several lines of dialogue and expressions from Acts 3 and 5 of Benson's dramatic poem can thus be found in Langgaard's libretto.

The actual name Antichrist can be found in four places in the Bible, all in the First and Second Epistles of St. John.¹¹ In the Second Epistle of St. Paul to the Thessalonians (2:4) this figure is also alluded to and it is, not least, the traditional view that “the Beast” in Revelation ch. 13 is an image of the Antichrist. In Langgaard's libretto this “Christ of Darkness” appears as a man who plays the dominant role in the opera under the Greek name Apollyon (originally Apollos).¹² One of Langgaard's contributions independent of Benson's drama is the introduction of a female counterpart to Apollyon, a personification – named Helena – of the “Great Whore” from Revelation. Langgaard undoubtedly borrowed the name Helena from Dalgas's *Doomsday Book*, where Antichrist is accompanied by a woman of that name.¹³ The same literary source seems to have inspired the initial inclusion in Langgaard's cast of a historical person, Ignatius of Loyola (1491-1556, founder of the Jesuit order).¹⁴ However, Ignatius's name was soon changed to Exterminans, Angel of the Abyss (this is the role which, in the altered version of the opera, is sung by Hate with a different text). Besides the works mentioned, the text of the first

5. The dating is in source O (cf. description p. 61).

6. Source U (cf. description p. 65).

7. Thomas Mann's *Der Tod in Venedig* appeared in 1913 and in Danish translation the same year. The identical titles do not necessarily mean that RL had read the novel, let alone intended to use it; it is just as likely that he was referring to Wagner's death in Venice in 1883.

8. RL's source is unknown.

9. Robert Hugh Benson: *Verdens Herre*. Transl. by Johannes Jørgensen. Copenhagen 1909. (Original English ed.: *Lord of the World*, 1907.) Second Danish edition with a preface by Johannes Jørgensen, Copenhagen 1924. – P. E. Benson: *Antikrist. Et Dramatisk Digt* [Antichrist: a Dramatic Poem]. Copenhagen 1907. – Ernesto Dalgas: *Dommedags Bog. En Vandring gennem Eksistensens Verden berettet af Peregrinus peripateticus* [Doomsday Book: the Peripatetic Pilgrim's Progress through the World of Existence]. Copenhagen 1903. Annotated editions 1965 and 1996. – The same sources, as well as the Book of Daniel [ch. 7] and the Epistles of St. Paul, were mentioned by RL in an interview on 4 May 1924; cf. note 25.

10. Cf. source S (see description p. 64 f.).

11. 1 John 2:18, 2:22 and 4:3; 2 John 1:7.

12. Cf. Revelation 9:11.

13. Cf. the chapter *Ottende Dagsrejse: Himmerige* [Eighth Day's Journey: Heaven].

14. Langgaard explains that the presence of Ignatius was meant to symbolise a particular Jesuitical school within the Church of Antichrist (the “Exterminans Church”).

5. Dateringen findes på kilde O (jfr. beskrivelsen s. 61).

6. Kilde U (jfr. beskrivelsen s. 65).

7. Thomas Manns *Der Tod in Venedig* udkom i 1913 og i dansk oversættelse samme år. Titelsammenfaldet behøver ikke at betyde, at RL havde læst romanen endsigte agtede at benytte den; det er lige så sandsynligt, at han refererer til Wagners død i Venedig i 1883.

8. RLs kilde kendes ikke.

9. Robert Hugh Benson: *Verdens Herre*. Oversat af Johannes Jørgensen. Kbh., 1909. (Engelsk originaludgave: *Lord of the World*, 1907.) Anden udgave med forord af Johannes Jørgensen. Kbh., 1924. – P. E. Benson: *Antikrist. Et Dramatisk Digt*. Kbh., 1907. – Ernesto Dalgas: *Dommedags Bog. En Vandring gennem Eksistensens Verden berettet af Peregrinus peripateticus*. Kbh., 1903. Kommenterede udgaver 1965 og 1996. – Samme kilder samt Daniels Bog [kap. 7] og Paulus' breve nævnes af RL i interview 4.5.1924, jfr. note 25.

10. Jfr. kilde S (se beskrivelsen s. 64 f.).

11. 1 Joh 2,18, 2,22 og 4,3; 2 Joh 1,7.

12. Jfr. Joh åb 9,11.

13. Jfr. kapitlet *Ottende Dagsrejse: Himmerige*.

14. Langgaard forklarer, at Ignatius' tilstedeværelse skulle symbolisere en særlig jesuitisk retning inden for Antikrist-kirken („Exterminans-kirken“).

det nævnte rummer teksten til første billede, som er en dialog mellem Apollyon og en mytisk kvindeskikkelse, Hesperia, inspiration fra Højsangen og sprogetonen i Rabindranath Tagores digtsamling *Gitanjali* (1913).¹⁵

Musikken

Umiddelbart efter at librettisten var færdig, gik komponisten i gang med at sætte teksten i musik. Den sommer (1921) opholdt Rued Langgaard sig det meste af tiden i Fredensborg i Nordsjælland, hvor han boede i en lejet villa. Hans mor Emma Langgaard ledsagede ham og bevidner, at han var fuldstændig opslugt af arbejdet med operaen: „Min Søn arbejder over alle Grændser paa sin Antikrist – en vældig Historie“, skrev hun.¹⁶ Rued Langgaard havde ikke nogen fast ansættelse i disse år og kunne derfor hellige sig kompositionsarbejdet.

Efter det landlige sommerophold flyttede Rued Langgaard tilbage til lejligheden i Niels Juelsgade 7, og det fortsatte arbejde med operaen blev af ydre begivenheder tilsyneladende kun afbrudt af to koncertrejser til Tyskland. Den 23. oktober rejste han således til Essen for at overvære en opførelse den 26. oktober af symfoni nr. 2, og fra midt i november og tre uger frem opholdt han sig i Karlsruhe og Darmstadt. I Karlsruhe blev *Sfærernes Musik* uropført med succes den 26. november, og i Darmstadt dirigerede han den 2. december en opførelse af symfoni nr. 4.¹⁷ Efter godt otte måneders arbejde blev operaen fuldført den 25. marts 1922 i form af en „orkestreskitse“.¹⁸ Denne skitse er på flere måder et interessant dokument. Det er et såkaldt partiel, hvor kompositionens orkestresats er trængt sammen til nogle få systemer, i dette tilfælde tre eller fire, mens solostemmerne er fuldt udformede. Der må rimeligvis have eksisteret nogle præliminære kladder og skitsepapirer, som nu er forsvundet, men det virker som om denne skitse over lange stræk er blevet til i en fortløbende proces, og manuskriptet giver i det hele taget indtryk af et dybt koncentreret og målrettet kompositionsarbejde. Det indtryk, man får af komponisten gennem dette manuskript, stemmer dårligt med det billede, der senere dannede sig af Langgaard som en temperamentsfuld, impulsiv og rastløs person. Notationen er detaljeret og foretaget med nærmest mikroskopisk skrift (skal man læse detaljerne må man bruge forstørrelsesglas!). Manuskriptet bærer undertitlen *Apokalyptisk Festspil i to Akter*, og på bindet er påtrykt betegnelsen „1. Aften“ – idéen om en wagnersk trilogi var altså fortsat levende, da Langgaard efter kompositionsarbejdets afslutning lod manuskriptet indbinde.¹⁹

Efter operaens sidste takt har Langgaard med blyant og med samtidig håndskrift nedfældet følgende programerklæring: „Antikrist: Fremstilling af Musikens eget Væsen: hinsides ondt og godt.“ Langgaard mere end antyder her, at hans interesse for Antikristfænomenet har en rent musikalsk side, knyttet til selve tonekunsten og dens udtryksmuligheder. Med udtrykket „hinsides ondt og godt“ refererer han til en hovedskikkelse, når det gælder lanceringen af begrebet Antikrist, nemlig Friedrich Nietzsche og nærmere betegnet Nietzsches bog *Jenseits von Gut und Böse* (1886). Det er en af komponistens få ytringer om operaens musik, og selv om musikalsk fortolkning ikke hører hjemme i denne fremstilling, må det være tilladt her at tolke udsagnet i retning af, at operaen på et æstetisk plan tematiserer grundlæggende emner som 'musikalske værdinormer' og 'betydning' i musikken.

15. Rabindranath Tagore: *Gitanjali (Sang-Ofre)*. Oversat af Louis von Kohl. Kbh., 1913. (Engelsk originaludgave 1913). Bogen udgør det programatiske grundlag for RLs klaverværk *Gitanjali-Hymner* fra 1918 (BVN 149).

16. Brev til Constance Tetens dateret 27.8.1921, RLP 9.

17. Symfoni nr. 2 = BVN 53 (værkets oprindelige version, 1912-14). – *Sfærernes Musik* = BVN 128 (1916-18). – Symfoni nr. 4 = BVN 124 (1916, rev. 1920).

18. Kilde O (jfr. beskrivelsen s. 61); se illustrationerne s. 77 ff.

19. Så sent som i midten af 1930'erne overvejede RL at placere værket (i dets omarbejdede version) i en trilogi, en såkaldt *Orgel-Opera* i tre aftener, hvor musikdramaet var anbragt imellem orgelværkerne *Messis (Hostens Tid)* (BVN 228a) og *Juan* (BVN 228b); notater herom findes i RLP 1.

scene, which is a dialogue between Apollyon and a mythical female figure, Hesperia, draws inspiration from the Song of Solomon and the language of Rabindranath Tagore's collection of poems *Gitanjali* (1913).¹⁵

The music

Immediately after the librettist had finished, the composer went to work setting the text to music. That summer (1921) Rued Langgaard spent most of his time in Fredensborg in the north of Zealand, where he stayed in a rented house. His mother, Emma Langgaard, accompanied him and testified that he was totally absorbed in his work on the opera: „My son is exceeding all limits writing his Antichrist – a huge affair,“ she wrote.¹⁶ Rued Langgaard had no permanent employment in those years and was therefore able to devote himself entirely to the task of composition.

After this summer stay in the countryside Rued Langgaard moved back to the family apartment on Niels Juelsgade in Copenhagen, and apparently the only outside events that interrupted his ongoing work on the opera were two concert trips to Germany. On 23 October he travelled to Essen to attend a performance of his Symphony no. 2 on 26 October, and he spent three weeks from mid-November in Karlsruhe and Darmstadt. In Karlsruhe on 26 November *The Music of the Spheres* was premiered with success, and in Darmstadt on 2 December Langgaard himself conducted a performance of his Symphony no. 4.¹⁷ After just over eight months of work the opera was completed on 25 March 1922 in the form of an „orchestral sketch“.¹⁸ This sketch is in several respects an interesting document. It is a so-called short score, where the orchestral texture of the composition is compressed into just a few staves, in this case three or four, while the solo parts are fully formed. Doubtless there were some preliminary drafts and outlines that have now disappeared, but over long stretches the sketch has the appearance of having been written in a continuous process, and the manuscript as a whole bears the marks of a highly concentrated and determined compositional effort. The impression of Langgaard as a composer that one gets from this manuscript accords ill with the image later formed of him as a temperamental, impulsive and restless person. The notation is detailed and is in an almost microscopic hand (to read the details one has to use a magnifying-glass!). The manuscript bears the subtitle *Apocalyptic Festival Play in Two Acts*, and on the binding the designation „First Evening“ is printed. The idea of a Wagnerian trilogy was thus still alive when Langgaard had the manuscript bound after completing the work of composition.¹⁹

After the last bar of the opera Langgaard has added a pencilled programmatic note in his handwriting of that time: „Antichrist: Representation of the very essence of music; beyond good and evil“. Langgaard more than hints here that his interest in the Antichrist phenomenon has a purely musical aspect, associated with the art of music itself and its expressive potential. With the expression „beyond good and evil“ he is referring to a major figure in the launching of the concept of Antichrist, Friedrich Nietzsche, and more specifically to Nietzsche's book *Jenseits von Gut und Böse* (1886). This is one of the composer's few utterances on the music of the opera; and although musical interpretation has no place in the present account, it is surely permissible here to interpret the statement along the lines that the opera, at the aesthetic level, deals with fundamental themes such as „musical value norms“ and „meaning“ in music.

15. Rabindranath Tagore: *Gitanjali* [...]. Transl. into Danish by Louis von Kohl. Copenhagen 1913 (original English edition 1913.) The book forms the programmatic basis of RL's piano work *Gitanjali-Hymner* [Gitanjali Hymns] from 1918 (BVN 149).

16. Letter to Constance Tetens dated 27 Aug. 1921, RLP 9.

17. Symphony no. 2 = BVN 53 (the original version of the work, 1912-14). – *The Music of the Spheres* = BVN 128 (1916-18). – Symphony no. 4 = BVN 124 (1916, rev. 1920).

18. Source O, cf. description p. 61 and illustrations p. 77 ff.

19. As late as the mid-1930s RL considered inserting the work (in its altered version) in a trilogy, a so-called *Organ Opera* for performance over three evenings, where the music drama was placed between the organ works *Messis (Harvest Time)* (BVN 228a) and *Juan* (BVN 228b); notes on this can be found in RLP 1.

Langgaard påbegyndte formodentlig renskrivningen af partituret, efter at han 16. juni 1922 havde indloget sig for tre måneder i Fredensborg, nu i et andet hus, og denne gang ikke blot ledsaget af moderen, men også af Constance Tetens, hans senere hustru. Constance (f. 1891) var den 1. april 1922 flyttet ind hos Rued og Emma Langgaard som hushjælp og selskabsdame. Den førnævnte orkesterskitse er forsynet med instrumentangivelser i margenen, som tyder på, at Langgaard foretog detailinstrumentationen og renskrivningen af partituret i én og samme proces på grundlag af skitsen og altså uden brug af en mellemliggende partiturladde. Nogle enkelte sider i kladdeform med særligt komplicerede passager er dog bevaret.²⁰

Forspillet blev sluttet den 30. juni 1922, og resten af partituret blev udfærdiget i løbet af det følgende halve år. Arbejdet blev dog afbrudt af en vigtig koncertrejse til Karlsruhe i januar 1923. Her dirigerede Langgaard den 15. januar sin 6. symfoni „Det Himmelmelvende“ (dengang betegnet symfoni nr. 5 i én sats og uden titel).²¹ Det var en uropførelse, og værket blev modtaget med begejstring af publikum og fik rosende omtale i den tyske presse. Dagen efter præsenterede han sit nye klaverværk *Afgrundssalmer* ved en koncert i samme by (værket kendes i dag kun i en senere version med titlen *Afgrundsmusik*).²²

Den 2. februar 1923 fuldførte den 29-årige Langgaard det 300 sider store, renskrevne partitur.²³ Titlen var *Antikrist, Allegorisk Opera i fem Billeder*; undertitlen blev dog kort efter ændret til *Et moderne Mysterium*. I værket havde Langgaard anvendt passager fra tre tidligere kompositioner, nemlig *Sinfonia interna*, en såkaldt scenisk symfoni fra 1915-16, *Sferernes Musik* (1916-18) og navnlig fra den lige nævnte symfoni nr. 6, komponeret 1919-20.²⁴ Operapartituret blev udfærdiget med violet blæk, ikke langsomt og omhyggeligt, men alligevel med stor sikkerhed, og uden at der blev foretaget rettelser undervejs. Selv om musikken er uhyre kompleks og notationen sine steder så tæt, at man også her må have luppen frem for at læse fortegnene, er manuskriptet et af de mest gennemarbejdede af Langgaards orkesterpartiturer for så vidt angår fortegn, artikulationsangivelser, buer og dynamiske angivelser.

Handlingen

Nogen tid efter fuldførelsen af værket bragte tre store københavnske dagblade i deres fælles søndagstillæg et helsides interview med komponisten om operaen.²⁵ „Antikrist symboliserer noget af det dybeste i vor Tid“ udtaler han og siger endvidere: „Stykket er en Psykologi: en Fremstilling af Mennesket Antikrists Livsforløb [...] et Fremtids-Passionsdrama med 'den nye Frelser', Mennesket, der gør sig til Gud, som Hovedfiguren.“ Komponisten blev også bedt om at gengive operaens handling i korte træk:

Langgaard presumably began the fair-copying of the score after he had again taken lodgings in Fredensborg, this time on 16 June 1922 for three months; but now he was in a different house and was accompanied not only by his mother but also by Constance Tetens, his wife-to-be. Constance (b. 1891) had moved in on 1 April 1922 with Rued and Emma Langgaard as a housekeeper and lady's companion. The above-mentioned orchestral sketch is furnished with instrumental instructions in the margin, suggesting that Langgaard carried out the detailed instrumentation and fair-copying of the score in one and the same process on the basis of the sketch, and thus without using an intermediate score draft. However, a few pages in draft form with particularly complicated passages have been preserved.²⁰

The prelude was dated 30 June 1922 at the end, and the remainder of the score was completed in the course of the next half year or so. Work was interrupted, however, by an important concert trip to Karlsruhe in January 1923, where Langgaard conducted his Symphony no. 6, „The Heaven-rending“, on 15 January (it was then called Symphony no. 5 in one movement and had no descriptive title).²¹ This was a first performance, and the work was received with enthusiasm by the audience and praised in the German press. The next day he presented his new piano piece *Hymns of the Abyss* at a concert in the same city (the work is known today only in a later version entitled *Music of the Abyss*).²²

On 2 February 1923 the 29-year-old Langgaard completed his fair copy of the 300-page long score.²³ The title was *Antichrist, Allegorical Opera in Five Scenes*; however, shortly afterwards the subtitle was changed to *A Modern Mystery*. Langgaard had used passages from three earlier compositions: *Sinfonia interna*, a so-called scenic symphony from 1915-16; *The Music of the Spheres* (1916-18); and especially the aforementioned Symphony no. 6, composed in 1919-20.²⁴ The opera score was written in violet ink, not slowly and carefully, yet with great assurance and without corrections being made along the way. Although the music is extremely complex and the notation in some places so compact that here too one must have a magnifying-glass to read the accidentals, the manuscript is one of the most thoroughly elaborated of Langgaard's orchestral scores as far as key signatures, accidentals, articulation instructions, slurs and dynamics are concerned.

The plot

Some time after the completion of the work, three major Copenhagen newspapers made it the subject of a full-page interview with Langgaard in their joint Sunday supplement.²⁵ „Antichrist symbolises some of the most profound issues of our time,“ he is quoted as saying, adding that: „The piece is a whole psychology: a representation of the successive phases in the life of the man Antichrist [...], a passion drama of the future with 'the new Saviour', the man who makes himself God, as the main character“. The composer was also asked to give a brief account of the plot of the opera:

20. Kilde N1-N2 (jfr. beskrivelserne s. 61).

21. BVN 165 (1919-20).

22. BVN 169 (1921-24).

23. Kilde C (jfr. beskrivelsen s. 48; se illustrationerne s. 80 ff.); kilden er slutdateret „Februar 1923“, men den eksakte fuldførelsesdato fremgår af CL's dagbog, RLP 10.

24. *Sinfonia interna* = BVN 122. – I konkordansen s. 104 ff. oplyses hvilke passager fra de tre værker, der indgår i operaen. – Der kan konstateres en række divergencer mellem de sammenfaldende passager i operaen og den version af symfoni nr. 6, som blev publiceret i 1946; afvigelserne skyldes, at RL foretog visse kompositoriske ændringer ved indlemmelsen i operaen, men navnlig at symfonien efterfølgende blev revideret i flere omgange. Temaerne i både operaens forspil t. 21 ff. og i forspil til andet billede t. 432 ff. fremstår således i *Antikrist* i deres oprindelige form fra 1920, men i senere udformning i symfoniens afsnit *Thema (Versione I)* og *Variation II*. Operapartituret omfatter også 10 takter, som er udgået af symfonien, jfr. beskrivelsen af kilde XC s. 69.

25. *En ny dansk Opera*, sign. Clerk. – i: *Søndag*. Tillæg til *Nationaltidende, Dagens Nyheder og Dagbladet*, nr. 109, 4.5.1924.

20. Source N1-N2 (cf. descriptions p. 61).

21. BVN 165 (1919-20).

22. BVN 169 (1921-24).

23. Source C, cf. description p. 48 and illustrations p. 80 ff.; the source is dated „February 1923“ at the end, but the exact date of completion appears from CL's diary, RLP 10.

24. *Sinfonia interna* = BVN 122. – The concordance on p. 104 ff. states which passages from the three works are included in the opera. A number of differences can be noted between passages in the opera and their counterparts in the version of Symphony no. 6 published in 1946; this is partly because RL made certain compositional changes when incorporating the passages from the symphony into the opera, but especially because the symphony was subsequently revised several times. The themes both in the prelude to the opera, b. 21 ff, and in the prelude to Scene 2, b. 432 ff, thus appear in *Antichrist* in their original form from 1920, but in a later form in the sections *Thema (Versione I)* and *Variation II* of the symphony. The opera score also includes ten bars that were omitted from the symphony (cf. description of source XC, p. 69).

25. „En ny dansk Opera [A new Danish Opera]“, signed „Clerk“ in *Søndag*. Supplement to *Nationaltidende, Dagens Nyheder og Dagbladet*, no. 109, 4 May 1924.

Gennem en overjordisk Kærlighed indvies Mennesket Antikrist (Apollyon) i Livets Mysterium; hans Villie til sig selv aabenbarer sig derigennem –: Ved „det slette“ vil han finde Vej til Kristus. Han er sig „Forsynets Jesuitisme“ bevidst. *Han er bleven Verdenslærerens*. Dette er Operaens første Billede [med titlen *Rosenoffer*].

I andet Billede [*Dag og Død*] hilses Antikrist af Folket og kronet med den gyldne Tornekrone. Antikrist forkynder sit Evangelium og rammes af Lynet... det er Verdens-Forbandelsen, *det antikristelige Golgatha*.

Tredje Billede [*Opstandelsen*] viser Antikrist paa Dødssarkofagen. Helena [Den store Skøge], Menneskeheden, hidkalder „de onde Aander“, de raser omkring Liget, og med dem og sin Tro på Antikrist vækker hun ham til Live. Det er *Opstandelsen*, den antikristelige Paaske... og som dod og dog levende staar han nu.

Fjerde Billede har jeg kaldt „Ved Kvindens Højre Haand“. Han er som en Gud. Men han er alligevel i Splid med sig selv. Han ser i den skønne Skøge sin farligste Konkurrent. Da bekriger han hende. Han bereder hende ved sin Helligaand „*Exterminans*“ for Exterminanskirkens Sakrament, Exterminans forfører hende til Synd og giver ulovligt *Kirkens* Absolution. Hun tror at have fundet Kirkens Trøst, men aner, at hun i Virkeligheden er underkastet *hans* Lov. Det er Forvildelsens Ørken.

Endelig det femte Billede. Det hedder *Den store Mester kommer*. Antikrist har mod eller med sin Villie beredt Vej for Kristus; for i Forvildelsens Ørken bryder det evige Lys frem ...²⁶

Rollelisten omfatter Apollyon, Hesperia, Biskop Lucio, Den store Skøge og Exterminans og hertil kommer en lang række små partier for både kvinde- og mandstemmer. Denne version af operaen har til lige et betydeligt korparti med dobbeltkor i værkets femte billede.

I interviewet geråder Langgaard ud i temmelig indviklede forklaringer, men rydder tavlen ved at erklære, at han frabeder sig beskyldninger for at tumle med fraser, abstraktioner eller filosofi – for „her er jo først og fremmest tale om et musikværk“. På interviewerens spørgsmål om, hvor Langgaard står i religiøs henseende, svarer han, at han ikke holder sig til nogen kristen autoritetstro, men til frie synspunkter båret oppe af en personlig oplevelse. Dog indrømmer han, at han føler sig tiltrukket af den katolske kirke, ikke mindst fordi musikken her spiller så væsentlig en rolle. Langgaards udtalte interesse for katolicismen i 1920'erne synes at gå tilbage til hans studiereje til bl.a. Italien i begyndelsen af 1921. Der er muligvis en direkte sammenhæng mellem hans oplevelser i udlandet og det forhold, at Antikrists verdensherredømme udfolder sig inden for en katolsk, snarere end inden for en protestantisk ramme i operaen. Langgaards synes dog ikke at have været afklaret i sit forhold til den romersk-katolske kirke, og hans oprindelige, åndelige fundament, som var baseret på faderen, pianisten og musikfilosoffen Siegfried Langgaards teosofisk inspirerede betragtninger om kunst og religion, synes i længden ikke at være blevet anfægtet.²⁷

Operaen afvises

Det Kongelige Teater var dengang den eneste operascene i Danmark, og i marts 1923 indleverede Langgaard derfor sit værk til teatret – i første omgang dog kun teksten. Otto Borchsenius, den da næsten 80-årige forfatter, fungerede som teatrets censor. Allerede 19. april modtog Rued Langgaard sin tekst og sit i mellemtiden indleverede partitur retur. Teaterchef Grev Brockenhuus-Schack skrev samtidig til Langgaard, at

26. Til grund for dette referat har ligget en synopsis, hvoraf der i dag kun kendes et fragment (RLP 3); under RLS 8,32 foreligger en tysksproget oversættelse med stort set samme indhold som det danske referat.

