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**SREDNJEEVROPSKA GLASBA  
19. STOLETJA: PARADIGME  
IN POPULARNI KANON**

**NINETEENTH-CENTURY MUSIC  
IN CENTRAL EUROPE: PARADIGMS  
AND POPULAR CANON**

uredila / edited by

Nataša Cigoj Krstulović, Ivano Cavallini

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## PREDGOVOR

Študije o narodih in nacionalizmih so v središču raziskovalnega zanimanja že desetletja, v zadnjih letih pa je njihovo število opazno naraslo. Splošno sprejeto stališče v humanistiki, da so zahteve za politično neodvisnost narodov Srednje Evrope v 19. stoletju temeljile na občutju kulturne identitete, je prevzela tudi sodobna muzikološka misel. Eseja Ernesta Gellnerja o »namišljenih narodih« v knjigi *Nations and nationalism* (1983) in zgodovinarja ter politologa Benedicta Andersona o »namišljenih skupnostih« v knjigi *Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (1991) potrjujeta, da so domneve in občutja skupne kulture vplivali na politično razlago držav. Pojma »ljudstvo« in »narod«, ki sta se od konca 18. stoletja vse bolj uveljavljala v Srednji Evropi, sta pogosto zamenljiva. Izraz »ljudstvo« skriva etnični, ne pa socialni pomen. Povezan je z rabo skupnega jezika ter ponekod tudi s pripadnostjo isti veri. Pojem »narod« pa ima v nasprotju z njim etično vrednost, izpostavlja »drugačnost« in izključevanje »drugega«.

Izvor pojma »narod« v Srednji Evropi 19. stoletja, natančneje zgodovinske paradigme in popularni glasbeni kanon, je bila osrednja raziskovalna naloga študijske skupine »Glasba in narod« na mednarodnem kongresu »Nacionalizmi in iredentizmi Srednje Evrope« ("Nationalisms and Irredentisms of *Mittleeuropa*"), ki je bil novembra 2012 v Gorici. Organiziral ga je Inštitut za srednjeevropska kulturna srečanja (*Istituto per gli Incontri Culturali Mitteleuropei*) s pomočjo in podporo vodje, profesorja dr. Fulvija Salimbenija in dr. Marca Plesnicarja. Udeleženci so razpravljali o političnih, jezikovnih, etničnih in kulturnih paradigmah, ki so po Herderjevem odkritju »ljudske pesmi« v procesu ustvarjanja zgodovinskega kanona omogočile popularnim ali cerkvenim pesmim priznanje etnične in teritorialne identitete. Nekateri prispevki s tega posvetovanja so predstavljeni v pričujoči tematski številki revije *De musica disserenda*.

Uvodna razprava preučuje nacionalno identiteto slovanske Srednje Evrope z novim pristopom k različnim kulturnim paradigmam, preko katerih se je na Poljskem, Češkem, Slovenskem in na Hrvaškem ob koncu 18. in v 19. stoletju uveljavil splošno priznani glasbeni kanon (Ivano Cavallini: "Cultural Paradigm and Popular Canon: The Discourse on Nation in Nineteenth-Century Music of Slavic *Mittleeuropa*"). V nadaljevanju sledijo študije primerov, ki prikazujejo različne faze identifikacijskega procesa, od eksotizma do samozavedanja in od samozavedanja do sprejetja nacionalnega sloga v glasbi. Avtorji so bolj kot samo umetniško vrednost glasbe upoštevali njeno družbeno funkcijo, kakršno so ob

koncu 18. in v 19. stoletju prepoznavali poljski, češki, hrvaški in slovenski domoljubi (Alina Żórawska-Witkowska: “Popolo, nazione e patria nelle prime opere polacche (1778–1794)”); Tomáš Slavický: “Musica, identità e mitografie nazionali dei cechi nel diciannovesimo secolo”; Stanislav Tuksar: “The Invention of Musical Illyrism”; Vjera Katalinić: “How to Create a National Opera? The Lisinski Case. Imaginary Memoirist Sketches with an Epilogue”; Natka Badurina: “Croatian Historical Myth, the South-Slavic Brotherhood and the Death of Opera”; Nataša Cigoj Krstulović: “Language, Literature and Music in Slovenian Cultural and Political Aspirations before 1914”). Zadnji članek prikazuje velik vpliv zbirke Ossianovih pesmi Jamesa Macphersona na oblikovanje nemške romantike in obravnava vprašanje, v kolikšni meri sta poezija bardov ter zavest o škotskih in irskih melodijah obstajali neodvisno v nemški glasbeni misli (Harry White: “Macpherson, Ossian and the Bardic Ideal: Some Irish Reflections on a German Phenomenon”).

Nataša Cigoj Krstulović in Ivano Cavallini

## FOREWORD

Nations and nationalism have been a main research topic for decades, but the last few years have witnessed noticeable growth in these studies. The perspective generally accepted in the humanities – that demands for political independence of the nations in nineteenth-century Central Europe were premised on a sense of cultural identity – has also been taken up by contemporary musicological thought. Essays by philosopher and social anthropologist Ernest Gellner on “invented nations” in *Nations and Nationalism* (1983), or by historian and political scientist Benedict Anderson on “imagined communities” in *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (1991), supported the idea that cultural constructs influenced the political interpretation of states. The concepts of “people” and “nation”, which penetrated Central Europe from the end of the eighteenth century, are often interchangeable. The term “people” hides an ambiguous ethnic but unambiguous social meaning related to the use of a common language and sometimes to profession of the same religious faith. The concept of “nation”, instead, possesses an ethnic value, a quest for alterity and produces the effect of exclusion of the “other”.

The origin of the concept of nation in nineteenth-century Central Europe, more specifically the historical paradigm and the popular musical canon, was also the central research task of the Study Group “Music and Nation” at the international congress “Nationalisms and Irredentisms of *Mitteleuropa*”, which was held in November 2012 in Gorizia. It was organized by the Institute for Cultural Encounters of *Mitteleuropa* (*Istituto per gli Incontri Culturali Mitteleuropei*), with the helpful and welcome support of its head, Fulvio Salimbeni, and secretary Marco Plesnicar. The participants focused on political, linguistic, ethnic and cultural paradigms which, after Herder’s discovery of *Volklied*, enabled the recognition of certain popular or church songs in the process of creating a historical canon representative of ethnic and territorial identity. Some of the contributions from that conference are now presented in this volume of *De musica disserenda*.

The introductory study examines the national identity of Slavic Central Europe by means of a new approach to various cultural paradigms, namely the historical events out of which the popular musical canon flourished at the end of eighteenth-century Poland, and in nineteenth-century Bohemia, Slovenia and Croatia (Ivano Cavallini: “Cultural Paradigm and Popular Canon: The Discourse on Nation in Nineteenth-Century Music of

Slavic *Mittleuropa*”). The next articles are case studies and refer to various stages of the identification process: from exoticism to self-consciousness and from self-consciousness to the appropriation of the national style in music. The authors do not take into consideration the quality of music, but rather its social functions as identified by Polish, Czech, Croatian and Slovene patriots from the end of eighteenth-century to the nineteenth century (Alina Żórawska-Witkowska: “Popolo, nazione e patria nelle prime opere polacche (1778–1794)”; Tomáš Slavický: “Musica, identità e mitografie nazionali dei cechi nel diciannovesimo secolo”; Stanislav Tuksar: “The Invention of Musical Illyrism”; Vjera Katalinić: “How to Create a National Opera? The Lisinski Case. Imaginary Memoirist Sketches with an Epilogue”; Natka Badurina: “Croatian Historical Myth, the South-Slavic Brotherhood and the Death of Opera”; Nataša Cigoj Krstulović: “Language, Literature and Music in Slovenian Cultural and Political Aspirations before 1914”). The final article presents the immense influence of James Macpherson’s *Ossian* poems on the formation of German Romanticism, the extent to which *Bardendichtung* and an awareness of Scottish and Irish melodies existed independently in the German musical imagination (Harry White: “Macpherson, Ossian and the Bardic Ideal: Some Irish Reflections on a German Phenomenon”).

Nataša Cigoj Krstulović and Ivano Cavallini

## CULTURAL PARADIGM AND POPULAR CANON THE DISCOURSE ON NATION IN NINETEENTH- CENTURY MUSIC OF SLAVIC *MITTELEUROPA*

IVANO CAVALLINI  
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**Izleček:** Nacionalna identiteta slovanske Srednje Evrope je v razpravi obravnavana z novim pristopom k različnim kulturnim paradigmam, takim, ki upoštevajo zgodovinske dogodke, preko katerih se je ob koncu 18. stoletja na Poljskem in v 19. stoletju na Češkem, Slovenskem in na Hrvaškem uveljavil splošno priznani glasbeni kanon. Pojav kanona je treba analizirati v okviru, v katerem sta kozmopolitizem in nacionalizem soobstajala v prepletu uporabne in avtonomne glasbe, kar presega zamejevanje v kategorije podrejenosti, prirejenosti in avtonomije.

**Gljučne besede:** paradigma, glasbeni kanon, 19. stoletje, slovanska Srednja Evropa.

**Abstract:** The national identity of Slavic Mitteleuropa is examined by means of a new approach to different cultural paradigms, namely the historical events out of which the popular canon in music flourished at the end of eighteenth-century Poland and in nineteenth-century Bohemia, Slovenia and Croatia. This phenomenon must be analysed within a framework in which cosmopolitanism and nationalism co-existed in a mix of functional and autonomous music, superseding the boundaries of subordination, adaptation and autonomy.

**Keywords:** paradigm, musical canon, nineteenth century, Slavic Mitteleuropa.

### **Central Europe as Geographic Space, Mitteleuropa as Cultural Space**

It may seem a contradiction to speak of music as one of the development factors in the identity processes of the Slavic countries of Central Europe, and at the same time to refer to *Mitteleuropa* as a place for the cohabitation of cultures and of reciprocal tolerance. But in actual fact this is not so, provided that we precisely trace the boundaries that contain the concepts of national identity, *Central Europe* and *Mitteleuropa*. These are three preliminary concepts that need to be clarified before we proceed to deal with the music.

First. The countries I wish to discuss briefly are Poland, Bohemia, Slovenia and Croatia. In the nineteenth century these countries were constrained between the political influences of Prussia, Russia and Austria (then Austria-Hungary from 1867). On the one hand, they set up Czech-Polish Pan-Slavism as a measure to counteract those dominations and as an alternative to the Russian Pan-Slavism, which had imperialistic connotations, resulting from the creation of state nationalism by Tsars Aleksandr I and Nikolaj I Romanov – an

“official nationalism” as Hugh Seton-Watson called it.<sup>1</sup> On the other hand, the Croatian Illyrian movement and its successors prepared the project for a country of the southern Slavs, to which the Slovenes (after the phase of the Illyrian Movement, ca. 1835 – 1848) adhered in order to preserve their independence, since in neither language nor culture could they be said to be similar to the people of Bosnia, Serbia and Montenegro.

Second. The terms *Central Europe* and *Mitteleuropa* need to be used with caution. Regarding merely the geographical aspects, Central Europe corresponds to a territorial area comprising the countries situated between the Alps and the North and Baltic Seas, with an important appendix in the Mediterranean between Trieste and Rijeka, as well as the regions lying between Alsace and Poland (I omit the intricate question of the Baltic Ring and Ukraine). The concept of *Mitteleuropa*, on the other hand, developed from a series of political objectives that flourished in the period bridging the nineteenth and twentieth-centuries, and it referred to the union of the peoples in a bipartite federation governed by Austria and Germany. To this was added the tripartite solution, advocated by the Austro-Slavic movement, which aimed to mitigate the power of the crowns of Austria and Hungary through an active participation of the Slavic peoples.<sup>2</sup> Although these proposals were never realized, they nonetheless had a secondary effect that should not be overlooked, for it was the political culture associated with them that provoked the downfall of the dynastic universalism of the Habsburgs, who were reluctant to concede more independence. The next steps were first the clash between the national groups and Austria and then the fatal disagreement among the new states at the time of the partition of the empire in 1919.<sup>3</sup>

Third. In a climate dominated by fear of the Irredentisms and the expansionist ambitions of Germany, it is not surprising that the intellectuals expressed their most heartfelt petitions just before the Great War. With the onset of the Fascisms these entreaties became more acute after 1920, and increased their appeal with the separation of Europe into two blocks in 1945. Some writers, during the years of the Iron Curtain, not only harked back to the defunct K.u.K. monarchy, which they judged to be better than the dictatorships, but also acknowledged, with a touch of nostalgia, the common traits of the peoples disseminated over the lands of Central Europe, whatever their language.<sup>4</sup>

For the reasons outlined here, the idea of *Mitteleuropa* is unthinkable without the contribution of those who advocated the freedom of states within the framework of a new federation. If the struggle for national autonomies within the framework of a united Europe is rejected, the result is a severe distortion of history.<sup>5</sup> The adoption of an antinationalist

<sup>1</sup> Seton-Watson, *Nations and States: An Enquiry into the Origins of Nations*, 148; Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 83–113.

<sup>2</sup> Vodopivec, “Mitteleuropa – Mythos oder Wirklichkeit?“, 29–42.

<sup>3</sup> Bibó, *Misère des petits États d’Europe de l’Est*, 133–139. This work dates back to 1946 and contains excellent intuitions, in spite of the theoretical limitations dictated by the period in which it was written.

<sup>4</sup> Magris, *Il mito asburgico nella letteratura austriaca moderna*; Le Rider, *Mitteleuropa*, 85–96.

<sup>5</sup> Agnelli, *La genesi dell’idea di Mitteleuropa*, 59: “The idea of Mitteleuropa acquires its own meaning in relationship to the concept of nation [...] and not if the dynastic universalism is opposed to it.”

position, which developed around the 1960s, can be explained by the serious situation that was generated by the provisions of Versailles and became exacerbated in the period from the end of World War II right up until the fall of the Berlin Wall. In this respect a revealing episode is described in the autobiography of Dragotin Cvetko, the father of Slovenian musicology, and is supported by further statements made to me during personal meetings in Trieste and Ljubljana between 1985 and 1991.

In 1937, after acquiring a grant from Czechoslovakia thanks to the intercession of the minister Kamil Kroft, young Cvetko, a student who had specialized in composition in Prague, found himself in an excellent position to observe the looming Nazi threat.<sup>6</sup> In order to understand the German and Slovak claims that threatened the unity of the young republic, Cvetko, acting as correspondent for the newspaper *Jutro*, went to Moravia, the Sudetenland and then to Bratislava; and from there he continued his survey journey to the Subcarpathian area. It was then that he, as a cosmopolitan and a democrat hostile to the authoritarian regime of the first Yugoslavia, understood that the advocates of revanchism were still unaware of the ferocity of Hitler's Nazism. As a result the German-speaking citizens acclaimed the Führer for his defence of their nationality and independence. On this subject Cvetko gained valuable insights by meeting Mihajlo Rostohar, an eminent psychologist at the University of Brno. Rostohar explained to him that within such extreme nationalism lay the roots of fascism and the negation of all ethnic otherness. This was an Innatist theory that Cvetko had only sensed, though he later witnessed its tragic consequences first in Vienna, where the Jews were reduced to slavery, and then with the violent Italian and German occupation of his own country (1941–1945).<sup>7</sup> From the Slovene Rostohar we know that it was impossible to engage in a peaceful debate on nationalisms. And it would have been even harder to outline an objective classification founded on the intricate web of different kinds of nationality: democratic, linguistic, biological, political, cultural and general (i.e. evolutionary-annexionist towards minorities).<sup>8</sup>

In other respects, the article by Milan Kundera on the post-1945 central-European catastrophe, “La tragédie de l'Europe central”, is still relevant.<sup>9</sup> Published in English by the *New York Review of Books*,<sup>10</sup> the article denounced the brutal elimination of a geographical entity that had been a vivid expression of the Western identity for centuries. Nevertheless, still today many musicologists insist on continuing to call this part of the continent Eastern Europe, considering it as a peripheral area. As a result, writes Kundera, the border moved hundreds of kilometres westwards, whereby the states that were geographically at the centre found themselves in the East, and the peoples whose civilizations belonged to the West suddenly became citizens of the East:

Geographic Europe (extending from the Atlantic to the Ural Mountains) was always divided into two halves which evolved separately: one tied to ancient Rome and the Catholic Church, the other anchored in Byzantium and the Orthodox Church. After

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<sup>6</sup> Cvetko, *V prostoru in času*, 38–39.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, 45–52.

