

Correspondence
between
Georg Gerson and
Jens Baggesen,
1820-1824

Edited by
Christian Mondrup

Contents

Editor's preface	3
Jens Baggesen to August Baggesen, Oktober 17, 1820	7
Jens Baggesen to Martin Courlænder, Oktober 17, 1820	11
Jens Baggesen to Georg Gerson, Oktober 17, 1820	11
Georg Gerson to Jens Baggesen, November 21, 1820	16
Georg Gerson to Jens Baggesen, April 4, 1822	23
Georg Gerson to Jens Baggesen, July 31, 1824	24
Martin Courlænder to Jens Baggesen, July 31, 1824	27
Literature	28
Abbreviations	28

Editor's preface

Having obtained a business education in Hamburg, Georg Gerson (1790–1824) was hired in 1812 as an accountant at the trading house of Joseph Hambro (1780–1848)¹ in Copenhagen. In 1816 Joseph Hambro made Gerson his business partner and head of the banking section of the house. Later Gerson was appointed 'privy counsellor' for his mediations in London (1820–1822) of an English loan to the Danish treasury, at that time deeply troubled by the Napoleonic wars.

Today only few know the name Georg Gerson, and if they do it is as a composer. As a child he got the best violin training available in Copenhagen, and during his five-year stay in Hamburg for business education he regularly presented his compositions to the composer Andreas Romberg (1767–1821),² who carefully evaluated and corrected them. These interactions gradually familiarised him with the early 19th century Northern German compositional traditions.³

While pursuing his profession as a banker Gerson continued composing and performing music as a 'dilettante', and in addition served as a significant organiser in the musical life of Copenhagen.⁴ As was common at the time, he maintained a comprehensive correspondence about both his business and music. Unfortunately, little of this seems to have been handed down. There are, however, some remnants of it. For example, we know from his own Thematic Catalogue⁵ that he continued to send his compositions to Andreas Romberg for advice until Romberg's death. And a quotation of a letter from Gerson is found in Romberg's correspondence.⁶

Apart from the compositions and the thematic catalogue Gerson's preserved writings include only two letters, dated 1820 and 1824, plus a brief message to the poet Jens Baggesen (1764–1826).⁷ Those are all in the Baggesen Collection of

¹(Bramsen and Wain 1979, pp. 157 sqq.).

²(Wikipedia-DE, Andreas Romberg)

³(Hust 2009, pp. 10 sqq.).

⁴See my biographical article 'Georg Gerson – Composer and Citizen', (Gerson 1823a, pp. 136 sqq.).

⁵(ibid., pp. 18 sqq.).

⁶(Pechstaedt 2009, p. 142).

⁷Jens Baggesen (1764–1826). In 1791 he took the first name Immanuel in admiration of Kant (DBL-3, Jens Baggesen).

the Royal Library in Copenhagen.⁸ Gerson's 1820 letter was a reply to one from Baggesen,⁹ which is only known through excerpts¹⁰ copied by Baggesen's son August Baggesen (1795–1865).¹¹



Christian Hornemann (1765–1844),¹² miniature portrait of Gerson from a collection of vocal duets 'Olla Potrida or a mish-mash of vocal duets with piano accompaniment. Dedicated to the birthday of his sister Rose, January 29, 1820', The Royal Library, Copenhagen.

Gerson's mother tongue was most likely German as in many Jewish families in Copenhagen. At the start of the 19th century about 20% of the Danish population was German speaking.¹³ Apart from the above mentioned brief message¹⁴ Gerson's correspondence is written in German, including the letter from Baggesen who grew up with Danish as his mother tongue but also wrote comprehensively in German.¹⁵

In Gerson's days letters were not only private but also circulated within family and friends of the receiver. As an example Gerson mentions (in 1824)¹⁶ a letter from Baggesen to the poet Friederike Brun (1765–1835),¹⁷ 'Mrs. Brun has received an epoch-making letter from you which I haven't yet read'.¹⁸ Therefore the

⁸(Gerson 1820a; Gerson 1822; Gerson 1824).

⁹(J. Baggesen 1820).

¹⁰In the Baggesen Collection of the University Library of Kiel, Germany.

¹¹Frederik Ludvig Haller August Baggesen (1795–1865), son of Jens Baggesen and his first wife Sophie von Haller (1767–1797), officer and author (Wikipedia-DA; Neue Deutsche Biographie). Published a four-volume biography on his father.

¹²(Holck Kolding 1997).

¹³(Gerson 1823b, pp. 160 sq.).

¹⁴In 1816 a periodical 'Nyeste Skildringer af Kjøbenhavn' [c: *Latest Account from Copenhagen*] published a letter of travel written in Danish 'Udtog af en Skrivelse fra en reisende dansk Tonekunstner' [c: *Excerpt from a letter from a travelling Danish music artist*] (Gerson 1816). The text is anonymous, but estimated from its content it was most likely written by Gerson and translated to Danish by the publisher (Gerson n.d.).

¹⁵Gerson wrote 6 songs to texts by Baggesen including 5 songs to German language poems.

¹⁶See p. 25.

¹⁷(Gerson 1823a, pp. 160 sq.).

¹⁸(J. Baggesen 1820, TE).

correspondents were phrasing their letters carefully. This is manifested in Gerson's earliest preserved letter (from 1820):

The fear of delivering a letter of ungainly form and content is paralysing my spirit and pen – and I'm convinced that I'd be able to write better to anyone else than to Baggesen.¹⁹

Letters were mailed without the use of an envelope but as a folded and sealed letter sheet:

The address was written on the outside of the paper, the letter text on the inside. Additional sheets, possibly with letters to other receivers, could be enclosed as was the case with Baggesen's letters from 1820 to his son August Baggesen, to Georg Gerson and Martin Courlænder in Copenhagen.²¹



*Letter from Georg Gerson to Jens Baggesen,
July 31, 1824.²⁰*

Gerson's correspondence is indeed sparsely handed down, but together with the letter from Baggesen the two preserved letters from Gerson offer a period piece of persons and events in the early 19th century found worthy of discussion in the eyes of the cultural citizenry. At that time correspondence must have played a significant role in reportage of current events.

With this edition of Gerson's correspondence I'm finishing a long-running project primarily aimed at providing modern editions of all of Gerson's preserved compositions. The result is freely available under Creative Commons license on the site IMSLP (http://imslp.org/wiki/Category:Gerson,_Georg).

I thank the Royal Library in Copenhagen and the University Library in Kiel, Germany for providing high quality facsimiles of Gerson's and Baggesen's letters. I'm infinitely grateful to Ulrich Alpers, librarian at the University Library of Stuttgart, Germany for his tireless and critical assistance with unravelling numerous reading difficulties in the manuscripts. My thanks also go to Don Simons (Redondo Beach,

¹⁹See p. 17

²⁰(Gerson 1824).

²¹(J. Baggesen 1820; Wikipedia-EN, Letter sheet).

California, author of the engraving software PMX) for his careful, critical and creative review of my English translation. And thanks to Lars Madsen, programmer at the Department of Mathematics at the University of Aarhus for his creative assistance with the \LaTeX typography.

Aarhus, November 2023

Christian Mondrup

**Jens Baggesen to August Baggesen, Martin Courländer and Georg Gerson,
October 17, 1820²²**

*Mr. A. Haller v. Baggesen*²³

Lieutenant in the service of His Majesty the King of Denmark in Kiel

Franfurt am Main October 17, 1820

My dearly beloved August, while in the midst of an overwhelming number of new activities – packing and unpacking, writing letters, paying visits, bookkeeping, and sometimes even writing poetry – I don't know how to explain our troubles to you in a more practical way than to submit unsealed letters to you which I would normally send to the north, and then ask you to seal them as soon as you've read them and hand them in unstamped to the post office. Otherwise I would need to repeat what is written in the two enclosed letters.²⁴

I received Courländer's²⁵ letter to you in Hanover. The confusion is understandable considering the hurry.²⁶ I don't forward it to you because apart from testimonies of friendship with you, it contains only orders for me which I've already received. And you've read his letter to me, so now we're even.

Thank you, my excellent son, from the bottom of my heart for your kind zeal and tireless care for us in Kiel. My Fanny²⁷ and Paul²⁸ also bless you for it. More than ever I take delight in having a son like that. This completes the cloverleaf most desired by a father.²⁹

²²(J. Baggesen 1820).

