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# The restless and searching spirit of the 1890s — Berlioz's La Damnation de Faust in Helsinki: 1890-luvun levoton ja etsivä henki - Berliozin Faustin tuomio Helsingissä

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Helena Tyrväinen

# The restless and searching spirit of the 1890s — Berlioz's *La Damnation de Faust* in Helsinki[1]

An announcement published in the Helsinki newspaper *Uusi Suometar* on 21 April, 1900 reveals a great deal about the first eighteen years of the existence of the orchestra of the Helsinki Philharmonic Society and about Finnish musical life in general:

> Faust, the dramatic legend by Berlioz, will be given in the University Festival Hall on Wednesday 25th of this month. When performed some years ago, this great symphonic work obtained a success which in comparison to other musical works is probably unequalled here. The attractive power it held over the audience seemed unlimited.[2]

With its great Berlioz concerts of the end of the nineteenth century the orchestra of the Philharmonic Society joined an international current which posthumously advanced the status of the French composer to that of a cult figure. In Finland this phenomenon climaxed with eleven performances of *La Damnation de Faust* in April 1894 and 1895. These first Finnish performances of *La Damnation* offer a window into the special characteristics of what has been called the Golden Age of Finnish arts.

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[1] The primary sources for this article are the writings in Helsinki newspapers concerning performances of Berlioz's works in the city between 1885 and 1931, efficiently compiled by Ms. Virve Arjanne in connection with my musicological seminar at the University of Helsinki in 1996–1997, 'French music in Helsinki, 1882–1932'. I am grateful to the University of Helsinki Professors Matti Klinge, Riitta Konttinen and H.K. Riikonen, as well as to MA Anssi Sinnemäki and MA Anna Ripatti for their valuable comments on earlier versions of this essay and to the Kone Foundation for their generous support of my research.

[2] *Uusi Suometar* 21 April, 1900. La Damnation de Faust.

Finnish nationalism merged with European trends; the national and the international were inseparable. The German musical hegemony that had traditionally prevailed in Finland was now joined by the pervasive cultural influence of France. The German musical hegemony that had traditionally prevailed in Finland was joined by the pervasive cultural influence of France. One and the same spirit animated musical creation and performance. European art music vigorously integrated with Finnish subjectivity for musical audiences as well as amateurs of music. These phenomena shall be observed in this article, in particular, through the Helsinki 1894 *La Damnation* project.

Hector Berlioz (1803–1869) was first inspired by the Faust motive after reading the newly-published French translation of part one of Goethe's *Faust* by Gérard de Nerval in 1828. The following year, at the age of twenty six, the composer completed his 'Eight Scenes from Faust' which, however, he soon judged to be immature.[3] A few years after the publication of the French translation of part two in 1840, he drew up a libretto for a new work in co-operation with the French writer Almire Gandonnière, again using part one as his starting point. In the version we know today, the symphonic legend from 1846, Berlioz does not rely on Goethe's final settlement, the salvation of Faust through the 'eternally-feminine'. His Faust only signs a contract with the devil once it is the matter of the salvation of Marguerite — his damnation is the prize paid for her salvation.[4]

Despite the fact that *La Damnation de Faust* had its first performance in Paris as early as in 1846, one still cannot claim that Finnish musical culture lagged behind the currents of continental Europe by half a century. Indeed, Berlioz had lost a good deal of his cultural cache in his home city with the economic failure of the first performance of the work and was thus obliged to seek his fortune abroad. His creative work found a particularly receptive audience in the German cultural community.[5] Yet as a conductor of his own works he also enjoyed success in the wider international sphere. He conducted *La Damnation de Faust* in St. Petersburg, Moscow, Riga and Berlin in 1847, in London in 1852, in Dresden in 1854, in Weimar in 1856 and in

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[3] Berlioz included parts of 'Eight Scenes from Faust' in *La Damnation de Faust*.

[4] Cf. Guy Marchand, 'Le mythe de Faust dans la musique du XIXe siècle', in Jean-jacques Nattiez (ed.), *Musiques. Une encyclopédie pour le XXIe siècle. 4 Histoire des musiques européennes*, (Paris, 2004), 1328–1347, more specifically, pp. 1334, 1337–1338.

[5] R[ainer] Schmusch. 'Allemagne et Europe centrale, Voyages en', in Pierre Citron, Cécile Reynaud & Jean-Pierre Bartoli, Peter Bloom (eds.), *Dictionnaire Berlioz* (Paris, 2003), 20–26, more specifically, p. 26.

Vienna in the 1860s.[6] The renaissance of *La Damnation of Faust* in the composer's native country only occurred after his death, thus in a historical moment that was much more favourable to romantic visions and deep individual emotion. In the years following the 1871 defeat of France by Prussia, such an inclination coincided with a determined forging of a French national identity. Before the 1870s, the symphonic orchestras of Paris had usually only given partial performances of Berlioz's extensive works. In 1875 conductor Edouard Colonne gave in the Châtelet theatre, his usual concert hall, complete performances of *L'enfance du Christ* and *Roméo et Juliette*.[7] On 18 February, 1877 an "extreme rehabilitation" of *La Damnation de Faust* finally took place with the simultaneous Parisian performances of the whole work by two rivals, Jules Pasdeloup, with his *Concerts populaires* and Edouard Colonne, with his *Association artistique*.[8] In Paris this homage represented a significant triumph resulting in ever more performances of the work. The economic success of the Colonne orchestra was due to a great extent to the success of *La Damnation*.[9] The year 1898 witnessed the orchestra's hundredth performance of the work.

Julien Tiersot, then a student at the Paris Conservatoire (and later director of its library, a music scholar and a composer) described the atmosphere in these historical Colonne concerts in the following terms:

> Starting with this moment [18 February 1877] the author of this essay speaks in the capacity of a witness. He participated in every one of these events. He conserves of them a profound memory, indeed, to him they seem to be the cause of the vividest impressions he ever experienced in connection with art. ... There was something providential, so to say, in the apparition of Berlioz's work at that very moment. In it, the French spirit recognised its strongest characteristics, and in him, instinctively without analysis, the national master whose divine genius had proudly expressed its highest aspirations.
>
> What unforgettable days were these Sundays spent in the highest floors of

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[6] Charles Malherbe, 'La Damnation de Faust. Fête du jubilé de l'Association artistique (1873–1898)', in *Centième audition de la Damnation de Faust* [program book of Association artistique] (11 December 1898), 550–559, more specifically, pp. 552–554. According to Malherbe, Berlioz even conducted parts of his work in London in 1848, Paris in 1849 and 1850, Leipzig, Baden, Frankfurt, Brunswick and Hannover in 1853 and Paris in 1861. Malherbe does not specify which one (or ones) of the performances Berlioz conducted in Vienna in 1864, 1866 and 1868 were of the integral work. D. Kern Holoman in his article 'Le voyageur', in Catherine Massip & Cécile Reynaud (eds.), *Berlioz. La voix du romantisme* (Paris, 2003), 163–173, gives a somewhat different picture of what works Berlioz conducted on his journeys and in which cases the whole *La Damnation de Faust* was given.