<sup>8</sup> Symaniec, *La construction idéologique slave orientale*, 51–56.

<sup>9</sup> Kundera, “Un occident kidnappé ou la tragédie de l'Europe centrale”, 3–23.

<sup>10</sup> *Id.*, “The Tragedy of Central Europe”, 33–38.

1945, the border between the two Europes shifted several hundred kilometers to the west, and several nations that had always considered themselves to be Western woke up to discover that they were now in the East. As a result, three fundamental situations developed in Europe after the war: that of Western Europe, that of Eastern Europe, and, most complicated, that of the part of Europe situated geographically in the center — culturally in the West and politically in the East.<sup>11</sup>

Contributing to this distorted picture were the errors committed by the Czechs, who flaunted their ‘Slavness’ by claiming a brotherhood with the Russians, when in actual fact Russia and Bohemia shared neither a history, nor a religion, nor even a culture. The fact of belonging to the same language family was adopted as an argument to resist the advance of the aggressive Pan-Germanism, but at the same time it was also the source of a mystification that permitted the Soviet Union to incorporate the Slavophone states, in addition to Romania and Hungary. This had been an aspiration already cultivated by the Tsars, the roots of which are to be found in the theory of Aleksandr Šiškov. Šiškov promoted an anachronistic language family tree, according to which the Russian language boasts a close kinship with Proto-Slavic (viewed as the *langue souche*). He conferred the primacy on his own “Slavonic dialect” and launched a purging of foreign influences. Conversely, for him the “Carniolan” of the Slovenes, bastardized with the German of the Austrians, had degenerated to the level of a dialect.<sup>12</sup> In this regard Kundera reiterates an accusation already expressed, though in different words, by Karel Havlíček Borovský, as well as by prominent figures such as Mickiewicz, Michelet and Mazzini; an idea that can be summarized by the simple slogan: “slaviser pour russianiser”:

I feel that the error made by Central Europe was owing to what I call the ‘ideology of the Slavic world’. I say ‘ideology’ advisedly, for it is only a piece of political mystification invented in the nineteenth century. The Czechs [...] loved to brandish naively their ‘Slavic ideology’ as a defense against German aggressiveness. The Russians, on the other hand, enjoyed making use of it to justify their own imperial ambitions. ‘The Russians like to label everything Russian as Slavic, so that later they can label everything Slavic as Russian’, the great Czech writer Karel Havlíček declared in 1844, trying to warn his compatriots against their silly and ignorant enthusiasm for Russia. It was ignorant because the Czechs, for a thousand years, have never had any direct contact with Russia. In spite of their linguistic kinship, the Czechs and the Russians have never shared a common world: neither a common history nor a common culture. The relationship between the Poles and the Russians, though, has never been anything less than a struggle of life and death.<sup>13</sup>

While the rebirth of the idea of *Mitteleuropa* was above all a literary myth encouraged after the downfall of the Empire, it has now been superseded by the creation of the European Union. Nonetheless, the spirit of ‘Austrianness’ has by no means been eclipsed, since the people of Central Europe live together on the strength of their acceptance of

<sup>11</sup> Ibid., 34.

<sup>12</sup> Symaniec, *La construction idéologique slave orientale*, 86–90.

<sup>13</sup> Kundera, “The Tragedy of Central Europe”, 38.

similar values that originated in the past and are rooted in the present. What remains an open question, however, is how to examine what connects and divides the identity pathways of the Slavic peoples in relation to music, as well as the problematic acquisition of the dominant German culture.

Even though the contribution of each culture is related to the use of folk canons (and in this sense we can detect profound differences), one must also remember that there were two sources from which the musicians of *Mitteleuropa* drew from the end of the eighteenth century onwards. The first was the Classical-Romantic movement and the second was the highly professional teaching work carried out by the Czechs, who wielded a considerable influence on the art music and music for entertainment in Poland, Slovenia and Croatia. From the end of that century a large number of patriots and musicians from Bohemia spread throughout the Habsburg Empire, and also in Italy and Germany. In addition to the *Mannheimer*, the earliest signs of this compact migration can be seen in the imposing presence of Czechs at the court orchestra in Warsaw at the time of Stanisław August Poniatowski.<sup>14</sup> Shortly before the revolutions of 1848 the Czechs exported the *besedy*, i.e. the meetings of patriots during which national anthems, *Lieder* and poems were exhibited. Convened at regular intervals, these meetings were hosted in reading rooms that were called čitalnice by Slovenes and čitaonice by Croats. During the following fifty years it was the Czechs that occupied the positions of responsibility in the chapels of the Eastern Adriatic coastal centres, both those of Italian and Croatian majority, like Koper and Split respectively. In Ljubljana the violin school was refounded by professionals from Bohemia;<sup>15</sup> the leading figure in Croatian national opera, Ivan von Zajc from Rijeka, was of Czech origin; the Czech and Slovak bourgeoisie, which flourished in Trieste, owing to the city's status as a free port, was closely associated with the Slovenian institutions; and the first to disseminate the modern piano teaching methods in Trieste was Adolf Skolek, again a Bohemian schooled in Vienna.<sup>16</sup> An emblematic moment, which took place in 1868, was the reunion of representatives of all the Slavic peoples for the laying of the foundation stone of the National Theatre (Národní Divadlo) in Prague. In spite of the scant participation of Poles and Russians, owing to obvious political disagreements, many were the guests invited from several lands to deliver speeches in their own languages. The *národní obrození*, the project of a Czech revival, became a celebrated model during the period in which Bedřich Smetana ordered the translation of foreign operas for the Provisional Theatre (Prozatímní Divadlo), before the building of the National Theatre. In Zagreb, for the opening of the Croatian National Theatre (Narodno Hrvatsko Kazalište), the management turned to Prague for consultancy, and for the production of *Lohengrin* the materials were purchased in Prague, not in Bayreuth! The same happened in Ljubljana. On the basis of a linguistic affinity, in spite of the vicinity of Trieste, Venice and Vienna, the Italian, French and German operas were subjected to the same treatment. *Lucia di Lammermoor*,

<sup>14</sup> Żórawska–Witkowska, “Böhmischer Musiker in Warschau unter der Regierung von Stanislaus August Poniatowski (1764–1795)”, 242–257.

<sup>15</sup> Zupančič, “V iskanju lastne identitete: češki violinist kot glavni tvorci violinizma na Slovenskem”, 105–132; Weiss, *Ceški glasbeniki v 19. in na začetku 20. stoletja na Slovenskem*.

<sup>16</sup> Radole, *Le scuole musicali a Trieste e il Conservatorio “Giuseppe Tartini”*, 106–107.

*Rigoletto*, *Il trovatore*, *La muta dei portici*, *Carmen* and *Der fliegende Holländer* were all sung in Slovenian rhythmic translations, with scenarios and librettos borrowed from the Národní Divadlo.<sup>17</sup> At the same time, however, the desire to erect barriers could not prevent the spontaneous interaction between the German and Slavic cultures: they grew together and they influenced one another, even if the scores aiming to emphasize the separate identities constitute the increasing trend.

## Paradigm and Canon

To return to the main assumption of this article – i.e. to establish the causes that led to the discovery of national traditions and to folk music – it is helpful to clarify the concept of paradigm referred to in the title of this paper.

In the field of the exact sciences a paradigm can be summarized as a simple theoretical formulation to which empirical proofs are associated. Given that in cultural matters there are no events that admit universal laws, any act can become a paradigm, even when the subject is ‘belonging to a nation’. In this context the paradigm is a concept acquired by historiography as a basis for comparison, since it stimulates change in social dynamics and gives them a different mapping. In the arts, music included, it can be identified as an element of the past that is relevant to the history of a country. The paradigm is subjected to the artifices of revision for reasons that are different from those that can be identified in its position within the narrative, in so far as it is loaded with unpredictable values. In short, the paradigm is a conflictual agent that provokes the reorganization of a constituted order. Its importance, as an element that triggers the construction of concepts of people and nation, has by now been established through the works of Ernest Gellner, Benedict Anderson and Eric Hobsbawm, just to mention only some of the many scholars that have studied the formation of nation states and their respective mythographies.<sup>18</sup> Even leaving aside the exemplary cases that led to the idea of *invented nations*, or to the more apposite idea of *imagined communities*, the paradigm is a process of hypostasization that aspires to become a category, in so far as it is immovable despite the phenomenal flow. This does not exclude stratifications with other factors in the course of time, but the paradigm maintains its privileged position when one acknowledges its prime role in impressing the initial impulse, even if that occurs in unforeseen ways (and here a little irony in the vein of Jean Cocteau would not be out of place: “La source désapprouve presque toujours l’itinéraire du fleuve”, *Le coq et l’arlequin*).

A canon, on the other hand, is an ambiguous regulating principle. It is an instrument of identity that takes the form of a large-scale unifying topos. An example could be folksong: a genre in which ethical references to language, faith and culture are brought together and duly emphasized. These features assume the physiognomy of an exclusive heritage that is irreproducible elsewhere and forcibly confined within the specific context of the nation.

<sup>17</sup> Ther, “The Czechs as Cultural Role Models”, 49–61.

<sup>18</sup> Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism*; Anderson, *Imagined Communities*; Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism since 1780*.

In the cases under examination here, the idea of paradigm corresponds to the events that overthrew a pre-existing regime and drove the subordinate groups to identify the canon – i.e. a non-negotiable pattern of self-representation – in an image of the people. In the nineteenth century, for the conquest of an independent state, the people were set up as the ethnic and cultural symbol of the nation. Yet the problem to be solved does not concern the painstaking description of the demotic repertoires so much as the definition of the paradigms from which the folk canon stems.

A scientific paradigm is considered by Thomas Kuhn to be an element that provokes the readjustment of a previous order. On this is based the patient work carried out by Michel Foucault in *Les mots et les choses* of 1966, a volume published in English with the more explicit title *The Order of Things: An Archaeology of the Human Sciences*.<sup>19</sup> In his equally celebrated *L'archéologie du savoir* of 1969, the philosopher highlights the passages that determine the “thresholds of epistemologization”, which correspond to discursive practices before they become science or world vision.<sup>20</sup> Here we are dealing with a series of experiences out of which alternative meanings emerge, to the extent that one can speak of a *before* and *after*.<sup>21</sup> This means that historical research, if given an anthropological slant, should assume the task of revealing the *turn* where those values are still burdened by a vocabulary belonging to the old system and where the words needed to

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<sup>19</sup> Foucault, *Les mots et les choses. Une archéologie des sciences humaines*.

<sup>20</sup> Id., *The Archaeology of Knowledge and the Discourse on Language*, 190: “The third type of historical analysis takes as its point of attack the *threshold of epistemologization* – the point of cleavage between discursive formations defined by their positivity and epistemological figures that are not necessarily all sciences (and which may never, in fact, succeed in becoming sciences). At this level, scientificity does not serve as a norm: in this archaeological history, what one is trying to uncover are discursive practices in so far as they give rise to a corpus of knowledge, in so far as they assume the status and role of a science. To undertake a history of the sciences at this level is not to describe discursive formations without regard to epistemological structures; it is to show how the establishment of a science, and perhaps its transition to formalization, have come about in a discursive formation, and in modifications to its positivity”.

<sup>21</sup> Foucault, *The Order of Things: An Archaeology of the Human Sciences*, 49: “Discontinuity – the fact that within the space of a few years a culture sometimes ceases to think as it had been thinking up till then and begins to think other things in a new way – probably begins with an erosion from outside, from that space which is, for thought, on the other side, but in which it has never ceased to think from the very beginning. Ultimately, the problem that presents itself is that of the relations between thought and culture: how is it that thought has a place in the space of the world, that it has its origin there, and that it never ceases, in this place or that, to begin a new?”; 366: “Archaeology, then, has two tasks with regard to these figures: to determine the manner in which they are arranged in the episteme in which they have their roots; and to show, also, in what respect their configuration is radically different from that of the sciences in the strict sense.”; 368: “the imaginative values then assumed by the past, the whole lyrical halo that surrounded the consciousness of history at that period, the lively curiosity shown for documents or for traces left behind by time – all this is a surface expression of the simple fact that man found himself emptied of history, but that he was already beginning to recover in the depths of his own being, and among all the things that were still capable of reflecting his image (the others have fallen silent and folded back upon themselves, a historicity linked essentially to man himself).”

give a complete definition of the new concepts have not yet emerged. Or rather, as Giorgio Agamben argues, the paradigm observes the idea of a factor positioned at Degree Zero.

Inspired by Foucault, Agamben takes his cue from Feuerbach's *Entwicklungsfähigkeit* and in his *Signatura rerum* he asserts that "the genuinely philosophical element in any work, be it a work of art, one of science, or one of thought, is its capacity for being developed".<sup>22</sup> He also deals with critical thresholds or *signaturae* that reveal the advent of a paradigm. But over and above such assertions made by a philosopher, how can the term paradigm be used in historiography? If observed at the instant in which it appears, the paradigm is similar to the bi-stable figures that can be viewed in two different ways (like the white vase or two black faces in Rubin's vase).<sup>23</sup> Since such images cannot be hybridized, they are an effective metaphor of the paradigm before it assumes a precise aspect by proceeding in one direction rather than in the other. While the paradigm can cloak itself in duplicity during the initial phase, it will subsequently acquire a single meaning, failing which it loses its function as a basis for comparison. A practical reference for the people and the nation is useful.

It is known that such epoch-making concepts are very changeable over the course of time. The lemma *Volk*, which is linked to the term *Volkslied* coined by Herder, was subjected to an immediate, though farfetched, double meaning, given that it could refer in certain moments to the idea of people and in others to the idea of nation. For Herder the *Volk* was identified with the people, who, as depositaries of a historical memory ignored by the élites, were the custodians of the true national sentiment (*Volkstum*). But if we look more closely, the matter is more complicated. After the Napoleonic campaigns, in fact, many were the German intellectuals who used the notion of the people to refer to the peasant classes and bourgeoisie, excluding the nobility and clergy for moral reasons.<sup>24</sup> At its beginning, therefore, the paradigm was expressed in words that are used to designate both the new and the preceding situation. This is an inescapable condition in cultural processes. The words of the past are bearers of an *otherness*, the deciphering of which will become satisfactory with the adoption of a vocabulary appropriate to the scenario repainted *ex post*. In this regard Aristotle's statement is always pertinent: "Names are finite and so is the sum total of formulae, while things are infinite in number. Inevitably, then, the same formula, and a single name, have a number of meanings."<sup>25</sup>

In my opinion the paradigm in history has closer analogies with the work of art. Agamben, harking back to the words of Kant, writes that the aesthetic judgement, in cases for which a rule cannot be given, is founded on common sense, and not on logic. In the paradigm there can be no *archè*; it aspires to archetypicity, it follows an itinerary

<sup>22</sup> Agamben, *Signatura rerum. Sul metodo*, 8.

<sup>23</sup> Fortuna, "Note su oblio, paradigma e discipline linguistiche a partire da *Signatura rerum*", 205–222.

<sup>24</sup> Cesa, "Popolo, nazione e stato nel romanticismo tedesco", 150–151; Kindl, "Im namen des deutschen Volkes", 321.

<sup>25</sup> Aristotle, *De sophisticis elenchis*, I, 165, a 11.

in which synchrony and diachrony intersect, and it remains recognisable in spite of the work of readjustment to which it must be subjected.<sup>26</sup>

Obviously history, unlike science, is a subject that cannot boast long-term laws, and it is plagued by discontinuities. From a chronological point of view the paradigms are often contemporaneous, but also alien to one another. In spite of geographical and temporal distances, they can provoke shared reactions, like those occurring within the ideological framework of the national awakening inspired by the people. And in fact the canon originating from these paradigms is the same (i.e. the people). What changes is its morphology, as one can deduce from the musics that, with a great deal of imagination, were called folk music. In any case the relationship between paradigm and canon is causative, never dialectic, so the latter can be born from the former, but it cannot have any influence on the former, given that the former is an *a priori* that generates the phenomenon. Citing Agamben we could say that the paradigm does not act metonymically; it is a prerequisite for a set of rules, but at the same time it is not a rule.