27. Siegfried Langgaard efterlod to kolossale, upublicerede skrifter om „Musikkens Mission“ og „Kunstarternes Samklang i Verdensharmonien“; blandt hans centrale inspirationskilder var følgende bog, som også RL henviser til: Hans Martensen: *Jacob Bohme. Theosophiske Studier*. Kbh., 1881.

Through a supernatural love the man Antichrist (Apollyon) is initiated into the mystery of life; his will to himself is thereby revealed –: by way of “evil” he wishes to find his way to Christ. He is aware of “the Jesuitism of Providence”. *He has become the Teacher of the World*. This is the first scene of the opera [with the title *The Rose Sacrifice*].

In the second scene [*Day and Death*] Antichrist is greeted by the people and crowned with the golden crown of thorns. Antichrist preaches his gospel and is struck by lightning ... this is the Curse of the World, *the Antichristian Golgatha*.

The third scene [*The Resurrection*] shows Antichrist on the sarcophagus. Helena [the Great Whore], Mankind, summons “the evil spirits”, they rage around the body, and with them and her faith in Antichrist she awakens him to life. This is the *Resurrection*, the Antichristian Easter ... and now he stands there, dead and yet living.

I have called the fourth scene “On the Right Hand of the Woman”. *He* is like a god. Yet he is divided against himself. In the beautiful whore he sees his most dangerous rival. Then he makes war on her. He prepares her with his Holy Spirit “*Exterminans*” for the sacrament of the Exterminans Church; Exterminans seduces her into sin and unlawfully grants her the *Church's* absolution. She believes she has found the comfort of the Church, but suspects that in reality she has submitted to *his* law. This is the desert of aberration.

Finally, the fifth scene. It is called *The Great Master Cometh*. Antichrist has by or against his will prepared the way for Christ; for in the desert of aberration the eternal light breaks through...²⁶

The cast of characters comprises Apollyon, Hesperia, Bishop Lucio, the Great Whore and Exterminans, as well as a long succession of minor roles for both female and male voices. This version of the opera also has a substantial choral section with a double choir in the fifth scene of the work.

In the interview Langgaard gets involved in rather complicated explanations, but then wipes the slate clean by declaring that he rejects any accusations of wallowing in clichés, abstractions or philosophy – for “this is first and foremost a musical work”. To the interviewer's question about where Langgaard stands in religious matters, he replies that he does not adhere to a belief in any Christian authority, but to free views borne up by personal experience. He does admit, however, that he feels attracted to the Catholic Church, not least because music plays such an important role in it. Langgaard's declared interest in Catholicism in the 1920s seems to go back to his study trip to Italy and other places at the beginning of 1921. There may be a direct connection between his experiences abroad and the fact that the domination of the world by Antichrist unfolds in the opera within a Catholic rather than a Protestant framework. Langgaard does not seem to have clarified his relationship with the Roman Catholic Church, and his original spiritual foundation in the Theosophically inspired reflections on art and religion of his father, the pianist and musical philosopher Siegfried Langgaard, seems in the long run not to have been questioned.²⁷

The opera is rejected

The Danish Royal Theatre was at that time the only opera house in Denmark, so in March 1923 Rued Langgaard submitted his work to the theatre (though in the first instance only the libretto). Otto Borchsenius, the then almost 80-year-old author, was the theatre's drama adjudicator (*censor*). As early as 19 April Langgaard's text – and the score he had submitted in the meantime – were returned to him. At the same time the managing director of the theatre, Count Brockenhuus-Schack, wrote to Langgaard that

26. This account was based on a synopsis of which only a fragment is known today (RLP 3); under RLS 8,32 there is a German translation with more or less the same content as the Danish account.

27. Siegfried Langgaard left two huge unpublished works on “The Mission of Music” and “The Concord of the Arts in Universal Harmony”; among his main sources of inspiration was a book to which RL also refers, Hans Martensen: *Jacob Bohme. Theosophiske Studier*. Copenhagen 1881.

[...] denne Opera ikke vil kunne antages til Opførelse med den foreliggende Tekst, som forekommer Censuren dunkel og meget lidt tilgængelig. Under disse Forhold mener jeg, at den musikalske Censur bør udskydes indtil Spørgsmaalet er afgjort, om Tilvebringelsen af en anden Tekst er mulig.²⁸

Langgaard talte med teaterchefen og fik lov at indlevere værket igen. Borchsenius fik atter librettoen at se, og kapelmester Georg Høeberg fik forelagt partituret. En officiel musikalsk censur er ikke registreret i Det Kongelige Teaters protokol, men Høebergs vurdering var, ifølge Langgaard, at musikken var „strålende“.²⁹ Materialet blev desuagtet returneret, uden at teatret havde ændret standpunkt; derom beretter teatrets protokol ganske lakonisk: „Til Indsenderen d. 8. Juni 1923 forkastet“.³⁰ Langgaard var dog ikke til sinds at acceptere denne afvisning, og nogle få dage senere, den 11. juni 1923, fik han foretræde på teatret med henblik på at forsvare sin komposition. Det er uvist, hvem der repræsenterede teatret ved denne lejlighed. Langgaard gik fra mødet med den besked, at han senere skulle erholde svar.³¹ Man gav altså komponisten det indtryk, at sagen ikke var definitivt afgjort.

Første gang, publikum og presse havde mulighed for at stifte bekendtskab med en del af operaens musik, var den 26. september 1923, hvor Blüthner-Orkestret fra Berlin afholdt en gæstekoncert i Odd Fellow Palæet i København. Programmet omfattede uropførelsen af forspillet til *Antikrist* samt den danske førsteopførelse af Langgaards symfoni nr. 6 (stadig betegnet nr. 5). Ved denne lejlighed var symfonien betitlet *Symfoni Nr. 5 (Over motiver af „Antikrist“)* – hvad der var lidt af en tilsnigelse, da det jo var operaen, som var afhængig af symfonien og ikke omvendt. I programmet annonceredes forspillet med følgende motto:

Guds Villie, Jesus Kristus	(1ste Motiv)
løfter vort Haab	(2det Motiv)
Men gennem Antikrists Rige gaar Vejen til	(3die Motiv)
Herlighedsriget	(4de Motiv)

Langgaard dirigerede selv både forspillet og symfonien, og koncerten blev noget af en skandale på grund af symfoniens pågående tone-sprog. Når man læser Axel Kierulfs anmeldelse i *Politiken* tror man næppe, at det var det samme værk, som var blevet modtaget med ovationer i Karlsruhe blot et halvt år før. Kierulf skrev, at det var

[...] en ung søgende Musikers forfærdelige Kamp for at sige det udsigelige – med det forvirrende og sørgelige Resultat, at næppe et Menneske forstod ham, og at det var forfærdeligt at høre paa. Faa klappede, og flere hyssede.³²

Forspillet til *Antikrist* blev dog pænt modtaget af publikum, og Frejllif Olsen vurderede i *Ekstra-Bladet*, at

[...] det er et i mange Henseender ejendommeligt og smukt Stykke Musik, det har Kirkens Højtid, Orglets Brus, Helvedes Larm og Himlens Herlighed i sig.³³

Dette synspunkt deltes af *Berlingske Tidende*, mens Gustav Hetsch i *Nationaltidende* om forspillet og symfonien konkluderede:

Hvis disse Stykker giver et rigtigt Indtryk af Karakteren af „Antikrist“s Musik, skal jeg med min gode Villie ikke hen og høre den Opera.³⁴

[...] this opera cannot be accepted for performance with the present libretto, which the censor finds obscure and very inaccessible. In these circumstances I think that an evaluation of the music should be deferred until it has been settled whether it would be possible to provide a different text.²⁸

Langgaard spoke to the Count and was allowed to re-submit the work. Borchsenius was again given the libretto for inspection, and the conductor Georg Høeberg was presented with the score. No official musical assessment is registered in the records of the Royal Theatre, but Høeberg's judgement, according to Langgaard, was that the music was "splendid".²⁹ Nevertheless the material was returned with no change in the attitude of the theatre, whose records state laconically: "To the submitter, 8 June 1923; rejected".³⁰ However, Langgaard had no mind to accept the rejection and a few days later, on 11 June 1923, he was granted an audience at the theatre with a view to defending his composition. It is not known who represented the theatre on this occasion. Langgaard left the meeting having been told that he would receive an answer later.³¹ In other words the composer was given the impression that the matter had not been definitively settled.

The first time the public and the press were able to make the acquaintance of some of the music of the opera was on 26 September 1923, when the Blüthner Orchestra from Berlin visited the Odd Fellow Palæ concert hall in Copenhagen. The programme comprised the first performance of the prelude to *Antichrist* as well as the first Danish performance of Langgaard's Symphony no. 6 (still entitled no. 5). On this occasion the symphony was designated *Symphony no. 5 (On Motifs from "Antichrist")* – which was cheating slightly, since it was in fact the opera that was dependent on the symphony, not the other way round. In the programme the prelude was announced with the following motto:

God's Will, Jesus Christ,	(1st motif)
raises our hope,	(2nd motif)
But through the Kingdom of Antichrist goes the path	(3rd motif)
to the Kingdom of Glory	(4th motif)

Langgaard himself conducted both the prelude and the symphony, and the concert caused quite a stir because of the aggressive tonal idiom of the symphony. Reading Axel Kierulf's review in *Politiken* one can hardly believe that this was the same work as had been received with ovations in Karlsruhe just six months before. Kierulf wrote that it was

[...] a young questing musician's terrible struggle to say the unsayable – with the confusing and sad result that hardly anyone understood him, and that it was frightful to listen to. Few clapped and several booted.³²

However, the prelude to *Antichrist* was well received by the audience, and Frejllif Olsen took the view in *Ekstra-Bladet* that it was

[...] in many respects a distinctive and beautiful piece of music; it has the solemnity of the church, the swell of the organ, the din of Hell and the glory of Heaven in it.³³

This view was shared by *Berlingske Tidende*, whereas in *Nationaltidende* Gustav Hetsch concluded of both the prelude and the symphony:

If these pieces give a true impression of the character of the music of *Antichrist*, I shall not willingly go to listen to the opera.³⁴

28. KTs arkiv, Rigsarkivet, brev nr. 158/1923.

29. Refereres af RL i indlæg i *Nationaltidende*, 29.4.1926, jfr. note 48.

30. KTs arkiv, Rigsarkivet.

31. Oplysninger om dette møde findes i CLs dagbogsoptegnelser, RLP 10.

32. *Politiken* 27.9.1923.

33. *Ekstra-Bladet* 27.9.1923 (signeret Mefisto).

34. *Nationaltidende* 27.9.1923.

28. Royal Theatre archive, Danish State Archives, Letter no. 158/1923.

29. Account by RL in an article in *Nationaltidende*, 29 Apr. 1926, cf. note 48.

30. Royal Theatre archive, Danish State Archives.

31. Information about this meeting can be found in CL's diary entry, RLP 10.

32. *Politiken* 27 Sep. 1923.

33. *Ekstra-Bladet* 27 Sep. 1923 (signed "Mefisto").

34. *Nationaltidende* 27 Sep. 1923.

Ventetid

Langgaard nærede stadig håb om, at værkets skæbne ikke var beseglet, og hans aktiviteter i den følgende tid skal ses i det lys. Dels kæmpede han med at forbedre teksten, dels søgte han at holde sagen varm. Nogle indførelser i en kalender, som dækker de første måneder af 1924, og som i øvrigt er de eneste dagbogsblade, der kendes fra den voksne Langgaards hånd, giver et interessant indblik i hans gøren og laden.³⁵ Kalenderen rummer en del notater, som kan relateres til operaen, sådan som følgende uddrag viser:

- 4. jan. Laante Greven [Brockenhuus-Schack] min Dekoration, Foredrag og Textbog
- 10. jan. Atter Betænk[c]ligheder ved Exterminans Aabenbarelse uden foregaende Paakaldelse.
- 11. jan. Exterminans's første Replik forandret. Hos Grev Schack med den. Afs. et Brev til Herold. Bad ham tilbagesende det ugyldige Texteksemplar.
- 22. marts Ind. Texten paany til G. Høeberg.
- 27. marts Opsøgte Herold (traf ham) „Det gjorde intet at mit Mysterium var filosofisk, alle gamle Mysteriespil var til en vis Grad filosofiske“ [...] Afs Text til Severin Christensen.
- 7. april Penge afs til Lahn.
- 6. maj Atter omarbej. af Text.
- 7. maj Studier til Omarb (Bibl.) Omarbej. Overvejelse
- 8. maj Studier til Omarb. (Bibl.) Omarb. Overvejelse. Finder det godt.

Som man ser, tøved Langgaard ikke med at kontakte både teaterchefen, kapelmester Høeberg og Herold. Vilhelm Herold, den berømte tenorsanger, var direktør for operaen ved Det Kongelige Teater, da Langgaard i 1923 indleverede *Antikrist* og indtil 30. juni 1924. Han synes her at støtte Langgaard, men har åbenbart ikke haft nogen indflydelse, og hans navn ses ikke i sagens akter.

Notaterne viser, at Langgaard troede, han kunne ændre den negative holdning til operateksten ved at justere enkelte ord eller replikker. Teksthæftet synes således at have været under løbende revision. Sammenhængen mellem de ændringer, der nævnes i kalenderen, og det, man kan se i de foreliggende kilder, er uklar, men en del tidlige tekstrettelser kan iagttages i partituret og andre findes i en kopi (et gennemslagsksemplar) af det eneste færdige teksthæfte til operaens oprindelige version, som kendes i dag.³⁶

Den dekoration, Langgaard omtaler under 4. januar, er komponistens eget dekorationsforslag forestillende „Exterminanskirkens indre“, et stort gotisk, kirkeagtigt rum med orgelpiber under loftet. „Lysets alter (hengivelsen)“ og „dommens engel“ ses til venstre og „mørkets alter (viljen)“ og „stridens engel“ til højre, og i midten findes Antikrists alter på baggrund af „uendeligheden, hvorfra han kommer“.³⁷ Kun denne ene dekoration var nødvendig, mente Langgaard.

Foredraget, som nævnes i samme indførelse, er *Fremtidens Frelser og Kunsten*, som Langgaard i november 1923 havde holdt i foreningen Academicum catholicum.³⁸ I manuskriptet fremsætter Langgaard på spekulativ vis og med udgangspunkt i Wagners tanker om religion og kunst nogle særdeles vidtløftige idéer om „fremtidskunstens udviklingsmuligheder“. Langgaard skitserer rammerne for et fremtidigt, religiøst idealsamfund, hvor kunsten, dvs. musikken eller rettere sagt

35. Kilden findes i RLP 3.

36. Kilde S.

37. Efter billedteksten i magasinet *Søndag* 4.5.1924 (jfr. note 25), hvor tegningen er gengivet. Den farvelagte originaltegning er bevaret (RLS 8a).

38. *Fremtidens Frelser og Jesu musikalske Selskab*. Første del omfatter *Fremtidens Frelser og Kunsten* (RLS 139a,1: maskinskrevet afskrift med RL's rettelser, 32 sider; s. 10 mangler). Anden del omhandler *Jesu musikalske Selskab* (RLS 139a,2: maskinskrevet afskrift med RL's rettelser, 47 sider; ukomplet).

A time of waiting

Langgaard still cherished the hope that the fate of the work was not sealed, and his activities in the subsequent period should be viewed in that light. On the one hand he struggled to improve the libretto, on the other he tried to keep the pot simmering. Some entries in a diary covering the first few months of 1924 – incidentally the only diary pages known from the adult Langgaard – provide an interesting insight into his activities.³⁵ The diary has a number of notes related to the opera, as the following extracts show:

- 4 Jan. Lent the Count [Brockenhuus-Schack] my stage set, lecture and libretto
- 10 Jan. Again scruples about the manifestation of Exterminans without previous invocation.
- 11 Jan. Exterminans's first lines changed. To Count Schack with it. Sent a letter to Herold. Asked him to send back the invalid copy of the text.
- 22 Mar. Text in to G. Høeberg again.
- 27 Mar. Went to see Herold (met him): "It did not matter that my mystery was philosophical, all old mystery plays were to some extent philosophical" [...] Sent text to Severin Christensen.
- 7 Apr. Money sent to Lahn.
- 6 May Again revision of text.
- 7 May Studies for revision (library) Revision. Reflection
- 8 May Studies for revision (library) Revision. Reflection. Consider it good.

As can be seen, Langgaard did not hesitate to contact the managing director and the conductor Høeberg as well as "Herold". The famous tenor Vilhelm Herold was director of the opera department at the Royal Theatre when Langgaard submitted *Antikrist* in 1923, and remained so until 30 June 1924. Here he seems to support Langgaard; but apparently he had no influence and his name does not appear in the documents of the case.

The notes show that Langgaard believed he could change the negative attitude to the libretto by adjusting a few words or some of the dialogue. The libretto accordingly seems to have been subjected to ongoing revision. The relationship between the changes mentioned in the diary and what can be observed in the available sources is not clear, but a number of early textual corrections are visible in the score, and there are others in a carbon copy of the only complete text booklet for the original version which is now extant.³⁶

The stage set which Langgaard mentions on 4 January is the composer's own suggestion, representing "the interior of the Exterminans church", a large Gothic, church-like space with organ pipes below the ceiling. "The altar of light (devotion)" and "The angel of judgement" can be seen on the left, and "The altar of darkness (the will)" and "The angel of strife" on the right; in the middle is Antikrist's altar against the background of "the infinity from which he comes".³⁷ Only this one set was necessary, thought Langgaard.

The lecture mentioned in the same entry is "Fremtidens Frelser og Kunsten [The Future's Saviour and Art]", which Langgaard had given in November 1923 to the society Academicum Catholicum.³⁸ In his lecture manuscript Langgaard – speculatively and on the basis of Wagner's thoughts on religion and art – offers some very grand ideas about "the developmental possibilities of the art of the future". He sketches the framework for an ideal religious society of the future

35. The source is in RLP 3.

36. Source S.

37. From the caption in the magazine *Søndag*, 4 May 1924 (cf. note 25), where the drawing is shown. The original coloured drawing has been preserved (RLS 8a). 38. See "The Saviour of the Future and the Musical Society of Jesus", of which "The Future's Saviour and Art" makes up the first part (RLS 139a,1: typescript with RL's corrections, 32 pp.; p. 10 missing); the second part is about "The Musical Society of Jesus" (RLS 139a,2: typescript with RL's corrections, 47 pp.; incomplete).

musikdramaet, tillægges en funktion som åndeligt og etisk erkendelsesmiddel. Operaen *Antikrist* har naturligvis en plads i denne sammenhæng, men nævnes kun en passant. Langgaard påpeger dog, at fænomenet „Antikrist“ er det samme som „selvet“ og „jeget“, der er „indbegrebet af vore sensuelle, sensitive storhedsdrømme“, og at også „det onde“ skal findes i jeg'et. Det er en vigtig pointe, at musikken (og vel navnlig musikdramaet) er i stand til at give kunstnerisk udtryk for hele spektret mellem ondt og godt, og at vejen til erkendelse sker gennem kunsten.

I det religiøse verdenssamfund, Langgaards tanker kredser om, er en „fælles forståelse“ af fremtidens musik derfor af central betydning. I den sammenhæng udvikler han idéerne om „Jesu musikalske Selskab“, som er en art opdragende organisation, hvis grundlag er Langgaards musikalske fortolkning af jesuiterordenens stifter, Ignatius Loyolas åndelige øvelser, *Exercitia spiritualia*, skrevet i begyndelsen af 1520'erne.³⁹ Ignatius' hovedtese er, i Langgaards gengivelse, at

Alle Ting paa Jorden er skabt for Menneskets Skyld, for at understøtte Mennesket i at naa sit Maal [...] Deraf følger, at Mennesket kun skal bruge Tingene, for saa vidt de kan tjene ham i Kampen for at naa Maalet, – at han skal frigøre sig fra dem, saafremt de hindrer ham i at naa Maalet.⁴⁰

Den særlige musikforståelse, Langgaard forestiller sig, kalder han derfor „Alle Tings Musik“. Den rette forståelse af fremtidens musik opnås gennem musikalske koncentrationsøvelser omkring en „åndelig skala“, og i sine dokumenter bringer Langgaard to eksempler fra *Antikrist*, som skal illustrere brugen af en dermed forbundet „intervalskala“.⁴¹ Det er ikke klart, hvordan de begreber, Langgaard her lancerer, skal forstås, og desværre mangler de efterfølgende sider af manuskriptet, hvor teorien formodentlig var yderligere belyst ved eksempler.

Langgaard foreslår endog, hvilke love og regler, der skal gælde for Jesu musikalske Selskab, og han kommer ind på, at man kunne forestille sig et samarbejde mellem selskabet og den internationale, teosofisk orienterede orden *Stjernen i Øst* (*The Order of the Star in the East*), som han nærede sympati for og hvis åndelige leder var Jiddu Krishnamurti, samt det nystiftede georgistiske parti Danmarks Retsforbund. Blandt partiets stiftere var den Severin Christensen, som Langgaard nævner i kalenderen under den 7. marts. Han var en retsfilosofisk forfatter, hvis bøger udgjorde en del af Retsforbundets ideologiske grundlag, og han var en god bekendt af komponisten. Selvom Langgaard her viser interesse for nogle af de politiske og nyreligiøse bevægelser, som var oppe i tiden, synes det at have ligget ham fjernt at søge medlemskab i, endsnge gå aktivt ind i, sådanne organisationer.

Langgaards tanker om et nyt samfund er for så vidt en tidstypisk utopi i kølvandet på første verdenskrig, om end hans idéer er meget højtflývende og vidtgående. Der var fokus på åndelige værdier og livsanskuelsestemaer i kulturdebatten i Danmark i begyndelsen af

in which art, i.e. music or rather music drama, is assigned a function as a path to spiritual and ethical awareness. Of course the opera *Antichrist* has a place in this framework, but it is only mentioned in passing. Langgaard does point out, however, that the phenomenon „Antichrist“ is the same as „the self“ and „the ego“, which is „the epitome of our sensual, sensitive dreams of grandeur“, and that „evil“ too is to be found in the ego. It is an important point that music (and presumably music drama in particular) is able to give artistic expression to the whole spectrum between evil and good, and that the path to awareness goes through art.

In the religious world community around which Langgaard's ideas revolve, a „shared understanding“ of the music of the future is therefore of central significance. In this context he develops the ideas of „The Musical Society of Jesus“, which is a kind of educational organisation based on Langgaard's musical interpretation of the spiritual exercises (*Exercitia spiritualia*) of the founder of the Jesuit order, St Ignatius of Loyola, written at the beginning of the 1520s.³⁹ Ignatius's first thesis, in Langgaard's rendering, is that

All things on earth were created for the sake of mankind, to support mankind in achieving his goal [...]. Hence it follows that mankind must only use things insofar as they can serve him in the struggle to achieve the goal, – that he must liberate himself from them if they prevent him from achieving the goal.⁴⁰

The special understanding of music that Langgaard envisages is therefore called „The Music of All Things“. The proper understanding of the music of the future is reached through musical exercises concentrating on a „spiritual scale“,⁴¹ and in his documents Langgaard uses two examples from *Antichrist* to illustrate a related „interval scale“.⁴¹ It is not clear how the concepts Langgaard proposes here are to be understood, and unfortunately the next few pages of the manuscript, where the theory was presumably further propounded with examples, are now missing.

Langgaard even proposes the laws and rules that should apply to „The Musical Society of Jesus“, and ventures to suggest that one could imagine a collaboration between the Society and the international Theosophically oriented *Order of the Star in the East* (with which he had some sympathy, and whose spiritual leader was Jiddu Krishnamurti) as well as the newly founded Georgist party, Danmarks Retsforbund (The Danish Justice League). The founders of the party included the Severin Christensen mentioned by Langgaard in his diary on 7 March. He was a writer on legal philosophy whose books formed part of the Retsforbund's ideological basis, and he was a close acquaintance of the composer. Although Langgaard here shows an interest in some of the political and neo-religious movements current at the time, he seems to have been far from seeking membership, let alone actively participating, in such organisations.

Langgaard's thoughts about a new society are in fact a Utopia typical of the time following World War I, although his ideas are very high-flown and radical. There was a focus on spiritual values and the philosophy of life in cultural debate in Denmark at the beginning of

39. RL kendte bogen i tysk oversættelse, en dansk udgave forelå først 15 år senere (*St. Ignatius af Loyola's Exercitiebog. Med Indledning og forklarende Noter af Fr. Kuppferle*. Kbh., 1938).