²³In his section on the Baggesen family's trip from Copenhagen to Paris in autumn 1820 August Baggesen repeatedly quotes this letter in Danish translation (Jens Baggesens biographie, pp. 276 sqq.).

²⁴See page 5.

²⁵Martin Sigismund Wilhelm Courländer (1784–1832, DJGB, I53862), friend and colleague of Gerson. Police official in Hamburg during the French occupation, but 'had to leave that town when the sheets had turned' (Abrahams, Meddelelser, p. 37, **TE**). At first the Copenhagen Chamber of Commerce opposed his petition on a trade licence as a wholesaler referring to his conduct in Hamburg (Fra Kongegunst til selvstyre., pp. 366 sqq.; Lloyd and Campe 1815, pp. 70 sq.; Lloyd 1814, p. 92). The Courländer family were close friends of Jens Baggesen. In 1814 Baggesen gave a handwritten copy of his poem 'Da jeg var lille' [c: *When I was small*] (J. Baggesen 1899, Vorwort) to the daughter Henriette Marie Julie Courländer (born 1811, still alive 1850, DJGB, I82325). For Mrs. Caroline Henriette Courländer (see footnote ¹⁰⁷, page 19) he wrote a humorous 'Ode on her 27th birthday' (J. Baggesen 1845, pp. 137 sq.).

²⁶The Baggesens were travelling as fast as possible, see page 11.

²⁷In 1799 Jens Baggesen married the French–Swiss Françoise (Fanny) Reybaz (1774–1822) (Blicher n.d.).

²⁸Adam Paul Baggesen (1804–1822), Jens Baggesen's and Fanny Reybaz' son (ibid.).

²⁹Danish saying 'trekløver' [c: *trefoil*]: to him Baggesen's three sons made up a trefoil: Carl Baggesen (1793–1873), pastor in Bern, joint editor of Baggesen's collected works (Neue Deutsche Biographie, Carl Baggesen), August Baggesen (1795–1865), officer, joint editor of Baggesen's collected works (DBL-3, August Baggesen) and Adam Paul Baggesen (1804–1822) (see the above footnote).

In all I can only be jubilantly grateful to the Father in Heaven for the continuous good fortune during the trip. Until now the sun has smiled upon us – 20 days without ceasing, thereby preserving your mother’s health and fully restoring mine. In Hanover, however, I could no longer bear the loading and unloading of the completely wrecked chaise.³⁰ It probably broke on the packet boat.³¹ I sold it for 25 Gulden,³² to a traveller, (nowhere else would I have been paid more than 1 Louis d’or³³ for it) and engaged a hired coachman³⁴ from Hanover to Cassel and, since I had reason to be satisfied with him, from Cassel to here. It is less expensive for me than with ‘Extrapost’ [ɔ: *post wagon*],³⁵ and not significantly more expensive than the stagecoach.³⁶ But there’s no denying that the exceedingly slow voyage necessitated until now by your mother’s condition will cost me a lot. Now I’ll see what can be achieved with Varrentrapp³⁷ or more likely with Wenner,³⁸ recommended to me by everyone here. Privy Counsellor von Gerning³⁹ in particular thinks that the latter will be more helpful for me. Yesterday I was dining at Baron v. Leonhardi’s,⁴⁰ having tea at

³⁰A chaise is a light two- or four-wheeled travelling or pleasure carriage for one or two people with a folding hood or calash top (Wikipedia-EN, Chaise).

³¹Packet boats were medium-sized boats designed for domestic mail, passenger, and freight transportation. They were used extensively during the 18th and 19th centuries and featured regularly scheduled service (Wikipedia-EN, Packet boat). ‘The last time he took his leave of the coasts of his homeland he had gone aboard a *steamboat* (**Caledonia**), and that was also the first and last time he set his foot on boat like that.’ (Jens Baggesens biographie, p. 275, **TE**).

³²Gulden is the historical German and Dutch term for gold coin, equivalent to the English term guilder. (Wikipedia-EN, Gulden).

³³The Louis d’or is any number of French coins first introduced by Louis XIII in 1640. The name derives from the depiction of the portrait of King Louis on one side of the coin; the French royal coat of arms is on the reverse. (Louis d’or Wikipedia-EN). The coin was minted until 1794 containing between 6 and 7¼ g gold. It was in international use and was imitated in Germany as well as Denmark (Den Store Danske).

³⁴Quoting the letter August Baggesen writes that ‘the distance was traversed comfortably with a “Hauderer” (Vetturino)’ (Jens Baggesens biographie, p. 278, **TE**).

³⁵‘Extrapost’: transportation of travellers in a wagon hired by themselves outside the regular routes; designates also the wagon hired for the trip, in contrast to the ordinary stagecoach (ODS).

³⁶A stagecoach is a four-wheeled public transport coach used to carry paying passengers and light packages on journeys long enough to need a change of horses. (Wikipedia-EN, Stagecoach).

³⁷Franz Varrentrapp (1776–1831) publisher and antiquary in Frankfurt am Main. Continued from 1814 his father Friedrich Varrentrapp’s (1742–1814) publishing house. Until his death in 1831 this house was ‘still one of the most important in Germany’ (Arnswaldt 1908, pp. 80 sq., **TE**).

³⁸Johann Friedrich Wenner (1772–1835), business partner in the publishing company Varrentrapp Sohn & Wenner. (ibid., p. 69; Neue Deutsche Biographie).

³⁹Johann Isaak von Gerning (1767–1837), author, collector and diplomat (Wikipedia-DE).

⁴⁰Most likely Ludwig Carl Freiherr von Leonhardi (1781–1864), merchant and squire (Hessische Biographie).

Baroness v. Wolzogen's⁴¹ (Schiller's sister-in-law, the German M^e de Stael)⁴² and dined today with the magnificent Colonel Haffner,⁴³ who already visited us twice. I hear everywhere and already notice that I am remembered most fondly here in Frankfurt. I've already met more kindness here than during my years in Copenhagen. The fine Count v. Eiben⁴⁴ seated ministers and generals on chairs, whereas I was sitting with him on the couch. I can't possibly accept half of the invitations. Excuse me, my son, that I wasn't able to disburse your outstanding debts in Hamburg at Perthes⁴⁵ and Besser.⁴⁶ My available cash sufficed for the transport to here. We'll cross that bridge when we get there, however – now I'm among people whom I'm understanding and who are understanding me. Nestler⁴⁷ didn't want to bother with trifles. We did business. He offered me a substantial credit on books and let my son Paul have two grand works on entomology for a quarter of their worth expecting me to pay when it was possible.

⁴¹Caroline von Wolzogen (1763–1847), author. From 1797 Caroline von Wolzogen was living in Weimar and had a significant influence on the spiritual and social life of this town. Her house became a meeting place for writers and philosophers (Wikipedia-DE). In 1817 Friederike Brun (see footnote ¹⁴³, page 25) characterised her as 'my friend in the earliest years' (Brun 1833, p. 325, **TE**). Baggesen had probably been introduced to Mrs. Wollzogen by Friederike Brun.

⁴²Anne Louise Germaine de Staël-Holstein (Madame de Staël, 1766–1817), French, Swiss born writer, arranged influential literary salons (Wikipedia-DE).

⁴³Adam Mogens Wenzel Haffner (1774–1844), around 1820 member of the military committee in Frankfurt am Main on behalf of the Danish king and duke of Schleswig–Holstein (DBL-3).

⁴⁴Friedrich von Eyben (1770–1825), Danish legate in Frankfurt am Main (Wikipedia-DE).

⁴⁵Friedrich Christoph Perthes (1772–1843), bookseller and publisher in Hamburg (Wikipedia-DE).

⁴⁶Johann Heinrich Besser (1775–1826) business partner with Perthes (Wikipedia-DE).

⁴⁷Probably Friedrich Hermann Nestler (1765–1848), bookseller and pressman in Hamburg, publisher of the periodical *Hamburg und Altona* (1801–1806) edited by Johann Carl Daniel Curio (*Kalliope Verbundkatalog* n.d., Friedrich Hermann Nestler).

I've only moments left and am using the last of them to once again convey my gratitude and blessing to you. Pass along my regards, blessings and thanks to Father Reinhold⁴⁸ – and also greet Pfaff,⁴⁹ the Johns,⁵⁰ and remaining friends. Write to me in Paris at the address Rougemont de Löwenberg. Banquier.⁵¹

Dearly your father

Baggesen

I've been at P. Manuel's⁵² but won't see him in person until this afternoon.