Another logical consideration, relating to the connection established between paradigm and canon, also deserves close attention. If we take the case of an event external to the arts, for example the Napoleonic campaigns which provided Russia with a valid motive for developing a populism that previously did not exist, should the paradigm emerge in some episode related to music? Or if that should happen, would there be a paradoxical superimposition? I believe that paradigm and canon coexist in a single entity up until the moment when the canon achieves the status of self-sufficient 'pattern'. At the start their position is only virtually separable, since the paradigm cannot restrict itself to external causality, in other words without evident links to what it gives its first impulse to. On the contrary, in order to exhibit its driving force it must anticipate an immediate effect, otherwise it relinquishes its status as epiphany. The paradigm is not a regulatory or prescriptive *a quo*, but it can be identified historically if it triggers long-lasting effects that give it evidence. The canon, on the other hand, is a regulatory artefact subject to variability, failing which it ceases to have any referential value. It is, potentially, a *quid* in a working progress, provided that it is recognised as having a persuasive force, even when the paradigm fades into rhetoric.

### **Emphasis: authentic or invented traditions?**

At this stage we must necessarily tackle the problem of the paradigms in the context of the civil and political transformations involving the Slavic peoples of *Mitteleuropa*, with the specific aim of illustrating the thresholds of access that led to folk song being indicated as a distinctive sign of the nation. I will limit myself, therefore, to the events that permitted the constitution of the canon, adding some notes on the musics related to it.

The multiplicity of paradigms makes it impossible to trace a uniform portrayal on the web of fragile similarities, since their identification is suggested by concrete situations. Paradigms, it must be stressed, are conceptual manifestations related to single

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<sup>26</sup> Agamben, *Signatura rerum. Sul metodo*, 62.

events, even when misleading analogies are present. For example, the political paradigm suits the case of Poland; for Bohemia, on the other hand, the confessional paradigm is intertwined with the philological one, which in turn gives rise to a metabolic chain that leads up to the vernacular song. The political and confessional paradigm suits Slovenia. In Croatia orality predominates and develops in two phases: a weaker phase of Homeric studies, and the phase of common language, which generated a political impact over a large portion of the southern Slavs.

The canon also deserves further reflection. As well as constantly resorting to music judged to be folk music in the name of simplicity (sic!), the folk collections of these countries assembled pieces that were reputed to be original in the nineteenth century. Even though they are exceptions, the *contrafacta* and the rewritings of art music prove the opposite, however. Besides, patriotism identifies its own *raison d'être* in the autochthonous tradition (true or alleged as the case may be), which in turn is related to language and ethnicity, even if, as Renan and Hobsbawm have pointed out, neither the one nor the other guarantees the unity of a country. If we follow Herder's ideas on poetry, the canon should be based on song types corresponding to the character of the peoples. Today, some two centuries later it is astonishing to learn that certain anthologies were considered as local expressions, even when they had little or nothing to do with the folklore. For example the church songs of the Slovenians or the hymns of the Czechs, who lacked an epic tradition comparable to that of the southern Slavs, were entrusted with this function – a fact that is today inexplicable, unless one were to substitute the term folksong with the more appropriate label of a song that was widely disseminated and transversal to all classes. Any piece of *Trivialmusik*, even of non-native origin, could be admitted to the category of folklore, given that it was the language and its wide dissemination that ensured the necessary popularity-quotient.

The paradigm, as we stated above, uses a vocabulary that is destined to be replaced, and the results that stem from the paradigm must invalidate the preceding regulatory framework, as is attested by the operas staged during the political events in Poland between 1793 and 1795. After the partition of the country by Prussia and Russia, both the Poles and the Russian occupiers identified the seeds of revolt in the singspiel *Cud mniemany, czili Krakowiaczy i Górale* (*The Presumed Miracle or Cracovians and Highlanders*, 1794) by the Czech composer Jan Stefani to a libretto by Wojciech Bogusławski.<sup>27</sup> Even though the music's structure was by no means innovative, the sound of the *krakowiak* and the *polonaise* were sufficient to fire the spirits of the public. At another time those same features would have sounded like a diversion in the form of *couleur locale*. Instead, as a result of the dissolution of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, the nobility, and above all the bourgeoisie, were induced to project onto it the symbols of a love for one's fatherland. In this instance it is legitimate to speak of the constitution of a political paradigm, since it is a point of departure that the composers of the following generations could not ignore.

For an exact understanding of the Polish crisis we need to go back a few decades, to before the partition. The Sarmatism that cemented the unity of the Polish, Lithuanian and Ruthenian nobles, on the strength of a common descent from the ancient Sarmatians, was

<sup>27</sup> Żórawska-Witkowska, "People, Nation and Fatherland in Three Polish Operas", 41–58.

subjected to severe criticism. Its basic values were in fact antithetical to the universalism of the Enlightenment. Sarmatism reappeared, however, in the nineteenth century after the dissolution of the country, and its reappearance was prepared by the Herderian ideas of Franciszek Salezy Jezierski, who upheld the individuality of every people as opposed to the sameness of the nobility in every country. For Jezierski the individuality of a nation, whatever its form of government, derived from the particular characters of the common people. In this regard, in the period between 1778 and 1794, there appeared on the stage thirty-five operas with rustic subjects, hence the denomination of *opera wiejska* (rustic opera). With the rise to power of Stanisław August Poniatowski the intermingling of popular language and the aulic writing of the Renaissance poet Jan Kochanowski was intensified. And as a result, long before *Cud mniemany* the repertoire became enriched with arias and dances inspired by the customs of the single regions of Poland. It was with the trauma of the lost independence, however, that the “natural song”<sup>28</sup> of Bogusławski gave to the Poles a new awareness about the role of folklore as the expression of national feeling. On this subject some clarification on the dogmas of the Enlightenment in Poland is indispensable.

Unlike their French colleagues, the Poles were conservative and intent on safeguarding their local traditions. Given that the Lithuanians, Ruthenes and Masovians spoke languages and professed religions that were different from one another, a common foundation could be found in the use of a language *super partes*. Restraints were therefore imposed on literature with the aim of elevating Polish to the rank of national language. This policy had very distinct social implications, which are reflected in the contemporary novels. The main character in these novels speaks on behalf of everyone; he lives in the country; he is a small landowner committed to reforming agriculture, burdened by centuries of hardship. He detests the French-speaking nobility and does not consort with the country folk. For him the lifestyle of the lower classes is a cause of pride, but also acts as a stimulus to accomplish the redemption of the peasants from Feudalism. In this social vision, in which state and nation are the same thing, bourgeois themes of the *Pamela* type have no space and, for reasons that are easy to surmise, the Jew is sometimes a negative figure.<sup>29</sup>

While the political paradigm can be identified with rare precision in the singspiel of Stefani-Bogusławski, the situation in Bohemia, on the other hand, was very complicated, for there we see the stratification of three paradigms. In conjunction with the rise of an anti-German bourgeoisie, as a result of which Czech became the most spoken language around 1870, a secularised revision of Hussitism was also born. Thanks to his use of vernacular language a century before Luther, Jan Hus was presented as the upholder of the freedom of the Czech people. Obviously, a reinterpretation of this type ill fitted the Catholicism imposed on the country after the Thirty Years War. To remove the obstacle, considering that the Slovak protestants also made use of Czech as a vehicular language (see Jan Kollár, for example), the patriots found a good compromise in the celebration of a fourteenth-century manuscript discovered at Dvůr Králové in 1817, along with the

<sup>28</sup> Id., “Popolo, nazione e patria nelle prime opera polacche (1778–1794)”, in this volume, 31–43: 37.

<sup>29</sup> Rejman, “Les héros du canon littéraire des Lumières politiquement incorrect”, 112–119.

fragment from Zelená Hora of the eighth century (hence preceding Bohemia's conversion to Christianity) discovered in 1822. To no avail were doubts on their authenticity cast by the authoritative Slavist Josef Dobrovský. On the strength of these paleoslavic texts Jan Palacký engaged in a personal battle to disseminate the icon of an antique Czech *natio* based on democracy. As regards music, the lack of the *epos* was offset by the tradition of the Protestant chorale, Jesuitical hymnography and the reassessment of the mythical singers Lumir and Záboj. The result of these dissimilar references was the reconstruction of a genuine and imaginary Middle Ages, to which Smetana contributed with his opera *Libuše*, which served to inaugurate the National Theatre in 1882.<sup>30</sup>

While the Czechs rediscovered Hussitism for purposes that were anything but religious, the Catholic Slovenes also engaged in the reassessment of the evangelical work of Primož Trubar. In the sixteenth century this enterprising Lutheran succeeded in imposing the language of the people, not only through the printing of sacred books and language primers, but also through the painstaking work of promoting literacy. However, the first collection of folk songs prepared by the Philharmonische Gesellschaft of Ljubljana in 1819 had no effect. What acted as a real cement was rather the church singing of the rural areas, into which the syntagmas of folklore had been incorporated. The scenario changed with the revolution of 1848. Not only in Ljubljana, but also in Graz and Trieste, the Slovenes gave a decisive impulse to national life by establishing the *bésede*, borrowed from the corresponding *besedy* of the Czechs.<sup>31</sup> After 1861, along the coastal areas the experience of four-part choral music and national anthems accessible to amateurs, which began with the Ljubljanesse *Slovenska gerlica* (The Slovene Turtle dove) of 1848, became consolidated. The national opera, on the other hand, appeared at the end of the century with Benjamin Ipavec's *Teharski plemiči* (The Noblemen of Teharje, 1892), Viktor Parma's *Urh, grof celjski* (Ulrich, Count of Cilli, 1894) and Anton Foerster's *Gorenjski slavček* (The Nightingale of Upper Carniola, 1896), after though without causing much of a stir.

Paradigms are born and develop by autogenesis. Ever since the times of Herder the poems of Ossian were the object of drawn-out polemics, though this in no way diminished their fame, for they were rapidly translated into Italian, German, Czech and Polish. To no avail were the accusations of forgery or, as Hugh Trevor-Roper claimed, of a revision of a legacy that had been transported to Scotland by Irish bards and sung by the "remnants".<sup>32</sup> The Gaelic texts exerted an influence only in the narrow circles of élite culture. The many versions in the various languages of Europe, among the first those by Michael Denis and Melchiorre Cesarotti, failed to produce tangible effects, if we exclude the *Ossians Gesänge* by Franz Schubert, the operas *Comala* by Thomas Busby (1800),

<sup>30</sup> Ottlová, Pospíšil, "Zum Rezeptionsgeschichtlichen Hintergrund der tschechischen Nationaloper", 23–35.

<sup>31</sup> Cigoj Krstulović, "Uvod v glasbeno delo čitalnic na Slovenskem do ustanovitve Glasbene Matice (1848–1872)", 61–74; Klemenčič, "The Contribution of Music to Slovenian National Awakening", 513–530. On Trieste and the joined hinterland: Rojc, *Cultura musicale degli sloveni a Trieste: dal 1848 all'avvento del fascismo*.

<sup>32</sup> Trevor-Roper, "The Invention of Tradition: The Highland Tradition of Scotland", 16: "In the eighteenth century, the Western Islands were still essentially an Irish overflow, and the Gaelic language spoken there was regularly described, in the eighteenth century, as Irish."

*Ossian* by Jean-François Lesuer (1804), *Fingallo e Comala* by Stefano Pavesi (1805), *Colmal* by Peter von Winter (1809), and the later symphonic works such as *Die Hebriden* (1829) by Felix Mendelssohn.<sup>33</sup> Nor did all of this take place among the Slavic populations, in spite of the existence of a version translated into Czech by František Palacký (1817). Nonetheless, these songs in Earse helped to generate a new interest in oral sources and the only consequence worthy of note was the revival of the classical epos in the light of Ossian, who was renamed the “Nordic Homer”. In fact Homer acted as a cue for Giulio Bajamonti, who set out to compare the *Iliad* to the *pjesme* of the Morlack *guslari*, the bards believed to be the survivors of the ancient civilisation of the Balkanic Slavs.<sup>34</sup> The Illyrian movement that followed, however, did not avail itself of similar arguments, but instead boosted the musical repertoire by including any piece of demotic origin, provided that it was written in *neoštokavjan*, the potentially transnational language spoken in certain areas of Croatia, in Bosnia, Serbia and Montenegro.

According to Foucault’s perspective, the travel literature, or the research of Andrija Kačić-Miošić on the folk poetry, are not the causes that create a cult of the nation. We must wait for the interposition of the critical factor, in other words the fall of the Venetian Republic (1797) and Bajamonti’s consequent reflections on the subject. In his *Morlacchismo di Omero* (1797) Bajamonti sketches a monogenetic portrait of the southern Slavs, drawing attention to the narrative analogies between classical and Morlack epic as reassessed from an anthropological perspective.<sup>35</sup> Croatian Illyrism, indifferent to the pseudohistorical claims of Morlackism and professing less pretentious viewpoints, advocated a phenomenon that used language as the discriminating factor.<sup>36</sup> In order to resolve the Balkan puzzle the paradigm of orality merged with both the revival of the decasyllables sung by heart by the *guslari* and the study of the ancient literature of Dubrovnik belonging to the same linguistic group.

The first fruits of Illyrism can be observed in *Ljubav i zloba (Love and Malice)* of 1846, an opera by Vatroslav Lisinski (alias Ignaz Fuchs) that is partially influenced by Gaetano Donizetti. One should not overlook, however, the experiences that lay behind this achievement, which can be traced back to the operatic repertoire of the German companies and, to a lesser extent, those of the Italians.<sup>37</sup> Equally decisive was Lisinski’s choral output. The works by this amateur composer met with considerable success between 1841 and 1845, i.e. during the period when the pro-Hungarian party opposed the Croat Ljudevit Gaj’s proposal of a language reform, which implicitly anticipated the birth of a federation of states to the detriment of Hungary.<sup>38</sup> The Yugoslav-oriented project of Gaj influenced Lisinski, who composed the overture *Slavenka* (1848) in Prague, the meeting point of Central European Pan-Slavism.

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<sup>33</sup> Dahlhaus, *Nineteenth Century Music*, 21, 166.

<sup>34</sup> Cavallini, “Ossian, Omero e il bardo morlacco”, 259–288.

<sup>35</sup> Bajamonti, “Il morlacchismo di Omero”, 77–98.

<sup>36</sup> Tuksar, “On Some Concepts of Panslavism and Illyrism”, 79–102.

<sup>37</sup> Katalinić, “Paralelni svjetovi ili dvostruki identitet?”, 323–340.

<sup>38</sup> Palić-Jelavić, “Zborsko stvaralaštvo Vatroslava Lisinskog”, 289–306.

## Nationalism vs. Cosmopolitanism?

In the context of the relations between dominant and subservient cultures, the need to give a formal definition of the musics circulating in *Mitteleuropa* could be fulfilled by resorting to the categories of subordination, adaptation and autonomy. But in actual fact any strict recourse to these categories, which imply a high degree of simplification, is untenable in view of the intermingling of styles.

Concerning the emancipation from foreign models, a precious source is constituted by the suggestions for imposing a national physiognomy on opera, a genre in which the national setting was comprehensible to any type of audience. The instructions given by the Czech Otakar Hostinský and the Croat Franjo Kuhač, either to reject Wagner's *Musikdrama* or to accept it with reservations, are irrefutable proof of this tendency. From another viewpoint, any classification becomes insubstantial when dealing with the widely disseminated musics that are considered as autochthonous only on account of their language, even when they show traces of foreign influences. Furthermore, many folk collections cannot be assessed in aesthetic terms, because their aim was to consolidate political claims. But even at higher level, in situations where a technical assessment devoid of ideological implications can be made, it is not easy to constrain the scores within strict boundaries delimitating the degree of imitation or creative freedom.