40. *Fremtidens Frelser*, s. 27 (af Ignatius' *Principium et fundamentum fra Exercitia spiritualia*). Citeres også af RL i „Antikrist“ og „Aand“, et indlæg i *Dagens Nyheder* 13.10.1923 som led i en debat med relation til missionær Einar Prips bog *Antikrist* (Kbh., 1919).

41. RLS 139a,1, s. 34. Det første eksempel viser en melodi over denne intervalskala:

Antikrist
Op - gaa - min Tan - kes Mor - gen - sol som per -

I udgaven svarer eksemplet til 1. akt t. 630-634 – sangstemmen er dog siden hen ændret noget. Det andet eksempel svarer til 1. akt t. 432-446 („logisk sats over intervalskala“).

39. RL knew the book in German translation; a Danish version was not available until 15 years later (*St. Ignatius af Loyola's Exercitiebog. Med Indledning og forklarende Noter af Fr. Kuppferle*. Copenhagen 1938).

40. „The Future's Saviour“, p. 27 (from Ignatius's *Principium et fundamentum in the Exercitia spiritualia*). Also quoted by RL in „Antikrist“ and „Aand“ [„Antichrist“ and „Spirit“], an article in *Dagens Nyheder* 13 Oct. 1923 as a contribution to a debate on the missionary Einar Prip's book *Antikrist*. Copenhagen 1919.

41. RLS 139a,1, p. 34. The first example is a melody based on this interval scale:

Antikrist
Op - gaa - min Tan - kes Mor - gen - sol som per -

In the edition the example corresponds to Act 1 bb. 630-634 – however, the singing voice has later been changed somewhat. The second example corresponds to Act 1 bb. 432-446 („logical polyphony based on the interval scale“).

1920'erne. Langgaard distancerede sig dog senere fra det forfættede indhold i sit foredrag og de tilknyttede dokumenter og indrømmede, at det var langt ude: „Hvad Livet 'lærte' mig indtil 1923: Religiøs Vanvid som sidste Udvej“, skrev han således på titelbladet til foredraget.

Den 7. april 1924 noterer Langgaard i kalenderen, at han sender penge til en vis Lahn. Det drejer sig om den tyske trompetist og nodeskriver Karl Lahn, som var bosat i Karlsruhe, hvor Langgaard havde truffet ham, og som udførte flere kopieringsopgaver for komponisten, bl.a. partituret til *Antikrist*. Det forekommer sandsynligt, at Langgaard sendte pengene til Lahn, da kopien var færdig, men der kendes ingen korrespondance, som kan bidrage med oplysninger om samarbejdet mellem de to. Det var et smukt partitur, Lahn leverede, i stort format og skrevet med sepiafarvet blæk på pergamentagtigt, kraftigt papir. Men få år efter blev det genstand for Langgaards revision og omarbejdelse, hvorved teksten blev overskrevet, passager blev understreget, ændringer blev klæbet ind og der blev indskudt sider i andre formater.⁴²

En af de tidligste ændringer i dette partitur, som må være foretaget kort efter at det var blevet færdigt, vedrører overgangen mellem første og andet billede. Oprindeligt skete på dette sted en mystisk forvandling, hvor Apollyon inkarneres som Antikrist og derpå udtaler slagordet for sin mission: „Per Antichristum ad Christum“ – „Gennem Antikrist til Krist“. Men Langgaard ændrede dette, antagelig i midten af 1924, ved at indlægge en ny scene, en udvidelse af den drømmeagtige sangdialog mellem Hesperia og Apollyon i første billede. I denne nye scene finder Apollyons beslutning om at indtage Antikrists rolle sted på baggrund af en erkendelse, han når frem til med Hesperia som katalysator, og det nævnte slagord bliver sunget af Apollyon som scenens sidste replik.⁴³ Den indlagte scene er med i Langgaards klaverpartitur, som blev udarbejdet i andet halvår af 1924 og først blev færdigt i december, altså næsten to år efter fuldførelsen af værket.⁴⁴ Den sene tilkomst skyldes utvivlsomt, at partituret i længere tid havde været utilgængeligt for komponisten, eftersom det lå til kopiering i Karlsruhe.

Det fremgår også af kalenderens indførelser (men ikke af udvalget ovenfor), at Langgaard i begyndelsen af 1924 arbejdede intenst på musikken til Julius Magnussens skuespil *En Digtters Drøm*. Skuespillet var antaget til opførelse på Det Kongelige Teater og Langgaard var i december 1923 blevet engageret til opgaven, som omfattede en række orkesterforspil og balletindslag. Men han havde store vanskeligheder med denne musik, og han blev ikke færdig i tide med det resultat, at premieren måtte udskydes og først kunne gennemføres i januar 1925. Det var en alvorlig kunstnerisk krise, Langgaard her var løbet ind i, og musikken endte med at få et højromantisk, lettere sentimentalt pastichepræg. Dette værk indvarsler således et eklatant stilistisk vendepunkt i Langgaards musik.⁴⁵ Forestillingen blev i øvrigt ikke nogen succes, men komponisten dirigerede selv Det Kongelige Kapel ved mange af i alt 15 opførelser, der gik over scenen i 1925 og ved genoptagelsen i 1927.

Afgørelsen – en sag for pressen

Det varede længe, inden Langgaard fik det lovede svar fra Det Kongelige Teater. Af et avisinterview den 25. marts 1925, næsten to år efter at han havde præsenteret operaen på teatret, fremgår det, at han netop havde rykket for en afgørelse. „[Alle] rette Vedkommende på Teatret interesserer sig for mit Arbejde og er mig venligt sindede [...] – men på Grund af Emnets Karakter bliver Opførelsen stadig udsat“ udtaler han.⁴⁶ To måneder senere, den 12. maj 1925, fik han svar. Det kom fra den nye chef for Det Kongelige Teater, William Norrie:

the 1920s. Langgaard did however distance himself later from the more fanciful elements in his lecture and the related documents, and admitted that they were far-fetched: “What life ‘taught’ me until 1923: religious mania as the last resort,” he wrote on the title page of the lecture.

On 7 April 1924 Langgaard notes in his diary that he is sending money to someone called Lahn. This is the German trumpeter and music copyist Karl Lahn, who lived in Karlsruhe, where Langgaard had met him, and who executed several fair copies for the composer, including the score of *Antichrist*. It seems likely that Langgaard sent the money to Lahn when the copying was finished, but we know of no correspondence that can provide any information on the collaboration between the two. It was a fine score that Lahn delivered, in large format and written in sepia ink on strong parchment-like paper. But a few years later it was subjected to Langgaard's revisions and alterations, during which the text was written over, passages were crossed out, changes were pasted in and pages in other formats were inserted.⁴²

One of the earliest changes in this score, which must have been made shortly after it was finished, concerns the transition between the first and second scenes. Originally there was a mystical transformation at this point, where Apollyon was incarnated as Antichrist and then spoke the motto of his mission: “Per Antichristum ad Christum” – “Through Antichrist to Christ”. But Langgaard changed this, probably in the middle of 1924, by inserting a new scene, an expansion of the dreamlike sung dialogue between Hesperia and Apollyon in Scene 1. In this new scene Apollyon's decision to assume the role of Antichrist is made against the background of an insight at which he arrives with Hesperia as catalyst, and the motto is sung by Apollyon as the last line of the scene.⁴³ The interpolated scene is included in Langgaard's piano score, which was drawn up in the second half of 1924 and only finished in December – that is, almost two years after the completion of the work.⁴⁴ The delay was undoubtedly due to the fact that the full score had been unavailable to the composer for a long period, since it was being copied in Karlsruhe.

It is also evident from the diary entries (not, however, from the selection given above) that Langgaard was working intensely at the beginning of 1924 on music for Julius Magnussen's play *A Poet's Dream*. The play had been accepted for performance at the Royal Theatre, and Langgaard had been commissioned in December 1923 to write the incidental music, which involved a number of orchestral preludes and ballet interludes. But he had great difficulties with this music and did not finish in time, with the result that the premiere had to be postponed until January 1925. Langgaard had run into a serious artistic crisis, and the music ended up as a High Romantic, slightly sentimental pastiche. This work thus heralds a striking stylistic turning-point in Langgaard's music.⁴⁵ The production was incidentally not a success. The composer himself conducted the Royal Opera Orchestra in many of the total of 15 performances given in 1925 and during the revival of 1927.

The decision – a matter for the press

It was a long time before Langgaard received the promised answer from the Royal Theatre. It is evident from a newspaper interview on 25 March 1925, almost two years after he had presented the opera at the theatre, that he had recently pressed them for a decision. “[All] the appropriate persons at the theatre are interested in my work and well disposed towards me [...] – but because of the nature of the subject production is constantly deferred,” he states.⁴⁶ Two months later, on 12 May 1925, he received a reply. It came from the new managing director of the Royal Theatre, William Norrie:

42. Kilde A samt Q1-Q3 (jfr. beskrivelsen s. 44 og 62 f.); se illustrationerne s. 83 ff.

43. Kilde M2 (jfr. beskrivelsen s. 60).

44. Kilde E (jfr. beskrivelsen s. 52 ff.); se illustrationerne s. 88 f.

45. BVN 181.

46. *En Opera, der venter* – i: *Nationaltidende* 25.3.1925 (aftenudgave).

42. Sources A and Q1-Q3 (cf. description pp. 44 and 62 f.); see illustrations p. 83 ff.

43. Source M2 (cf. description p. 60).

44. Source E (cf. description p. 52 ff.); see illustrations p. 88 f.

45. BVN 181.

46. “En Opera, der venter [An Opera in Waiting]” in *Nationaltidende* 25 March 1925 (evening edition).

[...] Deres Tekst til Operaen [anses] nu som tidligere ikke for brugbar, hvorefter jeg ikke ser mig i Stand til at antage Deres Værk til Opførelse.⁴⁷

Det var et stort kunstnerisk nederlag for komponisten, og han havde god grund til at føle sig ilde behandlet. To af landets største kapaciteter på området, kapelmester Høeberg og sceneinstruktør Johannes Poulsen, havde jo støttet ham i sagen. Sidstnævnte havde aflagt privat besøg hos Langgaard og havde i den forbindelse udtalt: „Teksten er aktuel – ikke just en maler, som er forelsket i en sy pige – og kan iscenesættes og med stor virkning.“ Denne hændelse refereres af Langgaard i et indlæg i *Nationaltidende* den 29. april 1926 under overskriften *Hvad afgør nye danske Operaers Antagelse ved Det kgl. Teater?*⁴⁸ Langgaard oplyser, at teksten også har været forelagt teatrets nye censor Hans Brix, der i sin vurdering har påpeget at librettoen „mangler menneskeligt indhold“. Om operaen alligevel kan fremføres, må teatrets musikautoriteter afgøre, udtaler Brix ifølge Langgaard. På den baggrund stiller komponisten spørgsmålet: „Naar Scenesætter og Musikcensur har sagt god for mit Værk, hvorfor da denne Afvisning? [...] Hvad Værdi har Censur, og hvad er ‘Musikautoritet?’“.

Avisen følger spørgsmålet op ved at henvende sig til teatercensoren med spørgsmålet om, hvorvidt en libretto alene kan medføre, at en opera afvises. Hans Brix svarer:

[...] Bedømmelsen af Librettoen vil altid, for saavidt, være et underordnet Moment i Forhold til Bedømmelsen af Musikken, der er den overvejende Faktor. Baade min Forgænger, Professor Borchsenius, og jeg har udtalt os imod Hr. Langgaards Tekst [...] Hvis imidlertid Teatret paa Trods deraf for Musikens Værdiers Skyld alligevel bestemte ønskede at opføre Operaen vilde Sagen dermed være afgjort. [...] Afgørelsen hviler formentlig paa en omhyggelig Afvejning af de samlede Egenskaber. Og det kan vel tænkes, at en Opera, selv om Musikken i og for sig viser det fornødne Talent, alligevel ikke kan egne sig til Fremførelse.⁴⁹

Dagspressen finder sagen interessant og *Berlingske Tidende* henvender sig til teaterdirektør Norrie. Han svarer, at sagen er fra før hans tid, men at man over for ham har taget udtrykkeligt forbehold:

Man kan jo én Gang ikke saa godt bruge en Operatekst, der bestaar ene og alene af Tankestreger... Fra alle Sider har der været Enighed om, at Teksten var *fuldstændig taabelig* – og denne Opfattelse har der ikke været nogen Grund til at ændre.⁵⁰

Dagen efter imødegår Langgaard denne „hensynsløse og misvisende“ påstand i avisen, og oplyser, at

[...] Sagkyndige har udtalt, at Teksten paa sine Steder var af virkelig poetisk Værdi og Skønhed, og saafremt Operaen opføres som Mysteriespil (scenisk Oratorium), var der efter deres Mening intet til Hinder for, at den underlagte Tekst benyttes [...] ⁵¹

Et forsøg på en forklaring på den paradoksale behandling af Langgaard bringer *Kristeligt Dagblad* den 4. maj 1926. Under overskriften *Smaa Mænd* konkluderer avisen, at man ikke kan lægge ansvaret for operaens forkastelse på teaterledelsen eller censorerne, der enten har bedomt værket positivt eller har fralagt sig ansvaret, men at man må rette blikket mod den socialdemokratiske undervisningsminister Nina Bang, hvem Det Kongelige Teater var underlagt:

47. KTs arkiv, Rigsarkivet, brev nr. 160/1925.

48. *Nationaltidende* 29.4.1926 (aftenudgave).

49. Ligeledes *Nationaltidende* 29.4.1926 (aftenudgave).

50. *Berlingske Tidende* 4.5.1926 (aftenudgave).

51. *Berlingske Tidende* 5.5.1926 (aftenudgave).

[...] Now as before, your text for the opera [is considered] not usable, in light of which I cannot see my way to accepting your work for performance.⁴⁷

It was a great artistic defeat for the composer, and he had good reason to feel poorly treated. After all, two of the country's biggest names in the field, the conductor Høeberg and the director Johannes Poulsen, had supported him in the matter. The latter had paid a private visit to Langgaard and had remarked: "The text is topical – not exactly a painter who has fallen in love with a seamstress – and can be staged with great effect". Langgaard gives an account of this in an article in *Nationaltidende* on 29 April 1926 under the heading: "What decides the Acceptance of new Danish Operas at the Royal Theatre?"⁴⁸ He states that the libretto has also been submitted to the theatre's new literary adjudicator Hans Brix, who has pointed out in an assessment that the libretto "lacks human content". According to Langgaard, Brix finds that it is up to the theatre's musical authorities to decide whether the opera can be performed nonetheless. This is the backdrop for the question put by the composer: "When the director and the music adjudicators have vouched for my work, why then this rejection? [...] What value does adjudication have, and what is 'musical authority'?"

The newspaper follows the question up by asking the literary adjudicator whether a libretto alone can lead to the rejection of an opera. Hans Brix replies:

[...] The evaluation of an opera libretto will always in a sense be subordinate to the assessment of the music, which is the principal factor. Both my predecessor, Professor Borchsenius, and I have expressed ourselves negatively about Mr Langgaard's text [...]. However, if the theatre nevertheless definitely wanted to perform the opera for the sake of its musical merits, the matter would therewith be decided [...]. The decision presumably rests on a careful weighing-up of all the qualities [of the work]. And it is surely conceivable that an opera, even if the music in itself exhibits the necessary talent, can still be unsuitable for performance.⁴⁹

The newspapers considered the case interesting, and *Berlingske Tidende* approached managing director Norrie. He replied that the matter was from before his time, but that definite reservations had been expressed to him:

After all, one can hardly use an opera text that consists solely of dashes... All parties have been in agreement that the text was *completely foolish* – and there has been no reason to change this view.⁵⁰

The next day Langgaard countered this "inconsiderate and misleading" claim in the newspaper, stating that

[...] experts have said that the text in places was of genuinely poetic value and beauty, and if the opera is performed as a mystery play (scenic oratorio) there would in their view be nothing to prevent the underlaid text being used [...].⁵¹

An attempt to explain the paradoxical treatment of Langgaard appeared in *Kristeligt Dagblad* [The Christian Daily] on 4 May 1926. Under the heading *Little Men* the newspaper concludes that one cannot blame the rejection of the opera on the theatre management or the adjudicators, who have either assessed the work positively or disclaimed responsibility, but that one must look to the Social Democratic Minister of Education, Nina Bang, who wielded political authority over the Royal Theatre:

47. Royal Theatre archive, Danish State Archives, Letter no. 160/1925.

48. *Nationaltidende* 29 Apr. 1926 (evening edition).

49. Likewise *Nationaltidende* 29 Apr. 1926 (evening edition).

50. *Berlingske Tidende* 4 May 1926 (evening edition).

51. *Berlingske Tidende* 5 May 1926 (evening edition).

[...] det [kan] med Grund antages, at Fru Nina Bang har noget imod dem [dvs. religiøse Opførelser]. Hun er netop et saa enestaaende fanatisk og egenraadigt Stykke Socialistprogram i Skørter, at det ligefrem er umuligt at tænke sig andet end, at det er hende, der sidder paa Kuskesædet og kører de smaa Mænd i stramme Tøjler. „Religionen er en Privatsag“, siger Programmet og følgelig maa „Antikrist“ [ikke] opføres [...].⁵²

Kristeligt Dagblad kan have haft sine grunde til at skyde løs på Nina Bang, men man bør vel tro, at teatrets repertoirevalg beroede på kunstneriske beslutninger og ikke var underlagt en kulturpolitisk parole. Men værkets religiøse dimension har givetvis været en anstødssten, og specielt har måske den katolske tendens virket fremmedartet. Under alle omstændigheder slutter første kapitel af *Antikrists* historie her.

INTERMEZZO

Forspillet til operaen fik sin anden opførelse den 8. marts 1926 ved en koncert, Langgaard selv havde arrangeret med egne værker under overskriften „Populær-Koncert“. Dagen før udtalte han i et interview følgende om forspillet:

Engang paa Marcuspladsen i Venedig forekom det mig, at jeg lige-som „saa“ disse Toner en gylden Eftermiddag, da Havet var blaat og stille og forventningsfuldt.

– og han fortsatte:

Forspillet skildrer det samme, som er Handlingen i Operaen. Jeg vil i denne vise, hvorledes Antikrist – om jeg saa maa sige – vokser op i „Guds Have“ som en skøn, men fremmed og giftig Vækst. Mysteryoperaen har en slags Forbillede i *Helligtrekongersspillet*. Antikrist er den inkarnerede *Lucifer*. Hans Rige begynder dér, hvor en Ting ikke kan bevises, og Musikken naar derned. Hvad er vel al Verdens Mangfoldighed og Lærdom mod et Indblik i *det Rige*?⁵³

Anmelderskaren var enig om, at forspillet var et smukt og velformet stykke musik, og i Richard Hoves recension fik Langgaard en af sin karrieres mest rosende omtaler:

Men op af disse rindende Vande ragede pludselig en Klippe og pegede mystisk mod Himmelen. Det var Forspillet til „Antikrist“. Her tangerede virkelig Komponisten det, han vil, og hvorom han skriver besynderlige Programmer. Disse Toner talte virkelig om et Mysterium, om to Verdener eller to Begreber, Lysets og Mørkets Riger; rent musikalsk var der her fundet nogle fortrinlige Idéer, saaledes i Skildringen af Mørkets Magt, hvor Instrumentationen giver et mærkeligt Dobbeltlys samtidig med en ligefrem spændende rytmisk Kontrast, og i et Afsnit om Haabets Løftelse voksende der en polyfon Sats frem, der i baade Tema og Gennemførelse havde en ejendommelig Renhed og Trosstyrke.

Den Mand, der skriver saadant et Stykke, er trods alle sine Mærkeligheder dog en Musiker ovenover Mængden.⁵⁴

Det skal understreges, at dette oprindelige, endnu upublicerede forspil er en ganske anden og betydelig mere sammensat komposition, end forspillet til operaens endelige version.⁵⁵

Operaens libretto var en fortsat plage for komponisten, og 1926-27 forsøgte han på to måder at 'komme videre i teksten'. I juli 1926 forfattede han en libretto til en ny opera, hvis oprindelige titel formo-

52. *Kristeligt Dagblad* 4.5.1926.

53. *Berlingske Tidende* 7.3.1926.

54. *Dagens Nyheder* 9.3.1926.

55. En revideret version fra 1939 af det oprindelige forspil findes som præludium i korværket *Endens Tid* (BVN 243).

[...] there is reason to assume that Mrs. Nina Bang has something against them [i.e. performances of religious works]. She is indeed such a uniquely fanatical and pig-headed Socialist Manifesto in skirts that it is simply impossible to think of any other explanation than that it is she who sits in the driver's seat and holds the little men on a tight rein. "Religion is a private matter," says the Manifesto, and therefore "Antichrist" must not be performed [...].⁵²

Kristeligt Dagblad may have had its own agenda when bringing its guns to bear on Nina Bang, but one would of course prefer to believe that the theatre's choice of repertoire rested on artistic criteria rather than on a cultural policy slogan. Yet the religious dimension of the work was assuredly a stumbling-block, and its Catholic tendency in particular may have seemed alien. At all events the first chapter of the story of *Antichrist* ends here.

INTERMEZZO

The opera's prelude was performed for the second time on 8 March 1926 in a concert of his own works arranged by Langgaard under the heading "Popular Concert". The day before, he said the following about the prelude in an interview:

Once on St. Mark's Square in Venice it seemed to me that I "saw" these notes on a golden afternoon when the sea was blue and calm and expectant.

– to which he added:

The prelude depicts the same as the plot of the opera. In it I wanted to show how Antichrist grows up, so to speak, in "the Garden of God" as a beautiful, but alien and poisonous, plant. The mystery opera has a kind of model in *The Play of the Three Kings*. Antichrist is *Lucifer* incarnate. His kingdom begins where a thing is not amenable to proof, and music penetrates down there. What is all the multiplicity and learning of the world against a glimpse of *that* kingdom?⁵³

The press agreed that the prelude was a beautiful, well-wrought piece of music, and in Richard Hove's review Langgaard enjoyed one of the most laudatory mentions of his career:

But out of these flowing waters there suddenly towered a rock pointing mystically towards Heaven. It was the prelude to *Antichrist*. Here the composer really touched upon what he aims for, and about which he writes strange programmatic statements. This music truly speaks of a mystery, of two worlds or two concepts, the kingdoms of light and darkness. In purely musical terms one found here some eminent ideas, for example in the depiction of the power of darkness, where the instrumentation produces a strange double light at the same time as a truly exciting rhythmic contrast; and in a passage about the raising of hope a polyphonic structure arose which, in theme and development, had a distinctive purity and strength of faith.

The man who writes such a piece is, for all his peculiarities, a musician above the multitude.⁵⁴

It must be emphasised that this original (still unpublished) prelude is a quite different and considerably more complex composition than the prelude to the final version of the opera.⁵⁵

The libretto continued to plague the composer, and in 1926-27 he attempted in two ways to make progress with the text. In July 1926 he wrote a libretto for a new opera whose original title was presumably

52. *Kristeligt Dagblad* 4 May 1926.

53. *Berlingske Tidende* 7 Mar. 1926.

54. *Dagens Nyheder* 9 Mar. 1926.

55. A revised version from 1939 of the original prelude to the opera is extant as the prelude to the choral work *The Time of the End* (BVN 243).

dentlig også var *Antikrist*.⁵⁶ Handlingsgangen, rollelisten og dele af teksten minder om *Antikrist*, men hovedpersonen, som betegnes „En Menneskesøn“, er mere tvetydig og slutningen uafklaret. Det første billede blev faktisk komponeret som en ren sangdialog uden orkester, og Langgaard gjorde notater om, at noget af musikken skulle hentes fra hans symfoni nr. 7, men længere kom han ikke. Mange år efter, i 1939, reviderede han denne libretto under titlen *Marmor, Kirkeopera*, men musik kom der ikke ud af det. På teksthæftet har han med dateringen 29. maj 1940 noteret: „Kan ikke komponeres!“.

I 1927 forsøgte Langgaard sig så med en revision af *Antikrist*. Revisionen blev afsluttet den 3. oktober og omfattede en drastisk forkortelse af operaens forspil og en ændring af slutningen, således at værket nu blev afsluttet med en sats for kor og orkester, baseret på forspillets polyfone afsnit, i stedet for den tidligere, rent instrumentale slutning. Det nye forspil og korslutningen kendes fra værket endelige version, men korets tekst bestod oprindeligt kun af det ene ord „Salem“. Et teksthæfte med denne redaktion af librettoen er ikke overleveret, men musikskilderne viser, at Langgaards hensigt var at tydeliggøre dommedagsvisionen i slutningen af fjerde og i femte billede. Mens *Antikrist* idelig gentager „Det er MIG“, kommer koret skiftevis med udbrud som „ve os, ve os“, „aah“ og ikke mindst „ha, ha, ha“ (det hele går nærmest op i latter). Et sted synges om „penge, penge“, og der var tilføjet en korstemme til teksten „Svømme, danse, flyve, bile, regne, favne, slide, nyde ...“.⁵⁷ Det virker unægtelig som om, Langgaard hermed var kommet så langt ud i det absurde, at der ikke rigtig var nogen vej videre frem for operaen i dens oprindelige udformning.