Mama is so-so

Paul is perfectly well.

⁴⁸Carl Leonhard Reinhold (1757–1823), philosopher and writer. From 1794 professor at the University of Kiel, Germany (Wikipedia-DE). Reinhold introduced Baggesen to Kant und Schiller (Blicher n.d.).

⁴⁹Christoph Heinrich Pfaff (1773–1852), doctor and professor at the University of Kiel (Wikipedia-DE).

⁵⁰Not identified.

⁵¹See footnote ⁸⁷, page 17.

⁵²Not identified.

Excerpts from the enclosed letters:⁵³

Excerpt of a letter to Martin Courländer.

To Courländer. You'll understand how impossible it has been for me to attend to your tasks for me in Hamburg, since I first received your letter here in Frankfurt. In order to avoid that in the future, please write your letters directly to me and those for my son directly to him. I acknowledge, however, from this absent-mindedness, which is also innate in me, that you must have studied philosophy and astronomy. For from a philosophical point of view it's rather unimportant whether the son or the father is praised by a true Christian,⁵⁴ and even moreso from an astronomical perspective. – – You'll be excited to know that, contrary to my expectations, I've been met most kindly everywhere in Germany. However, unfortunately I can't stay long anywhere. I had to hurry through Göttingen. My Paul finds all specimen cabinets open and is given addresses and insects everywhere, so his scientific trading house is already thoroughly established. – Blücher⁵⁵ was not at home when I went to visit him. Give your lovely wife⁵⁶ a hug for me – now, at a distance of hundreds of miles, you may do that without concerns.⁵⁷ —

Baggesen

Excerpt from a letter to Georg Gerson.

Hamburg October 9, 1820

My dearest Gerson, I hereby start to provide you with the requested attestations that I'm alive.⁵⁸ I can't promise, though, that they'll always turn out as lively as from here in Hamburg. That's because I only exude life⁵⁹ to the extent that there's life around me, and that's why I wasn't able to come up with this kind of attestation in Copenhagen.⁶⁰ As I write, your Hamburg is filling me with joy just like it also fully enchanted me during my happy youth, despite the fact that here I have endured much heartbreak and anxiety due to the sufferings of the all too sensitive angel who is my

⁵³Written by another hand, most likely that of August Baggesen. A number of parenthetical text sections are obviously August Baggesen's abstracts of Jens Baggesen's letter.

⁵⁴Baggesen is most likely referring to Martin Courländer planning to let himself and his family convert from Judaism to Lutheran Christianity (see footnote ¹¹³, page 20).

⁵⁵Maybe Conrad Daniel von Blücher-Altona (1764–1845), president of the magistrate of Altona, appointed by the (Danish) Count of Schleswig–Holstein (Wikipedia-DE).

⁵⁶Caroline Henriette Wallach (1789–1853, DJGB, I53863).

⁵⁷Maybe the flammable Baggesen's self-deprecating reference to his earlier stormy – and disliked – affections for the married women Maria Magdalene Pram and Sophie Ørsted, in numerous poems praised as *Seline* and *Lilia* resp. (Blicher n.d.).

⁵⁸Collin: 'But is Baggesen indeed alive?', see p. 18.

⁵⁹Untranslatable pun 'denn ich befe nur in dem Grad, worin es um mich lebt'.

⁶⁰Baggesen may be referring to his literary dispute (1813–1820) with the Danish writer Adam Oehlenschläger (see footnote ⁹¹, page 17) taking its starting point in Baggesen's public criticism of Oehlenschläger's drama 'Hakon Jarl' (DBL-3, Jens Baggesen).

wife, and to being delayed against my will from rushing southward. –

But in this lively, active life, in this general hustle and bustle, in this interaction with the rest of the world – in this order, cleanliness and – in a word – in this contrast with Copenhagen, what dead person who once lived would not come back to life, and what correspondent who once wrote would not write again? If we add to this the fact that my real Father (whom the Germans oddly enough call Mother) has constantly smiled upon us since we left Copenhagen and here

Hanover, October 12

continues smiling, so that we have found a paradise not only in the surroundings of Hamburg and Altona, but in the whole Lüneburg Heath, then I'm unable to express the contrast between my current and former condition better than by telling you that in Copenhagen I lacked everything except time, while on the continent I lack nothing except the same. – About money, you ask? Not even that, wonderfully enough, because you're able to figure out your expences everywhere except in Brolæggerstræde [ɔ: *Paver Street*],⁶¹ where I never knew how much I would need to spend the next day. –

We're now in Weidenhoff⁶² in Frankfurt, October 18 (which competes with Hamburg), where we made our celebratory entry under the sounds of chimes, bells, and canons. And even if I've travelled the whole journey in a covered wagon, be it an 'Extrapost'⁶³ or a hired coach, and lodged in the best guesthouses, it was never more expensive than I estimated. –

August Baggesen summing up:

(his [ɔ: *Jens Baggesen's*] first verses in a year, written in $\frac{3}{4}$ hours) in the friendship book⁶⁴ of the eldest daughter⁶⁵ of canon Meyer⁶⁶ in Hamburg (he [ɔ: *Jens Baggesen*] had visited the amiable family twice before, but like this time only briefly).

Zweimal, dem Himmel nah'
ihn offen sehn,
Und – nicht hineinzugehn.

*Twice, near Heaven,
seeing it open
and – not entering,*

⁶¹During his appointment 1811-1913 as professor at the University of Kiel (Blicher n.d.) Jens Baggesen fell ill and had to move to Copenhagen with his family. His limited means sufficed only for an accommodation in the modest Brolæggerstræde (no. 14) (Sandau 2009–2017).

⁶²One of the oldest guesthouses in Frankfurt (Wikipedia-DE).

⁶³See footnote ³⁵, page 8.

⁶⁴A small booklet made by stapling paper together, or are sometimes just sheets or strips of paper. Usually decorated and the person who starts the book writes their name and address as the first person sending the book (Wikipedia-EN, Friendship book).

⁶⁵Luise Charlotte Meyer (1790–1860) (Beneke 1861, p. 86).

⁶⁶Friedrich Johann Lorenz Meyer (1760–1844), 'chairman of the Hamburg chapter, avowed follower of the French revolution and author of travel books' (Wikipedia-DE; Beneke 1861, p. 85, **TE**).

War meiner Wandrung Loos
hienieden
Jetzt schwör' ich's bey Euch
allen Drey'n
Ich will hinein,
Wird mir das Nah'n zum drittenmal
beschieden.

*That was the fate of my wandering
down here.
Now I swear to
all three of you
I want entry,
Will it be granted
on the third try?*

To the youngest and loveliest⁶⁷ (singing Weber's⁶⁸ Serenade for me)⁶⁹

Zweimal schon naht' ich mich
umsonst den Götterthoren
Am Tiberstrom;
Jetzt geh' ich voll des Eids,
den ich geschworen
Zum drittenmal nach Rom.
Wenn dort im Schönen ich gebadet
all mein Sinnen
Um würdiger zurückzugehn,
Werd' ich zum drittenmal der
Elbe Huldgöttinnen
Nicht bloß im Fluge wiedersehn. –

*Twice I approached
in vain the gate of the Gods
at the Tiber river
Now, by the oath
I swore, I go
for the third time to Rome.
When in its beauty
I've bathed all my senses
for returning worthier,
The third time I shall see again
the Faith Goddesses of the Elbe
not just in passing. –*

In Meyer's friendship book, after he [o: Jens Baggesen] had complained on getting older and envied Father for his youth (he's four years older, though).

Lieber Meyer. Es gab schön're Zeiten
Als die unsre, das ist nicht zu streiten;
Etwas jünger damals waren wir —
Könnten unsre Haare davon schweigen
Unsre Stammbuchsblätter würden's zeugen,
Herbstlich gelb sind diese mir, wie dir.
Aber, sind die Blüthen auch verschwunden,
Ihre Früchte sind noch nicht dahin —
Erdverloren sind zwar unsre Stunden,
Doch von holden Kindern kranzumwunden
Ist dabey ein himmlischer Gewinn.⁷⁰

*Dear Meyer. There were better times
Than ours, that can't be disputed:
We were somewhat younger then —
If only our hair could be silent about that,
Our friendship book pages would testify to it.
Autumn yellow are mine, like yours.
But even if the flowers vanished,
The fruits are not gone —
Our hours on Earth are indeed lost,
But to be surrounded with lovely children
Is a Heavenly prize.*

⁶⁷ Auguste Dorothea Meyer (1794–1853) (ibid., p. 86).