Equally inadmissible, finally, is the opposition national vs. cosmopolitan, since they were two components destined to coexist for a long time, as two halves of the same culture. In order to become acceptable as a school, it is claimed that the art music in Poland, Bohemia, Slovenia and Croatia, all countries involved in national struggles, would have had to reject the 'exogenous' models. Obviously this is a prejudice that can be easily disproved, even if it stubbornly refuses to die in musicological circles, bewitched by the modernity of a handful of composers active in semi-feudal Russia. Smetana, Dvořák, Zajc and Parma (two Czechs, a Croat and a Slovenian) were capable of following the teachings of Liszt, Brahms, Verdi and Mascagni respectively, but at the same time and with equal skill they knew how to transfigure unusual formulas when resorting to the national-folk sources. Hence we should accept that their culture, which was equally distributed between German, Italian and national tendencies, was based on a sort of tri-lingualism which is difficult to understand after the establishment of the national historiographies, but which at the time created no serious conflicts. Even if localism or nationalism serve to label the artistic expressions of communities that were dissatisfied, but basically faithful to the Habsburg Empire until 1918, and if cosmopolitanism refers to the performances of music from the centres driving the consolidated cultures, that does not mean that there was an automatic rupture. Let us clarify with an example.

For the Slavophone and Germanophone bourgeoisies, right down to the early twentieth century, it was natural to consider Italian opera as if it were a supranational product, even when the requirement was to translate the texts of foreign authors and compose to librettos in the mother-tongue. In accordance with a deeply entrenched convention, the genre of opera was Italian, and in part French, and appreciated in equal measure by audiences in Warsaw, Vienna, Prague, Ljubljana and Zagreb. Rather than an antithesis between nationalism and cosmopolitanism, it would be more proper to speak of symbiosis

or parallel lives. The spread of musics born elsewhere, yet made their own at the level of both reception and composition, was a practice comparable to the use of German as *Umgangssprache*. In my opinion cosmopolitanism is conceivable in an equal, and not only contrary, relation to patriotism and to its nationalistic deviations. And in fact, Italian and French opera, like the symphonic and chamber music of the German authors, were embraced by all the Slavic peoples, who identified themselves in those repertoires, while remaining aware of their ethnic and linguistic diversity. One of the sins of twentieth-century musicology, which again was divided between east and west, was to treat the relationship between the domestic currents and the cosmopolitan art as conflictual and not dialectic. In 1978, when the boundaries became more fragile and the weakness of terms such as Eastern Europe became evident, Dragotin Cvetko stigmatized this incongruity: “Even from what we already know it is obvious that despite some crucial differences the two kinds of music have so much in common and are so closely related to each other that they cannot be treated separately.”<sup>39</sup>

As the above clarifications suggest, what is needed is a correct methodological perspective on the usage of the adjective folk. That advanced by Matthew Gelbart in certain ways can be useful.<sup>40</sup> For the American musicologist, art music and folk music are constructions conceived as categories outside time, and in that respect similar to the “invented traditions” of Hobsbawm.<sup>41</sup> In spite of their close connection, they have been examined in terms of reciprocal exclusion. It was possible for this to happen when an age-old way of thinking, based on the functions of music, was supplanted by the concept of creativity and obsessive search for origins.<sup>42</sup> As a result, the presence of features extracted from folklore and re-inserted into art music, or contrarily, the popular success of melodies taken from operas, have complicated our interpretation of the function carried out by the various types of music that are labelled as folk (traditional music, music composed for the people, church songs, hymns and choruses written by composers, opera arias). Within the evolution of art music in the Slavic countries of *Mitteleuropa* there were continual interactions between utility and autonomy, which oblige us to examine carefully both the modes of reception and the technical quality of the scores. Otherwise it would be difficult to explain the success of any compositional genre, symphonic works included, as

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<sup>39</sup> Cvetko, “The Present Relationship between the Historiography of Music in Eastern and Western Europe”, 159.

<sup>40</sup> Gelbart, *The Invention of Folk Music and Art Music: Emerging Categories from Ossian to Wagner*.

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*, 6: “Folk music and art music, being recent constructions that have portrayed themselves as timeless categories, share much with the idea of ‘invented traditions’”; 7: “To understand fully the persistence and influence of these categories, we must [...] recognize [...] the specific historical interdependence of folk and art as a binary, dialectical pairing. These signifiers have gained their referents through contrast and opposition to each other: throughout their history, the fact that folk music and art music have functioned in dialogue with each other has rendered their force exclusive rather than inclusive”.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*, cover: “Whereas earlier ways of classifying music were based on its different functions, for the past two hundred years we have been obsessed with creativity and musical origins, and classify music along these lines”.

long as it referred to the history of the homeland.<sup>43</sup> When many composers attempted to forge an alternative style to that of the dominant cultures, the response of the public was always positive, even when the results were not of high quality, for its perception was guided by identity feelings and not by critical judgement. Some composers achieved this objective with decades of delay compared to Russia or Bohemia. The results were no less extraordinary, especially when they were introduced, with skill and refinement, the intermixing of modal and polytonal systems derived from the true ethnic grammar.<sup>44</sup>

## Conclusions

The national paradigm, when it takes root in the conscience of groups, is a contract of consent that defines and produces the rites of self-representation. In the last two centuries the musics associated with the folk canon have been walking a fine line between the concepts – understood as unchanging elements in an immobile universe – of language, ethnicity and tradition. And even if one detects an adaptation to the dynamics of history in these concepts, the paradigm from which they originated exists regardless. It stands like a breaking point within the system and does not allow one to predict the form of the future outcomes. Identity, however, is never the outcome of neutral theories, but a repositioning of the paradigm aimed to exert an influence on practice. The canon, which is passed off as natural, claims to convey a unanimous accord, whereas the arbitrary alliance of ideology with reality is always deceptive.

<sup>43</sup> Bergamo, “Umetniški značaj proti smotru: med polariziranjem in harmoniziranjem”, 211–228. The author dwells on the three different ways in which, in the modern age, a conflictual polarisation occurred between (instrumental) *pure music* and (operatic and otherwise) *vocal music*, then within the context of instrumental music only, between *absolute music* and *programme music*, and from the 1920s between *autonomous music* and *functional music*. Her reflections are founded on the studies of Carl Dahlhaus and the entries on *Absolute Musik*, *Autonome Musik*, *Funktionale Musik*, written by Albert von Massow for the *Handwörterbuch der musikalischen Terminologie*, Auslieferung 22, hrsg. von Hans Heinrich Eggebrecht, Stuttgart, Franz Steiner, 1994. Cf. also Cigoj Krstulović, “Glasba za rabo kot družbenozgodovinski pojav v drugi polovici 19. stoletja na Slovenskem”, 65–76. The author analyses the different roles of the so-called “utilitarian” repertoires, from the birth of the national awakening in 1848 until the end of the century, when they gradually lost their initial functionality and became music for “domestic use”.

<sup>44</sup> Béla Bartók’s oeuvre on the peasant tradition of Hungary is defined by David Cooper as a nationalistic reaction to the gipsy music: Cooper, “Béla Bartók and the Question of Race Purity in Music”, 16–32.

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## KULTURNE PARADIGME IN POPULARNI KANON: DISKURZ O NARODU V SLOVANSKI SREDNJEEVROPSKI GLASBI 19. STOLETJA

## Povzetek

Razprava se osredotoča na Srednjo Evropo kot geografski pojem in na Srednjo Evropo (*Mitteleuropa*) kot kulturni pojem. Pojasniti skuša vlogo različnih vrst glasbe v slovanskih deželah v 19. stoletju, v času po narodnih preporodih na Poljskem, Češkem, Slovenskem in Hrvaškem, ko je postalo vprašanje avtonomije posebno pomembno. V teh razmerah so imeli vodilno vlogo češki glasbeniki – ti so se naseljevali v različnih pokrajinah omenjenih dežel, ki so v političnem pogledu pripadale Prusiji, Rusiji in habsburški monarhiji. Prispevali so k nastanku preporodnih gibanj in z njimi povezanega odkritja ljudskega vključno s starimi slovstvenimi izročili. To je služilo kot osnova za idejo o novi umetni glasbi. Prizadevanja za uveljavitev lastne identitete so – za razliko od uporabe nemških modelov za instrumentalno glasbo in »nacionalne« italijanske opere – pospešila nastajanje partitur, ki so poudarjale bodisi avtentične ali pa le domnevne ljudske vzorce. Čeprav je bil poziv k ustanovitvi zveze neodvisnih držav eden od vzrokov za razpad avstrijskega dinastičnega univerzalizma, ni mogel preprečiti spontanih interakcij med glasbenimi kulturami Nemcev in Slovanov. Te kulture so rasle skupaj, in kot je mogoče videti iz življenjepisov Čeha Antonína Dvořáka, Hrvata Ivana Zajca in Slovenca Viktorja Parme, so se medsebojno oplajale. V tej zvezi so lahko kategorije podrejenosti, prirejenosti in avtonomnosti nadomeščene s primernejši izrazi, kot sta denimo uporabna in avtonomna glasba, saj je v slovanski Srednji Evropi (*Mitteleuropa*) nacionalno obstajalo hkrati s kozmopolitskim. Nacionalna identiteta, tema, ki je bila skupna tako poljskemu, češkemu, slovenskemu in hrvaškemu meščanstvu, se lahko obravnava s konceptoma paradigme in kanona. Kot meni Giorgio Agamben v svojem Foucaultovi filozofiji zavezanem delu *Signatura rerum* (2008), je paradigma element, ki ima zmožnost, da se razvija. Z zgodovinskega stališča je tisti konfliktni dejavnik, ki kliče k reorganizaciji predhodnega reda. Z drugimi besedami deluje paradigma kot tisti otipljivi in statični dejavnik, iz katerega lahko v zgodovinskem sosledju izide nov proces. Njena vrednost, se pravi gonilna sila njenega impulza, je razpoznavna le v zvezi s kanonom. Kanon je tako rezultat obsežnega toposa kot so ljudska pesem in popularna glasba, ki sta bili v 19. stoletju močno prežeti z jezikom, vero, narodnostjo in bodisi pristnimi ali umetnimi resničnimi ali izmišljenimi tradicijami. Gledano v tej luči je delitev Poljske v letih 1793–95 privedla do politične paradigme; oživitev husitskega gibanja je na Češkem pripravila pot verski paradigmi, ki je bila nadalje vzrok za porast pesmi v češčini; na Slovenskem sta bili ugodni politična in verska paradigma; na Hrvaškem pa je paradigma ustnega izročila v obliki epskega pripovedništva prevladala kot vir skupnega jezika v smislu enotnosti južnih Slovanov. Kljub njihovi raznolikosti so te paradigme razvile popularni kanon, ki je kot oblika samo-representacije obvladoval ljudsko in umetno glasbo tudi po prvi svetovni vojni.

## POPOLO, NAZIONE E PATRIA NELLE PRIME OPERE POLACCHE (1778–1794)

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**Izveček:** *Konec 18. stoletja so pojmi ljudstvo, narod in domovina vplivali na prve poljske opere, v katerih je bilo dogajanje postavljeno na podeželje. Libreti in glasba so bili prežeti z elementi govora in ljudskih pesmi različnih regij. Kralj Stanisław August je še posebej podpiral razsvetljensko idejo »ruralne opere«, povezano z izboljšanjem socialnega položaja kmetstva (ljudstva, naroda). Še več, idejo domovine lahko najdemo tudi v delu z naslovom Kantata w dzień inauguracji statui króla Jana III (Varšava 1788).*

**Ključne besede:** *poljska ruralna opera, razsvetljenstvo, sarmatizem, Stanisław August Poniatowski, Maciej Kamiński, Jan Stefani, Wojciech Bogusławski.*

**Abstract:** *At the end of the eighteenth century, the concepts of people, nation and homeland influenced the first Polish operas, whose topics were set in the countryside. Librettos and music incorporated authentic elements drawn from the speech and folk songs of different regions. In particular, King Stanisław August Poniatowski promoted the Enlightenment ideals of “rural opera”, connected with the improvement of the wretched social conditions of the peasantry (i.e., the people or nation). Moreover, the concept of the fatherland is recognizable in Kantata w dzień inauguracji statui króla Jana III (Warsaw 1788).*

**Keywords:** *Polish rural opera, Enlightenment, Sarmatism, Stanisław August Poniatowski, Maciej Kamiński, Jan Stefani, Wojciech Bogusławski.*

Il concetto di popolo e il canone musicale popolare assunsero un ruolo fondamentale nell'opera lirica polacca sin dai suoi inizi (1778–1794). Il primo concetto è palese soprattutto nei testi dei libretti, mentre il secondo emerge chiaramente dalle partiture conservatesi. In Polonia fu particolarmente popolare in quell'epoca un tipo di melodramma che gli studiosi definiscono “opera rurale”. La trama dei lavori appartenenti a questo genere si svolge in un ambiente contadino, che permette di introdurre sia nel testo, sia nella musica e nella scenografia, un elemento di realismo, talvolta spiccato. Il carattere sincretico della tradizione popolare, ove convivono musica, danza e cerimonie, la rendeva particolarmente atta ad essere utilizzata nell'ambito dell'opera, genere di per sé sincretico.

La tradizione popolare in Polonia ha sempre avuto un ruolo di prim'ordine, rappresentando un'espressione dell'autoctonia creata in gran parte dagli aristocratici. Questo fenomeno si accentuò nel diciottesimo secolo, trasformandosi in una particolare ideologia denominata sarmatismo (in sintesi, il culto dell'autoctono e dei valori nazionali), che si

manifestò tramite una intensa “rusticizzazione” della cultura. Già nel secondo Settecento, però, per via della universalizzazione dei postulati dell’illuminismo, il concetto di popolo assunse nuovi significati. Agli illuminati, ossia agli intellettuali, artisti e magnati radunati attorno a Stanisław August Poniatowski che regnò dal 1764 al 1795, erano ovviamente note le posizioni di Jean-Jacques Rousseau e Johann Gottfried Herder, così come i *Canti di Ossian* (la prima traduzione polacca dalla versione francese, a cura di Ignacy Krasicki, apparve a Leopoli nel 1792–1793). L’attenzione nei confronti della tradizione popolare, non solo quella polacca ma anche degli altri popoli residenti sul territorio della Repubblica delle Due Nazioni (soprattutto al confine polacco-ruteno), era più antica e più profondamente radicata che non in Europa occidentale, e costituiva la *summa* di due orientamenti: quello “estetico”, basato sulla conservazione delle tradizioni dell’antica Polonia, e quello storiografico, basato su alcuni elementi che furono considerati fonti per la storia della nazione.<sup>1</sup> Lo stesso re sarebbe stato un appassionato cultore di musica popolare, come conferma uno dei cronisti di quell’epoca: “Egli vedeva le manifestazioni del popolo quali grandi opere degne dell’occhio regio. Perciò i signori, conoscendo quel gusto particolare, qualora fosse ospite a casa di uno di loro, mettevano in scena per lui delle nozze rustiche veritiere o immaginarie”.<sup>2</sup>

## Popolo e nazione

Per molto tempo, il termine nazione, nella Repubblica delle Due Nazioni, veniva riferito unicamente alla nobiltà. Lo stato comprendeva il Regno di Polonia (inclusa una parte dell’odierna Ucraina) e il Granducato di Lituania (composto dalle odierne Lituania e Bielorussia); era governato da un regime politico senza eguali, ossia una repubblica con un monarca eletto democraticamente. Il diritto di cittadinanza, tuttavia, interessava solo la nobiltà, un gruppo molto numeroso, composto dall’8–10% della popolazione, e molto variegato per quanto riguarda la confessione (solo il 25% era cattolico), inoltre lo status economico rivela che il 60% dei signori non possedeva proprietà terriera. Quella nobiltà pluriethnica (polacca, russa, lituana) era integrata grazie al mito della comune origine dal potente popolo degli antichi sarmati. Nella Repubblica delle Due Nazioni la borghesia era una minoranza debole, e i contadini costituivano la maggioranza del popolo soggetto, privo cioè di qualsiasi diritto pubblico essendo proprietà del signore. Un fatto confermato eloquentemente da atti di cessione dei musicisti, appartenenti alla classe infima, effettuati da magnati in favore di Antoni Tyzenhauz, tesoriere del Granducato di Lituania intorno al 1770. In uno di quegli atti leggiamo che veniva dato in dono non solo il musico, ma anche “la moglie sua e la progenie già esistente e quella futura”.<sup>3</sup>

Fu Stanisław August a tentare di riformare quelle drastiche ineguaglianze sociali. Il re considerava il teatro come uno dei mezzi più importanti della sua propaganda, utilizzando, come annunciò nel 1765, per combattere uno degli stereotipi polacchi, cioè

<sup>1</sup> Górski, “Folklor”, 154–160: 156.