[7] Jann Pasler, 'Building a public for orchestral music — Les Concerts Colonne', in Hans Erich Bödecker, Patrice Veit & Michael Werner (eds.), *Le concert et son publique: mutation de la vie musicale en Europe de 1870 à 1914* (Paris, 2000), 209–240, more specifically, pp. 216–219.

[8] Julien Tiersot, *La « Damnation de Faust », étude historique et critique, analyse musicale* (s.l. [publisher: Mélottée], s.a. [c.a. 1920]), 85.

[9] Pasler, 'Building a public'.

> [the] Châtelet [auditorium] where a vibrant, communicative, sometimes noisy audience crowded, an audience however whose need of candour resolved in nothing but ardent manifestations of enthusiasm! The intelligent youth in its entirety came to be seated. The proximity of the Latin quarters furthered the access of the students. ... About the weaknesses [of the composition] we wanted to know nothing and, frankly, we noticed no such things at this moment when we had not yet familiarized ourselves with the great polyphony of Bach and his successors.
>
> Once the audition started everyone was all ears. Certainly, in order to recognize this deep silence, this complete absorption of one's resources through harmony it was not necessary to have seen Bayreuth (where none of us had been by then). When the conductor had given the initial cue, due to a unanimous consent, the dedicated expression was appreciated so intensely that one could have heard a fly in the hall. This is quite literally true to the extent that I recall how during pieces of a very fine sonority, such as the "Dance of the Sylphs", even the barely perceptible sound of burning gas seemed unbearable to us! But on the other hand, once the piece was over, what a crash, what a noise, what a roar of applause, of cheers and cries of encores! Indeed, it happened that six pieces had to be given twice during one concert.[10]

It was sometimes said about the listeners who filled the 3000-seat Châtelet hall: "A bit too Berliozian."[11]

Berlioz composed *La Damnation of Faust* at a moment when France still looked at Germany through benevolent cultural spectacles. Despite his reservations concerning German cultural life, Berlioz praised the seriousness of its musical

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[10] A partir d'ici, l'auteur de cette étude parle en témoin : il a assisté à tous ces événements ; il en garde un profond souvenir et le conserve comme étant celui des plus vives impressions d'art qu'il ait éprouvées en sa vie. ... L'apparition de l'œuvre de Berlioz à ce moment précis a eu, pour ainsi dire, quelque chose de providentiel. L'esprit français y reconnut ses plus puissantes qualités, et, d'instinct, sans rien analyser, ce fut avec une sorte d'orgueil qu'on acclama le maître national dont le génie divinateur avait fièrement exprimé ses plus hautes aspirations. Quelles inoubliables journées que ces dimanches passés aux étages supérieurs du Châtelet, où s'entassait un public vibrant, communicatif, parfois turbulant, mais dont le besoin d'expansion ne se résolvait qu'en d'ardentes manifestations d'enthousiasme ! Toute la jeunesse intelligente y venait s'asseoir. La proximité du quartier latin en facilitait l'accès aux étudiants. ... Pour les défauts, nous n'en voulions rien connaître, et, en vérité, nous n'en apercevions aucun, à cette époque où nous n'étions pas encore familiarisés avec la grande polyphonie de Bach et de ses successeurs. L'audition commencée, chacun était tout oreilles. Certes, il n'avait pas été besoin de voir Bayreuth (où aucun de nous n'avait encore été) pour connaître ce silence profond, cette absorption complète des facultés par l'harmonie. D'un consentement unanime, à peine le chef d'orchestre avait-il donné le signal de l'exécution que, suivant l'expression consacrée, on aurait entendu voler une mouche. Cela est tellement à la lettre que, je m'en souviens, pendant des morceaux d'une sonorité très ténue, comme la Danse des Sylphes, l'imperceptible bruit que fait le gaz en brûlant nous paraissait insupportable ! Mais aussi, quand un morceau était fini, quel fracas, quel tumulte, quel tapage d'applaudissements, d'acclamations, de cris de *bis !* Il arriva un moment où il fallut redire jusqu'à six morceaux dans le concert. Tiersot, *La « Damnation de Faust »*, 85–88.

[11] "Un peu trop Berliozistes." Hugues Imbert, 'Edouard Colonne', in Hugues Imbert, *Portraits et études* (Paris, 1894), 41–52, more specifically, p. 44. Concerning the auditorium of Théâtre du Châtelet, literary sources differ on the number of seats in the hall, reflecting the changes in seating at different times. According to Stavroula Marti, in an essay concerning Parisian musical life after World War I, 'Les grands concerts parisiens au seuil des années [19]20', *Revue internationale de musique française*, 29 (1989), 18–27, more specifically, p. 22, the number of seats was 3300.

practices and was a warm supporter of convergence between France and Germany.[12] He took an interest in Wagner's music, while the latter, in turn, profited from Berlioz's orchestral innovations.[13] Liszt, having himself been inspired by the Faust subject, encouraged Berlioz to write *La Damnation de Faust*; the work is dedicated to him.[14] Berlioz, together with Wagner and Liszt, was widely hailed as one of the principal representatives of the New German School, a concept developed in Weimar by Franz Brendel and emphasizing the union of music and the poetic.[15] When, as a consequence of the war in 1870–1871, a unified Germany emerged, its musical culture was perceived by the French to be a rival to their own. Paradoxically, as the frivolity of the Second Empire was increasingly perceived by the Third Republic as the cause of its downfall, the seriousness of German musical culture began to be appreciated in France as a virtue.[16] In an episode that exposes the whimsical nature of the history of music, Berlioz, during the last decades of the nineteenth century, was harnessed posthumously as part of the drive to inspire national pride and strengthen national identity following the collective French trauma of the Prussian defeat.

Thirsty for knowledge, new experiences and material goods, Faust has often been presented as a symbol of the modern human being. The Western Faustian person is typically discontented with his or her actual surroundings and is constantly searching for fulfilment elsewhere. The attention devoted to Faust in the nineteenth century, 'the century of progress', is significant.[17] The Faustian myth has its origins in a sixteenth-century German folk legend, which was published at the end of that century under the title *Faustbuch* and subsequently rose to prominence across Europe. This version did not yet include the salvation of Faust through the power of the 'eternally-feminine', an aspect that was introduced by Goethe in his *Faust* tragedy, part one of which was published in 1808 and part two in 1832. It was this later

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[12] Schmusch, 'Voyages en Allemagne et Europe centrale', 26.

[13] See, for example, Peter Bloom, 'Wagner, Richard', in *Dictionnaire Berlioz*, 589–592.