Det nye forspil blev opført 10. november 1927 af Københavns filharmoniske Orkester, dirigeret af komponisten. Koncerten var den første, der blev afholdt i en forening, Langgaard havde oprettet „som modvægt mod den moderne musiks rædsler“, og som han gav navnet „De kedeliges Musikforening“. Da koncertdagen oprandt, havde foreningen dog skiftet navn til det mere kedsommelige „Klassisk Musikforening“. Operaforspillet var til lejligheden blevet forsynet med en koncertslutning, som ikke er identisk med den nu kendte slutning (fra 1929).⁵⁸ Forspillet var sidste programpunkt efter Schumanns symfoni nr. 3 og de tre instrumentale sater af Beethovens niende, og mottoet blev i programmet gengivet således: *Motiv: I Guds Villie – [Motiv] II løfter vort Haab mod – [Motiv] III Herlighedsriget*.

OPERAENS OMARBEJDEDE VERSION

Omarbejdelsesprocessen

Den omfattende bearbejdelse af værket, Langgaard gennemførte 1928-30, resulterede reelt i et helt nyt operakoncept med allusion til middelalderlige mysteriespil og moraliteter, hvor scenen befolkes af allegoriske figurer og bibelske skikkelser. Den store Skøge er således den eneste rolle, der går igen fra operaens oprindelige version. Den grundlæggende idé om Antikrists tilsynkomst i verden og hans endeligt er den samme som før, men den fremadskridende handling mellem disse to holdepunkter er ganske elimineret, og en gennemgående hovedperson findes ikke. *Antikrist* viser sig ikke på scenen. Transformationen fra gammel til ny version indebar, at operaens fokus blev flyttet fra et psykologisk drama om mennesket *Antikrist* til et alment opgør med den moderne civilisations rådvildhed, tomme slagord, selvished og magtsyge.

Tilpasningen af musikken til den nye libretto medførte, at operaen blev stærkt forkortet, men samtidig kom væsentlige nye afsnit til, nemlig forspillet til første og sjette billede, næsten hele tredje billede

also *Antichrist*.⁵⁶ While the plot, the cast of characters and parts of the text are reminiscent of *Antichrist*, the main protagonist, named „A son of man“, is more ambivalent and the ending is unresolved. The first scene was in fact set to music as a pure sung dialogue without orchestra, and Langgaard made notes saying that some of the material was to be taken from his Symphony no. 7; but he proceeded no further with the project. Many years later, in 1939, he revised this libretto under the title *Marble, Church Opera*, but no music came out of it. On the libretto he noted: „Cannot be composed!“ (dated 29 May 1940).

Then, in 1927, Langgaard attempted a revision of *Antichrist* as such. The revision was concluded on 3 October and comprised a drastic abridgement of the prelude to the opera and a change in the ending, such that the work now concluded with a piece for choir and orchestra, based on the polyphonic passage of the prelude instead of on the earlier, purely instrumental ending. The new prelude and choral ending are known from the final version of the work, but the text of the chorus originally consisted only of one word, „Salem“. No text booklet with this version of the libretto has survived, but the musical sources show that Langgaard's intention was to clarify the Vision of Judgement at the end of the fourth and in the fifth scene. While *Antichrist* constantly repeats „It is I“, the chorus alternately sings exclamations like „woe to us, woe to us“, „aah“ and not least „ha, ha, ha“ (everything more or less dissolves in laughter). At one point they sing about „money, money“, and a choral part was added to the text „Swim, dance, fly, drive, count, embrace, toil, enjoy“.⁵⁷ It seems undeniable that Langgaard had now ventured so far into the absurd that there was no real path forward for the opera in its original form.

The new prelude was performed on 10 November 1927 by the Copenhagen Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by the composer. The concert was the first to be held in a society that Langgaard had established „to counteract the horrors of modern music“, and to which he gave the name „The Musical Society for Boring People“. When the day of the concert arrived, however, the society had changed its name to the less inspired „Classical Music Society“. For the occasion the opera prelude had been furnished with a concert ending, which is not identical to the ending now known (from 1929).⁵⁸ The prelude was the last item on the programme after Schumann's Symphony no. 3 and the three instrumental movements of Beethoven's Ninth, and in the programme the motto was stated as follows: *Motif: I The Will of God – [Motif] II lifts up our Hope towards – [Motif] III the Kingdom of Glory*.

THE ALTERED VERSION OF THE OPERA

The alteration process

The extensive adaptation of the work that Langgaard carried out in 1928-30 resulted in reality in a quite new opera concept with allusions to medieval mystery and morality plays, where the stage is populated by allegorical and Biblical figures. The Great Whore is for example the only role that recurs from the original version of the opera. The fundamental idea of the appearance of Antichrist in the world and his end is the same as before, but the progress of the action between these two points of reference has been wholly eliminated, and there is no consistent main character. Antichrist does not appear on stage. The transformation from the old to the new version meant that the focus of the opera was shifted from a psychological drama about the man Antichrist to a wholesale showdown with the desperation, slogans, selfishness and hunger for power of modern civilisation.

The adaptation of the music to the new libretto meant that the opera was greatly abridged, but at the same time important new sections were added: the preludes to the first and sixth scenes, almost the

56. BVN 195; kilde XD1-XD2 (jfr. beskrivelserne s. 70).

57. Teksten ses i kilde Q2 og E.

58. Et partitur svarende til denne koncertversion fra 1927 kendes ikke, men orkestermateriale foreligger som kilde R2 (jfr. beskrivelsen s. 64).

56. BVN 195; source XD1-XD2 (cf. descriptions p. 70).

57. The text can be seen in sources Q2 and E.

58. No score corresponding to this concert version from 1927 is known, but the orchestral material exists as source R2 (cf. description p. 64).

samt sjette billedes begyndelse. Desuden blev der tilføjet en prolog, dannet af begyndelsen af den oprindelige versions andet billede. En del af de oprindelige, tætte forbindelser mellem tekst, musik og de ledsagende karakterbetegnelser gik tabt ved omarbejdelsen, mens andre og nye pointer opstod. Den omarbejdede version bibeholdt de ofte ret særprægede italienske karakterbetegnelser, hvoraf flere er arkaiske eller direkte kryptiske. Ordet *baccato*, der betyder „bakkantisk“, kendes eksempelvis ikke i moderne italiensk, men kan findes i italiensk middelalderlitteratur.⁵⁹

Kilderne røber, at omarbejdelingsprocessen ingenlunde foregik efter en snor. Det er dog ikke sådan at komme til klarhed over kronologien og alle detaljer i forløbet. Det skyldes dels lakuner i det tekstlige kildemateriale, dels at de musikalske kilder er revideret i så mange omgange, at sammenhængende revisionsfaser er vanskelige at definere og afgrænse. Det gælder navnlig for klaverpartituret til operaen, som var komponistens primære arbejdsredskab i første del af omarbejdelingsperioden.⁶⁰ Den sidste del af omarbejdelsen, som blev gennemført i partituret (Lahns afskrift fra 1924), står klarere.⁶¹ Flere af de dunkle punkter i forløbet er knyttet til Langgaards arbejde med teksten, som kun dårligt kan følges, eftersom stort set alle tekstudkast og teksthæfter fra tiden før, den 'gyldige' libretto forelå, er forsvundet. Langgaards dateringer er få og i flere tilfælde vildledende, men samlet set viser kilderne, at man kan tale om to hovedfaser i henholdsvis 1928 og 1929. Hertil kom nogle mindre justeringer af tekst og sangstemmer, der blev foretaget i forlængelse heraf, og som markerer afslutningen på omarbejdelingsperioden (1930).

Ny libretto – samme musik

Det står klart, at en ny libretto forelå i 1928, men en mere præcis datering og detaljer om tekstens tilblivelse mangler. Ordlyden kan til dels aflæses af musikkilderne, men et separat teksthæfte findes ikke – bortset fra to maskinskrevne blade, som synes bevaret udelukkende af den grund, at deres blanke bagside på et tidspunkt har tjent som kladdepapir.⁶² De to fragmenter stammer fra to forskellige afskrifter, som øjensynlig indeholdt hver sin redaktion af den tidlige libretto. Der foreligger også en oversigt over værket, som viser, hvordan operaen var disponeret i omarbejdelsens første år.⁶³ Titlen var *Antikrist, Et religiøst Feber-Spil, Opera i Prolog og seks Billeder*. I en introducere tekst hedder det, at Antikrist er et menneske, som i sin person rummer „den sidste Menneskeheds Væsen“, ja Antikrist er ligefrem indbegrebet af „vor Tids Væsen“. De seks billeder præsenterer hver især en egenskab, en side af hans personlighed, og betegnes *Gaade-Stemningen, Storhedsvanviddet, Mismodet, „Dyret“, Løgnen og Alles Strid mod Alle*. Den oprindelige hovedrolle var delt op, således at Antikrist nu fremtrådte i 'forklædning' som en række figurer svarende til de seks billeders titler. I sidste billede optrådte han under navnet Antikrist, men denne rolle blev snart døbt om til Skinhellighed. Alle Antikrist-rollerne skulle udføres af én og samme sanger. Guds Stemme, der tillader Antikrists virke og til slut gør det af med ham, var ny.

Den eneste nye musik var forspillet til første billede, og det var endda ikke med fra starten, men hører dog hjemme i omarbejdelsens første fase (hvorimod gentagelsen i værkets slutning først kom til senere hen). Endvidere var „Larmens Kirke-Øde“-motivet skudt ind i prologen og alle de seks daværende billeder. Udtrykket er en metafor for det støjende, sekulariserede samfund. Motivet går tilbage til værkets første version, hvor det optræder en enkelt gang i instrumental udformning, men nu fik det altså en helt anden vægt som et gennemgående ledemotiv. Fra revisionen 1927 havde Langgaard bibeholdt det omarbejdede forspil i en let retoucheret form sammen med koralutningen, hvis tekst nu var ændret til Theodor Oldenburgs salme-

59. RLs ordbogskilder er ikke identificeret.

60. Kilde E.

61. Kilde A.

62. Kilde H1 og H2 (jfr. beskrivelserne s. 56).

63. Kilde G6b. Kilden synes at være første blad af et i øvrigt forsvundet teksthæfte (jfr. beskrivelsen s. 56).

whole third scene and the beginning of the sixth scene. A prologue too was added, formed from the beginning of the second scene of the original version. Some of the original close connections between text, music and the accompanying Italian terminology were lost in the reworking, while new connections arose. The altered version retained the often rather odd Italian expression marks, several of which are archaic or even cryptic. The word *baccato*, for example, which means “bacchantic”, is not known in modern Italian but can be found in medieval Italian literature.⁵⁹

The sources reveal that the alteration process was by no means straightforward. However, it is not easy to get a clear idea of the chronology and all the details of the process. This is due partly to lacunae in the textual source material, partly to the fact that the musical sources were revised so many times that continuous phases of the revision are difficult to define and demarcate. This is especially true of the piano score of the opera, which was the composer's primary working tool in the first part of the alteration period.⁶⁰ The last part of the alteration, which was done in the score (i.e. in Lahn's copy from 1924), is clearer.⁶¹ Several of the obscure points in the process are related to Langgaard's work with the text, which cannot easily be followed, since more or less all text drafts and booklets from the time before the “valid” libretto emerged have disappeared. Langgaard's datings are few and in several cases misleading, but on the whole the sources show that one can speak of two main phases, in the years 1928 and 1929 respectively. To these we can add minor adjustments of the text and vocal lines, made in the wake of the two phases and marking the conclusion of the alteration period (1930).

New libretto – same music

It is clear that there was a new libretto by 1928, but we lack a more precise date and details of the genesis of the text. The wording can be partly read from the musical sources, but no separate libretto text exists – apart from two typewritten sheets that appear to have been preserved for the simple reason that their blank versos served at some point as draft paper.⁶¹ The two fragments come from two different manuscript copies, each of which apparently contained its own variant of the early libretto. There is also a survey of the work that shows how the opera was arranged in the early years of the alteration process.⁶³ The title was *Antichrist, a Religious Fever-Play, Opera in a Prologue and Six Scenes*. An introductory text says that Antichrist is a human being who personifies “the final nature of mankind”, indeed Antichrist is the very epitome of “the nature of our time”. Each of the six scenes presents some characteristic – an aspect of Antichrist's personality – and they are called *Mystery Mood, Vainglory, Hopelessness, “The Beast”, The Lie and Every Man's Strife With Every Man*. The original principal role was split up in such a way that Antichrist now appeared “in disguise” as a number of figures corresponding to the titles of the six scenes. In the last scene he appeared with the name Antichrist, but this role was soon renamed Hypocrisy. All the Antichrist roles were to be performed by one and the same singer. The Voice of God, which tolerates the activities of Antichrist and in the end destroys him, was new.

The only new music was the prelude to Scene 1, and this was not even present from the start but belongs to the first phase of alteration (while its repetition at the end of the work only came later). Furthermore, the motif of “the Church's clamorous wasteland” was interpolated in the prologue and all of the then existing six scenes. The phrase is a metaphor for our noisy, secularised society. The motif goes back to the first version of the work, where it appears just once in instrumental form; now however it was given a quite different emphasis as a recurrent leitmotif. From the revision of 1927 Langgaard had kept the altered prelude in a slightly retouched form along with the choral ending, whose text had now been changed to Theodor Old-

59. RL's dictionary sources have not been identified.

60. Source E.

61. Source A.

62. Sources H1 and H2 (cf. descriptions p. 56).

63. Source G6b. The source seems to be the first sheet of a text booklet that has otherwise disappeared (cf. description p. 56).

strofe „Kun naar Guds Effata i Sind“.⁶⁴ Omarbejdelsen blev (foreløbigt) afsluttet med, at Constance Langgaard føjede den nye sangtekst ind i Lahns partiturskrift, som komponisten havde omredigeret.

Arbejdet med et nyt klaverpartitur blev påbegyndt.⁶⁵ Constance udførte renskrivningsarbejdet efter anvisning fra sin mand og med det gennemrettede, oprindelige klaverklaverpartitur som forlæg. Da hun i begyndelsen af 1929 var nået et godt stykke ind i fjerde billede, afbrød hun arbejdet. Grunden var, at Langgaard havde fået nye idéer, og dermed begynder omarbejdelsens anden fase. Første skridt var sandsynligvis, at han i januar-februar 1929 forfattede en ny tekst til tredje billede og komponerede en 73 takter lang udvidelse af dette billede, som i sin tidlige form var bemærkelsesværdigt kort.⁶⁶ Derpå fulgte en gennemgribende revision af operaens øvrige tekst. Kun prolog og første billede gik nogenlunde fri. Omfanget af revisionen fremgår tydeligt af partituret, hvori Langgaard har indføjet de nye ord og samtidig annulleret det meste af den tekst, hans hustru havde skrevet ind året før. Ud over den nævnte udvidelse af tredje billede blev operaens slutning forøget med et soloparti med teksten „Død er Gud ...“, hvilket gav Langgaard anledning til at etablere et nyt sjette billede, der som forspil fik en gentagelse af forspillet til første billede (dog en styrkegrad kraftigere og med en ændret slutning).

Som følge af disse ændringer fik operaen nu sin karakteristiske, symmetriske form med en ramme, som i værkets begyndelse består af forspil, prolog og forspil til første billede og i slutningen af forspil til sjette billede samt sjette billede. Det nye sjette billede blev betitlet *Undergang og Lysets Sejer*, og femte billede blev udvidet med begyndelsen af det gamle sjette billede, men bibeholdt titlen *Alles Strid mod alle*. Samtidig skiftede første billede titel til *Vildfarelsens Lys* og fjerde billede til *Dyret i Mennesket*. Der var nu tale om individuelle solopartier i hvert enkelt af operaens billeder (dog skulle andet og tredje billede vistnok udføres af samme sanger). Og det var Antikrist selv, der – først under eget navn, men snart efter under dæknævnet Dyret fra Afgrunden – fremførte den nye monolog i sjette billedes begyndelse. I løbet af 1930'erne blev denne rolle omdøbt til det neutrale En Stemme, og titlerne på billederne (med undtagelse af femte billede) blev ændret til de nugældende: *Vildsomhedens Lys*, *Hoffærdigheden*, *Haabløsheden*, *Begerligheden*, *Alles Strid mod alle* og *Fortabelsen*.

Revisionsarbejdet blev formodentlig fuldført i maj eller juni 1929, hvorefter Constance kunne genoptage arbejdet med klaverpartituret. Den nykomponerede del af tredje billede blev skudt ind, og størstedelen af den eksisterende tekst på de 113 sider, der var blevet færdige i første omgang, blev raderet ud og erstattet med nye ord, ligesom der også her og der var detaljer i sangstemmerne, som skulle rettes. Manuskriptet blev sluttet august 1929. Rued Langgaard var i mellemtiden selv begyndt at renskrive partituret på ny. I juli 1929 afsluttede han forspillet med en 'ny' koncertslutning (som er identisk med orkestersatsen i operaens korslutning fra 1927), og han fik også renskrevet de første 24 takter af prologen. Resten af arbejdet blev udført af Karl Lahn i Karlsruhe, der færdiggjorde det nye partitur som en afskrift af den omarbejdede og efterhånden noget maltrakterede partiturskopi, han engang havde lavet så smukt. Den nye kopi af partituret blev færdig i 1931.⁶⁷

Mens kopieringsarbejdet stod på i Karlsruhe, finpudsede Langgaard librettoen. Det er i hvert fald sådan, man må tolke situationen og det forhold, at Langgaard angiver 1930 som tekstens fuldførelsesår. Det kan konstateres, at der er foretaget seks tidlige rettelser i teksten (og delvis i sangstemmerne), og at disse rettelser ser ud til at være indføjet i det nye partitur med Lahns skrift, altså mens det endnu var under udarbejdelse i Tyskland, mens de samme korrektioner i klaverpartituret er ført ind af Constance Langgaard og vistnok

enburg's hymn verse "Only when God's Ephphata finds ...".⁶⁴ The altered version was (provisionally) completed when Constance Langgaard added the new vocal text to Lahn's copy of the score, which the composer had re-edited.

Work on a new piano score now began.⁶⁵ Constance did the fair-copying according to instructions from her husband and with the fully corrected original piano score as her source. At the beginning of 1929, when she had reached well into the third scene, she suspended work. The reason was that Langgaard had thought of new ideas, and thus begins the second phase of alteration. The first step was probably that he wrote a new text for the third scene in January-February 1929 and composed a 73-bar expansion of this scene, which in its early form was notably short.⁶⁶ This was followed by a radical revision of the rest of the opera libretto. Only the prologue and the first scene remained relatively untouched. The extent of the revision is clear from the score, in which Langgaard has added the new words and at the same time cancelled most of the text his wife had written in the previous year. Besides the above-mentioned expansion of the third scene, the end of the opera was increased by a solo passage to the words "God is dead ...", and this in its turn gave Langgaard occasion to establish a new sixth scene which was supplied with a prelude, actually a repetition of the prelude to Scene 1 (but a degree louder and with a changed ending).

As a result of these changes the opera acquired its characteristic symmetrical form, with a frame which at the beginning of the work consists of prelude, prologue and the prelude to Scene 1, and at the end the prelude to Scene 6 and Scene 6 itself. The new Scene 6 was entitled *Ruin and the Triumph of Light*, and Scene 5 was expanded with the beginning of the old sixth scene but retained the title *Every Man's Strife against Every Man*. At the same time the first scene changed title to *Light of Delusion* and the fourth scene to *The Beast in Mankind*. Now there were individual solo parts in all of the opera's scenes (although the second and the third scene appear to have been meant for the same singer), and it was Antichrist himself – first under his own name, but soon afterwards under the pseudonym the Beast from the Abyss – who performed the new monologue at the beginning of Scene 6. In the course of the 1930s this role changed name to the neutral A Voice, and the titles of the scenes (with the exception of the fifth) were altered to those they have today: *Light of Pathlessness*, *Vainglory*, *Hopelessness*, *Lust*, *Every Man's Strife With Every Man* and *Perdition*.

The revision was presumably carried out in May or June 1929, after which Constance could resume work on the piano score. The newly composed part of Scene 3 was interpolated, and the bulk of the existing text of 113 pages that had been finished in the first round was crossed out and replaced with new words; there were also details here and there in the vocal parts to be corrected. At the end the manuscript was dated August 1929. Langgaard had in the meantime himself begun a new fair copy of the score. In July 1929 he concluded the prelude with a "new" concert ending (identical with the orchestral accompaniment in the choral ending of the opera from 1927), and he also managed to recopy the first 24 bars of the prologue. The remainder of the work was done by Karl Lahn in Karlsruhe, who finished the new score as a transcript of the altered – and by now somewhat mal-treated – score copy he had once executed so beautifully. This new transcript of the score was finished in 1931.⁶⁷

While the copying went on in Karlsruhe, Langgaard polished up the libretto. At least that is how one must interpret the situation, including the fact that Langgaard specifies 1930 as the year in which the text was completed. It can be established that six early corrections were made in the text (and partly in the vocal parts), and that these corrections seem to have been inserted into the new score in Lahn's hand (i.e. while it was still being written in Germany), while the same corrections in the piano score were added by Constance Langgaard

64. Af „Et Suk igennem Verden gaar“, *Salmebog for Kirke og Hjem* nr. 470, strofe 4 (*Den danske Salmebog* nr. 139, strofe 5).

65. Kilde D (jfr. beskrivelsen s. 51 f. og illustrationen s. 90).

66. Udvidelsen omfatter t. 761-833; den tidligere version: jfr. kilde J2 (s. 58).

67. Kilde B (jfr. beskrivelsen s. 46 ff. og illustrationerne s. 91 f.).

64. From the hymn "A Sigh goes through the World", *Salmebog for Kirke og Hjem* no. 470, v. 4 (*Den danske Salmebog* no. 139, v. 5).

65. Source D (cf. description p. 51 f. and illustration p. 90).

66. The expansion comprises bb. 761-833; the previous version: cf. source J2 (p. 58).

67. Source B (cf. description p. 46 ff. and illustrations p. 91 f.).

delvis af komponisten selv. Disse justeringer fandt altså utvivlsomt sted i 1930.⁶⁸

I den omarbejdede librettos første billede ligger teksten ret tæt op ad samme billede i den oprindelige version, men ellers er kun nogle enkelte ord og udtryk genbrugt i den nye libretto, som Langgaard synes at have skabt uden direkte litterære forbilleder. Man kan nok spore en vis indflydelse fra symbolisme og ekspressionisme, mens ordlyden i fjerde og femte billede er mere bibelnær end i de forudgående billeder.⁶⁹ Det ret fremtrædende element af sarkasme og absurditet, librettoen nu indeholder, fandtes ikke i den oprindelige tekst.

Senere ændringer i værket

Igennem de næste 20 år foretog Langgaard et stort antal mindre ændringer og retoucheringer i operaens tekst og musik, i alt omkring 300. En af de væsentligste var tilføjesen af en alternativ „koncertslutning“. Langgaard foretog denne tilføjelse i 1933, umiddelbart før han indleverede operaen som programforslag til Statsradiofonien og utvivlsomt for at signalere, at en koncert- eller radioopførelse af værket ville være ligeså relevant som en scenisk opførelse. Genrebetegnelsen „Et religiøst Feberspil“ var i 1932 blevet udskiftet med betegnelsen „Mysterieopera“, som i slutningen af 1930'erne blev ændret til „Kirke-Opera“, en genrebetegnelse, Langgaard fastholdt, selv om meningen ikke var, at operaen skulle opføres som kirkespil. Langgaard har villet tilkendegive, at værket er en særegen form for kirkelig eller religiøs opera. Det fremgår tydeligt af kilderne, at en teateropførelse er værket egentlige bestemmelse, men Langgaard pointerer dog at „Operaen ogsaa [er] tænkt som Oratorium for Kirke og Koncertsal“.⁷⁰

Koncertslutningen var hentet fra 'aflæggeværket' *Klange fra „Fortabelsen“*.⁷¹ Forskellen mellem de to slutninger er blot den, at koncertslutningen omfatter 16 takter mere end teaterslutningen. De 16 takter er ikke nye, men baseret på en passage fra den oprindelige operaversions slutning. Der synes ikke at være nogen grund til at udelade disse takter i forbindelse med teateropførelser, og Langgaards ændring skal nok betragtes som en udvidelse af operaen som sådan og brugen af ordet „koncertslutning“ følgerig som et opførelsesstrategisk træk. I koncertslutningen foreskrives dybe klokker (kirkeklokker) i C, E, G og A (ligesom i Wagners *Parsifal*). For at forøge virkningen af disse eliminerede Langgaard alle andre deciderede klokkeindsatser i partituret, undtagen de såkaldte „døds-klokker“ i fjerde billede. Dette indgreb taler også for, at koncertslutningen er tænkt som en obligatorisk del af operaens musik.