<sup>2</sup> Kitowicz, *Pamiętniki, czyli Historia polska*, 673.

<sup>3</sup> Pl- Wagad, Archiwum Tyzenhauza, D-4/XVIII-7, f. 240.

l'“oppressione delle genti di basso rango”.<sup>4</sup> Quando, vent'anni dopo, ereditò il corpo di ballo dal tesoriere Tyzenhauz, composto di giovani popolani, li liberò dalla sudditanza e concesse loro lo status di uomini liberi.

Il vasto stato polacco-lituano, plurietnico, plurilinguistico e pluriconfessionale, sotto il regno di Poniatowski tentò di “trasformarsi secondo il modello occidentale illuminato, che intendeva la nazione come comunità politica”. Come ha ben definito lo storico Andrzej Walicki, il suo modello era lontano dall'“ideologia del risveglio etnico che ha caratterizzato i processi nazionalistici nei cosiddetti popoli senza storia, non possedenti uno stato, una lingua letteraria e una cultura superiore cristallizzata”.<sup>5</sup> Sulla base di tali azioni, la costituzione del 3 maggio 1791, la prima legge suprema in Europa e la seconda nel mondo dopo quella degli Stati Uniti d'America, ha introdotto il termine di nazione unitaria nel senso statale, comprendendo tutte le classi della società civile, quindi non solo l'aristocrazia, ma anche la borghesia e il ceto contadino (fatto, quest'ultimo, di straordinario rilievo). Uno degli articoli della costituzione fece persino uso del termine “nazione–popolo”.<sup>6</sup> In quell'occasione lo scrittore e pubblicista Franciszek Salezy Jezierski argomentava: “il popolo andrebbe nominato il primo stato della nazione, o parlando più chiaramente, la nazione assoluta”. Lo stesso autore confermava che “l'aristocrazia in tutta Europa, in tutte le nazioni è simile [...]. Il popolo, invece, differenzia le nazioni, mantiene l'autoctonia della lingua paterna, conserva le tradizioni ed è attaccato allo stesso modo di [concepire] la vita”. Inoltre, aggiungeva che “nazione e governo della nazione sono cose distinte”, portando ad esempio gli italiani: “La nazione italiana è una nazione molto distinta dalle altre, nonostante [...] non possieda governo, legge o potenza [...]; la nazione trasformata in regni, repubbliche, diverse forme di governo e regno, perse ciò che determina la serietà nazionale e che si manifesta nel carattere proprio del linguaggio, della musica, dell'architettura, della pittura”.<sup>7</sup>

Secondo Jezierski, dunque, la nazione si articolava principalmente mediante la lingua e la cultura. Più o meno nello stesso tempo, una simile argomentazione fu presentata dall'eminente uomo politico e pubblicista Hugo Kołłątaj. Definendo il principio essenziale comune alla nazione, egli sosteneva: “la lingua paterna perfezionata, adoperata nell'istruzione e in tutti gli strumenti del governo, determina il carattere della nazione in modo molto più preciso che non l'abito; unisce in modo magistrale le diverse province”.<sup>8</sup> E il canonico del Duomo di Wawel Waclaw Sierakowski, riferendosi alla questione che più ci interessa, chiedeva retoricamente: “Quando le altre grezze nazioni, poco propense alla melodia, danno cotanto valore alle loro lingue da scrivere con esse opere liriche, [perché] noi dovremmo scordare la nostra?”.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>4</sup> *Listy Stanisława Augusta*, 29.

<sup>5</sup> Walicki, *Idea narodu w polskiej myśli oświeceniowej*, 10.

<sup>6</sup> Augustyniak, *Historia Polski 1572–1795*, 316.

<sup>7</sup> Salezy Jezierski, *Niektóre wyrazy porządkiem abecadła zebrane*, 176–177.

<sup>8</sup> Kołłątaj, *Listy Anonima*, vol. 1, 154.

<sup>9</sup> Sierakowski, *Sztuka muzyki*, vol. I, 2.

## L'opera polacca

La nascita dell'opera polacca nell'ottavo decennio del Settecento fu una sorta di necessità storica. Si tratta di un fenomeno osservato anche in Austria (con il *Singspiel*), Danimarca, Svezia e Russia, emerso dai postulati dell'Illuminismo che esortavano a coltivare la lingua e l'arte nazionale in tutti i campi. In Polonia, l'opera fu anche un utile strumento per divulgare l'ideologia del potere presso la società. Il principe Michał Kazimierz Ogiński, librettista e compositore di opere in polacco rappresentate nella sua corte privata di Słonim (ora in Bielorussia) a partire dal 1771, nel 1779 scrisse in versi che l'opera:

Contiene in sé le verità fondamentali,  
i principi del buon costume,  
condanna il vizio, la virtù elogia,  
scoraggia il cattivo costume ed esorta al buono.<sup>10</sup>

Il progetto di creare una forma d'arte propriamente nazionale sarebbe stato sostenuto dallo stesso re Stanisław August. Così almeno sostenne il compositore Maciej Kamieński, autore della prima opera del genere rappresentata in pubblico, *Nędza uszczęśliwiona* (*La miseria resa felice*, Varsavia 1778), su libretto di Franciszek Bohomolec e Wojciech Bogusławski, che ancora anni dopo si definiva con orgoglio l'autore della “primissima musica d'Opera Naz:[ionale] Orig:[inale]”.<sup>11</sup> Egli scrisse: “Siccome [...] gli italiani, i francesi e i tedeschi divertivano il pubblico con le loro opere, così volle il re che facessero anche i polacchi”.<sup>12</sup> Sul palcoscenico del teatro di Varsavia, infatti, si esibivano a turno le compagnie italiane, francesi, tedesche e polacche, e fu così che nacque *La miseria resa felice*, considerata dal coautore del libretto, Wojciech Bogusławski, un trionfo “sulla superstizione che il polacco non è portato all'opera lirica”.<sup>13</sup>

Negli anni 1778–1794 fu creato un significativo repertorio di opere polacche. Nel solo teatro di Varsavia furono rappresentati circa sessanta titoli, di cui quaranta traduzioni di titoli stranieri (venticinque italiani, tredici francesi e due tedeschi), e diciotto lavori originali in polacco, creati cioè da scrittori e compositori locali. Aggiungendovi il repertorio di altri teatri della repubblica, il numero di opere originali polacche andrebbe stimato in almeno trentacinque lavori. Il principe Adam Kazimierz Czartoryski raccomandava che nel caso di opere tradotte da lingue straniere non si trattasse di traduzioni alla lettera, ma che vi fossero introdotti “costumi nostrani”,<sup>14</sup> e così avvenne. In tutte le opere di quel periodo, sia quelle originali sia quelle tradotte, le parti cantate, arie, “canzoni” e *ensembles*, sono intercalate da dialoghi in prosa, similmente al *Singspiel* tedesco e all'*opéra comique* francese.

<sup>10</sup> Prefazione al libretto dell'opera di Ogiński, *Filozof zmieniony* (*Il filosofo cambiato*), pagina non numerata.

<sup>11</sup> *Gazeta Warszawska*, 1814 no 49, 870.

<sup>12</sup> Kamieński, “Krótki rys [...] o egzystencji najpierwszej oryginalnej opery polskiej”, 411.

<sup>13</sup> Bogusławski, *Dzieje Teatru Narodowego*, 18.

<sup>14</sup> Czartoryski, prefazione al dramma *Panna na wydaniu* (*Una signorina da maritare*), 64.

## La lingua dell'opera

Al tempo di Stanisław August fu intrapreso un rinnovamento della lingua, deteriorata nel passato da maccheronismi barocchi. Nella vita pubblica l'aristocrazia usava il latino, mentre i magnati parlavano il francese, la lingua franca dell'epoca, che spesso conoscevano meglio della lingua materna. Fu concordato che il modello andava cercato sia negli scritti del poeta rinascimentale Jan Kochanowski, sia nell'idioma del popolo, liberato dai forestierismi. Per cui videro la luce i primi dizionari, grammaticali ed ortografici, e la lirica con il teatro si riferirono alla tradizione popolare. “Talvolta si andava a cercare la lingua popolare, la fonetica e il lessico dialettale, per caratterizzare la parlata specifica dei personaggi, sottolineare la loro origine sociale, la diversità degli ambienti; altre volte, si trattava di citare un testo popolare, riferirsi ai versi, allo stile, all'immaginario dei canti popolari nella lirica amorosa dell'epoca; altre volte ancora si trattava di introdurre la danza e la musica popolare, o certi elementi della tradizione cerimoniale del popolo (p. es. le nozze) e dei suoi costumi”.<sup>15</sup>

Esempi di riferimento a modelli popolari si trovano nei libretti di *Nędza uszczęśliwiona* (*La miseria resa felice*), nella quale le protagoniste del popolo usano una parlata masoviana, *Prostota cnotliwa* (*La semplicità virtuosa*, Franciszek Bohomolec, Varsavia 1779?), dove tutti i personaggi, “sia nello stile, sia nel tono, devono parlare in modo popolare”, *Zośka, czyli Wiejskie zaloty* (*Sofia o Gli amori contadini*, Stanisław Szymański, Varsavia 1780), nella quale i dialoghi parlati sono caratterizzati da una lingua grezza che imita piuttosto il gergo delle periferie di Varsavia che non quello popolare, mentre le parti cantate, pur essendo composte in lingua letteraria, nell'espressione sono chiaramente stilizzate sul modello della lirica popolare. E ancora in *Agatka czyli Przyjazd pana* (*Agata o l'Arrivo del signore*, Maciej Radziwiłł, Nieśwież 1784), ove i contadini dialogano in una lingua stilizzata sul modello popolare della Mazuria, mentre i nobili parlano la lingua letteraria, in *Cud mniemany, czyli Krakowiaci i Górale* (*Il miracolo presunto, ossia i cracoviani ed i montanari*, Wojciech Bogusławski, Varsavia 1794), opera che felicemente rappresenta la raffinatezza della tradizione popolare, quale fonte importante della cultura nazionale, sia dal punto di vista del materiale letterario sia musicale.<sup>16</sup> Nel caso dei *Krakowiaci i Górale*, i due gruppi etnici eponimi, tormentati da un palese conflitto, rappresentano il popolo polacco con la sua parlata e i suoi costumi. I dialetti adoperati dai cracoviani e dai montanari, tuttora molto diffusi, non costituiscono una lingua polacca concreta, ma rappresentano una sintesi “della lingua contadina con elementi caratteristici delle diverse regioni del paese”.<sup>17</sup>

Si trattava indubbiamente di una strategia consapevole, consona alle azioni politiche della cerchia del re. Wojciech Bogusławski, autore del libretto di *Krakowiaci i Górale*, sottolineava la presenza di una tendenza nazionale nelle opere liriche polacche anteriori, ma confessava che ormai: “all'opera lirica polacca mancava quello che ad ogni nazione è più caro: [...] la nazionalità. Mi è occorsa l'idea di rappresentare in scena quei cracoviani

<sup>15</sup> Górski, “Folklor”, 158.

<sup>16</sup> Żórawska-Witkowska, “People, Nation and Fatherland in Three Polish Operas”, 41–58.

<sup>17</sup> Raszewski, *Bogusławski*, vol. 1, 317.

gioviali e rustici, che cantano coltivando i campi e cantano lottando per la patria. [...] Ho invocato la mia memoria e tutta la mia capacità di dipingere i loro costumi, espressioni, emozioni, parlate e divertimenti; [...] i cracoviani vinsero i cuori di tutti, accesero le menti di tutti. Le allusioni che tutti cercavano alla situazione attuale fecero sì che l'opera fosse proibita dopo tre rappresentazioni<sup>18</sup>. Al pubblico fu infatti evidente il contesto politico dei momenti caldi precedenti l'insurrezione antirussa del 1794. Si associavano quindi i cracoviani pacifici ai rappresentanti della nazione polacca, mentre i montanari, i quali aggredivano i cracoviani, ai russi che costituivano una minaccia per i polacchi.

Argomenti rustici, infine, anche se di stile più arcadico che realistico, erano presenti nelle opere rappresentate al teatro dei principi Izabela e Michał Kazimierz Czartoryski di Puławy (per esempio *Zosinki* e *Marynki*, del librettista Franciszek Karpiński con la musica di Wincenty Lessel).

### Realismo dei costumi e radicalismo sociale

La trama delle opere citate si concentra sulle peripezie stereotipe di una coppia di amorosi, calate su uno sfondo realistico, o persino in un contesto di spiccato radicalismo sociale, che costituisce il loro tratto specifico. In *Nędza uszczęśliwiona* (1778) gli elementi di critica sociale sono ancora attenuati e l'ambiente contadino è rappresentato in modo convenzionale. L'unico elemento di critica sociale si osserva nella dichiarazione del borghese Jan, rivolta ad un contadino povero sebbene nobile di cuore:

Non conosci ancora i costumi dei Signori,  
che hanno sempre delle belle parole,  
belle storie che poco son vere.  
Chi non conosce la miseria non sente pietà,  
beato chi si giova della loro grazia,  
beato chi di essa bisogno non ha.<sup>19</sup>

Nella *Prostota cnotliwa* (*La semplicità virtuosa*) l'ambiente contadino è dipinto in modo più crudo, e il libretto assume un tono da manifesto. La trama narra dell'esperimento effettuato da un nobile che ha liberato i suoi contadini e concesso loro dei terreni (nel territorio polacco annesso alla Russia, la liberazione dei contadini avvenne ufficialmente solo nel 1861). Secondo il nobile, uno dei due protagonisti dell'opera, "non è lecito che un uomo tenga un altro uguale a sé in servitù e lo tratti come bestiame". L'altro protagonista, il contadino Antek, intona un testo che la censura sicuramente non avrebbe autorizzato né a Parigi, né a Vienna:

Spietati assassini degli innocenti,  
non basta tenerci in servitù?

<sup>18</sup> Bogusławski, *Dzieje Teatru Narodowego*, 76–77.

<sup>19</sup> Id., *Dzieła dramatyczne*, vol. 12, 445.

Ci ponete i vincoli anche sui cuori,  
anche il bestiame vive meglio da voi.<sup>20</sup>

In *Agatka* (Maciej Radziwiłł, Nieśwież 1784) il proprietario della campagna apprezza il ruolo dei contadini, ammettendo che sono loro a consentire l'esistenza materiale dell'intera nazione: "Sono loro che ci nutrono, che ci danno il pane. [...] Del loro lavoro pagato con il sangue vivono tutti gli stati".<sup>21</sup>

## La musica

Nell'epoca in esame, la varietà stilistica delle musiche delle diverse nazioni si attribuiva, seguendo il pensiero di Rousseau e Herder, alle caratteristiche timbriche, espressive e grammaticali delle diverse lingue. Ancora nel 1821 il compositore Karol Kurpiński scriveva: "Che cosa definisce la letteratura musicale nazionale? Il canto, perché si coniuga con la lingua paterna e vi assume un tratto caratteristico e nazionale. È diverso il timbro della lingua italiana da quella francese, tedesca o polacca; e chiunque approfondisca l'argomento sente che la differenza dei timbri si traduce nell'espressione del canto"<sup>22</sup>; un'idea condivisa da Józef Elsner, il maestro di Fryderyk Chopin. Era diffusa, infatti, la convinzione che la musica su testo polacco di per sé era sufficiente a garantire la sua nazionalità, poiché si richiedeva ai compositori di adeguarsi all'intonazione della lingua, alle sue caratteristiche grammaticali, accentuative e timbriche.