[14] D[avid] Cairns, 'Damnation de Faust, La', in *Dictionnaire Berlioz*, 132–134, more specifically, pp. 132–133.

[15] About the New German School and Franz Brendel, see for example, John Williamson, 'Progress, modernity and the concept of an avant-garde', in Jim Samson (ed.), *Cambridge History of Nineteenth-Century Music* (Cambridge, 2002), 287–317, more specifically, pp. 300–302.

[16] This phase of French music history, which has until recently received little attention, is insightfully discussed by Michael Strasser in 'The Société Nationale and its Adversaries: The Musical Politics of *L'Invasion germanique* in the 1870s', *19th Century Music*, 3 (2001), 225–251.

[17] See, for example, Hannu Salmi, *Vuosisadan lapset. 1800-luvun kulttuurihistoria* (Turku, 2002), 47–63.

version that achieved cult status over the course of the nineteenth century.[18] German culture was the principal source of new ideas in Finland until the 1880s. The Finnish educated classes, who at this time originated primarily from the country's Swedish-speaking population, were familiar with *Faust* in German and in Swedish. Following several centuries of Swedish rule, the language of the leading echelons of Finnish society was Swedish, but with the establishment in 1809 of an autonomous Grand Duchy of the Russian Empire, Finnish language started to gain in impact.[19] The publication of part one of Goethe's *Faust* in Kaarlo Forsman's Finnish translation in 1884 is indicative of the rising status of Finnish as a language of education and culture. This translation widened the Finnish readership of the tragedy, once again giving its themes timely relevance in the intellectual climate of the Grand-Duchy of Finland. The Finnish theatre of Helsinki performed it a year after publication.[20] Musically, this intellectual climate was tinted by Wagner's visions, to which the leading Finnish authorities of the moment dedicated much of their attention in the practical sphere of the musical life as well as in literary discussions. Thus cultural interests in Finland reflected those of the wider European cultural scene. When, however, *La Damnation de Faust* was adopted into the Finnish cultural context, it gained new cultural significations. When a cultural object passes from the sphere of one national culture to that of another, it undergoes a metamorphosis that is largely of a semantic nature.[21]

## *Kajanus's* La Damnation *project as a phenomenon of the Golden Age of the Finnish arts*

Researchers on the history of Finland have claimed that by 1900 the Finnish collective self-esteem had become little short of megalomaniac — this Finnish self-esteem, they say, is unequalled in earlier as well as subsequent times, encompassing not only a sense of the national and political self, but also, and more specifically,

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[18] Marchand, 'Le mythe de Faust', 1328–1334.

[19] See also the article of Ulla-Britta Broman-Kananen in this publication.

[20] Pertti Lassila, 'Saksankielinen kirjallisuus', in H[annu] K. Riikonen, Urpo Kovala & Outi Paloposki (eds.), *Suomennoskirjallisuuden historia* 2 (Helsinki, 2007), 91–103, more specifically, p. 94.

[21] This remark is made by French scholar of cultural history and of Franco-German cultural relations Michel Espagne, Professor at Ecole Normale Supérieure, in his theory of cultural transfer in *Transferts culturels franco-allemands* (Paris, 1999), 20–24.

cultural self-assurance and pride.[22] The preceding decade was a period of dynamic growth in Finnish society including musical life. It seems to be in accordance with the spirit of the times that Faust — that restless, learned scholar bored by the commonly approved virtues and eager for new experiences — appealed to the educated Helsinki circles in the vanguard of social and cultural progress. The artistic atmosphere of that era and milieu is epitomised by painter Akseli Gallén (later, Gallen-Kallela) in his work from the early part of 1894, *The Symposium* (originally, *Symposion*; also called *Probleemi*), which has become one of the most famous paintings in the history of Finnish art. It portrays three Finns who have gone down in national and international cultural history: Gallén himself, the composer Jean Sibelius, and the conductor Robert Kajanus (1856–1933) were highly-acclaimed, international builders of the Finnish culture. The fourth person in the painting is sleeping and his face is obscured, but it is known from historical documentation that Gallén's model was the composer, organist, pianist, and music critic Oskar Merikanto (1868–1924).[23] Gallén was on personal terms with his subjects; during this period the same group spent long evenings in the restaurant of the Kämp hotel in Helsinki deep in conversations about art and society. Gallén was aware that Kajanus, as a composer, was a pioneer of Finnish national romanticism and that his sphere of interests reached much wider. A determined man, he succeeded in generating sufficient trust in Finnish society and business circles to found the orchestra of the Helsinki Filharmonic Society in 1882.[24] He engaged skilful musicians, most of whom were of German origin. He was familiar with such European music centres as Leipzig, Berlin, Paris and St. Petersburg. Kajanus had accepted as his mission to introduce the Finns to the staple European art music repertoire and, beginning with the premiere of *Kullervo* in 1892, to the works of Sibelius who from then on was acclaimed as a national genius.[25] He was involved in

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[22] Kerstin Smeds, '"Missä Suomen sielu on asuva." Suomi maailmannäyttelyissä viime vuosisadan lopulla', *Tieteessä tapahtuu*, 15:2 (1997), electronic publication, http://urn.fi/URN:NBN:fi:ELE-531015, verified on 31 July, 2009. According to Smeds, an equally powerful manifestation of Finnish identity might only have been seen during the Finnish Winter War, in 1939–1940.

[23] Janne Gallen-Kallela-Sirén, *Minä palaan jalanjäljilleni. Gallen-Kallelan elämä ja taide* (Helsinki, 2001), 199–200. The sphere of professional activities of multitalented Merikanto was also international.

[24] Called until 1895 the Helsinki Orchestral Society (Helsingin Orkesteriyhdistys), and from 1914 on, Helsinki Philharmonic Orchestra (Helsingin kaupunginorkesteri).

[25] Concerning Kajanus's activities, see e.g., Robert Layton & Fabian Dahlström, 'Kajanus, Robert', *Grove Music Online*. *Oxford Music Online*. 19 Aug. 2009 http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/14602, Yrjö Suomalainen, *Robert*

many ways in the general modernisation project that was reshaping Finnish society, its vistas of progress and internationalisation applying just as much to society as to art.

There was probably talk in the '*Symposium*' circle of the big project scheduled for April 1894, which was to be the Philharmonic's most notable event before the turn of the century. Speaking in terms of artistic content, Kajanus's *Damnation* project even gave voice to the nostalgia, born as criticism of the idea of progress, for a mythical timelessness and infinity, features which are also captured in Gallén's *Symposium*. Thus it is appropriate to ask if it is possible to detect something of the spirit that fired this project in its timeless mystery, the classical setting, the nocturnal sky, the strange winged apparition, the encounter of the visible world and mystery[26]. Art historian Janne Gallen-Kallela-Sirén remarks that the painter depicted Kajanus as "a god-like figure, actively moulding the fate of mankind, while Sibelius presents himself as an introspective man moulding his personal fate and visions".[27] Following the hermeneutics of Gallen-Kallela-Sirén, one might ask if it was Faust, unfettered as he was by conventional morality and rationality, who so riveted Kajanus as to make him appear god-like to Gallén.