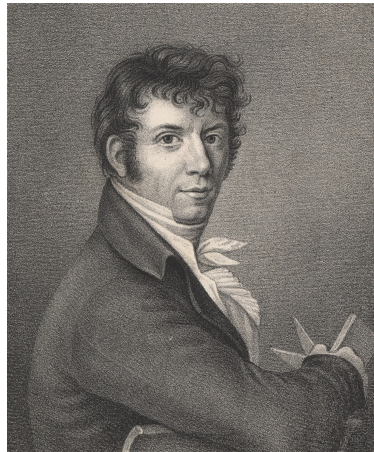
⁶⁸ The composer Carl Maria von Weber (1786–1826, Wikipedia-DE), belonged to Gerson's circle of friends.

⁶⁹ 'Serenade by Baggesen accompanied by piano or guitar' (Weber and J. I. Baggesen 1815).

⁷⁰ This friendship book contribution is reproduced in Jens Baggesens biographie, pp. 276 sq.

(He [ɔ: *Jens Baggesen*] mentions the most dear family Bendix (portrait painter)⁷¹ Marquis d'Alfieri.⁷² – He didn't want to trouble the poor Lotz⁷³ with a useless visit. – He wants to establish a lasting relation to Varrentrapp and Wenner).⁷⁴

then:



Poet's portrait from '*Jens Baggesens Danske Værker*', Copenhagen 1827–1832, Siegfried Detlev Bendixen after an older original, Kgl. Bibl. Copenhagen.

So far I've found the atmosphere in Germany excellent. Despite outward appearances, things are progressing in giant strides. And I did find everything (apart from the miserable Kassel) improved since 1800 and completely since 1789.⁷⁵ Even Lüneburger Heide [ɔ: *Lüneburg Heath*] has been cultivated since then. The roads are laudably good, and all land areas are better planted. The civic life is more alive and active. Only the Duchy Kassel⁷⁶ is, as mentioned above, in its old miserable condition.⁷⁷ And I wanted to stay only 3 hours in

Kassel. The contrast to the first major village on this side of Marburg, where you're entering the constituted Darmstadt, is striking. In Frankfurt there's also apparent

⁷¹Siegfried Detlev Bendixen (1786–1864), historical painter (Wikipedia-DE). In his Baggesen biography August Baggesen points out that Bendixen has completed a poet's portrait for the first edition of Jens Baggesen's Danish works edited by Caspar Johannes Boye (1791–1853) and the Baggesen sons (Jens Baggesens biographie, p. 277).

⁷²Not identified.

⁷³See footnote ⁹⁶, page 18.

⁷⁴See footnote ³⁸, page 8. According to August Baggesen's biography Jens Baggesen agreed to an accord with Wenner in Frankfurt am Main regarding editions of former unpublished works like '*Der vollendete Faust*' [ɔ: *The completed Faust*]. These editions were never realised, though (Jens Baggesens biographie, p. 276),

⁷⁵Baggesen's trip in 1789 through Europe towards Switzerland was expressed in literary terms by his novel '*Labyrinten*' [ɔ: *The Labyrinth*] (J. Baggesen 1792). In 1800 he travelled with his family to Paris in order to settle there (Blicher n.d.). Baggesen had to follow about the same route during both travels.

⁷⁶A Duchy Kassel has never existed. Until 1866 Kassel was the capital of the Electorate Hessen (Wikipedia-DE).

⁷⁷Baggesen is most likely comparing with the situation upon the 'Seven Years' War' (1754–1763, Wikipedia-EN, Seven Years' War) as experienced during his earlier trips. In '*The Labyrinth*' Baggesen repeatedly reports on war damages – like wretched roads.

progress. The ‘Neckar Zeitung’ [ɔ: *Neckar Journal*]⁷⁸ is probably the best in Germany. — — — — When Courländer, however, wants me to explore Germany slowly in order to find a publisher for my works, he’s forgetting that I have other pursuits besides my literary ones to look after on this trip. The best way to secure my future economic fortune is to make my wife, and thereby myself, healthier and happier. If I succeed in that everything else will sort itself out. A healthy and happy Baggesen whose sensitivities are not tortured is exceedingly hard-working. The trip is in itself a primary means to this end, and the journey will become a book. Nothing good comes from rushing. Now I’m rushing but with breaks, while in Copenhagen I was always in a needless rush.

Baggesen

⁷⁸According to he Bavarian State Library published 1820–1833 in Stuttgart (<https://opacplus.bsb-muenchen.de/search?oclcno=225721879&db=100>).

Georg Gerson to Jens Baggesen, November 21, 1820⁷⁹

Copenhagen, November 21, 1820

My venerated friend! Your letter, begun in Hamburg and finished in Frankfurt,⁸⁰ is so dear to me. Before I proceed to answer it I need to refer to our financial affairs;⁸¹ You may already have suspected me of being a windbag – maybe a few friendly allegations are already on the way for or even directed at me. These and several other doubts have tormented me as often as I've thought of the old Baggesen. (Courlænder⁸² has already reported to you how often I've had occasion to do that recently). Nevertheless I was hesitating partly voluntarily with answering your letter, partly for the quite simple reason that I wanted to include the address in Rouen to which your chests etc. have been sent, and that I didn't have time to write a non-mercantile letter due to excessive business obligations brought on by the absence of my partner;⁸³ it was not due to a vibrant state of the market.⁸⁴ I've now found time by making use of a late evening and an early Sunday. Regarding the first thing, the task of the Rouen address, it was delayed and I've kept silent for so long that I would deserve the reproaches I imagine being on their way to me. All of the luggage was sent long ago to Helsingør [ɔ: *Elsinore*],⁸⁵ from which there are weekly shipping opportunities – but since the captains passing through are looking more at volume than weight and value and are demanding an excessive freight rate of 60 francs, our shipping brokers didn't consider themselves authorised to initiate the shipping under such unfavourable conditions. So several shipping opportunities remain unused. But now I've authorized the shipping broker to accept a rate of at most 50 francs. And ships sailing from the East towards Rouen are expected daily, among which it should be possible to find a more inexpensive one. I'll inform you as soon as I know anything certain about it. In the worst case we'll have to wait for the spring when the shipping can be done to a lower charge and insurance premium due to the season and the competition. Courlænder doesn't consider the luggage important enough for you to spend too much on early shipping.

So much for the comissioner's discussion (I won't say 'sorry' since I haven't wronged you so far). Now the explanation of your *salva venia* [ɔ: *if you will pardon the expression*] banker.

Although we believed to have understood each other quite well, it appears there

⁷⁹Gerson 1820a.

⁸⁰See p. 11.

⁸¹In the biography of his father August Baggesen explains that Gerson 'had taken over the handling of his domestic financial matters' (Jens Baggesens biographie, pp. 276 sq., **TE**).

⁸²Martin Sigismund Wilhelm Courlænder, see footnote ²⁵, page 7.

⁸³Joseph Hambro (1780–1848), merchant and banker, like Gerson educated in the trading house Fürst, Haller & Co. in Hamburg (DBL-3).

⁸⁴See footnote ⁸⁹, page 17.

⁸⁵Seaport north of Copenhagen.

must have been a misunderstanding. I understood that an amount of 1500 ‘rigsbankdaler silver’⁸⁶ should be withdrawn, and in this mistaken belief I promised to open a credit of 4000 francs as an approximate amount for you through Rougemont.⁸⁷ But when I reported to the finance department with my power of attorney, I found that you had already taken withdrawals in each of the past three quarters and that there was therefore only 375 ‘rigsbankdaler’⁸⁸ left to withdraw on December 11. Hence I changed the agreed-upon advance to ¼ and accredited you with 1000 francs on October 14. Now please tell me whether it’s important for you to be accredited with another 1000 francs. In these days of scant money⁸⁹ I’d rather avoid it – but if you wish I’ll subordinate my convenience to yours, and as soon as your quarter has been paid to me, I’ll once again put 1000 francs at your disposal through Rougemont or Rothschild,⁹⁰ (whichever you may wish).