Igennem 1930'erne foretog Langgaard små justeringer af librettoen i dens rent tekstlige fremtrædelsesform, såvel af sangteksten som af regianvisninger og overskrifter. Ændringerne blev successivt indføjet i eksemplarer af tekstbogen til operaen, som Langgaard lod renskrive af et maskinskrivningsbureau i alt tre gange, sidste gang omkring 1938.⁷² Teksten levede sit eget liv i disse teksthæfter, og selv om mange af ændringerne efterhånden fandt vej til klaverpartituret og partituret, var der ikke tale om nogen systematisk ajourføring af nodematerialets sangtekst.

En af de ændringer, Langgaard foretog efter 1938 i operaens regianvisninger og som han (heldigvis) valgte at annullere igen, var en rent udgyseragtig slutning på operaen: Nede i marmorkisten (som står på scenen i sjette billede) ligger et lig. Pludselig ryger kistelåget af med et brag, og liget i kisten hæver sig „sukkende og truende“. Uvejret tager til. Et kridhvidt lyn efterfølges af torden, hvorunder Gud lader Antikrist ramme af „det evige lyn“; „Kisten sprænges. 'Liget' staaer morde-

68. Detaljer herom findes i beskrivelsen af kilde B s. 46 ff.

69. Jfr. eksempelvis RLs direkte brug af udtryk og situationer fra følgende steder i Johannes' åbenbaring: 6:13, 11:2, 13:4, 14:8, 17:2-3, 17:5, 17:16, 18:3 og 18:7-8 (RL benyttede den autoriserede oversættelse fra 1907 af Det Nye Testamente).

70. Denne formulering findes i brev til Det Kongelige Teater 15.4.1935 (KTs arkiv, Rigsarkivet).

71. BVN 218; kilde XE (jfr. beskrivelsen s. 71).

72. Kilde G1, G2 og G3 (jfr. beskrivelserne s. 54 f.).

and apparently partly by the composer himself. These adjustments were thus undoubtedly made in 1930.⁶⁸

In the first scene of the altered version the text is very close to the same scene in the original version, but otherwise only a few words and phrases are recycled in the new libretto, which Langgaard seems to have created with no direct literary models. A certain influence from Symbolism and Expressionism can be traced, but the wording in Scenes 4 and 5 is more Biblical than in the preceding scenes.⁶⁹ The very prominent element of sarcasm and absurdity now evident in the libretto had not been in the original text.

Later changes in the work

Over the next 20 years Langgaard made a large number of minor changes and retouchings in the text and music of the opera – a total of about 300. One of the most important was the addition of an alternative “concert ending”. Langgaard made this addition in 1933, immediately after he submitted the opera as a programme proposal to the Danish State Radio and undoubtedly as a signal that a concert or radio performance of the work would be just as relevant as a stage performance. The genre designation “A Religious Fever-Play” had been replaced in 1932 by “Mystery Opera”, which was in turn changed at the end of the 1930s to “Church Opera”, a genre name that Langgaard retained, although the idea was not that the opera was to be performed as a church play. Langgaard wanted to indicate that the genre of the work is a distinct type of ecclesiastical or religious opera. It is very clear from the sources that performance in the theatre was the true purpose of the work, but Langgaard does point out that “the opera is also meant as an oratorio for church and concert hall”.⁷⁰

The concert ending was taken from the spin-off work *Sounds from „Perdition“*.⁷¹ The difference between the two endings is simply that the concert ending comprises 16 bars more than the theatre ending. The 16 bars are not new, but are based on a passage from the end of the original version. There appears to be no reason to omit these bars in stage performances; Langgaard's change should probably be regarded as an expansion of the opera as such, and the use of the term “concert ending” as a device to get the work performed. In the concert ending low church bells are prescribed in C, E, G and A (as in Wagner's *Parsifal*). To increase the effect of these Langgaard eliminated all other decided bell entries in the score, apart from the so-called “deathbells” in Scene 4. This intervention also suggests that the concert ending was intended as an obligatory part of the music of the opera.

Throughout the 1930s Langgaard made small adjustments of the libretto in its purely textual manifestation – of the sung text as well as the stage directions and headings. The changes were successively added to copies of the libretto, which Langgaard hired a typing bureau to produce three times in all, the last around 1938.⁷² The text lived its own life in these booklets, and although many of the changes eventually found their way into the piano score and the full score, no systematic updating of the sung text was done in the music sources.

One of the changes that Langgaard made after 1938 in the stage directions, and that he (fortunately) chose to cancel again, was a decidedly horrific ending to the opera: Down in the marble coffin (which stands on the stage in Scene 6) lies a corpse. Suddenly the coffin lid flies off with a bang, and the corpse in the coffin rises up “sighing and threatening”. The storm increases. A deadly white bolt of lightning is followed by thunder, during which God has Antichrist struck down by “the eternal lightning”; “the coffin bursts open. The ‘corpse’ stands up with a murderous appearance. The curtain falls

68. Details of this can be found in the description of source B, p. 46 ff.

69. Cf. for example RL's direct use of expressions and situations from the following places in Revelation: 6:13, 11:2, 13:4, 14:8, 17:2-3, 17:5, 17:16, 18:3 and 18:7-8 (RL used the Danish authorised translation of the New Testament from 1907).

70. This formulation can be found in a letter to the Royal Theatre of 15 Apr. 1935 (Royal Theatre archive, Danish State Archives).

71. BVN 218; source XE (cf. description p. 71).

72. Sources G1, G2 and G3 (cf. descriptions p. 54 f.).

risk. Tæppet trækkes for hurtigt.“ Og derpå mere torden, så stilhed, og til sidst den afsluttende korsats.⁷³

Langt de fleste små ændringer i operaen blev indført af komponisten i partiturets femte og sjette billede forud for en studieopførelse af disse afsnit i radioen i 1940. Langgaard benyttede lejligheden til at foretage præciseringer og justeringer, og instrumentariet blev udvidet med et klaver, hvortil en del af celestestemmen blev overført. Langgaard bragte også teksten i partituret i overensstemmelse med det gældende teksthæfte. Et bevaret kladdehæfte med udskriften „Revisioner inden Opførelsen d. 22 Maj 1940 ...“ indeholder noter fra ordbogs- og leksikonopslag om betydninger og bibetydninger af tekstens noglebegreber; men udskriften på hæftet er misvisende, for disse noter førte ikke til en eneste ændring i den allerede fastlagte tekst.⁷⁴

Efter radioopførelsen blev den „gyldige“, rettede partiturforskrift deponeret i Statsradiofoniens nodearkiv i København, og Langgaard kom aldrig til at se dette manuskript igen, idet han samme år flyttede til Ribe for at overtage posten som domorganist ved Ribe Domkirke. De korrektioner, han foretog efter 1940 blev derfor skrevet ind i det omarbejdede partitur og i klaverpartituret, som han begge havde ved hånden.⁷⁵ På et tidspunkt i slutningen af 1940'erne ændrede han status for det omarbejdede partitur og erklærede det „gyldigt“ på linje med afskriften i radioens besiddelse. De seneste ændringer omfatter et mindre antal melodiske og harmoniske korrektioner og en revision af teksten i operaens første billede. Sidstnævnte blev foretaget i klaverpartituret og samtidig indført i et eksemplar af teksthæftet så sent som omkring 1950.⁷⁶

Langgaards rettelser og korrektioner blev altså gennem årene føjet ind i alle de tre nodekilder, som repræsenterer operaens omarbejdede version (den omarbejdede partiturforskrift, det nye klaverpartitur og den nye partiturforskrift), men det er karakteristisk, at han fandt det tilstrækkeligt kun at indføre en ændring i én af de tre kilder, og at han aldrig synes at have sammenholdt kilderne eller forsøgt at samordne de ændringer, der hen ad vejen kom til. De tre kilder blev således efterladt med en række indbyrdes varianter. Hertil kommer yderligere tekstvarianter i forhold til de rene tekstkilder.⁷⁷

Operaen afvises på ny – slutningen spilles i radioen

Et andet karakteristisk træk er de mange gange, Langgaard gennem årene skiftede titel på operaen.⁷⁸ Ved fuldførelsen 1930 havde den fået titlen *Fortabelsen, Et religiøst Feberspil*. „Fortabelsen“ refererer til Johannes' åbenbaring (kap. 17, vers 8), men valget af ordet som titel kan meget vel være inspireret af Søren Kierkegaard – i hvert fald findes følgende Kierkegaard-citat, forsynet med anmærkningen NB, i en af Langgaards notesbøger:

Dersom det forfærdelige sker at et Menneske taber det Evige, tale vi ikke mere om Tab, dette er Fortabelsen.⁷⁹

En kort overgang bar operaen den farverige titel *Dyret fra Afgrunden*, og den kunne læses på partiturets titelblad, da den præsentable nye afskrift blev registreret på Det kongelige Teater i september 1931.

Det er temmelig uklart, hvad der egentlig skete med operaen på teatret. Eller rettere sagt: der skete ingenting. Langgaard hævder i et brev, at han allerede i 1930 havde indleveret værket til teatret (formodentlig som teksthæfte og klaverpartitur). Han forventede naturligvis, at operaen ville blive forelagt censur. Da han ingenting hører, henvender han sig til teatret i efteråret 1931 og erfarer, at der intet er

quickly”. And then there comes more thunder, silence, and finally the concluding choral piece.⁷³

The great majority of the small changes in the opera were inserted by the composer in the fifth and sixth scenes of the score prior to the studio performance of these scenes on the radio in 1940. Langgaard took the opportunity to add clarifications and adjustments, and the instrumentation was expanded with a piano to which some of the celesta part was transferred. He also accommodated the text in the score to the current libretto. A preserved notebook with the legend “Revisions before the performance of 22 May 1940...” contains notes from dictionary and encyclopaedia entries about meanings and connotations of the key concepts of the text; but the labelling on the book is misleading, for these notes did not lead to a single change in the already established text.⁷⁴

After the radio performance the “valid”, corrected copy of the score was deposited in the State Radio music archive in Copenhagen, and Langgaard was never to see this manuscript again, for that same year he moved to Ribe to take up a post as organist at Ribe Cathedral. The corrections he made after 1940 were therefore written into the altered score and the piano score, both of which he had at hand.⁷⁵ At one point at the end of the 1940s he changed the status of the altered score and declared it “valid” in line with the manuscript copy in the possession of the radio. The latest changes consist of a small number of melodic and harmonic corrections and a revision of the text in the first scene of the opera. The latter was made in the piano score and added at the same time to a copy of the libretto as late as c1950.⁷⁶

Over the years Langgaard's adjustments and corrections were thus added to all three of the music sources representing the altered version of the opera (the reworked copy of the score, the new piano score and the new copy of the score); but it is characteristic that he found it sufficient to write a given change into just one of the three manuscripts, and that he never seems to have collated them or tried to coordinate the changes which appeared along the way. The three sources were thus left with a number of variants, as well as further text variants vis-à-vis the purely textual sources.⁷⁷

The opera is rejected again – the conclusion is performed on the radio

Another characteristic thing is the many times Langgaard changed the title of the opera over the years.⁷⁸ On completion in 1930 it had been entitled *Perdition, a Religious Fever-Play*. “Perdition” refers to Revelation (17:8), but the choice of the word as a title may very well have been inspired by Søren Kierkegaard – at all events the following quotation from Kierkegaard is furnished with a note, NB, in one of Langgaard's notebooks:

If the terrible event happens that mankind loses the eternal, we speak no more of loss – this is perdition.⁷⁹

For a short period the opera bore the colourful title *The Beast from the Abyss*, which could be read on the title page of the score when the presentable new copy was registered at the Royal Theatre in September 1931.

It is not very clear what now actually happened to the opera at the Royal Theatre. Or rather: nothing happened. Langgaard claims in one of his letters that as early as 1930 he had sent the work to the theatre (presumably in the form of a libretto and piano score). He expected of course that it would be reviewed by the adjudicators. When he heard nothing, he approached the theatre in the autumn of 1931

73. Kilde F; disse regibemærkninger er alle overstreget af RL (jfr. publiceringen af kilden s. 187 ff.).

74. Hæftet findes i RLP 3.

75. Kilde A og D.

76. Kilde F (jfr. beskrivelsen s. 54).

77. S. 108 f. redegøres indgående for disse forhold.

78. Se *Operaens titler* s. 102.

79. Notesbog betegnet 1929 *Antikrist Studier*, s. 47, RLP 1; RL's kilde er: Søren Kierkegaards *Samlede Værker*. Udgivet af A. B. Drachmann, J. L. Heiberg og H. O. Lange, bd. 10, Kbh., 1904, s. 140 (af *Christelige Taler*). RL udelader ordet *timeligt* efter *Menneske*; sidste ord har hos SK formen *Fortabelse*.

73. Source F; these stage directions are all crossed out by RL (cf. publication of the source p. 187 ff.).

74. The booklet is in RLP 3.

75. Sources A and D.

76. Source F (cf. description p. 54).

77. P. 108 f. gives a detailed account of these matters.

78. See “The titles of the Opera”, p. 102.

79. Notebook entitled 1929 *Antichrist Studies*, p. 47, RLP 1; RL's source is Søren Kierkegaard's *Samlede Værker*. Ed. A. B. Drachmann, J. L. Heiberg and H. O. Lange, vol. 10. Copenhagen 1904, p. 140 (from *Christelige Taler* [Christian Addresses]). RL omits the word *timeligt* (temporally) after *Menneske* (mankind).

sket i sagen.⁸⁰ Den 8. september 1931 figurerer værket så i teatrets protokol, idet partitur og teksthæfter denne dato overdrages officielt til Victor Schiøler, som i 1930-32 var såvel førstekapelmester som operachef på Det Kongelige Teater. Schiøler havde i øvrigt som pianist opført værker af Langgaard ved flere lejligheder. Men operaen bliver ikke bedømt, selv om Langgaard beder om det, hverken tekst eller musik underkastes formel censur. Partituret må ret hurtigt være kommet tilbage til komponisten, men teatret beholdt klaverpartitur og teksthæfter. Johan Hye-Knudsen afløste Schiøler som kapelmester, men hans rolle er ukendt. Alt tyder på, at teatret overhovedet ikke har villet røre ved sagen, og noget svar får komponisten ikke. Først da Langgaard rykker i februar og igen i marts 1935 kommer der svar fra teaterchef Andreas Møller, som den 22. marts 1935 returnerer klaverpartitur og tekstbøger og samtidig beklager, at Det Kongelige Teater ikke mener at kunne antage operaen til opførelse.⁸¹ Langgaard beder om en motivation, og fem dage senere svarer teaterchefen, at

[...] Teatret ikke mener at kunne antage Operaen til Opførelse, og dette maa altsaa forstaas saaledes, at Teatret ikke mener, at den af Dem indsendte Tekst kan benyttes til Operatekst. Jeg tror ikke, at denne Opfattelse fra Teatrets Side behøver at motiveres nærmere, og saaledes som Sagen laa, har der ikke været nogen grund for Teatret til at bede om at faa Partituret indsendt.⁸²

Langgaard fandt dette brev så uhyrligt, at han må have haft til hensigt at orientere offentligheden om den urimelige sagsbehandling, han havde været ude for. Han skrev et indlæg med overskriften *Afvisning af en Opera, Det Kgl. Theater vil ikke se Orkesterpartituret*, men dette dokument synes ikke at være kommet videre. Langgaard argumenterer her for værkets aktualitet og skriver bl.a. at operaens seks billeder

[...] karakteriserer den sidste Tids elementære Egenskaber, [...] Djævelens kulminerende Egenskaber i vor Tid under Kristus-Dommens Sværd. 6 billeder, som saaledes paaviser Kristendommens Pligt og Plads paa Sværdsiden *mod* vor Tidsaand. Altsaa en klar Tanke, en generaliseret *bevidst* Tanke, kort belyst som saadan i et kort Tekstresumé, fremsat i 6 Billeder paa disse Egenskaber, i en klar Prosa-Tekst, som dog tydeligt nok karakteriserer Billederne og Tanken [...]; 6 Billeder som dog hovedsagelig blot er en scenisk Gengivelse af Luca Signorellis Dommedagsfresker i Orvieto (Antikrist), 6 Billeder som er en malerisk scenisk Gengivelse af Egenskaber, som man hyppigt finder dem i Renæssancen, f. Eks. Rafaels symbolske Malerier, Botticelli's „Bagtalelsen“ eller Veronese's „Ringeagt“, „Troløshed“, „Respekt“ o.s.v.⁸³ – [...] Mysterierne i Middelalderen var jo netop levende Malerier fra Bibelen, selvom Handlingen ikke var dramatisk „operamæssig“, ligesom i min Mysterieopera. [...]⁸⁴

Afgørelsen var kommet som et slag for Langgaard, der ikke havde formået at 'læse skriften på væggen' og som naturligvis havde forventet, at Det Kongelige Teater ville tage hans hovedværk alvorligt, nu hvor det forelå med en ny tekst, sådan som det var blevet krævet ved forkastelsen i 1923. At operaen endnu en gang blev afvist udelukkende på grund af et forholdsvist underordnet element som teksten, forekom

80. Ifølge udat. kopi af brev til KT (1932?), RLS 8,48.

81. Korrespondancen mellem RL og KT 1935-38 findes i KT's arkiv, Rigsarkivet (arkiv 220; 1393); visse breve fra KT og afskrifter af RL's breve findes under RLS 8,48.

82. Brev under RLS 8,48.

83. Botticelli's *La calunnia* er malet ca. 1497. – Paolo Veroneses allegorier over kærligheden omfatter i alt fire malerier fra 1570'erne.

84. Udateret maskinskrevet manuskript [1935], RLS 8,49. En del af indholdet blev meddelt i breve til KT dat. 28.3. og april 1935.

and learned that nothing had been done in the matter.⁸⁰ The work turns up in the theatre's records on 8 September 1931, when the score and libretto were officially handed over to Victor Schiøler, who in 1930-32 was both chief conductor and opera manager at the theatre. As a pianist Schiøler had in fact performed works by Langgaard on several occasions. But the opera was not evaluated, although Langgaard had requested this – neither text nor music were formally assessed. The score must have been returned rather quickly to the composer, but the theatre kept the piano score and libretto booklets. Johan Hye-Knudsen succeeded Schiøler as conductor, but his role is unknown. There is every indication that the theatre was completely unwilling to consider the matter, and the composer was given no answer. Only when Langgaard reminded them in February and again in March 1935 came a reply from managing director Andreas Møller, who returned the piano score and libretto booklets on 22 March 1935 and at the same time expressed his regret that the Royal Theatre could not see its way to accepting the opera for performance.⁸¹ Langgaard asked for the arguments and five days later Møller answered that

[...] the theatre does not find it can accept the opera for performance, and this must thus be understood to mean that the theatre does not think that the text submitted by you can be used as an opera libretto. I do not think that this opinion of the theatre's requires any further justification, and as things stood there has been no reason for the theatre to ask for the score to be submitted.⁸²

Langgaard considered this letter so monstrous that he must have intended to tell the public about the unfair treatment to which he had been subjected. He wrote an article headed "Rejection of an Opera: The Royal Theatre has no Wish to see the Orchestral Score", but this document does not seem to have got any further than his desk. He argues here for the topicality of the work and writes among other things that the six scenes of the opera

[...] describe the elementary characteristics of recent times, [...] the characteristics of the Devil culminating in our time under the sword of Christ's judgement. Six scenes which thus demonstrate the duty and place of Christianity on the sword-side *against* the spirit of our time. That is, a clear idea, a generalised *conscious* idea, briefly elucidated as such in a short textual summary, presented in six images of these characteristics, in a lucid prose text which still clearly enough depicts the scenes and the idea [...]; six scenes which, however, are for the most part simply a scenic rendering of Luca Signorelli's Judgement Day frescoes in Orvieto (Antichrist), six scenes which are a *pictorial* scenic rendering of characteristics that one frequently finds in the Renaissance, for example Raphael's symbolic paintings, Botticelli's "Calumny" or Veronese's "Scorn", "Infidelity", "Respect" etc.⁸³ – [...] The mysteries in the Middle Ages were after all precisely that – living paintings from the Bible, although the action was not dramatically "operatic", as in my mystery opera. [...]⁸⁴

The decision had come as a blow to Langgaard, who had not been able to "read the writing on the wall", and of course expected that the Royal Theatre would take his masterpiece seriously now that it was available with a new libretto, as had been demanded when it was rejected in 1923. That the opera was again rejected solely because of a relatively subordinate element like the libretto seemed to him quite

80. According to an undated copy of a letter to the Royal Theatre (1932?), RLS 8,48.

81. The correspondence between RL and the Royal Theatre 1935-38 is in the Royal Theatre archive, Danish State Archives (Archive 220; 1393); certain letters from the Royal Theatre and manuscript copies of RL's letters can be found under RLS 8,48.

82. Letter under RLS 8,48.

83. Botticelli's *La calunnia* was painted c1497. – Paolo Veronese's allegories of love comprise four paintings from the 1570s.

84. Undated typescript [1935], RLS 8,49. Some of the content recurs in letters to the Royal Theatre dated 28 Mar. and April 1935.

ham helt uforståeligt. Situationen udløste en byge af breve fra Langgaard til teatret i marts-august 1935 i hvilke han næsten desperat forsøger at argumentere for værkets kvalitet og relevans. Der var ikke tale om nogen dialog med teatret, men han må have været klar over, at det var et potentielt kritikpunkt, at der ikke var mennesker af kød og blod på scenen, og at operaen blot omfattede en serie 'levende billeder'. I et af brevene til teatret fremfører han det argument, at såkaldte *tableaux vivants* er en historisk, velkendt kunstnerisk form og fremhæver de gamle moraliteter som eksempel på en teaterform med personificerede begreber.⁸⁵ Lige meget hjalp det, og Langgaard må give op.

Tre år efter genoptager han imidlertid kontakten til Det Kongelige Teater, idet han indsender et femlinjers resumé af operaens handling i håb om, at dette vil kunne vække teatrets interesse. Men sagen var for længst lukket, og teaterchefens svar er ganske forudsigeligt:

[...] efter Indholdet af denne Oversigt vilde jeg paa Forhaand Tro, at det ikke drejer sig om et Værk for Teatret, og saa vilde det jo være ret formaalsløst at indsende Partituret.⁸⁶

Langgaard reagerer i sin magtesløshed med flere og nu også vrede breve. Han skriver bl.a.:

Hvorfor i Alverden skulle en Opera, et Musikdrama, som skildrer farverige Dommedagsmalerier ikke kunde gøre sig på Teatret. Altsaa noget *Nyt!* Tror De ikke Det kgl. Teater har andet til Opgave end at skildre gamle Herodes' Forbandelser eller Carl Nielsens Maskarade eller Saul og David. Der kommer *intet* ud af vore „kunstneriske“ Samfundsforhold. *Intet*. De skal sprænges.⁸⁷

Og i det sidste brev fra 1. marts 1938 skriver han:

Det kgl. Teater [...] *umuliggør* en virkelig alvorlig *kunstnerisk* ny-skabende og *instrumentatorisk* Bestræbelse for at opretholde *Aand* i Form af en nyt *tidssvarende* mægtigt Musikdrama [...]⁸⁸

Sideløbende havde Langgaard prøvet lykken hos Statsradiofonien. Han indleverede partituret med den tilføjede koncertslutning i november 1933, men radioen refuserede værket få måneder senere.⁸⁹ Langgaard ønskede en nærmere motivation, men fik kun den besked, at „Operaen ikke er egnet for Radio“.⁹⁰ I april 1938 forsøgte den utrættelige komponist så igen – og nu pludselig med held. Grunden må være, at radioorkestrets dirigent Launy Grøndahl var gået personligt ind i sagen, for der blev ikke foretaget nogen ny bedømmelse af operaen. Grøndahl var den eneste person i musiklivet, som på dette tidspunkt stottede Langgaard, og som desuden havde personlig gennemslagskraft. Han opførte og uropførte en lang række af Langgaards orkesterværker i radioen, og i enkelte tilfælde også ved de offentlige torsdagskoncerter. Den 22. maj 1940 uropførtes så, langt om længe, operaens femte og sjette billede (med koncertslutningen) i ra-

incomprehensible. The situation triggered a flood of letters from Langgaard to the theatre in March-August 1935 in which he tried almost desperately to argue for the quality and relevance of his work. There was no question of any dialogue with the theatre, but he must have been aware that it was a potential criticism that there were no human beings of flesh and blood on the stage, and that the opera simply comprised a series of “living tableaux”; in one of his letters to the theatre he propounds the argument that so-called *tableaux vivants* are a historically familiar art form, and singles out the old moralities as an example of a theatrical form with personifications of abstract concepts.⁸⁵ But it was all to no avail, and Langgaard had to give up.