Kajanus must have spent months preparing for the 1894 production of *La Damnation of Faust*. The practical preparations were by necessity preceded by an extensive period studying the score.[28] One could ask if without the support of his 'Symposium' confrères, Kajanus, responsible as he was for his orchestra's finances, would have had the courage to assemble such a vast, indeed, a megalomaniac international band of performers. In a newspaper announcement he described it as follows:

> On Wednesday 18 April [is to performed] with the gracious assistance of Aino Achté, the harpists Katharina and Eugenie Kühne (from St. Petersburg), the

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*Kajanus*. *Hänen elämänsä ja toimintansa* (Helsinki, 1952), Einari Marvia & Matti Vainio, *Helsingin kaupunginorkesteri 1882–1982* (Helsinki, 1993), and Matti Vainio, *"Nouskaa aatteet!" Robert Kajanus Elämä ja taide* (Helsinki, 2002).

[26] See, for example, Gallen-Kallela-Sirén, *Minä palaan jalanjäljilleni*, 193–197..

[27] Ibid., 198–199.

[28] The orchestral score Kajanus used was probably the German-language hand-written copy in two parts, now stored by the music library of Helsinki Philharmonic Orchestra (H. Berlioz, *La Damnation de Faust. Légende en quatre Parties / Faust's Verdammnis*. Helsinki, Music Library of Helsinki Philharmonic Orchestra, No. 2238). The Helsinki Philharmonic Orchestra stamp in it contains the date "5.–XII–1933", indicating that it was obtained the year of Kajanus's death. One can conclude from this that the orchestra took into its possession a score which had until then been stored by the conductor.

> opera singer Mr. L. Götjes (from Mannheim), Mr. A. Ojanperä, the violinists, professor J. Smit (from Belgium) and Mr. C. Kihlman, the Symphonic Choir, the orchestra of the Orchestral Society, and of music amateurs, in the University Festival Hall, Faust, a dramatic legend in four parts. Music composed by Hector Berlioz. Number of participants ca. 240.[29]

The first concert took place one day later than was first planned, on 19 April, 1894.

Until the Finnish premiere of *La Damnation de Faust*, the performances of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony in 1888 had been regarded as the greatest achievement of the orchestra and of the Symphonic Choir tutored by the conductor's sister, Selma Kajanus.[30] The underlying Beethoven–Berlioz tension, both stylistic and temporal, paralleled a more concrete tension within the conductor's public position at home in Finland: some years earlier the press had severely criticised him for his predilection for modern romantic music.[31] Works by Berlioz were included in Kajanus's repertoire from at least 1885, when he conducted *Carnaval romain* once and *Symphonie fantastique* twice. This was followed in 1888 by two performances of *Harold en Italie* and the overture to *Benvenuto Cellini*, in 1890 by the overture to *Le Roi Lear*, and in 1891 by the overture to *Les Francs juges*.[32] The *Damnation* project, however, grew to encompass quite different dimensions. The number of players in the orchestra was augmented considerably,[33] and the Symphonic Choir were joined by a chorus of students from the cantor school and a choir of school boys.[34] Kajanus found his

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[29] *Päivälehti* (13 April 1894).

[30] See, for example, Vainio, *"Nouskaa aatteet!"*, 223. In these Beethoven concerts the number of performers was ca. 150.

[31] It was the opinion of Ernst Fabritius, who in his writings in the press often critizied Kajanus's repertory, that the proportion of classical and new music was out of balance. For Fabritius, Spohr, von Weber, Gade, Mendelssohn, Schumann, Liszt, Wagner, Brahms, Tchaikovsky, Grieg and Kajanus himself were representatives of modern music. He thought in particular, that works by Bach, Händel, Cherubini, Haydn, Mozart and Beethoven had been neglected. Yet Fabritius was quite willing to admit that Kajanus's orchestra had executed Liszt's *Faust Symphony* and Wagner's overture to *Der fliegende Holländer*, for example, in a brilliant manner that would have brought honour to many an orchestra of the world's metropolises. Vainio, *"Nouskaa aatteet!"*, 254–259.

[32] This information comes from Nils-Eric Ringbom, *Helsingin Orkesteri 1882–1932. Helsingin Orkesteriyhdistys, Filharmooninen Seura, Helsingin kaupunginorkesteri* (Helsinki, 1932). Ringbom does not include in his listings the popular concerts of Kajanus's orchestra. At this time Berlioz was not the only representative of French music in the concert repertories of the Finnish capital. Saint-Saëns in particular, had a valued and well-established place.

[33] A slip attached to the orchestral score which Kajanus probably used (see note 25) contains information on the orchestral parts posessed by the Helsinki Philharmonic Orchestra. According to this information, the amount of material for the strings was scarce: 1st violin: 4, 2nd violin: 3, viola: 2, cello: 2, double bass: 2. It cannot be concluded from this alone that the work was in reality performed with such a small body of string players; in 1895, the orchestra normally consisted of 45 musicians. Ringbom, *Helsingin Orkesteri*, 51.

[34] O. [pseudonym of Oskar Merikanto], 'Hector Berlioz'n "Faust"', *Päivälehti* (18 April 1894).

Méphistophélès close at hand, giving the role to the beloved Finnish bass Abraham Ojanperä, whose teachers had included the legendary Pauline Viardot-García in Paris. Aino Achté (later Ackté),[35] who sang the part of Marguerite, had her eighteenth birthday during the production in the spring of 1894. The confidence she gained from this experience undoubtedly stood her in good stead when she was admitted as the best female applicant to the singers' class of the Paris Conservatoire that autumn.[36] Consequently, when *La Damnation de Faust* was repeated in Helsinki in the following spring, she was no longer available, and Kajanus had to invite Alma Hulting, a soprano at the Royal Opera in Stockholm, to take her place. The part of Faust was sung by German tenors, first by Ludwig Götjes from Mannheim and in 1895 by Heinrich Zeller from Weimar. Even the harp parts were occupied by exceptionally capable musicians coming from St. Petersburg.[37]

Kajanus was part of a circle of Finnish cultural elite who, despite of being of Swedish-speaking origin, had taken as their mission to advance Finnish-language culture. In this context, he was often attacked by the Swedish-language cultural circles. In the course of April 1894 the curiosity of the readers of Helsinki newspapers was whetted by an assortment of concert advertisements, invitations to rehearsals addressed to choir members, and pre-concert accounts by music editors. A unanimous sympathy towards the *Damnation* project can be discerned in these accounts, regardless of the language group represented. Given that by this time, after a calmer period, the struggle between Swedish and Finnish language groups was intensifying,[38] this observation ostensibly supports the hypothesis sometimes expressed in the scientific discourse that an interest in French culture served as a unifying function between the two groups.[39] Oskar Merikanto wrote in the Finnish-language newspaper *Päivälehti*:

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[35] See the article of Ulla-Britta Broman-Kananen in this publication.