Now to answer your dear, dear letter. I must summon all my usual arrogance to answer a letter like that, and I assure you that I’ve never been so much at a loss about what and how to write. Were this answer rich in content, then you might graciously ignore the form. Or if I were able to give some quality to the form, then that might make up for the lack of depth in the content: but the feeling, or I’ll honestly say the fear of delivering a letter of ungainly form and content is paralysing my spirit and pen – and I’m convinced that I’d be able to write better to anyone else than to Baggesen. I’m as much convinced of this as I am that Oehlenschläger⁹¹ wrote so poorly in the recent years (poorer than before) only because he imagined wrongly he was writing for you. Fear of serious criticism can only lead to poor books and poor letters, given the feeling of weakness.⁹² I’m not ashamed of confessing my vanity: If I hadn’t needed to write to you regarding our monetary matters, and if I hadn’t wanted to ensure the continuation at all costs of our correspondence, which is so dear to me, then you’d definitely have remained without a letter from me. Please write quite frequently to me (I preserve the letters like a treasure) and forbid me to answer – that’ll make me doubly happy. That way you’ll also ensure that you’ll never wait in vain for a reply from me.

I’m not going to say anything about the three poems you so kindly shared with me. You know I believe in you – and adore you! If one deserves the prize above the other

⁸⁶A Danish currency issued 1813, see footnote ⁸⁹ below.

⁸⁷Most likely Denis de Rougemont 1759–1839, Paris banker (*Berner Geschlechter* n.d.).

⁸⁸See footnote ⁸⁹ below.

⁸⁹The Danish monetary system was hit by a deep crisis upon the Napoleonic Wars. A monetary reform introduced a new currency, ‘Rigsbankdaler’ devaluating the previous currency to a tenth (Skovgaard-Petersen 1985, pp. 84 sq.).

⁹⁰The Paris branch of the Rothschild-Bank (Wikipedia-DE, Rothschild).

⁹¹Adam Gottlob Oehlenschläger, 1779–1850, a Danish poet and playwright. He introduced romanticism into Danish literature (Wikipedia-EN, Adam Oehlenschläger). Gerson wrote 2 songs to poems by Oehlenschläger (G.48 und G.66).

⁹²Here Gerson takes sides with Baggesen in his long-term (1813–1820) literary dispute with Oehlenschläger (Gerson 1823c, pp. 163 sq.).

two, then in my opinion it is the second, for the youngest and (as you say, and which I'd somehow perceived anyway as unsaid from the poem itself) loveliest daughter.⁹³

Believe me, I'm delighted at the prospect of being able to expect at least quarterly such declarations of life from you. I'll certainly bring along the letter when I go to Collin⁹⁴ to collect the money. And should he ask me: 'is Baggesen indeed alive?' then I'll show him the poems and, instead of an answer, ask him if he believes that I have written them or commissioned them from Oehlenschläger. If the man isn't completely lost in files, then he'll recognise the living, maybe the once again revived Baggesen in them. Then I don't believe that he'll ask for proof that you are alive. If he's not completely insensible he'll be ashamed to ask for an immortal's certificate of life.⁹⁵

You were certainly right in not seeking a publisher in Hamburg. Lotz,⁹⁶ the publisher of the journal 'Originalien', must be in short supply right now since he continues filling his journal with anonymous fragments of the gorging poems⁹⁷ and with

⁹³See p. 13.

⁹⁴Jonas Collin 1776–1861, among other positions secretary of the national foundation 'Ad usus publicos' supporting scientists and artists like Baggesen (Wikipedia-DA, Jonas Collin; Wikipedia-DA, Fonden ad usus publicos).

⁹⁵Gerson's response to Baggesen's pun in his preceding letter to Gerson, see footnote ⁵⁹, page 11.

⁹⁶Hans Georg Lotz (1784–1844), 'Author and belletrist [ɔ: *writer of belles-lettres*], founded the periodical "Originalien" in 1817 and edited it until his death' (Allgemeine Deutsche Biographie, **TE**). 'Baggesen's literary activity in this one and a half years was most insignificant, limited to a few songs plus some German poems written for the literary journal "Originalien" edited by Georg Lotz in Hamburg' (Jens Baggesens biographie, p. 268, **TE**).

⁹⁷Gorging poem: a reference to Baggesen's novel 'Labyrinten' [ɔ: *The Labyrinth*], 1792. In the chapter 'The hamper' you read about the forthcoming sea voyage from Copenhagen to Kiel (Germany) 'Aside from a passport a hamper is undisputedly among the most important things required for a journey at sea, whether you're travelling in order to enhance your stomach or your brain. Since I'm travelling for enhancing both as far as possible, the hamper, as I see it, deserves its own chapter – in truth I regard it as one of the most interesting and agreeable subjects you may choose to deal with, be it in verse or prose. Even the immortal Homer apparently shared that opinion. In his descriptions of the sea voyages of Ulysses he's dwelling on nothing as long and readily as the meals — and the moral of all the twenty books comprising the Odyssey is basically nothing else besides: the sea is wearing, which is also why England's prosaic Homer quite artfully names that poem 'The Gorging Poem', with a footnote on 'England's prosaic Homer': 'Henry Fielding [1707–1754], the author of *Tom Jones* [1731]' (J. Baggesen 1792, p. 13, **TE**). 'Now, after this short preface, we think it no disparagement to our hero to mention the immoderate ardour with which he laid about him at this season. Indeed, it may be doubted whether Ulysses, who by the way seems to have had the best stomach of all the heroes in that eating poem of the Odyssey, ever made a better meal. Three pounds at least of that flesh which formerly had contributed to the composition of an ox was now honoured with becoming part of the individual Mr Jones' (Berg 1980, p. 31). Flemming Lundgreen-Nielsen has pointed out that Oehlenschläger in his letters of travel from Paris (1817–1818, *En Reise fortalt i Breve til mit Hiem* [ɔ: *A voyage told in letters to my home*], Oehlenschläger 1817; Oehlenschläger 1818) reported thoroughly on his meals. In his literary dispute with Oehlenschläger (1813–1820) Baggesen, through a sharpened Fielding quotation, termed these letters of travel 'Gorging journey'.

novellas by Ingemann.⁹⁸ Dr. Zimmermann⁹⁹ withdrew as a theatre critic long ago. Since then someone signing with “a” but might have been better indicated with “a-a” supplies a purely laudatory theatre letter.¹⁰⁰ The journal has therefore grown fairly unpalatable even if there are quite a few ducks, calf’s heads¹⁰¹ and cabbage chunks in it. I’ll be interested to know how it went with Varentrapp,¹⁰² because I think we agree that you need a permanent publisher – and as far as I reckon from your letter Varentrapp seems to be your man.

As limited as my time is, I can’t end this letter without briefly reporting things happening here.

The rumours may already have reached you that Dr. Dampe¹⁰³ had decided to ‘constitutionalise’ the Danes. As a location for public discussions, he chose the street quite well, namely Brolæggerstrasse [o: *Paviour Street*],¹⁰⁴ which is so dear to you. But his choice of a house was less fortunate since a police officer was among its residents. I find it all very characteristic. I need to add that his audience was craftsmen with a majority of blacksmiths and goldsmiths. At that stage it was just lectures held within a kind of club. You may find more details in the state newspaper.¹⁰⁵

You may also have heard about the fate of the father of twins.¹⁰⁶ The poor Mrs. Courländer¹⁰⁷ suffered terribly after having given birth to two healthy boys with extraordinarily big noses à la Bernhard. She was almost taken from us, and we have only Jacobson’s¹⁰⁸ skill and friendship to thank for rescuing her. Thank God

⁹⁸Bernhard Severin Ingemann (1789–1861), Danish novelist and poet (Wikipedia-EN; Georg Lotz, p. xcvi). The novellas in question are most likely among those in ‘Märchen und Erzählungen’ [o: *Fairy tales and Novellas*], published by Georg Lotz freely after Ingemann, Leipzig 1821. In 1816 Gerson composed a song to a poem by Ingemann (G.100).

⁹⁹Friedrich Gottlieb Zimmermann (1782–1835, Neue Deutsche Biographie). Dramaturg and theatre critic. From 1815 professor at the Hamburg grammar school ‘Johanneum’ (Wikipedia-DE, Gelehrtschule des Johanneums). Wrote theatre critic articles in Lotz’ ‘Originalien’ (Friedrich Gottlieb Zimmermann’s Dramaturgie).