L'introduzione di elementi nazionali nella musica dell'opera polacca del Settecento era legata alla necessità di rappresentare l'ambito contadino che, come già indicato, diventava spesso il luogo dell'azione drammatica. L'unico manoscritto originale, conservato della *Nędza uszczęśliwiona*, contiene una nota interessante del compositore Maciej Kamieński. Ai lettori Kamieński scrive: "Questi canti alla moda [enfasi originale, NdA] non sono composti per i critici, ma per l'uso dei polacchi".<sup>23</sup> E infatti, come testimonia Bogusławski, alcuni brani dell'opera "venivano cantati ovunque e furono apprezzati ovunque".<sup>24</sup> Anche se oggi vi è qualche difficoltà a individuare gli autentici elementi "rusticani", la musica fu qualificata con gli aggettivi "rustica e naturale", e Kamieński fu considerato il primo "che ebbe il coraggio in quel divertimento di indicare loro [i Polacchi] l'alba amena della nazionalità".<sup>25</sup>

Kamieński fece un ulteriore passo avanti con *Prostota uszczęśliwiona* (*La semplicità virtuosa*, la cui partitura non si è conservata), opera nella quale uno dei protagonisti di secondo piano doveva cantare, come indica una didascalia nel libretto, "un canto masoviano qualsiasi", ed anche "saltare", cioè ballare. Kamieński, inoltre, utilizzò numerosi

<sup>20</sup> Bohomolec, *Prostota cnotliwa*, pagina non numerata.

<sup>21</sup> Radziwiłł, *Agatka, czyli Przyjazd pana*, 497. Pl-Wn, manoscritto 6960.

<sup>22</sup> Kurpiński, "Odpowiedź panu G.", 25.

<sup>23</sup> Kamieński, *Nędza uszczęśliwiona*, il manoscritto in Pl-Wtm.

<sup>24</sup> Bogusławski, *Dzieje Teatru Narodowego*, 20.

<sup>25</sup> Id., *Dzieła dramatyczne*, vol. 12, 422.

elementi folklorici nella detta *Zośka*, czyli *Wiejskie zaloty* (*Sofia, o gli amori contadini*). Fino all'avvento dei *Krakowiacy i Górale*, *Zośka* godette di un successo enorme sulle scene polacche. Del resto è difficile immaginare che il libretto di quell'opera, così radicato nella lingua popolare (sia contadina che suburbana), non armonizzasse con la musica, di cui rimane solo una riduzione per pianoforte e le parti dell'orchestra, conservate a Leopoli (L'viv, Ucraina) nelle collezioni dell'antica Biblioteca Baworowski. Un riferimento alla pratica esecutiva dei canti popolari si osserva nella scelta del compositore di far precedere un preludio strumentale ad ogni pezzo vocale, di costruzione talmente semplice da non poterlo definire con il termine convenzionale di aria ma piuttosto di "canto". La provenienza popolare è anche plausibile nella musica che accompagna la canzone della vecchia Maryna *Oj dadada, dada dada*: una frase di quattro misure a ritmo di mazurka, ripetuta quattro volte. Si potrebbero citare molti altri esempi, basti la testimonianza di Bogusławski che sottolineava: "[*Zośka*] è scritta completamente nel gusto polacco" (equivalente a popolare).<sup>26</sup> Un altro autore indicava che "quando si cantava la *Zośka*, la compagnia si rallegrava e si beveva un bicchiere di vino",<sup>27</sup> anche se l'opera elogiava piuttosto la vodka e non il vino.

In *Zośka*, nell'arietta interpretata dalla protagonista eponima, *Serce nie chłopiec* (*Il cuore non è un ragazzo*), il verso relativo alla libertà ("La libertà gli è concessa una volta") si svolge su una melodia che nella struttura ritmica e intervallare si avvicina molto al secondo periodo della *Mazurka di Dąbrowski*, l'inno nazionale polacco composto nel 1797 a Reggio Emilia (va ricordato che la partitura di *Zośka* risale al 1780 circa). Un altro riferimento alle prime misure della *Mazurka di Dąbrowski* si trova nella polacca dell'opera *Żółta szlafmyca* (*La cuffia gialla*, libretto di Franciszek Zabłocki, Varsavia 1783), composta dal musicista reale Gaitano (Kajetan Meyer). Si potrebbe quindi arguire che l'inno nazionale si ispirò a un'altra melodia polacca rielaborata da Gaitano. Per *Żółta szlafmyca* il compositore utilizzò anche altri motivi strettamente popolari, tra cui il canto di Natale *Lulajże Jezuniu* (*Dormi Gesù Cristo*), melodia genialmente reinterpretata anche da Chopin nello *Scherzo in si minore* op. 20.

Le manifestazioni più evidenti della nazionalità in musica furono le danze polacche: la polacca, la mazurka (con le sue varianti oberek e kujawiak), il krakowiak, le danze montanare. Nel ventesimo secolo, l'eminente critico Józef Sikorski riconobbe in quelle danze, "da tempo considerate nazionali", il "più alto grado di nazionalità".<sup>28</sup> Particolarmente ricca di tali elementi si rivela la partitura di *Cud mniemany, czyli Krakowiacy i Górale*.<sup>29</sup> I due gruppi in conflitto sono caratterizzati dall'uso di strumenti popolari in scena: le danze dei cracoviani sono accompagnate da un violinista e da uno zampognaro (I, 4), mentre i montanari dispongono di un complesso composto di flauti, tamburo, trombetta e scacciapensieri (I, 10).<sup>30</sup> Oskar Kolberg, eminente etnografo polacco dell'Ottocento, esaminando i legami dell'opera con la musica popolare, trovò un numero di analogie dirette senza poter determinare se si trattasse di elementi ricavati dal folklore, oppure se

<sup>26</sup> Ibid., 20.

<sup>27</sup> Dąbrowski, "Niedole aktorów w XVIII wieku", 245.

<sup>28</sup> Sikorski, "Halka", 3.

<sup>29</sup> In Pl – Wtm.

<sup>30</sup> Bogusławski, *Cud albo Krakowiacy i Górale*, 20, 46.

nel comporre la musica Jan Stefani avesse imitato quella tradizione con tanto successo da essere successivamente adottata dal popolo. Kolberg citava tra l'altro l'esempio della polacca *Rzadko to bywa w świecie* (*Succede di rado al mondo*, I, 3), che riteneva “una versione [della polacca] stampata nella mia collezione di canti [...] e scritta così fluentemente che sarei propenso a considerare la versione di Stefani essere l'originale, e quella popolare, nonostante sia più semplice, esserne l'imitazione”.<sup>31</sup> Altri esempi di simili analogie si trovano nel krakowiak *Oj da da da, oj da da da, tańcujmy wesolo* (*Oj da da da, oj da da da, balliamo lietamente*) e nella mazurka *Stała panna nad strumykiem* (*Una ragazza stava al ruscello*), motivi molto vicini agli autentici canti del popolo.

Wincenty Lessel, maestro di cappella dei principi Izabela ed Adam Kazimierz Czartorysky, nel 1804 scrisse per il teatro di questi ultimi a Puławy una nuova musica per l'opera *Dwaj strzelcy i mleczarka* (*Due cacciatori e la lattaiia*), tradotta in polacco dal francese e tuttavia assai diversa dall'originale (*Les deux chasseurs et la laitrière*, Louis Anseume, traduzione polacca di Jan Baudouin de Courtenay, 1779). Per l'occasione, Lessel comunicò a suo figlio Franciszek, allievo di Joseph Haydn, che avrebbe dovuto includere dei krakowiak e dei mazur.<sup>32</sup>

Elementi tipici dell'area di confine tra Polonia e Russia, quali la danza kozak e il canto epico-malinconico *duma*, sono stati utilizzati nel balletto del violinista del Teatro Nazionale Antoni Hart *Kozaki* (*I cosacchi*, Varsavia 1785), che godé di un'eccezionale popolarità. Infine, i riferimenti al già citato interesse di Stanisław August per le nozze popolari ricorrono nella commedia anonima *Pan poznany* (*Il signore riconosciuto*, Varsavia 1774), alla quale nel 1784 furono aggiunti “divertimenti e cerimonia di nozze, secondo il costume attuale dei contadini di Cracovia”.<sup>33</sup> Alla commedia fece seguito il balletto *Krakowiacy i Kozaki* (*I cracoviani e i cosacchi*),<sup>34</sup> probabile adattamento dell'omonimo balletto.

## La patria

La nozione di patria, meglio che in altri generi scenici, trovò la sua massima espressione artistica nella cantata drammatica, assai vicina all'opera lirica. Su ispirazione di Stanisław August Poniatowski, la *Kantata na dzień inauguracji statui króla Jana III* (*Cantata per il giorno della inaugurazione della statua del re Giovanni III*, libretto dello storico Adam Naruszewicz e musica di Maciej Kamiński) fu eseguita a Varsavia il 14 Settembre 1788.<sup>35</sup> La forma ed il contenuto del libretto furono controllati dallo stesso re, poiché il lavoro doveva esibire elementi patriottici e storici nuovi per la Polonia. Sull'esempio del valoroso

<sup>31</sup> Kolberg, “Melodie ludowe w operze Jana Stefaniego”, 361–363.

<sup>32</sup> Rudnicka Kruszevska, *Wincenty Lessel*. 112–114: “mit Musik von mir, [...] aber immer noch nach Krakowiaki, Mazuren riechen muß”.

<sup>33</sup> Bernacki, *Teatr, dramat i muzyka za Stanisława Augusta*, vol. 1, 309.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid.

<sup>35</sup> Libretto in: [Adam Naruszewicz], *Opisanie festynu danego w Łazienkach* [...], 16. Partitura in Pl-Wtm.

Jan III Sobieski, l'eroe che sconfisse i turchi a Vienna nel 1683, i cittadini dovevano scoprire i loro sentimenti patriottici e ripetere le gesta degli antenati. Il re desiderava incitare l'intera nazione a partecipare alla guerra russo-turca e in cambio si aspettava di ricevere dalla zarina Caterina II alcune concessioni per attuare le riforme in Polonia. Per la prima volta nella storia, i quattro protagonisti della cantata, che portano i nomi di pastori greci, elogiano Sobieski in polacco con una serie di recitativi accompagnati, arie e *ensembles*. Il testo allude apertamente alla situazione del paese, e sottolinea la necessità di un rafforzamento militare dello stato, lamentando la discordia nazionale che avrebbe comportato il fallimento della patria. Kamiński fece uso di melodie molto note, per esempio una marcia dei tempi di Sobieski, e durante l'esecuzione queste furono ripetute dal pubblico.

La compresenza di contenuti politici e musicali nelle opere polacche del Settecento divenne una costante nel diciannovesimo secolo, quando la sudditanza dello stato innescò la lotta per il mantenimento della coscienza nazionale anche per il tramite delle arti. Agli stessi strumenti fece ancora ricorso Stanisław Moniuszko nelle opere *Halka* (libretto di Włodzimierz Wolski, Vilnius 1848, nuova versione Varsavia 1858) e *Straszny dwór (Il castello dei fantasmi)*, libretto di Jan Chęciński, Varsavia 1865). Il patriottismo di stato, promosso da Poniatowski, ha avuto una evoluzione diversa da quello russo, fiorito a causa delle guerre napoleoniche. La continuità dell'opera nazionale in Polonia fu favorita dal lungo stato di eccezione, in cui venne a trovarsi il paese dopo la spartizione del suo territorio tra Prussia, Russia e Austria. Nata a corte per cementare l'unità della nazione sulla scorta delle tradizioni popolari, l'opera si tramutò in uno strumento di conservazione dell'identità dei polacchi, qualsiasi fosse il loro ceto sociale.

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PEOPLE, NATION AND HOMELAND  
IN THE FIRST POLISH OPERAS (1778–1794)

Summary

The concepts of people, nation and homeland influenced the librettos of the first Polish operas (1778–1794). The music had to be in agreement with the ideas expressed in the lyrics. However, the music has survived in only some cases. At that time, the opera style that scholars refer to as “rural opera” gained special popularity in Poland. Rural opera action, which was set in the countryside, provided a pretext for introducing a detailed presentation of reality in the literary, musical and staging layers. King Stanisław August Poniatowski, a patron of the Warsaw theatre, not only promoted the creation of the first Polish opera staged in public, *Nędza uszczęśliwiona* (*Misery Made Happy*; Franciszek Bohomolec/Wojciech Bogusławski – Maciej Kamiński, Warsaw 1778), but also supported Enlightenment ideals connected to improving peasants’ social conditions. He also encouraged enlivening these operas with music stylised from rural examples, which plays a major role in the operas *Zośka, czyli Wiejskie zaloty* (*Sophie, or Country Courtship*; Stanisław Szymański – Maciej Kamiński, Warsaw 1779) and above all *Cud mniemany, albo Krakowiaczy i Górale* (*The Presumed Miracle, or Cracovians and Highlanders*; Wojciech Bogusławski – Jan Stefani, Warsaw 1794). The librettos of these operas and other similar ones astonish with their strong realism and social radicalism, which is enhanced in the musical layer by drawing upon folk sources. Moreover, Polish opera is affected by the idea of fatherland, as seen in the distinct example of *Kantata w dzień inauguracji statui króla Jana III* (*Cantata on the Day of the Unveiling of the Statue of King Jan III*; Adam Naruszewicz – Maciej Kamiński, Warsaw 1788). It is clear that in the operatic compositions created during the reign of Stanisław August Poniatowski one can already find the ideals and musical means that would become the foundation of nineteenth-century Polish national opera (Stanisław Moniuszko).

## LJUDSTVO, NAROD IN DOMOVINA V PRVIH POLJSKIH OPERAH (1778–1794)

### Povzetek

Pojmi ljudstvo, narod in domovina so vplivali na librete prvih poljskih oper (1778–1794). Glasba je morala biti v soglasju z idejami teh pojmov. Vendar pa se je glasba ohranila le v nekaterih primerih. V tistem času je opera, ki so ji raziskovalci pridali pridevnik »ruralna«, na Poljskem postala še posebno popularna. Dogajanje, postavljeno v podeželsko okolje, je omogočilo predstavitev tedanje realnosti na literarni, glasbeni in uprizoritveni ravni. Kralj Stanisław August Poniatowski, patron varšavskega gledališča, je spodbujal nastanek prve javno uprizorjene poljske opere *Nędza uszczęśliwiona* (Franciszek Bohomolec / Wojciech Bogusławski – Maciej Kamieński, Varšava 1778), pa tudi razsvetljenske ideje, povezane z izboljšanjem družbenega položaja ljudi, ki so bile ponazorjene s stilizirano ruralno glasbo in imajo pomembno vlogo v operah *Zośka, czyli Wiejskie zaloty* (Stanisław Szymański – Maciej Kamieński, Varšava 1779) in predvsem *Cud mniemany, albo Krakowiaczy i Górale* (Wojciech Bogusławski – Jan Stefani, Varšava 1794). Libreti omenjenih in tudi drugih oper nas presenečajo z močnim realizmom in socialnim radikalizmom, okrepljenim v glasbenih plasteh, ki črpajo iz ljudskih virov. Poleg tega je poljska opera vplivala na idejo domovine, katere izrazit primer je *Kantata w dzień inauguracji statui króla Jana III* (Adam Naruszewicz – Maciej Kamieński, Varšava 1788). Ugotovimo lahko, da že med operami, nastalimi v času vlade Stanisława Augusta Poniatowskega, najdemo vzore in glasbena sredstva, ki so postali temelj poljske nacionalne opere 19. stoletja (Stanisław Moniuszko).