[36] Aino Ackté, *Muistojeni kirja* (Helsinki, 1925), 22, 36–38.

[37] The memory of pedagogue and harpist of the Mariinsky Theatre, Ekaterina Walter-Kühne who participated in Kajanus's 1894 production of *La Damnation*, lives on thanks to her fantasy for harp based on Tchaikovsky's *Eugène Onegin*. Kajanus's daughter, harpist Lilly Kajanus-Blenner later studied with this musician in St. Petersburg. Lilly Kajanus-Blenner, 'Lilly Kajanus-Blenner', in Maire Pulkkinen (ed.), *Suomalaisia musiikin taitajia. Esittävien taiteilijoiden elämäkertoja* (Helsinki, 1958), 462–469, more specifically, 463. In 1895, only one harpist from St. Petersburg took part in the production, "Miss Steinberg" (some newspapers give 'F.', other ones 'J.' as the initial of her first name).

[38] Matti Klinge, *Suomen sinivalkoiset värit* (Helsinki, 1999), 44.

[39] However, in her study of Finnish *francophilie*, Kristina Ranki evokes two different traditions of sympathies for France in the country. Kristina Ranki, *Isänmaa ja Ranska. Suomalainen frankofilia 1880–1914* (Helsinki, 2007), 224.

> Our concert season is just about to end, the beautiful spring weather persuades one to make one's way towards nature or to [the garden restaurant] Kappeli rather than towards concert halls. However, the greatest task of the season, its concert of splendour, remains to be undertaken. It is a point of honour of every music lover to attend. That is to say, tomorrow, Thursday, Berlioz's magnificent legend in four parts, "Faust", for soloists, choirs and orchestra is to be performed. As has been stated in public announcements, the number of participants will be ca. 240. ... Just as the first performances of Beethoven's 9th symphony and Missa solennis [!] were historical events in our music life, this performance will be such an event too.[40]

Merikanto gave a detailed account of the narrative content of the work and finished by a plea to the audience:

> Such are the main aspects of the content of this grand work. It is not possible to explain here how masterfully they have been portrayed in the music, what excellent, splendid, wonderful sections Berlioz has poured into this work of his — it quite simply must be heard![41]

Yet the pre-concert publicity took the most extensive dimensions in the Swedish-language press, and thus it was largely addressed to that part of the Finnish population that had long been privileged socially and culturally.[42] Remembered for his admiration of French music, Karl Fredrik Wasenius writing under the pseudonym Bis of *Hufvudstadsbladet*,[43] wrote three articles about *La Damnation* prior to the performance, filling sections set off by a line across the page a few inches from the bottom. He provided his readers with Swedish translations of passages from Berlioz's memoirs, which included accounts of the genesis of *La Damnation*, of the liberties the composer had taken in relation to Goethe's text, and of the disappointing first performance of the work. He even related the French composer's journey to Russia in 1847 and recounted *La Damnation's* recent triumph in Paris under the baton of Colonne and Pasdeloup: "It is quite different now; he and his music are being honoured and performed everywhere." Bis was confident enough of his readers' linguistic abilities to give the titles of all scenes of the work as well as the text of the

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[40] O., 'Hector Berlioz'n "Faust"', *Päivälehti* (18 April 1894).

[41] Ibid.

[42] Nevertheless it cannot be deduced from this that all Swedish-speaking Finns were socially and culturally privileged.

[43] Cf. Erkki Salmenhaara, 'Gabriel Fauré Helsingissä', *Musiikki*, 3 (1992), 7–22, more specifically, 10–11.

famous 'Invocation à la nature' scene in French.[44] His final pre-concert article consisted of a scene-by-scene account of the music, which was undoubtedly the product of a close examination of the orchestral score, and gives particular attention to Berlioz's realisation of Faust's and Méphistophélès's ride to hell.[45] Finland's most distinguished music critic, Karl Flodin of *Nya Pressen*, who was a cousin of Kajanus and wrote under the pseudonym K, gave an initial account which stretched over two pages under the dividing line and even contained a scene-by-scene depiction of the narrative content.[46] His other pre-concert article offered a reminder of the historical significance of the work and its Finnish realisation:

> It is well-known how ingeniously Berlioz uses the orchestra, but his way of writing for voices is no less ingenious. Everything sounds so miraculously grand, indeed, resplendent. ... Tonight the orchestra, the choir, the soloists and the conductor shall co-operate in order to accomplish a musical heroic deed which might well in many respects be described as unique in our concert annals.[47]

Thanks to Flodin, we know that a shortened version of *La Damnation* was performed in Helsinki. One of the most important scenes of the work, the powerful 'Invocation à la nature' of Faust, as well as a recitative preceding Marguerite's resurrection were omitted.[48]

*Berlioz's German Faust*

In Helsinki, *La Damnation de Faust* was performed neither in Finnish, nor Swedish, nor even in French, but in German. The Finnish agents possibly conceived of Faust as such a thoroughly German figure that they doubted the ability of the Finnish audience to take seriously a French-language aspirant. Also, traditionally knowledge of German was stronger in Finland than French.[49] In addition to the audience's linguistic skills, the abilities of the available soloists and choir members also had to be taken into

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44 Bis [pseudonym of Karl Wasenius], 'La Damnation de Faust II', *Hufvudstadsbladet* (13 April 1894).

45 Bis, 'La Damnation de Faust III', *Hufvudstadsbladet* (18 April 1894).

46 K. [pseudonym of Karl Flodin], 'Berlioz Faust', *Nya Pressen* (15 April 1894).

47 K., 'Berlioz Faust', *Nya Pressen* (19 April 1894).

48 K., 'Berlioz Faust', *Nya Pressen* (15 April 1894).

49 Cf. Ranki, *Isänmaa ja Ranska*, 48.

account. Selma Kajanus, the leader of the choir, presumably had something to say on the matter even if it is true that according to one review of 1895, "the choir was made up solely of cultivated ladies and gentlemen with good voices."[50] Partly, the decision regarding the language of execution might reflect Kajanus's long-held contacts with foreign publishing houses who delivered rented orchestral parts to him.[51] In its own particular way it also suggests that, in contrast to their French contemporaries, it did not appear relevant to the Finns to highlight the composer's nationality. In Finland too, Berlioz enjoyed great esteem as a representative of the New German school and as a composer of romantic programme music. Although the sympathies of Finnish composers started in the 1890s to turn increasingly away from Germany, their traditional culture of reference, and towards France, educated Finns did not yet have cause to choose between these two countries and cultures.[52] Similarly, in Finland at the end of the nineteenth century, *La Damnation de Faust* was discussed not as French but simply as great music. The music critics of the capital did not explicitly comment on the choice of language; clearly they did not consider it to be an issue.