¹⁰⁰Gerson is probably referring to F. G. Zimmerman’s ‘Dramaturgische Blätter für Hamburg’ [o: *Dramaturgic Journal of Hamburg*] issued in monthly instalments since 1821 published in Hamburg in four volumes. Zimmermann attended to the Hamburg theatre critique under the signature ‘T-a’ (Rassmann 1823, p. 377). I owe thanks to Flemming Lundgreen-Nielsen for his thorough account on F. G. Zimmermann’s importance to the theatre critique at that time.

¹⁰¹Untranslatable puns: ‘Ente’ [o: *duck*] may also denote a canard or a hoax, and ‘Kalbskopf’ a dunce.

¹⁰²See footnote ³⁷, page 8.

¹⁰³Jacob Jacobsen Dampe (1790–1867), Danish theologian, scholar, and politician activist (Wikipedia-EN).

¹⁰⁴See footnote ⁶¹, page 12.

¹⁰⁵See also Gerson 1823a, pp. 153 sq.

¹⁰⁶Martin Sigismund Wilhelm Courländer, see footnote ²⁵, page 7.

¹⁰⁷Caroline Henriette Wallach (1789–1853, DJGB, I53863).

¹⁰⁸Probably Ludvig Levin Jacobson (1783–1843), Danish doctor and zoologist (DBL-3; DJGB, I22935).

she's now proceeding in her recovery. What a terrible misfortune would losing her have been! Seven children with no one to bring them up! One of the newborns will be called Jens Imanuel¹⁰⁹ – I'd like to call the other Jean Baptiste¹¹⁰ since the two boys baptise the entire family.¹¹¹ Courlænder has almost made up his mind, Kochen¹¹² is already working on it and soon there'll be yet another black Christian in the world.¹¹³ Regarding any other details I'll direct you to Courlænder's own account.

You may recall that some years ago there was a society, til Musikens Udbredelse [ø: *for the Propagation of Music*],¹¹⁴ which purchased music and organized training concerts. But later nothing was heard of it and finally it almost ceased to exist.¹¹⁵ I say almost, for apart from the music and the name nothing else was left of the society but the memory of its prior existence. Out of this memory, this music, and this name, a new amateur music organization has now arisen, thanks to the combined efforts of several directors, and it should become significant in the history of music dilettantes.¹¹⁶ Dignitary members are titular Counsellor of State Kirstein¹¹⁷ and Schönberg.¹¹⁸ Serving as music directors are my friend Götze¹¹⁹

¹⁰⁹Immanuel Anthon Friedrich Emil Courlænder (1820–1880), became clerk at the Lord Steward office (DJGB, 182324). After his birth he was given the first name Anthon. Gerson may have written 'Jens Immanuel' just as a friendly salutation to Baggesen, see footnote ⁷, page 3.

¹¹⁰The twin brother apparently didn't survive.

¹¹¹In 1819 economic and social turmoil upon the Napoleonic Wars gave rise to violations against Jewish citizens and properties in Copenhagen and several other towns. In the subsequent years many families converted to Christianity and were baptised. Also before 1819 Jewish citizens were discriminated against civil rights and obtaining public offices. See also Gerson 1823a, pp. 154 sq.

¹¹²Albrecht Heinrich Matthias Kochen (1776–1847) Pastor at the St. Petri Church in Copenhagen 1816–1824 (Wikipedia-DE, St.-Petri-Kirche (Kopenhagen)). In 1824 he was displaced from his office due to falsified attestations and false statements at the court (DBL-1).

¹¹³'Schwarzer Christ' [ø: *black Christian*] may be a polemic reference to the black root of the Christmas rose, a well-known toxic natural remedy at that time. Martin and Caroline Courlænder were baptised May 11, 1821 in the St. Petri Church in Copenhagen (DJGB, 153862). Neither Gerson nor Joseph Hambro let themselves be baptised (Bramsen and Wain 1979, p. 172).

¹¹⁴Initially founded in 1809 under the guidance of Claus Schall (1757–1835), conductor of The Royal Orchestra in Copenhagen. The society had its last season 1812–1813 (Ravn 1886, p. 142).

¹¹⁵(*ibid.*, pp. 142 sq.).

¹¹⁶At the time of Gerson the terms 'dilettante' and 'amateur' did not just denote limited level artists but also designated persons exercising their art as experts while not as their profession. See also Gerson 1823a, pp. 149 sqq.

¹¹⁷Ernst Philip Kirstein (1759–1834), 1816 until his death deputy in the general custom house and chamber of commerce (DBL-3).

¹¹⁸Probably Hans Heinrich Schønberg (1785–1845) actor, later state official (DBL-1).

¹¹⁹August Friedrich Goetze, music teacher in Copenhagen, since 1821 Danish correspondent for the *Allgemeine Musikalische Zeitung*, Busk 1986, p. 44. In 1836 co-founder of 'Musikforeningen' [ø: *The Music Society*] and teacher at its singing school (Hammerich 1886, p. 26). On his initiative 'Musikforeningen' published 'Sex Sange udgivne efter Componistens Død' [ø: *6 songs published after the death of the composer*] (Sex Sange; Hammerich 1886, p. 61).

and Mr. Petersen,¹²⁰ the latter who recently conducted concerts held by the Massmann Sunday Schools.¹²¹ Since the association has been set under the direct supervision of the Lord Chamberlain¹²² they were granted the use of the Court Theatre for their concerts. There are 300 members, with no new members being admitted, and they will be giving their third concert Sunday, November 26. The Prima Donna [ɔ: *the lead solo singer*] is my sister¹²³ as Miss Henriques¹²⁴ was not willing to sing before 200 members, much less endure the trauma of singing together with the remaining 100. The Secunda Donna [ɔ: *the second leading singer*] is Mrs. Saabye.¹²⁵ Our first performance was *Le Nozze di Figaro* by Mozart, spread over two evenings. On the following evening the birthday of our magnificent queen¹²⁶ was to be celebrated. 13 days before that I was given the enclosed poem by Thiele,¹²⁷ and based on that wrote a small solemn cantata over four nights – not days, since my business doesn't leave me any other spare time. It didn't fail but didn't go that smoothly, and I didn't really enjoy it.¹²⁸ Please write me a small text for the birthday of the king for which I'll compose some music *con amore* [ɔ: *with pleasure*]. You'll delight me and others with it. And it would be funny that you would deliver something like that from

¹²⁰Peter Christian Petersen (1785–1824), clarinetist in The Royal Orchestra in Copenhagen (Wikipedia-DA; Thrane 1908, p. 447).

¹²¹Nicolaus Heinrich Massmann (1766–1816), enlightenment era educator, founder of the *Massmann Sunday Schools*, primarily aimed at craft apprentices. 'Even if the main purpose of the education was to teach the apprentices to read and calculate it would not neglect inculcating the apprentices with the responsibilities they owe to their master and teacher'. Singing and drawing lessons were also given (leksikon.org, De Massmannske søndagsskoler, **TE**).

¹²²Adam Wilhelm Hauch (1755–1838), director of the Royal Theatre 1794–1808, steward 1814–1831 (DBL-3).

¹²³Rose Goldschmidt née Gerson (1795–1869, DJGB, I12987). For her 20th birthday Gerson dedicated a collection of vocal duets (*Olla Potrida*) to her. In a correspondence with Magdalene Thoresen (1819–1903, Store Norske Leksikon) Georg Brandes (1842–1927, Wikipedia-DE) mentions Rose Gerson as a very rich lady once offering him an amount for a trip abroad as she 'had more money than she wished' (Hareide 2015, **TE**).

¹²⁴Hanne (Johanne) Amalie Henriques (born 1794, still alive 1845, DJGB, I50837). Talented amateur soprano singer, participated in Friederike Brun's (footnote ¹⁴³, page 25) salons (Thiele 1917, p. 179). Performed numerous Gerson songs (Gerson 1823a; Abrahams, *Meddelelser*, p. 76; Gigas 1899, p. 119).

¹²⁵Most likely Augusta Saabye, née Lauerwald (1789–1850), principal dancer at the Royal Theatre (Clausen and Rist 1906, pp. 112 sq.; Andersen, *brevbiografi*, letter no. 201 1838). Anonymous portrait in Wikimedia, File:Augusta Laurwald Saabye.jpg.