Three years later, however, he renewed contact with the Royal Theatre, submitting a five-line summary of the plot of the opera in the hope that this might arouse the theatre's interest. But the case had long since been closed, and the managing director's reply was quite predictable:

[...] judging from the content of this survey I would think on the face of it that it is not a work for the theatre, so it would be fairly pointless to submit the score.⁸⁶

Langgaard reacts in his helplessness with more, and now also irate, letters. He writes among other things:

Why in the world should an opera, a music drama, which shows colourful Judgement Day paintings, not be able to function in the theatre? That is, something *new!* Do you not think that the Royal Theatre has responsibilities beyond showing the cursings of old Herod or Carl Nielsen's *Masquerade* or *Saul and David*? *Nothing* comes out of our “artistic” circumstances as imposed by society. *Nothing*. Those limits must be transgressed.⁸⁷

And in the last letter from 1 March 1938 he writes:

The Royal Theatre [...] renders it *impossible* to make a *really* serious *artistically* innovative and *instrumentatory* effort to preserve the *spirit* in the form of a new, mighty music drama *appropriate to the times* [...]⁸⁸

Simultaneously, Langgaard had tried his luck with the Danish State Radio. He submitted the score with the added concert ending in November 1933, but the radio rejected the work a few months later.⁸⁹ Though Langgaard wanted more detailed justification, he was only informed that “the opera is not suitable for radio”.⁹⁰ In April 1938 the tireless composer then tried again – and now suddenly with success. The reason must be that the conductor of the radio orchestra, Launy Grøndahl, had personally intervened in the matter, for no new assessment of the opera took place. Grøndahl was the only person in the musical establishment who supported Langgaard at this time and who also had personal clout. He performed and premiered many of Langgaard's orchestral works on the radio and in a few cases also at the public Thursday Concerts. So on 22 May 1940, at long last, the fifth and sixth scenes of the opera (with the concert ending) were pre-

85. Brev til teaterchef Andreas Møller dat. 7.5.1935, KTs arkiv (kopi i RLP 8,48 med senere datering). – I en samtidig introduktion til operaen (RLS 8,14) nævner RL *Everyman* som eksempel; denne moralitet gik på Det Kongelige Teater 1914-39 i Hugo von Hofmannsthal's bearbejdelse og Johannes Jørgensen's oversættelse under titlen *Det gamle Spil om Enhver*. RL komponerede uopfordret et forspil til denne forestilling i 1936 uden at få det antaget; interessant nok er det baseret på forspillet til *Antikrist* (jfr. kilde XF s. 71).

86. Brev fra Andreas Møller af 10.2.1938, RLP 7 (kopi i KTs arkiv).

87. Brev til teaterchef Andreas Møller af 19.2.1938, KTs arkiv (afskrift under RLS 8,48).

88. Brev til Andreas Møller af 1.3.1938, KTs arkiv.

89. Korrespondancen mellem RL og Statsradiofonien findes i DRs arkiv (signatur: 78).

90. Brev fra driftsleder Emil Holm, Statsradiofonien, 13.6.1935, RLS 8,51.

85. Letter to managing director Andreas Møller dated 7 May 1935, Royal Theatre archive (copy also in RLP 8,48 but with later dating). – In a contemporary introduction to the opera (RLS 8,14) RL mentions *Everyman* as an example; this morality was in the repertoire of the Royal Theatre from 1914 to 1939 in Hugo von Hofmannsthal's adaptation and Johannes Jørgensen's translation, under the title *The Old Play about Everyman*. Unsolicited, RL composed a prelude to this production in 1936, but it was not accepted; interestingly, it is based on the prelude to *Antichrist* (cf. Source XF p. 71).

86. Letter from Andreas Møller of 10 Feb. 1938, RLP 7 (copy in Royal Theatre archive).

87. Letter to Andreas Møller of 19 Feb. 1938, Royal Theatre archive (manuscript copy under RLS 8,48).

88. Letter to Andreas Møller of 1 Mar. 1938, Royal Theatre archive.

89. The correspondence between RL and the State Radio (later DR) is in the DR archives (serial no. 78).

90. Letter from production manager Emil Holm, State Radio, 13 June 1935, RLS 8,51.

dioen under medvirken af Radiokoret og Radio-Orkestret og med solisterne Thyge Thygesen (Løgner), Margherita Flor (Skøgen) og Poul Wiedemann (Hadet og En Stemme). Der var tale om en direkte transmitteret studieopførelse. Operaen blev opført under titlen *Antikrist*, selv om partituret på dette tidspunkt bar Langgaards selvkonstruerede ord *Kremáscó* som hovedtitel.⁹¹ Uropførelsen foregik dog i stilhed, uden reaktioner fra pressens side eller fra teater- og musikfolk, så vidt det kan konstateres. Men opmærksomheden var måske også vendt mod andre temaer, for landet var lige blevet besat af den tyske værnemagt.

EFTERSPIG

Kort tid efter opførelsen fik Langgaard stillingen som organist og kantor ved domkirken i Ribe og 1. september 1940 flyttede han dertil sammen med sin hustru. Det var et stort lyspunkt, for gennem 1930'erne havde han uden held kæmpet for at få et organistembede, og dette årti står både menneskeligt og kunstnerisk som den mest triste periode i hans liv. Operaen kom nu ud af komponistens fokus, i hvert fald i sin omarbejdede form. I 1939-40 havde han sammenstillet nogle uddrag af *Antikrists* oprindelige version, næsten udelukkende passager som var taget ud af operaen under omarbejdelsen, til et koncertværk med titlen *Endens Tid*.⁹² Og Langgaard vedblev i 1940'erne at fatte interesse for værket i dets oprindelige form. I 1944 omredigerede han den oprindelige partiturrenskrift fra 1923, idet han udelod første billeden og erstattede slutningen med en ny korbymne. Denne version blev kaldt *Afgrunds fyrsten, En Art katolsk Opera*, og i november 1944 indsendte han partituret og eksemplarer af librettoen til Det Kongelige Teater.⁹³ Denne gang fik Langgaard en udtalelse om kompositionen sammen med det afslag, han modtog fra teaterchef Hegermann-Lindencrone den 20. april 1945. I udtalelsen hedder det, at operaen

[...] er for kaotisk i sin Struktur, der synges meget og sker kun lidt, den er oversanselig i saavel Tekst som Musik – hele 2 Akters Op-hidselse og derefter den Oratorieagtige 3. Akt [i.e. slutningen af 2. akt] „Hymne til Fredsfyrsten“. Partituret har megen Effekt, Farve og Glans, men er skrevet uden Hensyntagen til den menneskelige Stemmes Mulighed for at trænge igennem Orkestergraven.⁹⁴

Men Langgaard kunne ikke slippe den oprindelige version, og i 1946 udfærdigede han et nyt, forkortet partitur, efter at han havde haft forskellige planer med den gamle partiturrenskrift. Denne korte version omfatter en stor del af 1. akt af operaen, et lille uddrag af slutningen samt den før omtalte korbymne fra 1944, som her fandt sin blivende plads. I oktober 1947 indsendte han det nye partitur til Det Kongelige Teater under titlen *Satans Dybder, Drømmeopera*.⁹⁵ Den 10. november samme år fik han uden nærmere motivation besked om, at heller ikke dette værk kunne antages.⁹⁶ Det skiftede senere titel til *Vildstjernelys*. Den oprindelige renskrift fra 1923 blev efterladt af Langgaard med en uklar status og med titlen *Antikristens Saga*. Måske udgør manuskriptet, som det foreligger i dag, en gyldig version af operaen i dens oprindelige form (dog uden det første billede).⁹⁷

91. Titlerne var i årene 1937-40 *Cremátio – Kremátio – Kremáscó*, jfr. titeloversigten s. 102.

92. BVN 243, jfr. kilde XG (s. 71 f.). Dette værk blev uropført som studieopførelse i radioen 18.12.1945 af Radio-Orkestret og Radiokoret under Launy Grøndahls ledelse og med solisterne Holger Byrding, Niels Hansen, Inger Lis Hassing og Else Schiøtt.

93. Kilde C og S samt T.

94. KTs arkiv, Rigsarkivet, ad censur nr. 44, 1944/45, bilag til brev nr. 367 (originalbrevet findes under RLS 139,23).

95. BVN 314; kilde XH (jfr. beskrivelsen s. 73 f.).

96. KTs arkiv, Rigsarkivet, ad censur nr. 11, 1947/48.

97. Jfr. beskrivelsen af kilde C s. 48 ff.

miered on the radio with the participation of the Radio Choir and Orchestra and soloists Thyge Thygesen (The Lie), Margherita Flor (The Whore) and Poul Wiedemann (Hate and A Voice). This was a live broadcast of a studio performance. The opera was performed under the title *Antichrist*, even though the score at this juncture bore Langgaard's self-coined word *Kremáscó* as the main title.⁹¹ However, the first performance went unremarked, with no reaction, as far as can be ascertained, from the press or from theatre and music personalities. But they were perhaps preoccupied with other matters, for the country had just been occupied by the German *Wehrmacht*.

POSTLUDE

Shortly after the performance Langgaard was appointed organist and precentor at the Cathedral in Ribe (southern Jutland), and on 1 September 1940 he moved there with his wife. This was a great consolation, for throughout the 1930s he had struggled unsuccessfully for an organist's post, and this decade, in both human and artistic terms, stands as the saddest period in his life. Now the opera ceased to be the focus of the composer's thoughts, at least in its altered form. In 1939-40 he had put together some extracts from the original version of *Antichrist* – almost exclusively passages that had been taken out of the opera during the alteration process – for a concert work entitled *The Time of the End*,⁹² and in the 1940s he continued to take an interest in the work in its original form. In 1944 he re-edited the original fair copy of the score from 1923, omitting the first scene and replacing the ending with a new choral hymn. This version was called *The Prince of the Abyss, a Kind of Catholic Opera*, and in November 1944 he sent the score and copies of the libretto to the Royal Theatre.⁹³ This time Langgaard received a statement about the music as part of the rejection by managing director Hegermann-Lindencrone on 20 April 1945. The statement says that the opera

[...] is too chaotic in its structure, there is much singing and little action, it is overwrought in both text and music – a whole two acts of agitation and then the oratorio-like Act 3 [i.e. the conclusion of Act 2], “Hymn to the Prince of Peace”. The score has great effect, colour and lustre, but is written without consideration for the ability of the human voice to penetrate through the orchestra pit.⁹⁴

But Langgaard could not let the original version be, and in 1946 he drew up a new abridged score after considering various plans for the old fair copy. This short version comprises much of Act 1 of the opera, a short extract from the ending and the aforementioned choral hymn from 1944, which now found its permanent place. In October 1947 he sent the new score to the Royal Theatre under the title *The Depths of Satan, Dream Opera*.⁹⁵ On 10 November the same year he was informed without detailed arguments that this work could not be accepted either.⁹⁶ Its title was later changed to *Light of Wild Stars*. The original fair copy from 1923 was left by Langgaard with an unclear status and with the title *The Saga of the Antichrist*. Perhaps the manuscript as it exists today forms a valid version of the opera in its original form (but without the first scene).⁹⁷

91. In the years 1937-40 the titles were *Cremátio – Kremátio – Kremáscó*, cf. the list of titles p. 102.

92. BVN 243. Cf. source XG (p. 71 f.). This work was first broadcast as a studio performance on the State Radio on 18 Dec. 1945, with the Radio Orchestra and Choir under Launy Grøndahl's baton and with soloists Holger Byrding, Niels Hansen, Inger Lis Hassing and Else Schiøtt.

93. Sources C, S and T.

94. Royal Theatre archive, Danish State Archives, at adjudicator's no. 44, 1944/45, appendix to Letter no. 367 (the original letter is found under RLS 139,23).

95. BVN 314; source XH (cf. description p. 73 f.).

96. Royal Theatre archive, Danish State Archives, at adjudicator's no. 11, 1947/48.

97. Cf. description of source C p. 48 ff.

LANGGAARDS VÆRKKOMMENTARER

Der er i det foregående bragt forskellige citater fra breve og interviews om operaens idé og indhold i sammenhæng med den kronologiske fremstilling. Men Langgaard efterlod sig et langt større materiale med tilknytning til operaens omarbejdede version, og indholdet af dette skal behandles i det følgende. Fra foråret 1929 og i de følgende næsten 10 år brugte han mange kræfter på at beskrive og begrunde operaen og dens emne. Et stort antal håndskrevne og maskinskrevne dokumenter vidner sammen med utallige optegnelser i notesbøger og på separate papirlapper om komponistens vedholdende forsøg på at forklare operaens budskab og argumentere for dens brændende aktualitet. Langgaard var i disse år en flittig benytter af læsesalene på Det Kongelige Bibliotek og Københavns Kommunes hovedbibliotek. En stor del af optegnelserne vidner om hans udprægede interesse for ord, gerne fremmedartede eller velklingende ord, og disses forskellige betydningsaspekter.

Det er væsentligt at slå fast, at de mange dokumenter om *Antikrist* blev til, efter at operaen var komponeret. De beskriver altså ikke kunstværkets forudsætninger eller baggrund, men er komponistens efterfølgende fremlæggelse og tolkning af sit værk i den aktuelle kulturelle situation i 1930'erne og har det formål at skabe interesse for værket. Langgaards udsagn og deres sproglige form virker i dag tidsbundne og fjerne, og hans fortolkning forekommer snæver eller ensidig i forhold til værket, som i sin karakter er almengyldigt og åbent. Materialet rummer dog personalhistoriske og kulturhistoriske aspekter, som kan have interesse.

Langgaards arbejde fulgte to spor. For det første søgte han at præcisere, hvad operaen i korthed handlede om, dens indhold og forløb. En serie dokumenter med titler som *Indledning*, *Resumé* og *Overblik* hører til denne kategori. For det andet var det magtpåliggende for ham at overbevise omverdenen om, at han ikke stod alene med den religiøse verdensopfattelse og den kritik af den moderne civilisation, som operaen udtrykte, men at tilsvarende synspunkter deltes af og havde optaget filosoffer og kulturpersonligheder fra den vestlige kulturkreds i årtier. Med det sidstnævnte for øje udarbejdede han et dokument, hvis formål altså var at legitimere værket ved at sætte det ind i en kulturhistorisk kontekst og påvise dets aktualitet. Dokumentet består hovedsagelig af korte tekststykker, plukket ud af bøger med debatterende, religiøst eller filosofisk indhold.

Introduktioner

Der skal først gives nogle eksempler fra Langgaards introduktioner til operaen. Der er bevaret en del papirer på typisk en eller to sider med sådanne introduktioner, men der er mange indholdsmæssige overlapninger, idet Langgaard har en tendens til at cirkle rundt om og variere de samme udtryk og begreber. I et tidligt *Resumé* fra 1930 hedder det, at operaen består af

Billeder som omhandler den bibelske Forestilling om Antikristens Kulmination: Dyret fra Afgrunden, hvis Fremtræden er nøje knyttet til „de sidste Dage“. En Saga om Had mod Gud, om Magt, Nydelse, Blændværk og Glimmer, om Lovløshed som fortærer sig selv, om Gudløshed som spiller Fallit og om Menneskesønnen der som Lyset kommer til Dom.

Og han afslutter resuméet med at påpege, at

[...] disse bibelske Billeder [...] er [...] ikke verdensfjerne Fantasier, men Virkeligheden selv, som den egentlig er. De peger udover Hverdagens Automobiler, Radio og Tal, lige ind i Livets Drama i vor Tid.⁹⁸

98. Kilde G4 (jfr. beskrivelsen s. 55).

LANGGAARD'S COMMENTS ON THE WORK

In the course of the above chronological account, various quotations were included from letters and interviews concerning the idea and content of the opera. But Langgaard left behind a far larger body of material associated with the altered version of the opera, and the contents of this will be discussed in what follows. From the spring of 1929 and for almost ten years after that he expended a great deal of energy on describing and justifying the opera and its subject. A large number of handwritten and typewritten documents testify, along with innumerable entries in notebooks and on separate slips of paper, to the composer's persistent attempts to explain the message of the opera and to argue that it dealt with burning issues of the time. In those years Langgaard was a frequent user of the reading rooms at the Danish Royal Library and the Copenhagen Central Library. Many of the notes testify to his decided interest in words as such – often foreign-sounding or euphonious words – and their various semantic aspects.

It is important to emphasise that the many documents about *Antikrist* were written after the work had been composed. In other words they do not describe the background or premises for the opera, but are the composer's subsequent presentation and interpretation of it in the cultural climate of the 1930s, and have the aim of creating interest in the work. Today Langgaard's statements and their verbal form seem remote from us, very much of their own time; and his interpretation seems narrow or one-sided compared with the work itself, which is universal and open in character. However, the material does include biographical and historical aspects that may be of interest.

Langgaard's work pursued two tracks. Firstly, he tried to clarify briefly what the opera was about, its content and development. A series of documents with titles like *Introduction*, *Summary* and *Survey* belong to this category. Secondly, it was essential for him to convince others that he was not alone in the religious worldview and criticism of modern civilisation expressed by the opera, but that similar views were shared by and had preoccupied philosophers and cultural personalities from the western cultural sphere for decades. With the latter point in mind he drew up a document whose purpose was to legitimise the work by placing it in the context of cultural history and demonstrating its relevance. The document consists mainly of short texts culled from books with polemic, religious or philosophical content.

Introductions

First some examples will be quoted from Langgaard's introductions to the opera. A number of papers with such introductions, typically one or two pages long, have been preserved. However, much of the content overlaps, for Langgaard has a tendency to return to and vary the same expressions and concepts. In an early *Summary* from 1930 he says that the opera consists of

Scenes that deal with the Biblical idea of the culmination of the Antichrist: the Beast from the Abyss whose appearance is closely related to "the last days". A saga of hatred against God, of power, pleasure, illusion and glitter, of lawlessness that consumes itself, of godlessness that comes to a bad end, and of the Son of Man who comes as light to pass judgement.

And he concludes the summary by pointing out that

[...] these Biblical scenes are not unworldly fantasies, but reality itself, as it truly is. They point beyond the automobiles, radio and figures of everyday life, straight into the drama of life in our time.⁹⁸

98. Source G4 (cf. description p. 55).

I et andet dokument, betegnet *Indførelse* og angiveligt udarbejdet 1929-34, præsenterer Langaard operaen under en særlig synsvinkel:

Rued Langaard's kirkelige Opera (Oratorium) eller Opera-Mysterium: „Fortabelsen“ („Antikrist“) omhandler det tilsyneladende paradoksale Faktum at være en kunstnerisk Fremstilling af den oprindelige Jesu-Lære uden derfor at være en „kristelig“ Opera. Der maa nemlig (ifølge Spengler) sondres skarpt mellem den oprindelige Jesu-Lære og den vesterlandske „Kristendom“. Jesu-Læren (de synoptiske Evangelier) er et Udslag af persisk-kaldæiske Forestillinger: Hele den apokalyptiske Aand over Mellem-europa [i.e. Mellemøsten] kort før Kristi Fødsel. Man forventede „Menneskesonnen“, og Tanken om Verdensundergangen gjorde sig gældende med frygtelig Styrke. Oswald Spengler siger i „Der Untergang des Abendlandes“: „Jesu Lære var udelukkende Forkyndelsen af 'de sidste Ting', hvis Stemnings-Billeder altid fyldte ham“, d.v.s. den fantasifulde profetiske Anelse om den kommende antikristelige Stortid („Høstens Tid“ Matth. 13) med „de falske Krister“, „Hedningernes Tider“'s Udløb (Luc. 21) og dens Undergang i Lyset. [...]”⁹⁹

I en tredje, maskinskrevet introduktion (uden overskrift), dateret april-maj 1935, kalder Langaard værket, der på dette tidspunkt har titlen *Mysterieoperaen „Fortabelsen“*, for en „Stemmingsfantasi over vor Tid“. Han siger, at „Operaen skildrer noget djævelsk, noget menneskeligt, knyttet til de sidste Tider, vor Tid“, og at det er „Djævelens elementære kulminerende Egenskaber“, som fremstilles på scenen i skikkelse af en række farverige fantasifigurer.¹⁰⁰

Langaards endelige formuleringer om operaen blev omkring 1938 samlet og indsat foran i den netop udarbejdede, tredje maskinskrevne afskrift af teksthæftet.¹⁰¹ Heri findes først en noget tåget indledning, som afslutningsvis rummer en præcisering af meningen med operaens morale:

Den til det yderste frygtænge, sønderflænger denne „Samfundsverden“ og vaagner *alene* i Sønderflængens sukkende „*Effata!*“

„Effata“ (eller „Effatha“) betyder „luk dig op“ og er et udtryk fra Markusevangeliets kapitel 7, vers 31-37, hvor der berettes om Jesu helbredelse af en døv og stum mand. Den mirakuløse helbredelse sker, idet Jesus retter blikket mod himlen, sukker og udbryder „Effata“.

Efter indledningen følger otte „oversigter“, nummereret 1-8. Flere af dem er næsten enslydende. Den korteste er *Oversigt Nr. 1*:

I Prologen hører og ser vi, at Satan og Gud udsender Antikrist i Tiden. I de følgende Billeder hører og ser vi Fremstillingen af disse store maleriske Dommedagsscener fra Johs. Aabenbaring.

En af de længere er *Oversigt Nr. 8*, som Langaard (i en variant) også klæbde ind i partituraskriften som forord. Den må derfor tillægges en særlig vægt:

Fortabelsen, Kirke-Opera skildrer „Messis“, „Høstens Tid“, Jesu Stemningsudtryk: de katastrofale antikristelige Forbandelsesstemninger eller Verdens Undergang i stigende Kulmination i Tiden, Fortabelsesstemningerne.

Prolog: Satan og Gud udsender Antikrist: Forbandelses- eller Dommedagsstemningen i Tiden („Satan gav Antikrist sin Trone og stor Magt“ Aab. 13,2. 2. Thes. 2,9).

Operaen fremstiller derefter scenisk og i vældige Orkesterklange de 6 store teatraliske Dommedagsscener, Stemningsmalerier, fra Joh. Aabenbaring, som udtrykker denne Stemning eller

99. RLS 8,17 (maskinskrevet afskrift); dateringen findes på autografmanuskriptet (RLS 8,40). – Ang. *Der Untergang des Abendlandes*: se note 118. – Om begrebet „høstens tid“ jfr. nedenfor.

100. RLS 8,14.

101. Kilde F.

In another document, called *Introduction* and ostensibly drawn up in 1929-34, Langaard presents the opera from a special point of view:

Rued Langaard's church opera (oratorio) or operatic mystery *Perdition (Antichrist)* is about the apparently paradoxical fact of being an artistic representation of the original teachings of Jesus without therefore being a “Christian” opera. For according to Spengler one must draw a strict distinction between the original teachings of Jesus and western “Christendom”. The teachings of Jesus (the Synoptic Gospels) are a result of Persian-Chaldaean ideas: the whole apocalyptic spirit over Central Europe [i.e. the Middle East] shortly before the birth of Christ. The “Son of Man” was expected, and the idea of the end of the world made itself felt with terrible strength. Oswald Spengler says in *Der Untergang des Abendlandes*: “The teachings of Jesus were exclusively the proclamation of ‘the last things’, whose atmospheric images always filled him”, that is the imaginative prophetic presentiment of the great anti-Christian period to come (“the time of harvest”, Mt. 13) with “the false Christs”, the fulfilment of the “time of the Gentiles” (Lk. 21) and its destruction in the light [...]”⁹⁹

In a third, typewritten introduction (with no heading) dated April-May 1935, Langaard calls the work, which by this time has the title *The Mystery Opera “Perdition”*, an “atmospheric fantasy of our time”. He says that “the opera depicts something diabolical, something human, associated with the last times, our time”, and that it is “the Devil’s elementary culminating characteristics” that are represented on the stage in the form of a number of colourful fantasy figures.¹⁰⁰

Around 1938 Langaard's final formulations about the opera were gathered together and inserted at the front of the recently drawn-up third typewritten copy of the libretto.¹⁰¹ In this we find first a rather nebulous introduction ending with a clarification of the moral point of the opera:

He, distressed in the extreme, rends apart this “social world” and awakens *alone* in the sighing “*Ephphata!*” of that rending-apart.