## MUSICA, IDENTITÀ E MITOGRAFIE NAZIONALI DEI CECHI NEL DICIANNOVESIMO SECOLO

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**Izvleček:** *Češki narodni preporod v 19. stoletju je bil večplasten. Razvoj moderne narodne identitete je izhajal iz dveh kulturnih tradicij, katoliške in protestantske, ki sta vplivali na idejo avstro-slavizma in panslavizma. Usmeritve teh gibanj so zaznamovale popularno in umetno glasbo Čehov.*

**Ključne besede:** *češka nacionalna glasba, češki zgodovinski mit, panslavizem, avstroslavizem.*

**Abstract:** *The nineteenth-century Czech national revival had various cultural layers. The evolution of today's national identity derived from two cultural traditions, Catholic and Protestant, which influenced both the idea of Austro-Slavism and the Pan-Slavic nationalism. Each of these movements' politics left a mark in Czech popular and art music.*

**Keywords:** *Czech national music, Czech Historical Myths, Pan-Slavism, Austro-Slavism.*

Nel diciannovesimo secolo, il movimento nazionale ceco<sup>1</sup> nei paesi boemi<sup>2</sup> ha avuto una trasformazione veloce.<sup>3</sup> Detto con una certa semplificazione, vi fu uno sviluppo immediato dai modesti tentativi per salvare la lingua colloquiale e letteraria, alle ambizioni di ottenere uno stato indipendente. Per realizzare tali intenti era indispensabile rafforzare l'identità culturale della nazione. Il punto di partenza per risolvere i molti quesiti posti da tale esigenza fu l'interesse alla creazione di una propria mitologia moderna, intelligibile a tutti, nonché paragonabile agli altri grandi progetti elaborati dal nazionalismo ottocentesco.<sup>4</sup>

A fronte di questi motivi, la formazione dell'identità ceca è un tema ancora aperto. Il bisogno di decostruire la sua mitizzazione è uno dei compiti più urgenti da assolvere

<sup>1</sup> Per designare l'emancipazione culturale e politica dei cechi è d'uso comune l'espressione *národní obrození*, da tradursi come *rinascita nazionale*, o più semplicemente con il termine *rinascita*. Una formula che si è imposta nella storiografia in alternativa a *národní vzkříšení* (*resurrezione nazionale*), caduta in disuso all'inizio dell'Ottocento.

<sup>2</sup> In rispetto all'autorità della letteratura tedesca del diciannovesimo secolo, adotto il termine *boemo* (*böhmisch*) secondo l'accezione geografica, e il termine *ceco* (*tschechisch*) nella sua accezione nazionale.

<sup>3</sup> Urban, *Česká společnost 1848–1918*.

<sup>4</sup> Questo tema è riassunto in *Historické fikce a mystifikace v české kultuře 19. století*.

al fine di individuare altri miti più antichi, dimenticati o rimossi, i quali contribuirono a creare la *background* della moderna fede politica nella nazione. Per uno storico della musica ciò vuol dire entrare in un contesto interdisciplinare descritto in numerose pubblicazioni.<sup>5</sup> Per cui, il presente contributo non intende offrire un punto di vista nuovo su argomenti tanto discussi, ma vuole riassumere la problematica nelle sue linee generali e dedicarsi ad alcuni argomenti che riguardano il ruolo della musica nella rinascita boema all'epoca della definizione delle "nazioni culturali".

Oggi le idee sulla questione nazionale in Boemia non sembrano tanto complicate. Probabilmente ciò è dovuto alla chiarezza degli obiettivi, e al modo persuasivo con cui la politica ha presentato al mondo il programma dell'autonomia. "Il pensiero ceco" di Tomáš Garrigue Masaryk, per esempio, era basato sulla reinterpretazione della storia patria, i cui tratti salienti erano l'hussitismo, la riforma protestante, il connesso uso della lingua del popolo e la rinascita della nazione.<sup>6</sup> Questo fu il ritratto dominante della Cecoslovacchia dal 1918 sino allo scoppio della seconda guerra mondiale.<sup>7</sup> Per Masaryk e per la sua generazione il pensiero dello slavista Ernest Denis fu di una importanza capitale. Il suo concetto della storia boema<sup>8</sup> partiva dalla separazione tra le tradizioni progressiste e quelle conservatrici. Il punto di forza della teoria dello slavista francese Ernest Denis fu la reinterpretazione secolarizzata dell'hussitismo e della riforma del sedicesimo secolo, in quanto fenomeni ritenuti i veri precedenti dei movimenti rivoluzionari del Settecento e dell'Ottocento. I cechi andavano presentati come i primi in Europa a ribellarsi contro i vecchi regimi, mostrando agli altri popoli del continente la giusta direzione: quella che portò alla rivoluzione francese e successivamente al ricupero della lingua quale fattore di coesione per riacquistare l'identità nazionale.

La problematicità di questo quadro emerge nitidamente dal libro di Benito Mussolini, *Giovanni Huss, il veridico* del 1913,<sup>9</sup> che ebbe un impatto del tutto marginale in Italia,<sup>10</sup> mentre a Praga suscitò una viva approvazione.<sup>11</sup> Il saggio del giovane socialista Mussolini non aveva nulla di nuovo, ma provocò comunque l'entusiasmo dei patrioti per avere egli dato una rilevanza internazionale alla interpretazione di Hus martire del "libero

<sup>5</sup> La discussione interdisciplinare sulla cultura e l'arte ceche procede dal 1981 nei colloqui annuali di Plzeň. Per il tema qui trattato sono importanti gli atti di studio *Historické vědomí v českém umění 19. století; Povědomí tradice v novodobé české kultuře. Doba Bedřicha Smetany; Čechy a Evropa v kultuře 19. století; Sacrum et profanum; Český lev a rakouský orel v 19. století; Slavme slavně slávu Slávův slavných. Slovanství a česká kultura 19. století; Naše Itálie. Stará i mladá Itálie v české kultuře 19. století.*

<sup>6</sup> Programma esposto chiaramente in: Masaryk, *Česká otázka. Snahy a tužby národního obrození.*

<sup>7</sup> Bisogna ricordare che il paradigma politico di storia nazionale di Masaryk fu contestato dagli storici universitari del tempo. Con Masaryk polemizzarono Jaroslav Goll (1846–1929), Kamil Krofta (1876–1945) e Josef Pekař (1870–1937): soprattutto Pekař in *Smysl českých dějin.*

<sup>8</sup> Si veda soprattutto Denis: *Fin de l'indépendance bohême.*

<sup>9</sup> Mussolini, *Giovanni Huss, il veridico.*

<sup>10</sup> Helan, "Mussolini Looks at Jan Hus and the Bohemian Reformation", 309–316, online: <http://www.brrp.org/proceedings/brrp4/helan.pdf>. Cit. 2015; inoltre Helan, *Duce a kacír.*

<sup>11</sup> Nel 1925 il presidente Masaryk insignì il Duce della più alta onorificenza dello stato, l'Ordine del leone bianco.

pensiero”.<sup>12</sup> Si tratta di un’interpretazione astorica, in quanto fondata sulla attualizzazione politica del riformatore che investe la nozione stessa di verità. Per gli hussiti del quindicesimo secolo il motto “*veritas vincit*” si riferiva alla “*veritas Dei*”, cioè alla verità divina quale valore assoluto.<sup>13</sup> La lettura secolarizzata, invece, mirava a esaltare i valori nazionali e sociali insiti nel concetto di verità, che divenne perciò limitato e relativo, a causa del tenace proposito di cambiare l’ordinamento statale.

Il paradigma dell’hussitismo ha radici profonde nella storia boema, ma prese il sopravvento solo alla fine dell’Ottocento, quando i movimenti nazionali si trasformarono nell’irredentismo delle piccole nazioni impegnate nella lotta contro l’assimilazione per la sopravvivenza. La guerra austro-prussiana del 1866 che determinò l’*Ausgleich*, ossia il compromesso per la divisione dell’impero asburgico in Austria-Ungheria, fu vissuta dalla politica ceca come una sconfitta catastrofica. Grazie al lealismo nei confronti di Vienna, e con le proposte della corrente austroslavista, i cechi miravano a conquistare il sostegno del governo centrale contro il nazionalismo aggressivo degli stati più potenti. Il dualismo austro-ungarico, invece, fece crollare la speranza di rinnovare il regno di Boemia, nel quale i cechi avrebbero avuto la maggioranza, e l’idea di austroslavismo divenne obsoleta dal momento in cui Vienna perse ogni influenza sulla vita sociale dei popoli slavi sottomessi all’Ungheria nella Transleitania. In ragione di questa crisi, nella politica ceca si fece strada un nuovo corso mirante ad adattare il proprio programma ai metodi del nazionalismo liberale dell’Europa occidentale, con la conseguente ridefinizione della storia patria nella prospettiva di ottenere l’autonomia. Il che comportò una separazione di fatto tra i “vecchi cechi”, fedeli alla monarchia e all’austroslavismo, e i “giovani” liberal-nazionali.<sup>14</sup> Ambedue le correnti di pensiero saranno oggetto del nostro discorso.

Nella prima metà del diciannovesimo secolo l’ambiente intellettuale ceco aspirava a fare della Boemia uno dei centri di organizzazione della rinascita dei popoli slavi ancora sottomessi.<sup>15</sup> La concezione ceca di austroslavismo era in concorrenza con il panslavismo politico fomentato da Mosca.<sup>16</sup> Questa diffidenza era dovuta alla delusione per quanto era avvenuto in Polonia nel 1830, e alla conseguente perdita di fiducia nei confronti della Russia zarista. La via verso il rivolgimento nazionale non fu dunque semplice.

Nel tempo in cui si formò la moderna idea di nazione, nelle regioni della Boemia operavano gruppi politici dalle visioni contrastanti. Per capire le loro radici e la loro evoluzione dobbiamo tornare alle origini. La delicata questione dell’autodefinizione dei cechi risale al medioevo, considerato che la Boemia è situata tra il mondo slavo e quello tedesco. La *Chronica Bohemorum* di Kosmas, scritta in latino nel dodicesimo secolo, è un’opera classica che attesta il passaggio dalla mentalità tribale a quella del popolo che si

<sup>12</sup> Il libro, infatti, fa parte della “Collezione storica dei Martiri del libero pensiero”.

<sup>13</sup> *Eschatologie und Hussitismus*.

<sup>14</sup> Nel 1874, dalla scissione dei “giovani” dal Partito Nazionale Ceco, presente al parlamento di Vienna, nacque il Partito Nazionale Liberale (*Národní strana svobodomyšlná*). L’appellativo “giovani cechi” era in linea con gli altri movimenti liberali e nazionali d’Europa (Jungdeutschen, Giovane Italia et alii).

<sup>15</sup> Al riguardo possiamo rammentare il congresso panslavo tenutosi a Praga nel 1848.

<sup>16</sup> Su questo tema: Vlček, “Panslavismus či rusofilství?”, 9–20.

riconosce nell'uso di una fede e di una lingua comuni, nonché di una memoria condivisa.<sup>17</sup> Almeno dal tredicesimo secolo si può parlare di una identità nazionale, in connessione con la piena coscienza della minaccia che sovrastava la sovranità dello stato e la lingua. La conoscenza della tragedia degli slavi settentrionali, che per difendersi dalla pressione tedesca ritornarono al paganesimo, rafforzò nei cechi il senso di identità legata al cristianesimo. Le leggende fiorite sui santi patroni in quell'epoca accentuarono il culto del popolo e il battesimo dei boemi fu eletto a simbolo della continuità tra la fede e la lingua. La figura di san Venceslao (sv. Václav), che diventò garante della dinastia, dello stato e della lingua, svolse in tal senso un ruolo di vitale importanza e nel medioevo i cechi si autonominarono la "famiglia di san Venceslao".<sup>18</sup>

Una testimonianza efficace è offerta da due antichi inni in ceco, tramandati senza soluzione di continuità sino al diciannovesimo secolo. Il primo, *Hospodine pomiluj ny* (*Kyrie eleison*, X–XI secolo), a detta dei linguisti proviene dalla litania abbreviata su base paleoslava.<sup>19</sup> L'invocazione finale, "Daj nám všem Hospodine žižň mir v zemi" ("Signore, dacci abbondanza e pace in terra"), ovviamente non contiene riferimenti al tema moderno della nazione, ma la terra e la comunità dei fedeli ("a noi tutti" recita il verso) furono ingredienti di forte enfasi per il popolo ceco.<sup>20</sup> Il secondo è il "corale sanvenceslaviano" *Svatý Václave, vévodo české země* (*San Venceslao, duca della terra boema*, XII secolo).<sup>21</sup> Anche questo canto ha la forma delle litanie abbreviate<sup>22</sup> e nel quindicesimo secolo vi fu aggiunta la strofa "Ty jsi dědic české země, rozpomeň se na své plémě./Nedej zahynouti nám, ni budoucím" ("Tu sei erede della terra boema, ricordati della tua stirpe./Non lasciar perire né noi, né i posteri"),<sup>23</sup> in cui è vivo il senso dell'appartenenza a una sola terra e a una medesima stirpe.<sup>24</sup>

Per la formazione dell'identità ceca è particolarmente interessante il quattordicesimo secolo. Durante il governo di Carlo IV di Lussemburgo venne realizzata una visionaria costruzione di Praga, quale nuova residenza del Sacro Romano Impero, e sono caratteristiche le utopie escatologiche e messianiche degli intellettuali boemi, che si manifesteranno appieno ai tempi dell'hussitismo: la prima esperienza che separò il paese in due campi di pensiero e di azione.

L'erede degli ideali hussiti, e per la prospettiva ottocentesca il garante della continuità, fu la *Jednota bratrská* (*Unione dei fratelli*), che anche nel canto proseguì il lavoro iniziato

<sup>17</sup> Třeštík, *Kosmova kronika*.

<sup>18</sup> Kalhous, *České země za prvních Přemyslovců v 10. – 12. století*.

<sup>19</sup> Sulla storia e l'analisi di questo canto cfr. Orel, *Hudební památky svatováclavské*, 41–63. Sulla datazione Mareš, *Cyrilometodějská tradice a slavistika*, 403–476.

<sup>20</sup> L'edizione delle varianti in Orel, *Hudební památky svatováclavské*, 29–39.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, 63–67.

<sup>22</sup> Le strofe singole si rivolgono a San Venceslao in quanto supplicante principale, e infine a tutti i protettori della terra e del popolo: prima direttamente alla Santa Trinità, poi alla Vergine Maria, agli angeli, e infine ai singoli santi patroni. L'ultima strofa contiene il segno della croce.

<sup>23</sup> L'edizione delle varianti in Orel, *Hudební památky svatováclavské*, 4–13.

<sup>24</sup> Sulla trasmissione del canto dal dodicesimo al diciannovesimo secolo cfr. Velek, *Musikalische Wenzelstradition (bis 1848)*; *Id.*, "Svatováclavská tradice včera a dnes očima hudební vědy", 137–144; *Id.*, "Svatováclavská tradice za první světové války", 413–428.

dagli hussiti. La trasformazione delle preghiere e degli articoli di fede in canti devozionali in lingua ceca divenne un'arma importante della riforma e una parte significativa del corale luterano fu adottata dai fratelli boemi.<sup>25</sup> L'autorità della *Jednota bratrská* crebbe nel periodo della ricattolicizzazione, quando i suoi seguaci furono costretti a emigrare. I protestanti boemi allora coltivarono il loro credo, come è evidente negli scritti e nei canti degli esuli, identificando se stessi con la nazione d'Israele in esilio:<sup>26</sup> per gli storici dell'Ottocento un nucleo di primitiva definizione nazionale.

Per lo stesso motivo anche il ritorno al cattolicesimo nel diciassettesimo secolo fu accompagnato da un forte accento patriottico. A tal fine occorreva una reinterpretazione della storia culturale, e nozioni quali “la fede dei padri”, o “la devozione degli antichi Boemi”, acclamate dai gesuiti, divennero le nuove parole d'ordine.<sup>27</sup> Da questa connessione emerge poi la definizione del ceco amante del canto.<sup>28</sup> In merito a questo particolare è utile precisare che in Boemia i cattolici ebbero cura sia della qualità dell'istruzione, sia dello studio della musica.<sup>29</sup> L'eredità di questo patriottismo *ante litteram*, con tutte le forze appoggiato agli strumenti dell'arte, svolse un ruolo decisivo sino al Novecento.