A thirty-two-page German-language textbook was for sale some time before the concerts; in it only titles and scenes had been added in Swedish.[53] The Helsinki production used one of the various German versions of Berlioz's work.[54] According to a newspaper statement from April 1894, this caused a complication:

> Since it has been remarked on many sides that Faust's part is sung to a text which doesn't correspond at all to the text printed in the textbooks, we wish to remind the readers that the singer in the role of Faust, Mr. Götjes, has rehearsed his part in Germany according to an older German translation of the original French text. The differences in relation to the newer German version which is used by the other soloists as well as the choir in performing their parts should not concern content but word form only.[55]

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[50] 'La Damnation de Faust', *Uusi Suometar* (23 April 1895). The critic here might be pseudonym R.E., but a stain covers the signature of the review on the microfilm of Finnish National Library.

[51] This question remains to be solved by future research.

[52] Between the two world wars, Finnish-French relations lost much of their previous liveliness.

[53] *Faust. Dramatisk legend i fyra afdelningar (Musiken af Hector Berlioz)*, (Helsingfors, 1894).

[54] Unfortunately, it has not been possible until now to identify the translator of this text in German. In any case the person in question is neither Minslaff nor Kniese, whose German translations of Berlioz's and Gandonnières text the author of this essay has studied at the Bibliothèque nationale de France, Paris.

[55] *Nya Pressen* (27 April 1894).

*Enthusiasm and penetration*

The success of *La Damnation de Faust* in Helsinki in 1894 and 1895 was indisputable and as such it generated a unique phenomenon in Finnish terms. In the prevailing conditions, merely getting a place on the window seat of the chock-full Helsinki University Festival Hall represented an achievement for local concertgoers. The 1897 performance of *Roméo et Juliette* by Kajanus's orchestra did not arouse similar enthusiasm to say nothing of the bleak repetition of *La Damnation* in 1900,[56] after which date Kajanus dropped the composition from his repertory. It was performed six times in 1894 and five times the year after. Such a success would be worth mentioning today; in a city, which had fewer than one-hundred-thousand inhabitants prior to the turn of the century, it was exceptional.

After the first concert of 1894, the public success in terms of the number of listeners was at risk of remaining modest due to poor reception accorded to the forty-six-year old German tenor Ludwig Götjes. Possibly the singer had underestimated the seriousness of Helsinki as a musical city. In the first concert he had insufficient control over his part and remained seated when singing. Of the poor attendance in the second concert,[57] obviously a consequence of the indignation expressed in the first reviews, the press assumed a responsibility, and in subsequent evaluations attempted to compensate for the damage done. The critic R.E. wrote about the first concert: "But — Mr. Götjes as Faust is as little successful as could be. The reason is that Mr. G. has never sung the part of Faust before and obviously, he is not able to sing from printed music. Besides, he was in a bad singing mood. It is quite understandable that all of this had an effect on the other performers."[58] According to R.E., Götjes, embarrassingly, did not take part in the ensembles. Merikanto, assuming an even more unchecked tone, wrote: "If one is willing to perform a part and, especially, as in this case, if one accepts to sing in a foreign country, it would seem to be a first condition that one is in command of the task. Mr. Götjes did not fulfil this condition."[59] The critics assumed that the tenor would be replaced by another one in the following concert, but when this did not happen, references to Götjes became

[56] See, for example, K., 'Berlioz Faust', *Nya Pressen* (30 April 1900).
[57] R. E. [pseudonym], 'Damnation de Faust', *Uusi Suometar* (25 April 1894).
[58] R.E., 'Damnation de Faust', *Uusi Suometar* (20 April 1894).
[59] O., 'Berlioz'n Faust', *Päivälehti* (20 April 1894).

more favourable, and even laudatory. His accomplishment was now described as almost flawless and precise to the point of being exemplary. His voice was described as strong, mellow and beautiful, his singing as being quite in tune, even full of sentiment. He was also said to have set the choir on fire, inspiring it to reveal the most brilliant side of its musical capabilities.[60]

On the other hand, young Aino Ackté, who had with no doubt rehearsed her part under the guidance of her mother Emmy Achté, herself a product of the French system of vocal education, enjoyed considerable success from the outset. Her voice too was described as beautiful and mellow, her execution as full of musical sentiment, her expression as touching and evoking sympathy.[61] 'Bis' Wasenius states:

> The Romance of Marguerite became for Miss Achté a success of the most beautiful kind. Not only does the young singer delight by her beautiful voice and her appearance, but she even captivates the entire sympathy and interest of her audience through an extraordinarily communicative, poetic way of performing. The whole salon celebrated her with applause.[62]

In Merikanto's words the performance of the Romance was "truly artistic, even masterful".[63] From all the critics, only R.E. remarked that the Romance was not given in its entirety, something which he regretted.[64]

Historically speaking it is especially interesting that Marguerite's song about the king of Thule, Le roi de Thulé, left Merikanto and Flodin but more particularly, Wasenius quite unmoved.[65] This might mean that they were either not aware of Berlioz's intention in this strange 'Gothic song' to reproduce an archaic style, or that they could not, due to lack of historical awareness  apparently symptomatic of contemporary Finland, appreciate such an aim. R.E. used it as an opportunity to show his expertise.

> However, as for the execution of the song "Le roi de Thulé", we cannot agree with Mr. K. [Kajanus]. First of all one would expect it to be performed a bit

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[60] See for example, K., 'Berlioz Faust', *Nya Pressen* (23 April 1894), O., 'Berlioz'n Faust', *Päivälehti* (24 April 1894), and R.E. 'Damnation de Faust', *Uusi Suometar* (25 April 1894).
[61] E.g., K., 'Berlioz Faust', *Nya Pressen* (23 April 1894) and K., 'Berlioz Faust', *Nya Pressen* (27 April 1894).
[62] Bis, 'Gårdagens konsert', *Hufvudstadsbladet* (20 April 1894).
[63] O., 'Berlioz'n Faust', *Päivälehti* (20 April 1894).
[64] R.E., 'La Damnation de Faust', *Uusi Suometar* (20 April 1894).
[65] See Bis, 'Gårdagens konsert', *Hufvudstadsbladet* (20 April 1894) and Bis, 'La Damnation de Faust', *Hufvudstadsbladet* (18 April 1894).