¹²⁶Marie Sophie Frederikke af Hessen-Kassel (1767–1852), Wikipedia-EN, Marie of Hesse-Kassel).

¹²⁷Just Mathias Thiele (1795–1874), was a Danish scholar and librarian. A central figure during the Danish Golden Age, he contributed to Danish cultural life in a number of capacities. He collected and published Danish folk tales with inspiration from the Brothers Grimm and founded the Royal Print Collection, today part of the Danish National Gallery (Wikipedia-EN, Just Mathias Thiele).

¹²⁸'Cantate i Anledning af Hendes Majestæt Dronningens og Hendes Kongelige Højhed Kronprinsessens høie Fødselsfest.' [ɔ: *Cantata for the high birthdays of Her Majesty The Queen and Her Royal Highness The Crown Princess*], København 1821 (Thiele 1821). Gerson's music for this has not been preserved. According to Gerson's thematic catalogue the music was 'amalgamated' with the music of the birthday cantata for King Frederic VI.

Paris.¹²⁹ If you don't like the idea I'll withdraw my request. But if you concede then please don't delay – because I don't want to rush the composition, and January 28 is just around the corner. A chorus, a little soprano solo, suitable for the choir or a solo ensemble, possibly ending up in a duet with the soprano, and a final chorus – voila tout ce-qu'il me faut [ɔ: *There! That's all I need*].¹³⁰

Just another matter, which may not interest you anymore: through a royal decree it has again been permitted to sign contracts in banknotes which has been forbidden for the last three years.¹³¹

And now, finishing off, my sincere regards to your dear wife.¹³² I don't know who should feel ashamed that I need to add – without having ever met her. Kind greetings to your Paul,¹³³ and the kindest to yourself from my family and from your sincerely devoted

Gerson

¹²⁹Having Baggesen deliver the text of a birthday cantata for the absolutist Danish king from Paris, the capital of the French revolution, would be a funny thought for Gerson. Of course he couldn't possibly expand that thought.

¹³⁰Baggesen didn't deliver the requested text. Gerson's birthday cantata for King Frederick VI (G.173) was performed February 1821 to a text by Simon Sørensen Meisling (1787-1856), today primarily known as a less-than-beloved headmaster for the young Hans Christian Andersen at the grammar school in Slagelse (DBL-3).

¹³¹See footnote ⁸⁹, page 17.

¹³²Françoise (Fanny) Baggesen née Reybaz (1774-1822, DBL-3, Jens Baggesen).

¹³³Paul Baggesen (1804-1822, DBL-3, Jens Baggesen).

Georg Gerson to Jens Baggesen, April 4, 1822¹³⁴

Dear Baggesen.

It was not possible for me to come to Marly yesterday.¹³⁵ I'm leaving tomorrow and ask you to meet me at half past two tomorrow (Friday midday). That will make it possible to see you once more before I leave.¹³⁶

April 4, 1822

Yours sincere

Gerson

¹³⁴Gerson 1822

¹³⁵In 1804 Jens Baggesen purchased a house in Marly-le-Roi near by Paris and lived there with his family (DBL-3, Jens Baggesen).

¹³⁶As business partner with the merchant and banker Joseph Hambro (footnote ⁸³, page 16) Gerson was deeply involved since 1821 in negotiations with an English banking consortium for a large bank loan to the Danish state and stayed for a long time in London (Bramsen and Wain 1979, pp. 172 sqq.; Konow 2007, pp. 23 sqq.). His songs G.176–189, were written in London in this period, between October 14, 1821 and June 5, 1822. Gerson was passing through Paris April 4 and later also June 5 where he wrote a song for 3 male voices (G.190). During the negotiations for the loan he probably passed through Paris several times on his travels between Copenhagen and London.

Georg Gerson to Jens baggesen, July 31, 1824¹³⁷

[page 1]

Copenhagen July 31, 1824

Mr. Counsellor J. J. Baggesen

Bern.

I'm fulfilling a pleasant duty by informing you of my blessed betrothal on the 20th with Miss Adelaide David.¹³⁸

I'm convinced of your kind participation and commend myself and my wife to your goodwill.

quite sincerely¹³⁹

Georg Gerson

My dear, old friend!

You're one of the first to whom I've sent the above announcement. You know my wife, and you are my friend. You proved the latter on February 15 by writing me your exceedingly kind letter. I received it only recently because I've been absent for four months and was travelling about in Germany for my health.¹⁴⁰ I've sympathised with your illness, thank goodness now shrunken. I know it well myself. Praise to the Creator that you and I both recovered so soon and so much. May my betrothal announcement be the best bulletin of health for my friends.

It's over with the violin and also with the little bit of singing. The *calligrapher* needs to pull himself together strongly if he still wants to write legibly. Apart from that I've not become any dumber and may say that I'm still up to my business. But I don't work $\frac{1}{10}$ as much as I did before. I need help and have gotten it through the chief clerk of my office, Bertelsen,¹⁴¹ among others. Under my guidance he also

¹³⁷Gerson 1824

¹³⁸Adelaide Nathan David (1796–1891, DJGB, I14745), sister of the writer, economist and politician Christian Georg Nathan David. In 1826, upon Gerson's death she married Prince Antonio Pignatello-Ruffo, 1823–1826, chargé d'affaires for the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies (Jørgensen 1950, pp. 13 sq.). In a contemporary correspondence Adelaide was described as a 'lady of culture and talent'. Gerson knew her already as a youngster and wrote compositions for her. As 'the widow of privy counsellor Gerson' she brought along '150,000 Species' [ɔ: "*Thaler*", the Danish currency in 1826] (footnote ⁸⁹, page 17) into the marriage. As 'fils cadet de famille' [ɔ: *youngest son in the family*] the prince was completely without means. Hence one shouldn't resent his 'placing himself in a situation where he could stand on his own feet' (Daae 1876, pp. 82 sq., TE). The couple relocated to Italy and eventually settled in Rome where the princess opened her house for compatriots and as customary in that country arranged small musical soirées. (Jørgensen 1950, pp. 13 sq., TE).

¹³⁹Written in another hand, probably that of Adelaide Nathan David.

¹⁴⁰In the summer 1822 Gerson, while returning from a business travel to London, was hit by a stroke in Hamburg (Gerson 1823a, p. 152).

¹⁴¹The Norwegian publisher Christopher Grøndahl (1784—1864, NBL-2) writes in a letter (June

handled the affairs of my friend Baggesen. I let him take care of the correspondence with you because I feared you were not able to decipher my then scratchy writing (my current, disfigured handwriting is yet another task, difficult to handle!?). I'm sincerely pleased that this was to your satisfaction.

I don't need to say how much I take delight in your letters. Please, please write to me from time to time, maybe just a few lines, as a sign of life.

Courlænder¹⁴² will add a few words. Mrs. Brun¹⁴³ has received an epoch-making letter from you which I haven't yet read.

Please let me know about your plans for the future in so far as I can and should assist. Would you prefer to return to us?¹⁴⁴

You may be interested in knowing that Peppina Siboni¹⁴⁵ has been betrothed to the Prussian vice Consul Ferd. Tutein.¹⁴⁶ Rottbøll¹⁴⁷ is dead, didn't leave [unreadable words]. Bierring¹⁴⁸ has been expelled for three years – and has been

25, 1838) to the Danish writer Nicolai Frederik Severin Grundtvig (1783–1872, DBL-3), that he's going to send him 'Berthelsen's and Hoskiær's cheque on 131 "Rigsbankdaler" (see footnote ⁸⁹, page 17) for C. I. Hambro & Son' (Yde 2012, p. 88, **TE**). The trading house 'Bertelsen & Hoskiær' was handling the interests of Joseph Hambro's bank in Norway (Nielsen 1875, p. 154). 'Bertelsen' may be the Bertelsen mentioned by Gerson. 1825–1826 the agent was another 'clerk' from the house of Hambro, Andreas Hansen (1798–1873, DBL-3, A.N. Hansen).

¹⁴²See footnote ²⁵, page 7.

¹⁴³Friederike Brun, née Münter (1765–1835, Wikipedia-EN, Neue Deutsche Biographie), Danish, German born writer. She arranged well-respected literary and musical salons with among others her daughter Ida Brun as an esteemed singer and dancer. Gerson was among the participants in the salons and wrote a number of songs for Friederike and Ida Brun.