“Ephphata” (“-atha”) means “Be opened!” and is an expression from the Gospel of St Mark (7:31-37), which tells of Christ’s healing of a deaf and dumb man. The miraculous healing takes place as Jesus looks up to heaven, sighs and says: “Ephphata”.

After the introduction follow eight “surveys”, numbered 1-8. Several of them are almost identical. The shortest is *Survey no. 1*:

In the prologue we hear and see that Satan and God send Antichrist out into time. In the subsequent scenes we hear and see the representation of these great pictorial Judgement Day scenes from the Revelation of John.

One of the longer ones is *Survey no. 8*, which Langaard (in a variant) also pasted into the score copy as a preface. It must therefore be accorded particular importance:

Perdition, Church Opera, depicts “Messis”, “the harvest time”, the evocative expression of Jesus: the catastrophic anti-Christian evocations of Damnation or the End of the World increasingly culminating over time, the evocations of Perdition.

Prologue: Satan and God send out Antichrist: the Damnation or Judgement Day mood in time (“And the dragon gave him his power, and his seat, and great authority” Revelation 13:2; 2 Thess. 2:9).

The opera then represents scenically and in mighty orchestral sounds the six great theatrical Judgement Day scenes, mood paintings, from the Revelation of John, which express this atmosphere

99. RLS 8,17 (typescript copy); the dating is on the autograph manuscript (RLS 8,40). For *Der Untergang des Abendlandes* see note 118. – On the concept “harvest time” see below.

100. RLS 8,14.

101. Source F.

disse Sindsstemninger i stigende Kulmination i Tiden („Antikrist er allerede i Verden“, 1. Joh. Brev 4,3).

Første Maleri: Vildsomhedens Lys („Vildsomme Stjerner“ Jud. 13. 2. Cor. 11,14). To Solostemmer.

Andet Maleri: Hoffærdigheden, Solostemme, („Munden der taler store Ord“ Aab. 13,5).

Tredie Maleri: Haabløsheden, Solostemme („Vilde Bølger paa Hav“ Jud. 13).

Fjerde Maleri: Begærligheden („Den store Skøge som sidder paa et skarlagensfarvet Dyr“ Aab. 17,3), Solostemmer.

Femte Maleri: Alles Strid („Dyret, Antikrist vil hade Skøgen“ Aab. 17,16). Løgn og Had d.v.s. Antikrist og Skøgen raser, Solostemmer.

Sjette Maleri: Fortabelsen, hele Fortabelsesstemningen („Antikristen skal gaa bort til Fortabelse“ Aab. 17,8; 2. Thes. 2,3) Mystisk Solostemme som udtrykker denne Fortabelsesstemning. Forbandelsessukket: Undergangs-*Effata!* Mark. 7,34.

I flere papirer med nogenlunde samme indhold bringer Langgaard tilige en kort, karakteriserende beskrivelse af hvert billedes indhold. Disse beskrivelser gengives her i to formuleringer, dels hentet fra et dokument i autograf med overskriften *Fortabelsen* og dateringen „21/11.1935 Kl. 12 Nat“, dels fra *Oversigt Nr. 4* (sidstnævnte citeres i parentes):¹⁰²

Første billede:

Den usikre, trætte, pessimistiske Fin de siècle-Stemning (Den usikre lyriske Dekadencestemning i den Tid („L'ennui“))

Andet billede:

Den fremtrædende Fremskridts-, Personligheds- og Magtoptimistiske Stemning i Dekadence-Tiden (Den pragtfulde Fremskridtsstemning og „Udviklingsstro“ i den Tid)

Tredje billede:

Pessimismen i Dekadence-Tiden (Den pessimistiske Stemning i den Tid)

Fjerde billede:

Den darwinistiske magtkære og sanselige Stemning i Dekadence-Tiden (Den darwinistiske sanselige Magtstemning i den Tid.)

Femte billede:

„L'ennui“, Verdenskrigs-Struggle for life-, Had-, Løgn- og Skinheligheds-Stemninger i Dekadence-Tiden (Verdenskrigs- „Struggle for life“-Stemningen i den Tid)

Sjette billede:

Tomheds- og Forbandelsens-Stemningen og Efterklngen i de førnævnte Stemninger tilsammen i Tiden (Hele „Fortabelses-Stemningerne“s Stemning i den Tid, set i dens eget Symbol: dens græske Præg, dens Gade- og Gaslygte-Undergangs Fakkellys: Hécate-Lys, Hécate-Suk, Forbandelsessuk, Undergangs-*Effata!* Mark. 7,34.)¹⁰³

I de citerede eksempler er Langgaard noget uklar, både når det gælder en fastsættelse af, hvornår Antikristtiden tænkes at finde sted, og hvad der skal lægges i centrale begreber som „undergang“ og „de sidste tider“. På den ene side bruger han vage formuleringer som „den tid“ og „dekadence-tiden“, og på den anden side refererer han til mellemkrigstiden med et udtryk som „vor tid“. En lidt klarere besked får man i de to formuleringer, som findes i librettoen og partituret, og som fastsætter handlingens tid til henholdsvis „Slutningen af det 19. Aarhundrede og henimod vor Tid“ og „Det 19. Aarhundrede og vor Tid“. At handlingen tænkes at foregå i „vor tid“ bekræftes af *Oversigt Nr. 6*, hvori det hedder:

102. RLS 8,40 bl. 11 samt kilde F.

103. I den som appendiks publicerede libretto med F som kilde henviser RL til denne sidste passus i *Oversigt Nr. 4*, jfr. redaktionel note s. 191.

or these moods increasingly culminating over time (“and even now already is Antichrist in the world”, 1 John 4:3).

First Tableau: The Light of Pathlessness (“wandering stars”, Jude 1:13; 2 Cor. 11:14). Two solo voices.

Second Tableau: Vainglory, solo voice (“the mouth that speaks great things”, Revelation 13:5).

Third Tableau: Hopelessness, solo voice (“Raging waves of the sea”, Jude 1:13).

Fourth Tableau: Lust (“The great whore sitting upon a scarlet coloured beast”, Revelation 17:3). Solo voices.

Fifth Tableau: Every Man's Strife (“the Beast, Antichrist, shall hate the whore”, Revelation 17:16). Lying and Hate, i.e. Antichrist and the Whore, in a rage. Solo voices.

Sixth Tableau: Perdition, the whole mood of Perdition (“Antichrist shall depart into perdition”, Revelation 17:8; 2 Thess. 2:3). Mystical solo voice which expresses this mood of Perdition. The sigh of Damnation: the *Ephphata* of Destruction! Mk. 7:34.

In several papers with more or less the same content Langgaard also gives brief descriptions characterising the content of each scene. These descriptions follow here in two formulations, one from an autograph document with the heading *Perdition* and the date “21/11/1935 12 midnight”, the other from *Survey no. 4* (the latter quoted in round brackets):¹⁰²

First scene:

The uncertain, tired, pessimistic fin-de-siècle mood (The uncertain lyrical mood of decadence of that age (“L'ennui”))

Second scene:

The marked mood of optimism about progress, personality and power of the age of decadence (The grand mood of progress and “belief in development” of that age)

Third scene:

The pessimism of the age of decadence (The pessimistic mood of that age)

Fourth scene:

The Darwinist, power-loving, sensual mood of the age of decadence (The Darwinist sensual mood of power of that age)

Fifth scene:

Moods of “L'ennui”, World-War struggle for life, hatred, lying and hypocrisy in the age of decadence (The World-War “struggle for life” mood of that age)

Sixth scene:

The mood of emptiness and damnation and the echo in the aforementioned moods prevailing together in the age (The whole mood of the “moods of perdition” in that age, seen in its own symbol: the Greek influence, its torchlight of street- and gas-lamp destruction: Hécate-light, Hécate-sighs, sighs of damnation, the *Ephphata* of destruction! Mk. 7:34)¹⁰³

In the examples quoted Langgaard is rather unclear both when it comes to establishing when the time of Antichrist is conceived as taking place, and what should be understood by central concepts like *undergang* (= destruction/ruin/decline) and “the last days”. On the one hand he uses vague formulations like “that age” and “the age of decadence”, and on the other he refers to the inter-war period with an expression like “our time”. One gets a slightly clearer message from the formulations that can be found in the libretto and the score, which both situate the time of the action at “the end of the nineteenth century and towards our time” and in “the nineteenth century and our time” respectively. That the action is conceived as taking place in “our time” is confirmed by *Survey no. 6*, which says:

102. RLS 8,40 fol. 11 and source F.

103. In the libretto published as an appendix from source F, RL refers to this last passage in *Survey No. 4*. Cf. editorial note p. 191.

Operaen hævder stærkt, at „de sidste Tider“ nu er i Verden i stigende Kulmination, altsaa den aandelige Undergang, de teatraliske Forbandelsesstemninger eller Dommedagsscenerne i Johannes Aabenbaring Kap. 13 og 17.¹⁰⁴

Her udtrykkes det samtidig, at undergangen sker på det åndelige plan, og de bibelske dommedagsvisioner paralleliseres med „teatraliske forbandelsesstemninger“ – de opfattes altså ikke konkret, men som noget abstrakt, måske endog som et fænomen, der hører til på et teater. Man kommer tættere på Langgaards kunstnerisk-musikalske indfaldsvinkel til de nævnte begreber ved at se nærmere på et af de synonymmer for undergangen, han anvender i bl.a. flere af de citerede kilder, nemlig „høstens tid“. Begrebet „Høstens tid“ (på latin: *messis*) forekommer med betydningen „verdens ende“ i Jesu lignelse om ukrudtet i hveden (Matthæusevangeliet, kap. 13, vers 36-43). I 1932-37 komponerede Langgaard et „orgeldrama i tre aftener“ med titlen *Messis (Høstens Tid)*, et værk der programmatisk er centreret om Jesu lignelser og lidelseshistorie, og i interviews i forbindelse med opførelsen af første del i 1936 kommer han ind på, hvad der rent musikalsk ligger i begrebet „høstens tid“:

[Det er] Tiden indtil Verdenskrigen, fra [Niels W.] Gades Død [1890] og indtil Verdenskrigen [1914-18], som jeg mener er Høstens Tid. Musikken naaede paa det Tidspunkt en Pragt, en Glans, en Skønhedsrigdom, der paralleliserer det [dvs. den] med Høstens Tid i bibelsk Forstand. Nu følger Opløsningen, Forfladigelsen.¹⁰⁵

Samtidig siger han ligeud, at „Vor Musiks Glansperiode ligger [...] omkring Aarhundredskiftet og brød sammen med Verdenskrigen“.¹⁰⁶ Det konservative kunstsyn bag disse udtalelser prægede Langgaards tankegang og musik efter stilomsvinget i 1925. Efter denne tid blev komponistens kunstneriske program et spørgsmål om at fastholde den særlige ånd, som han mente karakteriserede musikkulturen i de sidste årtier af det 19. århundrede og frem til dens „sammenbrud“. Det på én gang glansfulde og skønne, gådefulde, sammensatte og decadente i kulturen og åndslivet omkring 1900 – i det hele taget de træk der karakteriserede den symbolistiske epoke – virkede tillokende på Langgaard. Hans beskrivelser af operaen fra 1930'erne afspejler denne 'verdensopfattelse', og begreber som „de sidste tider“ og „verdens undergang“ (som han ofte sætter i citationstegn) benyttes således med tanke på en igangværende kulturel nedbrydningsproces, hvis forudsætning så at sige er, at det kulturbillede, han kendte fra sin barndom og tidlige ungdom, og som han både idealiserer og dæmoniserer, allerede og uigenkaldeligt var gået til grunde.

„Særskilt tekstindledning“

Men Rued Langgaard argumenterer faktisk også i 1930'erne for, at de bibelske profetier om verdens undergang og Kristi genkomst i mere bogstavelig forstand er ved at gå i opfyldelse. Det sker på de første seks sider af det dokument, som skal beskrives i det følgende. Det stammer i sin endelige version fra omkring 1938, hvor det fik betegnelsen *Særskilt Tekstindledning*.¹⁰⁷ Komponisten fremholder indledningsvis en række 'kendsgæringer' baseret på ældgammel talmystik, videnskab i kronologisk profeti, apokalyptik og pyramideundersøgelser, som samstemmende peger på, at verden siden 1870'erne har bevæget sig med tiltagende intensitet imod sin undergang. Langgaards hovedkilder er H. Grattan Guinness' *Light for the Last Days* (1888), brødrene Edgars *The Great Pyramid Passages* (1912-13) samt i mindre grad Johannes Hohlenbergs *Kheopspyramiden og dens Hemmelig-*

The opera strongly asserts that “the last times” are now in the world in increasing culmination. That is to say spiritual decline, the theatrical moods of damnation or the Judgement Day scenes in the Revelation of John, chs. 13 and 17.¹⁰⁴

Here Langgaard says that this ruin or decline takes place at the spiritual level, and the Biblical Judgement Day visions are compared with “theatrical moods of damnation” – in other words they are not understood concretely but as something abstract, perhaps even a phenomenon that belongs in a theatre. We come closer to Langgaard's artistic/musical approach to these concepts if we scrutinise one of the synonyms of *undergang* that he uses not only in several of the sources quoted, but also elsewhere, viz. “harvest time”. The concept of “harvest time” (in Latin *messis*) appears with the meaning “the end of the world” in Christ's parable of the sower with the tares among the wheat (Mt. 13:36-43). In 1932-37 Langgaard composed an “organ drama in three evenings” with the title *Messis (Harvest Time)*, a work that is centred programmatically on the parables and passion of Christ. In interviews in connection with the performance of the first part in 1936 he deals with what he means in purely musical terms by the concept of “harvest time”:

[It is] the time up to the World War, from [Niels W.] Gade's death [1890] until the World War [1914-18], that I believe is harvest time. At that time music arrived at a splendour, a lustre, a richness of beauty that makes it parallel with harvest time in the Biblical sense. Now comes the dissolution, the vulgarisation.¹⁰⁵

At the same time he says quite plainly that “the great period of our music was [...] around the turn of the century and broke down with the World War”.¹⁰⁶ The conservative view of art behind these statements was typical of Langgaard's thinking (and of his music) after the stylistic turnaround in 1925. After that date the composer's artistic agenda became a matter of maintaining the special spirit he thought had characterised musical culture in the last decades of the nineteenth century until its “breakdown”. All that was lustrous and beautiful, mysterious, complex and decadent in culture and spiritual life around 1900 – everything in fact that characterised the Symbolist epoch – appealed to Langgaard. His descriptions of the opera from the 1930s reflect this worldview, and concepts like “the last times” and “the end of the world” (which he often puts in quotation marks) are thus used with reference to an ongoing process of cultural breakdown whose background, so to speak, is the fact that the cultural scene which he knew from his childhood and early youth, and which he both idealised and demonised, had already perished irrevocably.

“Separate Text Introduction”

Rued Langgaard did in fact also argue in the 1930s that the Biblical prophecies of the end of the world and the Second Coming of Christ were about to be fulfilled in the more literal sense. He did so in the first six pages of the document now to be described. In its final version it is from around 1938, when it was named *Separate Text Introduction*.¹⁰⁷ The composer begins by proffering a number of “facts” based on ancient numerology, the study of chronological prophecies, apocalypics and pyramid studies, all of which agree in pointing out that since the 1870s the world has been moving with accelerating intensity towards its end. Langgaard's main sources are H. Grattan Guinness's *Light for the Last Days* (1888), the Edgar brothers' *The Great Pyramid Passages* (1912-13) and to a lesser extent Johannes Hohlenberg's book in Danish on *The Pyramid of Cheops and its Secret*

104. Kilde F.

105. *Ekstra-Bladet* 22.4.1936 – dagen før RLs uropførelse af *Messis*, 1. Aften (BVN 228a) i København.

106. *Berlingske Tidende (Aften)* samme dato.

107. *Særskilt Tekstindledning til „Sidste Tider“ Bibleopera*. RLS 8,8; omfatter 23 sider i maskinskrivet afskrift med RLs rettelser og tilføjelser (titlen *Sidste Tider, Bibleopera* var fremme så sent som omkring 1951).

104. Source F.

105. *Ekstra-Bladet* 22 Apr. 1936 – the day before RL's first performance of *Messis*, *First Evening* (BVN 228a) in Copenhagen.

106. *Berlingske Tidende (Aften)*, same date.

107. *Separate Text Introduction to “The Last Times”, Bible Opera*, RLS 8,8; comprises 23 pages in a typescript copy with RL's corrections and additions (the title “*The Last Times*”, *Bible Opera*, was mentioned as late as about 1951).

hed (1920).¹⁰⁸ Der er tale om udlægninger af profetierne i de apokalyptiske skrifter Daniels bog og Johannes' åbenbaring i samspil med symbolske talforhold i pyramidernes indre og ydre proportioner. Langgaard var så optaget af alt dette, at han i et interview i 1933 udtalte, at hans opera var intet mindre end „Kheops-Pyramidens Hemmelighed sat i Musik“, hvilket naturligvis blev artiklens overskrift.¹⁰⁹

Hoveddelen i dokumentet har overskriften *Fortabelsesstemningerne i vor Tid* og er inddelt i afsnit svarende til operaens billeder, som her tillige er forsynet med latinske navne à la 'de syv dødsynder'. Hvert afsnit indledes med bibelcitater og korte teologiske tolkninger heraf med henvisning til hovedsagelig præsten og forfatteren Carl Skovgaard-Petersens bog *Tegn og Tider* (1919) og biskop Thomas Skat Rørdams *Eviq Frelse og eviig Fortabelse* (1901).¹¹⁰ De relativt korte tekststykker, som derpå scene for scene skal underbygge operaens idé og tekst, er baseret på udsagn fra værker af en halv snes forfattere, hvoraf de oftest citerede er Gerhard von Mutius, Eckart von Sydow, Albert Schweitzer, Walter Rathenau, Richard Coudenhove-Kalergi og Oswald Spengler. Mens Schweizer (1875-1965) og Spengler (1880-1936) næppe behøver nærmere præsentation, kan det oplyses, at von Mutius (1872-1934) var tysk diplomat og filosof og bl.a. fungerede som tysk gesandt i København 1923-27. Walter Rathenau (1867-1922) var direktør for industrikoncernen AEG, politiker og kulturkritisk forfatter af jødisk herkomst, og blev som tysk udenrigsminister myrdet i Berlin i 1922, mens Coudenhove-Kalergi (1894-1972), der var østrigsk greve og politiker, blev et kendt navn på grund af sine visioner om en europæisk føderation. Mindst kendt er von Sydow (1885-1942?), en tysk kunsthistoriker med speciale i primitiv kunst, men hvis bog, *Die Kultur der Dekadenz*, som Langgaard bruger, imidlertid er en bred kulturhistorisk undersøgelse af dekadencefænomenet. Hertil kommer enkelte danske kilder, fx artikler af Georg Brandes og Arne Sørensen's samfundskritiske *Det moderne Meneske* (1936), som er den seneste udgivelse, Langgaard henviser til. Referencerne repræsenterer i virkeligheden kun et mindre udvalg af den omfattende litteratur, Langgaard var igennem og som han gjorde notater fra i sine notesbøger.

En tidligere version af dokumentet med betegnelsen *Efterskrift* var forsynet med et forord, hvori Langgaard afslører, at der er tale om „nogle Sammenstillinger af Udtalelser om vor Tid og det 19. Aarh., som jeg dels citerer, dels har sat sammen fra de paagældende Skribenters forskellige Skrifter.“¹¹¹ Langgaard har, som det er fremgået, fat i bøger af ganske interessante kulturpersonligheder, men forholder sig altså frit til kilderne. En gennemgang af hans henvisninger bekræfter snart, at han har udvalgt pointer, der særligt understøtter hans kulturpessimistiske verdenssyn, og præsenterer dem i sin egen redaktion. Oversættelsen skyldes tilmed Langgaard, da de fleste af kilderne kun findes på tysk. I det følgende skal enkelte eksempler fremdrages:

(1920).¹⁰⁸ These are all concerned with the interpretation of the prophecies in the apocalyptic Book of Daniel and Revelation of St. John in conjunction with symbolic numerical relationships in the internal and external proportions of the pyramids. Langgaard was so preoccupied with all this that in an interview in 1933 he stated that his opera was nothing less than “the secret of the Pyramid of Cheops set to music”, which of course became the heading of the article.¹⁰⁹

The main body of the document has the title *The Moods of Perdition in our Time* and is divided into sections corresponding to the scenes of the opera, here also furnished with Latin names resembling those of the Seven Deadly Sins. Each passage begins with Biblical quotations and brief theological interpretations of them, mainly with references to a book by the writer and clergyman Carl Skovgaard-Petersen, *Signs and Times* (1919), and Bishop Thomas Skat Rørdam's *Eternal Redemption and Eternal Perdition* (1901).¹¹⁰ The relatively short texts which are then meant, scene by scene, to underpin the idea and words of the opera are based on statements from works by about ten authors, of whom the most often quoted are Gerhard von Mutius, Eckart von Sydow, Albert Schweitzer, Walter Rathenau, Richard Coudenhove-Kalergi and Oswald Spengler. While Schweitzer (1875-1965) and Spengler (1880-1936) hardly require further presentation, it can be added that von Mutius (1872-1934) was a German diplomat and philosopher and among other things acted as German envoy in Copenhagen from 1923 to 1927. Walter Rathenau (1867-1922) was the director of the industrial conglomerate AEG; he was also a politician and cultural critic of Jewish origin, who while serving as German Foreign Minister was assassinated in Berlin in 1922. Coudenhove-Kalergi (1894-1972) was an Austrian count and politician who became a well known name because of his visions of a European federation. The least known member of the group is von Sydow (1885-1942?), a German art historian who specialised in primitive art but whose book *Die Kultur der Dekadenz*, which Langgaard uses, is a broad cultural history of the phenomenon of decadence. To these we can add a few Danish sources, for example articles by Georg Brandes and Arne Sørensen's socially critical *Det moderne Meneske* [Modern Man] (1936), which is the most recent publication Langgaard refers to. The references in fact only represent a small selection of the extensive literature Langgaard consulted and from which he took excerpts in his notebooks.

An earlier version of the document with the title *Postscript* was furnished with a preface in which Langgaard reveals that it is “a few juxtapositions of statements about our time and the nineteenth century, which I partly quote, and have partly put together from the various writings of the authors in question”.¹¹¹ Langgaard, as is evident from the foregoing, had got hold of books by very interesting cultural personalities, but he made rather free use of them; a review of his references soon confirms that he picked out points that particularly supported his culturally pessimistic worldview, presenting them in his own edited version. The translations too are Langgaard's work, since most of the sources only exist in German. In the following, some examples will be cited:

108. H. Grattan Guinness and Mrs. Guinness: *Light for the Last Days. A Study in Chronological Prophecy*. London, 1888. (Ny udgave 1917). RL synes ikke at have kendt bogens danske udgave: *Lys for Den sidste Tid. Historiske og profetiske Studier*. Paa dansk ved Chr. Møller. Rønne, 1896. – John Edgar og Morton Edgar: *The Great Pyramid Passages and Chambers*. Glasgow, 1910 (bd. 1) og 1913 (bd. 2). Flere senere udgaver besorget af Morton Edgar. – Johannes Hohlenberg: *Kheops-pyramiden og dens Hemmelighed*. Kbh., 1917 (3. gennemsete og forøgede udgave 1920; 4. udgave 1923).

109. *Dagens Nyheder* 17.6.1933.

110. C. Skovgaard-Petersen: *Tegn og Tider. Nutiden set i det kristne Haabs Lys* [Signs and Times. The Present seen in the Light of Christian Hope]. Copenhagen 1919. – T. Skat Rørdam: *Eviq Frelse og eviig Fortabelse. Et Lejlighedsskrift*. Kbh., 1901. – RL's bibelreferencer gengives i sceneoversigten i partiturbindet. – RL's tidlige redaktioner af dokumentet har flere skønlitterære referencer, som senere er taget ud; forfatternavnene er bl.a. Maeterlinck, Dumas, Tolstoj og Strindberg.

111. *Efterskrift*, RLS 8,12 (ca. 1931); maskinskrivet dokument i afskrift med RL's tilføjelser omfattende titelblad og 16 sider pag. 22-35 (opr. sammenhængende med librettoen kilde G3, jfr. s. 55).

108. H. Grattan Guinness and Mrs. Guinness: *Light for the Last Days. A Study in Chronological Prophecy*. London 1888 (new edition 1917). RL does not appear to have known the Danish edition of the book: *Lys for Den sidste Tid. Historiske og profetiske Studier*. Transl. by Chr. Møller. Rønne 1896. – John Edgar and Morton Edgar: *The Great Pyramid Passages and Chambers*. Glasgow 1910 (vol. 1) and 1913 (vol. 2). Several later editions by Morton Edgar. – Johannes Hohlenberg: *Kheops-pyramiden og dens Hemmelighed*. Copenhagen 1917 (third revised and expanded edition 1920; fourth edition 1923).