> more slowly and in a much more dreamy way. Moreover, it seems that when executing this number the orchestra is not as attentive as it is otherwise. Not only was it quite mistaken at one point but also, Berlioz's indications for changing the rhythm in some bars were not taken into account; according to them the stress must sometimes be put on the third and fifth, sometimes on the first and sixth, and at times, naturally, on the first and fourth eighth note. If these indications are being followed, this ballade gains quite a different tone, especially if it is sung in a reflective and dreamy way. It is true that the German words do not fit the music as well as the French words do. That is possibly one reason why this ballade did not make as beautiful an impact on the undersigned as did the execution in a Colonne concert we last heard in Paris. Yet Miss Achté sang it well, adjusting herself to the measure given by Mr. Kajanus.[66]

Certainly, one cannot claim for sure that the decisive impetus for Kajanus to produce *La Damnation de Faust* in Helsinki came from Paris. Yet an experience of the synchronicity between Helsinki and Paris, which by that time was a musical city of central importance for the Finns, as emphasised by R.E. in the recollections of his impressions from the Colonne concerts is worthy of mention.

Abraham Ojanperä, a Finnish-language singer who had in 1892 participated in the first performance of Sibelius's *Kullervo*, was mostly praised for an intelligent, lively and dramatic interpretation of Méphistophélès's part. Statements of gratitude addressed to Selma Kajanus and the choirs she had patiently rehearsed were abundant, and reveal the prevalent standard of Finnish choral singing and the esteem it enjoyed at the time. In relatively concise turns of phrases the orchestral contribution is described as excellent, brilliant and finely nuanced. The "grand, proud and fierce" Rakoczy March, the "exquisite" Ballet des sylphes, and the "evocative" Menuet des follets are reported as particularly having appealed to the audience. It is striking to notice how the critics thirsted to experience *La Damnation of Faust* again and again, to detect and analyze the nuances of the work, its interpretation and the audience's reaction in each performance, and to praise the Kajanus' achievement, which was seen as a magnificent national triumph. Using words which are far from conventional they emphatically urged people to hear the work a second and third time.

> Such a great composition must necessarily be heard many times. The first time the attention is drawn to the outer edifice; only when this is fully familiar can it focus on the details. And these are in fact at least as important as the broad outward features. The composition can only be fully enjoyed by a person who

[66] R.E., 'La Damnation de Faust', *Uusi Suometar* (20 April 1894).

> has examined its every single detail.[67]

The renewed collective penetration of the work which gained on each hearing in intimacy and nuance must have left a lasting mark on the inner life of those present. Whether positioned on the performer's podium of the University Festival Hall or seated in the auditorium, Helsinki music lovers learned to appreciate more and more accurately the inner experiences provoked by the music, accumulating cultural capital through Kajanus's great undertaking.

Berlioz's poetic and sweeping emotional landscape is like no other. Many a Finnish heart was probably seized by the bleak darkness of Faust's soul, the idealistic but false love and communion with nature he found with the devil's guidance, the grotesque cynicism portrayed with French precision in the scenes with Méphistophélès, the students and soldiers, and the whole fantastic otherworldliness of the work: the ethereal fairies, the cries of the damned souls and Marguerite's radiant resurrection.[68] Oskar Merikanto, as critic on the *Päivälehti* — and, not it seems, confined solely to slumbering during the 'Symposium' sessions at the Kämp — analyzed his powerful experience thus:

> What vivid scenes he [Berlioz] paints before us, what fantastic colours he masterly unfolds. And what fearsome strength he has, though fine and even tender feelings, too. Simply recall his masterly Hungarian march and his description of the clamour in hell. From that strength did even Wagner imbibe. Very graceful and beautiful is the fairies' dance in part two, and the will-o'-the-wisps' dance in part three. The ride to hell of Faust and Méphistophélès is highly evocative.[69]

The ecstatic public success of *La Damnation de Faust* in Paris as echoed in the quotation from Tiersot's description at the beginning of this article recurred in Helsinki in 1894 and 1895. However, in Tiersot's recollection the stormy applause is addressed not only to the performers of the Colonne production, but also, and perhaps even primarily, to Berlioz, the composer who was underestimated by his French contemporaries but fully recognized by subsequent generations. In contrast, in the Finnish accounts of applause, acclamations, cries for encores and celebrations, there is

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[67] R.E., 'Damnation de Faust', *Uusi Suometar* (25 April 1894).

[68] David Cairns points out in his essay that the personage of Faust in *La Damnation de Faust* can be seen as a projection of Berlioz's understanding of his own person. David Cairns, 'La Damnation de Faust', in *Dictionnaire Berlioz*, 132–134.

[69] O., 'Berlioz'n Faust', *Päivälehti* (20 April 1894).

one recipient who emerges above all others: the conductor Robert Kajanus who is portrayed as a great Finnish genius.

*Culture and civilization*

Some Helsinki newspaper reviews note with satisfaction that audiences were coming from other parts of Finland to hear *La Damnation* concerts.[70] It is evident that the production of *La Damnation de Faust* in Helsinki in 1894 and 1895 was seen as an event of national significance, one that transcended the tensions of the two language groups. The linguistic and cultural dispersion of the nation is hardly to be detected in writings concerning the undertaking, be they in Finnish or in Swedish; yet the tensions are evoked in passing in mentions of the crowns of laurel embellished with patriotic emblems that were given to Kajanus in connection with the concerts. Blue and white ribbons referred to fennomanic ties, and political loyalty towards Russia and Finnish nationalism. On the other hand, according to the symbolism of the time, yellow and red indicated friendly feelings towards both the Swedes and the Swedish and correspondingly, suspicions of relations with Russia.[71] Favourable towards Finnish-language culture, *Päivälehti* reported in spring 1894:

> The fanfare played yesterday in the beginning of the concert when Robert Kajanus walked in and the big crown of laurel with blue-and-white ribbons, one of them bearing the text: "To Robert Kajanus. From the friends of your art. 1830/IV94" — these were nothing more than a sign of our debt of gratitude.[72]

Two years before in the same hall, at the moment of the first performance of *Kullervo* and in front of the same orchestra, Kajanus had presented Sibelius with a garland. It was embellished with blue-and-white ribbons bearing a Finnish-language text, that is, the well-known words from the final, fiftieth poem of the national epic *Kalevala*: "That is where the way goes now, where a new track leads."[73] As the echo of the grand Rakoczy March from *La Damnation* faded on 28 April, 1895, the young Jean

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[70] O., 'Berlioz'n Faust', *Päivälehti* (1 May 1894), K., 'Berlioz Faust', *Nya Pressen* (1 May 1894).
[71] Klinge, *Suomen sinivalkoiset värit*, 49.
[72] O., 'Berlioz'n Faust', *Päivälehti* (1 May 1894).
[73] In Finnish: "Siitäpä nyt tie menevi, ura uusi urkenevi." The English text here is from *The Kalevala*, An epic poem after oral tradition by Elias Lönnrot, Keith Bosley (translator), (Oxford & New York, 1989), 666.