¹⁴⁴Jens Baggesen left Paris in 1823, lived in Switzerland until 1825, sought cure from a severe kidney disease at various health resorts. In 1826 he started a trip to Denmark but died in Hamburg (DBL-3, Jens Baggesen).

¹⁴⁵Josepha Aloisia Francisca Romalia Anna Maria (Peppina) Tutein (1806–1866), daughter of Guiseppe Siboni (see footnote ¹⁵², page 26). Took piano and singing lessons as a child. Participated already at age 14 in public concerts. Performed in 1822 in Prague as soloist in a piano concerto by J. N. Hummel (1778–1837). Because of her marriage in 1824 with Ferdinand Tutein (footnote ¹⁴⁶, page 25) she was prevented from pursuing a career as a professional career as musician. But in 1839 she performed as the first female piano soloist in a concert arranged by 'Musikforeningen' [=: *The Musical Society*] (see footnote ¹¹⁹, page 20). And her house became a musical centre in Copenhagen (Dansk Kvindebiografisk Leksikon).

¹⁴⁶Ferdinand Tutein (1788–1880), merchant and Prussian vice consul (Wikipedia-DA, Tutein).

¹⁴⁷Jens Laasby Rottbøll (1766–1824), 'Generalfiskal' [=: *chief public prosecutor*] (DBL-1; Den Store Danske, Generalfiskal).

¹⁴⁸Niels Christian Bjerring (1773–1840), Danish jurist; became an acknowledged and highly sought-after lawyer. He was called 'the little Marat' because of his rebellious, anti-absolutist attitude. During the monetary reform in 1813 (footnote ⁸⁹, page 17) he lost his capital, primarily accumulated during the Napoleonic Wars. Afterwards he directed his anger against the Danish financial administration, particularly the treasury secretary Møsting (1759–1843). In 1824 he was expelled for improper writings (DBL-3; Abrahams, Meddelelser, pp. 152 sqq., **TE**).

disbarred – and has moreover gotten increasingly bitter. Trine Olsen¹⁴⁹ has been snatched away from her inconsolable parents, quite suddenly. Counsellor of State Splittorff¹⁵⁰ and Major Scheel¹⁵¹ have both embezzled. That’s more or less the quintessence of what has happened here recently.

Siboni’s¹⁵² pupil, the little Ida,¹⁵³ is going to debut this winter.

I’m intending to marry on October 10. That very day is my 34th birthday. Please think kindly of me.

Take care of yourself – and keep me dearly in mind

your sincere friend

Gerson

¹⁴⁹The young August Bournonville (1805–1879, later ballet master at the Royal Theatre in Copenhagen (DBL-3) writes in a letter to his parents in Copenhagen (September 15, 1824) ‘Plusieurs choses se sont passés à Copenhague dont vous ne m’avez rien dit Le mort de Mlle Trine Olsen’ [ɔ: *This and that has happened in Copenhagen which you didn’t say anything about. The death of Miss Trine Olsen*] (Bournonville 1969, p. 23, **TE**). The editors of the letters assume (Bournonville 1978, p. 27) that Trine Olsen is Cathrine Olsen (born 1800), daughter of Gottsche Hans Olsen (1760–1829), professor, director at the Royal Theatre in Copenhagen (DBL-3). Jens Baggesen wrote a poem to Miss Catharina Olsen on her confirmation day (J. Baggesen 1845, pp. 132 sq.) and in 1813 he dedicated his rhymed letter ‘Fortsættelsen af Da jeg var lille’ [ɔ: *Continuation of When I was little*] (J. Baggesen 1847, p. 18). Gottsche Hans Olsen belonged to the circle around Friederike Brun (footnote ¹⁴³, page 25, Bobé 1910, p. 234). Cathrine Olsen’s death June 15, 1824 was announced by her fiancé on June 17 in ‘Kiøbenhavns kongelig alene privilegerede Adressecomptoirs Efterretninger’ [ɔ: *News of the Royally Privileged Address Office in Copenhagen*] and on June 19 by her parents (Adresse-Contoirs Efterretninger).

¹⁵⁰Counsellor of State Johan Henric Splittorff (1756–1833) (Slægtstavle for Leif Høxbroe). ‘Counsellor of State and treasurer of the general commissariat J. Splittorff has been arrested due to cash deficit, said to be 25000 “Rigsbankdaler” (see footnote ⁸⁹, page 17). He attempted to kill himself through a pistol shot in his mouth, which failed, however and he was severely injured’ (Christensen 1909, p. 407, **TE**).

¹⁵¹Hans Jacob von Scheel (1779–1851), Danish-Norwegian officer and official. Was appreciated for his mapping of Iceland and in 1816 was nominated inspector at the Copenhagen class lottery. In 1824 he was accused of fraudulent accounting and sentenced to prison and repayment of 350000 ‘Rigsbankdaler’ (footnote ⁸⁹, page 17, Wikipedia-NO).

¹⁵²Giuseppe Vincenzo Antonio Siboni (1780–1839) was an Italian operatic tenor, opera director, choir conductor, and voice teacher. He began his career in his native country in 1797 and actively performed in major Italian opera houses up through 1818. From 1806 to 1809, he performed successfully in London, and from 1810 to 1814, he was active in Vienna, where he enjoyed the friendship of Ludwig van Beethoven. He played a critical role in Danish musical life from 1819 until his death in 1839. In 1819, he joined the Royal Danish Theatre in Copenhagen, where he worked first as a singer and later as director of the opera chorus and head director. In 1827 he founded the Royal Conservatory of Music in Copenhagen. Wikipedia-EN).

¹⁵³Ida Henriette da Fonseca (1806–1858), opera singer, composer, was educated by Guiseppe Siboni as a contralto singer, primarily in the virtuoso Rossini style, debuted in 1827 at the Royal Theatre in Copenhagen, published two volumes of songs in 1848 and 1853 (Dansk Kvindebiografisk Leksikon).

Martin Courlænder to Jens Baggesen, July 31, 1824

Thank you very much my good Baggesen, for your greetings and for promising to write me a long letter soon – this is the only thing left for me to write, since privy counsellor Gerson has already reported all the news, but on serious reflection I believe he forgot to tell you that next year I'll have the pleasure of seeing Gustav¹⁵⁴ matriculate as a student, perhaps with the best marks – Æsculapiden minor.¹⁵⁵ I know how much you're interested in us, hence this joyful information, and affectionate regards from my wife and my family.

I read your poems very diligently, the most appropriate in the present chapter of my life.

Wer nie sein Brodt mit Thränen aß [ο: *Who didn't eat his bread with tears*]¹⁵⁶ etc.
May you live well and happier than does your friend

Courlænder

¹⁵⁴Johan Gustav Georg Courlænder () (1809–1863, DJGB, 182327). Gustav Courlænder was privately tutored for the examination for the general certification by the philologist Carl Wilhelm Elberling (1800–1870, Kolthoff 1970, p. 58). He only passed his *Examen Artium* in 1826, but then, as hoped by his father, with the best marks: *Laudabilis* (Selmer 1833, p. 76). A year later, at the second part of the examination he got the second mark: *Haud illaudabilis* (ibid., p. 107). Passed his exams as surgeon and physician 1832–1833. From 1838 he was appointed doctor in the Danish navy (Brünniche 1863, p. 477).

¹⁵⁵Probably a reference to his son's forthcoming study of medicine: 'Aesculapius. The Roman name for Asclepius, the Greek god of healing' (*Encyclopedia Mythica* n.d.). Courlænder is maybe also quoting a recently published collection of small treatises in which the controversial author Ludvig Baden (1764–1840, DBL-3, G.L. Baden) describes 'Æskulapiden' as priests of this god (Baden 1824, p. 249).

¹⁵⁶From Goethe's 'Wilhelm Meisters Lehrjahre' [ο: *Wilhelm Meister's Apprenticeship and Travels*], vol. 2, chapter 13 (Goethe 1795, p. 346),

Abbreviations

DBL-1	Dansk Biografisk Leksikon, 1. edition, 1887-1905
DBL-3	Dansk Biografisk Leksikon, 3. edition, 1979-1984
DJGDB	Danish-Jewish Genealogical Database
NBL-2	Norsk Biografisk Leksikon, 2. edition
SDE	Den Store Danske Encyklopædi
TE	Translated by the editor

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