109. *Dagens Nyheder* 17 June 1933.

110. C. Skovgaard-Petersen: *Tegn og Tider. Nutiden set i det kristne Haabs Lys* [Signs and Times. The Present seen in the Light of Christian Hope]. Copenhagen 1919. – T. Skat Rørdam: *Eviq Frelse og eviig Fortabelse*. Copenhagen 1901. – RL's Bible references are found in the list of scenes in the score volume. – RL's early versions of the document have several references to fiction, later removed; the authors' names included Maeterlinck, Dumas, Tolstoy and Strindberg.

111. *Postscript*, RLS 8,12 (c1931); copy of a typewritten document with RL's additions comprising a title page and 16 pages numbered 22-35 (originally continuous with the libretto source G3, cf. p. 55).

Vildsomhedens Lys (Invius)

Den overlyriske Svæven og Svælgen mellem to Livsformer: Den livsbekræftende og den livsfornægtende, hører tilligemed „Afgunden“ til Dekadencens inderste Kærne (omkr. 1890). Denne usikre Afgund aabner sit store Svælg ligesom en infernalsk Slange som vil fortære os. [Efter Eckart von Sydow]¹¹²

I aandelig Radvildhed og afbleget Kristendom blev vor Tid hildet. Vi drager vor Vej som hjemløse i Verdensanskuelsesløshedens tiltagende Mørke. Vi famler rundt i Pessimisme og Optimisme, i Stemningssumpens gækkende Clair-Obscur. Siden Midten af det 19. Aarh. fik Kulturlivet en ulykkelig Udgang. [Efter Albert Schweitzer]¹¹³

Hoffærdigheden (Magnificentia)

Vor Tids udelukkende udadvendte Kultur tendens bærer præg af Selvførelskelse og Individualisme. Vor afsjælede Tids Verden blev et Pandæmonium af Afgudsbilleder. [Efter Gerhard von Mutius]¹¹⁴

Haabløsheden (Tristitia)

Ingen tidligere Plage kan sammenlignes med vor Tids Mekanisering. Den piner med Bekymring, Tomhed og Fortvivelse. [Efter Walther Rathenau]¹¹⁵

Beqærligheden (Bestiarius)

Evolutionens Forsøg i det 19. Aarhundrede var kun mulig derudfra, at man benægtede den væsentligste Forskel mellem Mennesket og Dyret, og afledte Menneskets Færdigheder fra dyriske Anlæg, og tillagde særlig disse sidste stort Værd! „Det høj[e]st udviklede Dyr: Mennesket“ (Darwin). [Efter Otto Hamann m. fl.]¹¹⁶

Alles Strid mod alle (Furialis)

Vor Tid rummer forkroblet Hedenskab under kristelig Maske. – Kristianiseringen [sic] af de germanske Lande udartede til en af de mest skæbnesvangre Paradoxer i Verdenshistorien som fandt sit middelalderlige Udtryk i Divergensen, mellem ridderlig og kristelig Værdi, og denne er den egentlige Aarsag til den grænseløse Løgnagtighed i den europæiske Kultur. [Efter Coudenhove-Kalergi]¹¹⁷

112. Eckart von Sydow: *Die Kultur der Dekadenz*. Dresden, 1921 (3. oplag 1922). RL henviser til s. 43, 67, 81, 239 og 243, men baserer sin tekst på udsagn fra s. 67, 81 og 43 i nævnte rækkefølge.

113. Albert Schweitzer: *Kultur und Ethik. Kulturphilosophie, zweiter Teil*. München, 1923 samt *Kulturens Forfald og Genrejsning*. Oversat af Hans Wind. Kbh., 1925; RL henviser til s. 10 og 208 i førstnævnte værk og s. 83-84 i sidstnævnte, men kun anden og fjerde sentens ses nogenlunde enslydende i kilderne.

114. Gerhard von Mutius: *Gedanke und Erlebnis. Umriss einer Philosophie des Wertes*. Darmstadt, 1922. RL henviser til s. 68, 73 og 108; første sætning er RLs for-danskning frit efter s. 73 og 108; sidste sætning oversat med en vis frihed fra s. 68.

115. Walther Rathenau: *Sjælen (Zur Mechanik des Geistes)*. Oversat af Konrad Simonsen. Kbh., 1918 (tyisk originaludgave 1913). Koncentrat af afsnit s. 233. – RL henviser andetsteds til Rathenaus *Von kommende Dingen*. Berlin, 1917.

116. Otto Hamann: „Die Herkunft des Menschen im Lichte der modernen Anthropologie“ – i: Johannes Riem (udg.): *Natur und Bibel in der Harmonie ihrer Offenbarungen. Ein Handbuch moderner Forschung*. Hamburg 1911. RL henviser til s. 278-279, hvor citatet står nogenlunde uændret med undtagelse af den sidste sentens, der er tilføjet med reference til Darwins *Origin of Species* og J. P. Jacobsen og Vilhelm Møller: *Darwin. Hans Liv og Lære*. Kbh., 1893.

117. Richard N. Coudenhove-Kalergi: *Krise der Weltanschauung*. Wien, 1923. RL paraphraserer og sammenskriver uddrag af et afsnit s. 28-29.

The Light of Pathlessness (Invius)

The over-lyrical hovering and wallowing between two modes of life, the life-affirming and the life-denying, belongs along with “the Abyss” to the innermost core of decadence (around 1890). This uncertain abyss opens its huge jaws like an infernal serpent that wants to consume us. [After Eckart von Sydow]¹¹²

Our time has been snared in spiritual perplexity and faded Christianity. We wend our way, homeless in the gathering darkness of the absence of a worldview. We grope around in pessimism and optimism, in the deceptive chiaroscuro of the mood-swamp. After the middle of the nineteenth century cultural life has had an unfortunate outcome. [After Albert Schweitzer]¹¹³

Vainglory (Magnificentia)

The exclusively outward-looking cultural tendency of our time bears the marks of self-infatuation and individualism. The world of our soulless time has become a pandemonium of false idols. [After Gerhard von Mutius]¹¹⁴

Hopelessness (Tristitia)

No earlier pestilence can be compared to the mechanisation of our time. It torments us with worries, emptiness and despair. [After Walther Rathenau]¹¹⁵

Lust (Bestiarius)

The evolutionary experiment of the nineteenth century was only possible on the premise that one denied the most essential difference between man and beast, derived the accomplishments of man from bestial dispositions and attributed great value to the latter in particular! “The most highly evolved animal: man” (Darwin). [After Otto Hamann and others]¹¹⁶

Every Man's Strife With Every Man (Furialis)

Our time exhibits a warped heathendom beneath a Christian mask. – The Christianisation of the Germanic countries developed into one of the most fateful paradoxes in world history, which found its medieval expression in the divergence between chivalric and Christian values, and this is the true reason for the boundless mendacity of European culture. [After Coudenhove-Kalergi]¹¹⁷

112. Eckart von Sydow: *Die Kultur der Dekadenz*. Dresden 1921 (third ed. 1922). RL refers to pp. 43, 67, 81, 239 and 243, but bases his text on statements from pp. 67, 81 and 43 in that order.

113. Albert Schweitzer: *Kultur und Ethik. Kulturphilosophie, zweiter Teil*. Munich 1923; *Kulturens Forfald og Genrejsning* [The Decline and Restoration of Culture]. Transl. by Hans Wind. Copenhagen 1925; RL refers to pp. 10 and 208 in the former work and pp. 83-84 in the latter, but only the second and fourth utterances are more or less identical in the sources.

114. Gerhard von Mutius: *Gedanke und Erlebnis. Umriss einer Philosophie des Wertes*. Darmstadt 1922. RL refers to pp. 68, 73 and 108; the first sentence is RL's free Danish translation of pp. 73 and 108; the last sentence is translated with some freedom from p. 68.

115. Walther Rathenau: *Sjælen* [The Soul] (*Zur Mechanik des Geistes*). Transl. by Konrad Simonsen. Copenhagen 1918 (original German edition 1913). Summary of paragraph on p. 233. – RL refers elsewhere to Rathenau's *Von kommende Dingen*. Berlin 1917.

116. Otto Hamann: “Die Herkunft des Menschen im Lichte der modernen Anthropologie”, in Johannes Riem (ed.): *Natur und Bibel in der Harmonie ihrer Offenbarungen. Ein Handbuch moderner Forschung*. Hamburg 1911. RL refers to pp. 278-279, where the quotation stands almost unaltered except for the last sentence, which has been added with reference to Darwin's *Origin of Species* and J. P. Jacobsen and Vilhelm Møller: *Darwin. Hans Liv og Lære*. Copenhagen 1893.

117. Richard N. Coudenhove-Kalergi: *Krise der Weltanschauung*. Vienna 1923. RL paraphrases and combines extracts from a paragraph on pp. 28-29.

Fortabelsen (Krematio)

I det 19. Aarhundrede gaar vor Kultur over i Civilisationen. Frugtbarhed afløses af Ufrugtbarhed. Undergangen nærmer sig. Sjælen mister gnaven og træet Viljen til Livet. [Efter Oswald Spengler]¹¹⁸

Gud døde i Europas Tro. Det kristelige Fundament er skrøbeligt, Kaos har først grebet Europæerne, – derefter Europa: saa kom Verdenskrigen og dennes Følger, i vor Tid gaar Europa sin moralske og politiske Undergang i Møde. [Efter Coudenhove-Kalergi]¹¹⁹

Den nævnte, tidligere version med titlen *Efterskrift* afsluttes med et kapitel med overskriften „Kulminerer Antikristens Egenskaber i vor Tid? Besvarelse af Spørgsmålet ud fra Rich. Wagners Skrifter om Religion og Kunst.“ I *Serskilt Tekstindledning* er dette gledet ud til fordel for et bearbejdet citat af den amerikanske prædikant Charles T. Russell.¹²⁰

Perdition (Krematio)

In the nineteenth century our culture passes over into civilisation. Fertility is superseded by infertility. Decline (*undergang*) approaches. Disgruntled and fatigued, the soul loses the will to life. [After Oswald Spengler]¹¹⁸

God died in the faith of Europe. The Christian foundation is fragile, Chaos has seized first the Europeans – then Europe: then came the World War and its results; in our time Europe is approaching its moral and political destruction. [After Coudenhove-Kalergi]¹¹⁹

The above-mentioned earlier version with the title *Postscript* ends with a chapter headed “Are the characteristics of Antichrist culminating in our time? Reply to the question on the basis of Rich. Wagner’s writings on religion and art”. In the *Separate Text Introduction* this was omitted in favour of an adapted quotation from the American preacher Charles T. Russell.¹²⁰

118. Oswald Spengler: *Der Untergang des Abendlandes. Umriss einer Morphologie der Weltgeschichte*. Bd. 1, München, 1918. RL henviser til s. 22, 78. – RL citerer også en anden titel af Spengler: *Mennesket og Teknikken*. Kbh., 1932 (originaludgave: *Der Mensch und die Technik. Beitrag zu einer Philosophie des Lebens*. München, 1931).

119. *Krise der Weltanschauung*, efter udsagn fra s. 17 og VIII.

120. RL refererer bl.a. til følgende af Wagners skrifter: *Wollen wir hoffen?* (1879), *Religion und Kunst* (1880), *Erkenne dich selbst und Heldenthum und Christenthum* (1881) samt *Offenes Schreiben an Herrn Friedrich Schön in Worms* (1882). – Hvad angår Charles T. Russell er kilden *Studies in the Scriptures*. New York, 1916.

118. Oswald Spengler: *Der Untergang des Abendlandes. Umriss einer Morphologie der Weltgeschichte*. Vol. 1, Munich 1918. RL refers to pp. 22, 78. – RL also refers to another title by Spengler: *Mennesket og Teknikken*. Copenhagen 1932 (original edition *Der Mensch und die Technik. Beitrag zu einer Philosophie des Lebens*. Munich 1931).

119. *Krise der Weltanschauung*, after statements on pp. 17 and VIII.

120. RL refers among other things to the following writings by Wagner: *Wollen wir hoffen?* (1879), *Religion und Kunst* (1880), *Erkenne dich selbst and Heldenthum und Christenthum* (1881); also *Offenes Schreiben an Herrn Friedrich Schön in Worms* (1882). – As regards Charles T. Russell the source is *Studies in the Scriptures*. New York 1916.

SCENOGRAFISKE ANVISNINGER, HANDLINGENS TID OG STED

I teksthæftet til operaen henviser Langgaard til tre kunstværker af Albrecht Dürer og Luca Signorelli samt den i dag ret så ukendte franske maler Emile Renard og foreslår, at disse billeder benyttes som udgangspunkt for scenografien i operaen.¹²¹ De tre værker er reproduceret foran i partiturbindets sammen med Langgaards egen skitse til scenebilledet i fjerde billede. Signorellis Antikrist-fresko er den mest centrale blandt referencerne. Langgaard har aldrig selv set maleriet i domkirken i Orvieto, men indsatte en sort-hvid reproduktion af det i partituret.¹²² Han havde rimeligvis lært billedets eksistens at kende gennem sprogmanden Kristoffer Nyrops kronik *Antikrist*, trykt i *Politiken* den 5. april 1929. Her nævner Nyrop også Selma Lagerlöfs roman *Antikrists Mirakler* (1897), hvis sidste kapitel rummer en beskrivelse af billedet. Kronikken ligger som udklip mellem Langgaards papirer, hvor der også findes et samtidigt avisudklip uden kildeangivelse med en gengivelse af Dürers *Die Melancholie* (egl. „Melencolia I“) ledsaget af Carl Skovgaard-Petersens udlægning af dette allegoriske billede.¹²³

Ud over disse billedhenvisninger har Langgaard forsynet librettoen med scenografiske nøgleord, „slør“, „kugle“, „tåge“ osv., som ligeledes er gengivet i sceneoversigten i nodebindet. Kilderne til disse symboliske rekvisitter og sceniske effekter er ikke nærmere oplyst fra Langgaards side, bortset fra det bladløse træ i tredje billede, som er inspireret af Judas' brev, vers 12. Et slør og en kugle ses dog på henholdsvis Renards og Dürers billeder, og mørke og tåge findes i to andre af de centrale skriftsteder, Langgaard nævner, nemlig Judasbrevets vers 13 og Peters andet brev, kap. 2, vers 17. Et mere sammensat symbol er de gaslygter, Langgaard placerer som et fast element på scenen, og hvis flammer snart er usikre og forblæste, snart flakkende. Langgaard var opvokset i en tid, hvor blafrende gaslys stadig prægede mørkets og nattens København, og han beskriver i 1928 dette fænomen som

[...] det underlige rødlige infernalske flakkende Gasflammelys, der dengang brugtes overalt. Dette urolige Kulturlys, der ligesom brændende indebar Tidens antikristelige Flamme og selviske Menneskelighed – og derfor kan betegnes som Tidens mystiske *Brændpunkt*, varsler i Erindringen, for et indtrængende Blik, at „det dybest menneskelige“ nu som dengang – er Antikrist.¹²⁴

Men Langgaard knytter endnu flere betydningsnuancer til dette tidskarakteriserende symbol. I operaens libretto forekommer i første billede udtrykket „fjerne Gaslygters arme 'Evig-Jammer'-Blafren“ og i tredje billede „Haabløse Nætter med Gaslygters arme Skærildsflammer“. Begge gange tilføjer Langgaard et skriftsted fra Lukasevangeliet, nemlig det vers i historien om den rige mand og Lazarus, hvori den rige beder om, at Lazarus skal komme og lindre hans pinsler i dødsrigets luer.¹²⁵ Hvordan de blafrende lygter kan blive et billede på dødsriget står klarere, når man inddrager et motiv, Langgaard fandt i Dantes guddommelige komedie. I beskrivelsen af helvede beretter Dante om fordømte sjæle, som har antaget skikkelse af flammer

121. Det senest rettede eksemplar af teksthæftet er kilde F (jfr. appendiks s. 185).

122. Kilde B.

123. Begge udklip under RLS 8,54.

124. Citeret fra udatert introduktion til operaen (1928), RLP 1.

125. Luk 16, 24.

STAGE DIRECTIONS AND THE TIME AND PLACE OF THE ACTION

In the text booklet to the opera Langgaard refers to three works of art by Albrecht Dürer, Luca Signorelli and the now relatively obscure French painter Emile Renard, suggesting that these pictures can be used as a starting point for the stage design of the opera.¹²¹ The three works are reproduced at the beginning of the score volume of the edition along with Langgaard's own sketch for the set of Scene 4. Signorelli's Antichrist fresco is the most central of the references. Though Langgaard never himself saw the painting in Orvieto Cathedral, he inserted a black-and-white illustration of it into the full score.¹²² He had probably become aware of the existence of the picture through the linguist Kristoffer Nyrop's article "Antichrist", printed in the newspaper *Politiken* on 5 April 1929. In this article Nyrop also mentions Selma Lagerlöf's novel *Antikrists Mirakler* [The Miracles of Antichrist] (1897), the last chapter of which has a description of the picture. The article exists as a newspaper cutting among Langgaard's papers; here we also find a contemporary cutting, with no source indicated, featuring a reproduction of Dürer's *Die Melancholie* (more properly *Melencolia I*) accompanied by Carl Skovgaard-Petersen's interpretation of this allegorical picture.¹²³

Besides these references to pictures, Langgaard has supplied the libretto with cue words for the stage design – "veil", "sphere", "mist" etc., which are also reproduced in the score volume in the list of scenes. The sources of these symbolic props and stage effects are not specified by Langgaard, apart from the barren tree in Scene 3, which is inspired by Jude 1:12. A veil and a sphere can be seen, however, in Renard's and Dürer's pictures respectively, and darkness and mist can be found in another two of the central Scriptural texts mentioned by Langgaard, Jude 1:13 and 2 Peter 2:17. A more complex symbol is the gaslights which Langgaard situated as a fixed element on the stage, and whose flames are sometimes unstable and blown about, sometimes flickering. Langgaard had grown up at a time when flickering gaslights still typified the night and darkness of Copenhagen, and in 1928 he described this phenomenon as

[...] the strange, reddish, infernal, flickering light of the gas flame which was then used everywhere. This agitated light of culture, which in burning contained, as it were, the Antichristian flame and selfish humanity of the time – and can therefore be described as the mystical *burning point* of the time – warns us in memory, for the penetrating gaze, that "what is most profoundly human", now as then, is Antichrist.¹²⁴

But Langgaard links even more nuances of meaning to this characteristic symbol of a period. In the libretto of the opera the phrase "distant gas-lamps' flicker, endless complaints of wretches" occurs in the first, and "nights of hopelessness with gas-lights' poor purgatorial flames" in the third scene. In both cases Langgaard adds a text from the Gospel of St Luke, the verse from the story of Dives and Lazarus in which the rich man asks for Lazarus to come and soothe his torments in the flames of Hell.¹²⁵ How the flickering lamps can become an image of Hell is clearer when one considers a motif Langgaard found in Dante's *Divine Comedy*. In his description of Hell Dante speaks of damned souls who have assumed the appearance of tongues of flame

121. The most recently corrected copy of the text booklet is source F (cf. Appendix p. 185).

122. Source B.

123. Both cuttings under RLS 8,54.

124. Quoted from undated introduction to the opera (1928), RLP 1.

125. Lk. 16:24.

der slikker op gennem klippespalterne, mens de klager deres nød.¹²⁶ Gaslygternes uroligt flammende lys må følgelig tolkes som symbol på fortabelse og håbløshed. Hvis man 'forstørret' dette billede, er der ikke langt til Langgaards særprægede titelforslag på operaen, *Réverber' og Crematio* (fordansket som *Krematio*). Sidstnævnte ord er det latinske ord for 'forbrændelse', mens det franske ord *réverbère* betyder gadelygte, men mere specifikt refererer til en særlig type industriel ovn, en såkaldt reverbér-ovn.¹²⁷ Der er altså alt i alt en særdeles kompleks sammenhæng, et helt kinesisk-æske-system, mellem de billeder, Langgaard knytter til operaen.

Gasbelysningen er med til at definere handlingens tid, der i librettoen (som tidligere nævnt) formuleres „Slutningen af det 19. Aarhundrede og henimod vor Tid“. I afskriftpartituret, den eneste nodekilde med en tilsvarende angivelse, er tidsperspektivet udvidet til „Det 19. Aarhundrede og vor Tid“. ¹²⁸ I sidstnævnte kilde har Langgaard imidlertid streget angivelsen eftertrykkeligt over og altså annulleret den, uden at føje noget nyt i stedet. Langgaards centrale henvisninger til Signorellis og Dürers billeder fra omkring 1500 åbner samtidig for en langt friere, 'tidløs' fortolkning af handlingens tid.

En stedsangivelse for handlingen findes ikke. Librettoen nævner de to lokaliteter „Nevsky-Kirken“ og „Rheden“, og selv om disse ord er ret ukonkrete og ikke fastlåser handlingen til en bestemt by, men dog til et havnært bymiljø, så er det oplagt, at Langgaard tænker på henholdsvis den russisk-ortodokse Alexander Nevsky-kirke i Bredgade i København og på Københavns red. Langgaard boede i 1930'erne i kvarteret omkring kirken (opført 1881-83), og kanonsalutterne fra reden må han ofte have oplevet, eftersom hans vekslende adresser i København aldrig lå langt fra havneområdet – der i øvrigt havde øvet særdeles stor tiltrækning på ham som barn.

which lick up through the rocky fissures while they lament their fate.¹²⁶ The restless, flaming light of the gas lamps must therefore be interpreted as a symbol of perdition and hopelessness. If we “enlarge” this image, we are not far from Langgaard's strange proposals for the title of the opera, *Réverber' and Crematio* (spelled in Danish as *Krematio*). The latter is of course the Latin word for cremation, while the French word *réverbère* means street lamp, but more specifically refers to a special type of industrial furnace, a so-called reverberatory furnace.¹²⁷ So all in all there is a particularly complex chain of associations, a whole nest of Chinese boxes, between the images that Langgaard uses in the opera.

The gaslight helps to define the time of the action, which in the libretto (as mentioned already) is defined as “the end of the nineteenth century and towards our time”. In the full score – the only music source containing a similar specification – the time perspective is expanded to “the nineteenth century and our time”.¹²⁸ However, in the source Langgaard has emphatically crossed out this specification, annulling it without putting anything in its stead. At the same time, his central references to Signorelli's and Dürer's pictures from around 1500 pave the way for a far freer, “timeless”, interpretation of the time of the action.

There is no indication of the place of the action. The libretto mentions two localities, “the Nevsky Church” and “the roadsteads”, and while these words are rather vague and do not fix the action in a particular city (though at the very least to a city environment near a harbour), it is clear that Langgaard is thinking of the Russian Orthodox Alexander Nevsky Church on Bredgade in Copenhagen and of the Copenhagen harbour roadsteads. In the 1930s Langgaard lived in the vicinity of the church, which was built in 1881-83. He must often have heard the gun salutes from the roadsteads, for his various addresses in Copenhagen never lay far from the harbour area, which in fact had held a particularly strong appeal for him as a child.

126. Dante Alighieri: *Den guddommelige komedie. Helvede*. Oversættelse ved Chr. K. F. Molbech. Sang 26-27. Temaet er programmatisk benyttet af RL i klaverfantasierne *I det blafrende Efteraarslygteskær* (BVN 206) og *Flammekamrene* (BVN 221), komponeret i perioden 1930-37.

127. Blandt RLs noter i RLP 2 findes optegnelsen: „Reverbér-Ovn: Flammeovn“ (jfr. Ludvig Meyer: *Fremmedordbog*, 8. udgave ved J.P.F.D. Dahl og F.V. Dahl. Kbh., 1924; flere senere fotografiske genoptryk). Ovn-symbolikken forstærkes af, at udtrykket „Ild-Ovnen“, som også ses i RLs optegnelser, er et bibelsk billede på helvede, jfr. Matt 13,42.

128. Kilde B.

126. Dante Alighieri: *Den guddommelige komedie. Helvede* [The Divine Comedy. Hell]. Transl. by Chr. K. F. Molbech, cantos 26-27. The theme was used programmatically by RL in the piano fantasias *I det blafrende Efteraarslygteskær* (BVN 206) and *Flammekamrene* (BVN 221), composed in the period 1930-37.

127. Among RL's papers in RLP 2 is the note: “Reverbér-Ovn: Flammeovn” (cf. Ludvig Meyer: *Fremmedordbog*, Eighth ed. by J.P.F.D. Dahl and F.V. Dahl. Copenhagen 1924; several later photographic reprints). The furnace symbolism is reinforced by the expression “Ild-Ovnen [the Fiery Furnace]”, which can also be seen in RL's notes and is a Biblical image of Hell. Cf. Mt. 13:42.

128 Source B.