Sibelius, representing "music-lovers of the capital" is reported to have presented Kajanus with a garland decked with red and yellow ribbons. The Swedish-language newspaper *Nya Pressen* pointed out that these were "Finnish colours".[74] Although Sibelius's mother tongue just like Kajanus's was Swedish, it is surprising to thus see him linked in public with the Swedish-speaking camp. In those days the public debate on language policy also involving the question of national colours had intensified after a calmer period; yet it is not evident that Sibelius was conscious of it.[75]

The more important piece of information concerning Sibelius is the mere fact that he did participate in the celebrations of Berlioz which took place in Helsinki. Sibelius research does not report this, despite the fact that the importance to his symphonic vision of the *Symphonie fantastique* has been debated, and Sibelius himself stated that he learned a lot from Liszt's *Faust Symphony*[76]. Thus it seems possible that Sibelius dwelled in both Berlioz's and Faust's world more intensely than we have thought to date. Without being unmindful of the stylistic differences, we might ask for instance if the bone-chilling proximity of death of *Lemminkäinen in Tuonela* (1895) would have been possible without the descriptions of otherworldliness in *La Damnation de Faust*. It is not inappropriate here to juxtapose the Finnish national epic and Faust. Faust is together with such personages from the *Kalevala* as Kullervo, Aino, Lemminkäinen and Kyllikki whom Kajanus and Sibelius have portrayed in their music, a mythological character. As such he is a source of inspiration for composers of many nationalities.[77] A few years before those internationally significant political events which dramatically sharpened nationalist positions around the turn of the century — the heightening of the Dreyfus scandal which shocked the civilized world; the February manifesto from 1899 of Emperor Nicolas II which threatened the autonomy of Finland — there is no cause for exaggerating or isolating into a separate category the nationalist motives of the various actors. The Finnish pursuit of mythology can be seen in the wake of Wagner and in connection with aims articulated by the New German school. The extent to which the Helsinki press was weaving the narratives of Finnish culture and European

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[74] 'Berlioz' Faust', *Hufvudstadsbladet* (28 April 1895), 'Berlioz Faust', *Nya Pressen* (28 April 1895).
[75] His friend Axel Gallén, relying on psychological and aesthetical arguments, had spoken in favour of red and yellow as national colours. Klinge, *Suomen sinivalkoiset värit*, 46.
[76] Erik Tawaststjerna, *Jean Sibelius* 2 (Helsinki, 1967), 48–49.
[77] In his *Lemminkäinen* legends and *Kullervo* Sibelius portrayed two characteristics which are typical of Goethe's Faust: a Don Juan quality and that of a tragical hero.

civilization into one can be observed in the context of Kajanus's *La Damnation* undertaking. The fundamental message of the voluminous, enthusiastic, and ponderous feed-back from the press was that through this successful execution of one of the cornerstones of European music literature, Finnish music life had, under the guidance of Robert Kajanus, broken out of a provincial exteriority and Finland had won itself a place among the civilized countries. It was stressed that Kajanus *had made Finnish music life progress*.[78] Thus it becomes evident how artificial it would be here to adopt the well-known romantic metaphor and see Finnish national music culture as a closed organism pursuing its own unique essence, that is, as an opposite to a progressive civilization of an international orientation. "Cultural nationalisms, after all, staked their claims on a respected contribution to a generalised high-prestige culture; they were in reality a variety, a species, of that culture."[79]

By the turn of the century nationalist attitudes had intensified in Europe and were prominent in music. A new era had dawned in the history of Finnish music when Kajanus in the spring of 1900 concentrated on a new big undertaking, a European tour of the Helsinki Philharmonic Orchestra. The main destination was the Paris Universal Exposition. In the political aftermath of the February Manifesto by Russian Emperor Nicholas II, Finns wanted to gain the sympathy both of France, Russia's mighty ally, and of the international community, for the special character of their culture. At the point of the first performance of Sibelius's *Kullervo* in 1892, some German musicians of the Philharmonic orchestra could still snigger at this strange musical idiom.[80] On the eve of the Paris tour they were advised to speak their native language quietly while in Paris.[81] Finnish music introduced itself as a national entity when orchestral works by Sibelius made their first appearance in the French capital.[82] The press was excellent, and the orchestra and Kajanus had their share of the praise. "This orchestra,

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[78] This idea was expressed in the clearest manner by Merikanto (20 April and 1 May 1894). As is clearly stated by Matti Vainio in his Kajanus biography, such a remark was very often part of Finnish public judgments of Kajanus's work. As for the significance of the *Damnation* project in his activities and in the Finnish musical life more generally, Vainio has focused some attention on it in Einari Marvia & Matti Vainio, *Helsingin kaupunginorkesteri* (Helsinki, 1993), 223–224, 226, less in Vainio, *"Nouskaa aatteet!"*, 226, 298.

[79] Jim Samson, 'Rewriting Nineteenth-Century Music History', http://www.mmc.edu.mk/IRAM/Conferences/ContemporaryTrendsIV/JSamson.pdf. Verified on 31 July 2009.

[80] Erkki Salmenhaara, *Jean Sibelius* (Helsinki, 1984), 86.

[81] Cf. Suomalainen, *Robert Kajanus*, 128–131.

[82] In addition to Sibelius's compositions, works by the following Finnish composers were given: Ernst Mielck, Oskar Merikanto, Armas Järnefelt, Robert Kajanus, Erkki Melartin, Martin Wegelius and, possibly, Karl Flodin.

conducted excellently by Mr. Kajanus, dazzles in particular through its brass section and would bring honour to any European capital," praised the journal *Le Ménestrel*.[83] One of the orchestra's soloists, greeted by a storm of applause, was Aino Ackté, a soprano soloist of the Paris Opéra.[84]

[83] "L'orchestre, qui brille surtout par ses cuivres, excellemment conduit par M. Kajanus, ferait honneur à n'importe quelle capitale européenne." O. Bn. [pseudonym], 'La musique étrangère à l'Exposition', *Le Ménestrel*, 32 (12 August 1900).

[84] See for example, Helena Tyrväinen, 'Suomalaiset Pariisin maailmannäyttelyiden 1889 ja 1900 musiikkiohjelmissa', *Musiikkitiede*, 1–2 (1994), 22–74; Helena Tyrväinen, 'Sibelius at the Paris Universal Exposition of 1900', in Veijo Murtomäki, Kari Kilpeläinen & Risto Väisänen (eds.), *Sibelius Forum. Proceedings from the Second International Jean Sibelius Conference, Helsinki November 25–29, 1995*, (Helsinki, 1998), 114–128. Aino Ackté was engaged by the Paris Opéra in 1897 and made her début as Marguerite in Gounod's *Faust*.