All'inizio del diciannovesimo secolo, quando si stavano timidamente affermando gli orientamenti nazionali, i cechi avevano due diverse nozioni della loro identità, che sembravano essere incompatibili l'una con l'altra. Quando apparve il concetto herderiano degli slavi e del loro ruolo in Europa,<sup>30</sup> si sospettò che i cechi non fossero in grado di convenire su una formula di identità condivisa. Nonostante tutto, si trovò la soluzione a questa aporia. Nel 1817 Václav Hanka (1791–1861) scoprì nella torre della chiesa medievale di Dvůr Králové un frammento manoscritto del tredicesimo secolo contenente poesie liriche ed epiche (il *Rukopis Královédvorský*), e lo diede alle stampe con la traduzione in tedesco nel 1822.<sup>31</sup> L'anno successivo fu mandato in forma anonima al Museo Nazionale Ceco un frammento del manoscritto di Zelená Hora (*Rukopis Zelenohorský*), ritenuto un raro testimone della letteratura paleoslava tra l'ottavo e il nono secolo, precedente l'adozione del cristianesimo. I due reperti diedero la stura a una serie infinita di contestazioni sulla loro autenticità.<sup>32</sup> Oggi è generalmente accettata l'opinione espressa all'epoca del ritrovamento dal padre della rinascita nazionale, lo slavista Josef Dobrovský (1753–1829). Questi accusò Václav Hanka e Josef Linda (1789–1834), esperti editori di libri antichi, di avere falsificato i manoscritti e il loro contenuto. La storia dei due testi in ceco è molto simile a quella dei *Canti di Ossian*, poiché si tratta di una finzione letteraria concepita per scopi

<sup>25</sup> Schönbaum, “Die Weisen des Gesangbuchs der Böhmischen Brüder von 1531”, 44–61; recentemente Hlaváček, “Die Franziskaner-Observanten zwischen böhmischer und europäischer Reformation”, 295–326.

<sup>26</sup> Sulla poesia spirituale degli esuli e il problema dell'autoriflessione: *Čistý plamen lásky*.

<sup>27</sup> Cfr. Slavický, “K otázce vlivu jezuitů na lidový duchovní zpěv v českých zemích”, 1097–1119.

<sup>28</sup> Mañas, *Hudební aktivity náboženských korporací*, 147–177. Online: [http://is.muni.cz/th/13678/ff\\_d/](http://is.muni.cz/th/13678/ff_d/).

<sup>29</sup> Kabelková, “Musik im böhmischen Klöstern im späten 18. und frühen 19. Jahrhundert, 189–210.

<sup>30</sup> Herder, *Ideen zur Philosophie der Geschichte der Menschheit*.

<sup>31</sup> *Königinhofer Handschrift. Sammlung altböhmischer lyrisch-epischer Gesänge*.

<sup>32</sup> Nel 1969, quando fu realizzata l'ultima profonda perizia, si constatò che alle dispute sulla genuinità dei manoscritti erano state dedicate più di mille pubblicazioni.

diversi da quelli della letteratura. Alla loro notorietà contribuì tra l'altro Goethe, che si espresse in modo entusiastico sulla bellezza della poesia, raccomandando tale lettura agli studiosi di tutta Europa. I manoscritti furono contestati e respinti nell'ambito della cultura ceca solo dopo le grandi polemiche di fine Ottocento. Ma fino a quell'epoca costituirono un fattore di integrazione per una intera generazione di intellettuali, che adottarono le opinioni di Herder per volgerle a favore del panslavismo. Tra i molti possiamo citare František Ladislav Čelakovský (1799–1852), che organizzò cretomazie e traduzioni dei canti popolari slavi,<sup>33</sup> oppure Karel Jaromír Erben (1811–1870), il quale, sotto l'influenza dei fratelli Grimm, raccolse sia i canti, sia le fiabe del folklore, cercando le derivazioni dalla mitologia paleoslava.<sup>34</sup>

Anche František Palacký (1798–1876), fondatore della moderna storiografia ceca, credeva alla genuinità dei due manoscritti. La sua *Dějiny národu českého (Storia della nazione ceca)*, nella prima edizione pubblicata in tedesco, ebbe un'influenza notevole sulla costruzione dell'identità ceca.<sup>35</sup> Palacký accolse i manoscritti come fonti principali dell'età paleoslava. Da essi attinse per definire la sua concezione di società slava dei primordi, che viveva negli ideali di comunanza e democrazia. È giusto ricordare, a questo proposito, che in gioventù Palacký tradusse in ceco i canti di Ossian (1817).<sup>36</sup> Le dispute sui due manoscritti raggiunsero l'apice dopo la morte del patriota, con l'apparizione di Masaryk sulla scena politica, e nel 1886 iniziò un dibattito sulla genuinità dei testi, che portò al loro definitivo rigetto.

Come si è detto, i due falsi rispondevano a una esigenza di ordine civile importante per raggiungere l'unità della nazione, affranta da una situazione simile a quella della Germania, divisa tra opinioni politiche e confessionali diverse. Lo storicismo romantico tedesco contribuì in modo sostanziale a indicare nel ritorno all'antica civiltà il principio di unità del popolo. E così fu per i cechi che compensarono la debolezza degli archetipi nazionali, e la mancanza di un'epica eroica autoctona, con i due manoscritti. Inoltre, lo sforzo di dimostrare l'indole democratica degli antichi slavi, prima dell'avvento del cristianesimo e del sistema feudale, indirizzò l'attenzione sui frammenti *Sněmy (I raduni)* e *Libušin soud (Il giudizio di Libussa)*.<sup>37</sup> Nel medesimo ambito rientra la musica con i suoi antichi cantori Zábaj e Lumír. Zábaj incita all'unità, guida la lotta contro gli stranieri ed è paragonato al leggendario cantore Lumír: un personaggio sul quale si favoleggiò prendendo a modello l'epica degli slavi del sud e i canti ossianici.

Altri argomenti inerenti la musica sono complementari alle due forme di autoidentificazione dei cechi, l'identità nazionale e l'identità slava. Alle figure dei cantori leggendari, nel quadro musicale paleoslavo, si accostano “le arpe dei profeti” nell'introduzione a *Má vlast (La mia patria)* di Smetana (*Vyšehrad*, 1874). Il tema segna la scaturigine della *Libuše*

<sup>33</sup> Dell'opera dello slavista, etnografo e traduttore Čelakovský è importante soprattutto: *Slovanské národní písně*, degli anni 1822, 1825, 1827, e il volume *Mudrosloví národa slovanského v příslovích*.

<sup>34</sup> Erben, *Sto prstonárodních pohádek* e Id., *Prostonárodní české písně a říkadla*.

<sup>35</sup> Palacký, *Geschichte von Böhmen*; Id., *Dějiny národa českého v Čechách a v Moravě*.

<sup>36</sup> Palacký, “Ossián (J. Macphersona)”. In *Prvotiny pěkných umění neb Vídeňské učené noviny*.

<sup>37</sup> I frammenti furono utilizzati da Josef Wenzig (1807–1876) e Bedřich Smetana per sviluppare il soggetto dell'opera *Libuše* (Libussa, 1872).

smetaniana (1872), scritta seguendo il soggetto del manoscritto di Zelená Hora. *Libuše* originariamente era prevista per l'incoronazione di Franz Joseph I a re di Boemia.<sup>38</sup> Dunque era stata pensata sulla linea delle opere che glorificavano la legittimità del sovrano, ricordandogli nello stesso tempo i suoi doveri verso il popolo. Solo più tardi, quando l'intento naufragò, l'opera fu adattata e presentata in occasione della solenne inaugurazione del Teatro Nazionale (la prima volta nel 1881 e poi, dopo l'incendio, nel 1883).

Le liriche dei due manoscritti furono musicate da altri compositori, tra i quali Václav Jan Tomášek (1832)<sup>39</sup> e Antonín Dvořák (1872).<sup>40</sup> L'autorità di quei documenti è comprovata anche dai nomi dei personaggi<sup>41</sup> e degli strumenti,<sup>42</sup> usati spesso nell'onomastica delle associazioni di canto, dei circoli sportivi e letterari, per tralasciare le opere *Záboj* di Josef Leopold Zvonař (1862), *Libušin sňatek* di František Škroup (1835) e la detta *Libuše* di Smetana. Un altro soggetto interessante concerne l'arte visuale relativa a questa mitologia, che anima l'immagine del mondo paleoslavo.<sup>43</sup> Un mondo figurativo nato in palese concorrenza con analoghi protagonisti dell'iconografia protogermanica (si veda il mito dei nibelunghi nei drammi wagneriani).

A titolo riassuntivo si può sostenere che nel movimento nazionale ceco convissero almeno tre paradigmi, come livelli distinti entrati a far parte della tradizione in fasi temporali diverse. Il primo è costituito dall'eredità del patriottismo preilluministico, sviluppato tra gli intellettuali cattolici; il secondo dall'identità slava cresciuta sulla base dello storicismo romantico; il terzo dal programma politico progressista, fondato sulla rilettura dell'hussitismo. Talvolta, il rivaleggiare di questi paradigmi investì anche la musica. In questa prospettiva si colloca il discorso critico su Smetana, classificato come compositore progressista e nazionale, e Dvořák, condannato invece come tradizionalista e cosmopolita. Per lungo tempo tale polemica fu interpretata anche in relazione alle teorie dei sostenitori della musica assoluta e dei fautori della musica a programma.<sup>44</sup> Dvořák, comunque, pagò il proprio pegno all'attualizzazione della storia nazionale con l'oratorio *Svatá Ludmila* (*Santa Ludmila*, 1886), partitura con cui egli glorificò il battesimo dei cechi citando l'antico motivo sacro *Hospodine pomiluj ny*. Smetana, dal canto suo, concluse il ciclo dei poemi sinfonici *Má vlast* (*Tábor*, 1878) con un corale di guerra hussitico, *Kdož sú boží bojovníci*,<sup>45</sup> che riappare nel tempo finale *Blaník* (1879) al posto del tema principale

<sup>38</sup> Ottlová e Pospíšil, "Smetanas *Libuše*. Der tschechische Historismus und die Oper des 19. Jahrhunderts", 237–248; Id., *Bedřich Smetana a jeho doba*.

<sup>39</sup> Tomášek, *Starožitné písně královédvorského rukopisu*.

<sup>40</sup> Dvořák, *Písně na slova z rukopisu Královédvorského*.

<sup>41</sup> *Záboj*, *Slavoj* e *Lumír* erano i nomi frequenti delle associazioni di canto, fondate dopo il 1860 (Lumír, Brno 1864, Slavoj, Chrudim 1862, Záboj, Dvůr Králové 1861, Záboj, Pelhřimov 1862), e sportive (fino ad oggi Federazione Calcio Slavoj, Vyšehrad etc.). Si vedano inoltre i periodici *Lumír* e *Slavoj* (rivista musicale).

<sup>42</sup> Emblematica la sorte del *Varyto*, finto strumento paleoslavo del *Rukopis Zelenohorský*. Nel diciannovesimo secolo fu stilizzato come un'arpa arcaica. Si veda anche la composizione di Leoš Janáček *Varyto* per organo, s. a., JW 8/4.

<sup>43</sup> *Lumír*, *Záboj* e *Slavoj* sono frequenti anche nella scultura monumentale; per esempio la facciata del Teatro nazionale, o la decorazione originale del ponte Palacký a Praga.

<sup>44</sup> Il critico più severo di Dvořák fu il musicologo e più tardi politico Zdeněk Nejedlý (1878–1962).

<sup>45</sup> *Chi sono i combattenti di Dio*.

e in contrasto con l'originale leggenda di san Venceslao. Altrettanto notevole la proposta di Dvořák, il quale introdusse nella *Overtura Hussitica* (1883)<sup>46</sup> i due canti menzionati (il corale di guerra hussitico e il corale sanvenceslaviano), dapprima in conflitto tematico e poi in forma di riconciliazione.

Un singolare luogo comune, trasversale ai paradigmi elencati, attiene alla raffigurazione dei cechi come ineguagliabili cultori di musica. Ammessa come strumento per la ricattolicizzazione, insistendo sui canti dei padri e la fede,<sup>47</sup> la musica, fortemente presente anche nei due manoscritti medievali con i mitici cantori Slavoj e Lumír, apparteneva pure alla nuova mitologia hussitica (si pensi alla fuga dei nemici dopo avere ascoltato il canto di guerra nella battaglia di Domažlice, 1431). L'effettiva eccezionalità dei musicisti cechi contemporanei non era più percepita solo dal punto di vista culturale e sociologico, ma da quello strettamente nazionale. Inoltre si diffuse la tesi secondo la quale tutti i popoli slavi erano straordinariamente dotati nel canto e nella prassi strumentale. Alla base di questa nozione v'è una verità inoppugnabile, vale a dire l'ammirazione per i musicisti cechi, sia come insegnanti, sia come maestri di cappella, i quali andavano ad esercitare la professione soprattutto nei vicini paesi slavi sin dal diciottesimo secolo. E in effetti, grazie alla loro fama di artisti raffinati e patrioti filoslavi, i cechi diedero un aiuto straordinario allo sviluppo professionale delle orchestre di paesi come la Polonia, la Slovenia e la Croazia.

Un asserto interessante sull'indole musicale dei cechi è offerto da un articolo non firmato di Karel Sabina (1813–1877) apparso sulla rivista *Dalibor* nel 1863. Si tratta di un elogio acritico alle innate doti musicali della razza slava, e in particolare alla priorità dei cechi nella organizzazione dell'educazione musicale: il che li rendeva in grado di assumersi l'onere di portare i fratelli delle altre regioni al loro stesso livello:

Tra tutti gli slavi noi cechi siamo quelli che, quanto al numero, abbiamo più scuole elementari nei villaggi. Agli insegnanti che occupano due uffizi si impone tacitamente il dovere di insegnare la musica. Altre occasioni ed istituzioni per la superiore erudizione musicale da noi si trovano più frequentemente che in altri paesi slavi. Da noi le doti innate non sono poche, e da tutto ciò emerge che i cechi superano nella musica tutta la razza slava. Date agli altri slavi le stesse materie e la stessa occasione, e lo spirito musicale, innato in tutti gli slavi, si vanterà degli stessi risultati.<sup>48</sup>

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<sup>46</sup> *Husitská* (Hussitica), ouverture drammatica, op. 67, 1883.

<sup>47</sup> Mañas, *Hudební aktivity náboženských korporací*, 147–177.

<sup>48</sup> K. S. [Karel Sabina], “Něco o hudebnictví Slovanů”, 129–131. Cito da Freemanová, “Slovanství v zrcadle pražského koncertního života, dobové hudební kritiky a literatury”, 187.

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## MUSIC, IDENTITY AND CZECH NATIONAL MYTHOLOGY IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

### Summary

In the nineteenth century, the Czech national movement experienced a rapid and diversified transformation. Viewed in light of the current historiography, this development led to more cultural layers, which in turn influenced music. At the beginning of the nineteenth century, the Czech national revival sought a way to unite different political tendencies (e.g., Pan-Slavism and Austro-Slavism), as well as two divided cultural traditions (e.g., Catholic and Protestant). This problem was resolved through the well-timed “discovery” of two literary monuments, inspired primarily by Ossian literary fiction, South-Slavonic heroic songs and early medieval epics. These two “manuscripts” (*Rukopis královédvorský*; Manuscript of Dvůr Králové, 1818, and *Rukopis zelenohorský*; Manuscript of Zelená Hora, 1819) offered a domestic national mythology and strengthened the national identity by using the premise of an ancient cultural basis that was pre-Hussite, and thus acceptable to all. The authenticity of these manuscripts was questioned only in the 1880s, when a new form of liberal nationalism based on a political revival of Hussitism had already been consolidated. In the development of the Czech national identity during the nineteenth century, at least three different cultural history–related paradigms thus coexisted. Each expressed itself in the contemporary music. The first one proceeded from the pre-Enlightenment territorial patriotism, developed by Catholic intellectuals and founded on the continuity of the faith and language (e.g., Dvořák’s *Svatá Ludmila*; Saint Ludmilla). The second one grew from the Romantic historicism and literary fictions of the paleo-Slavonic world (Smetana’s *Libuše* and *Vyšehrad*; based on the Manuscript of Zelená Hora). The third paradigm grew from the new nationalist politics, based on the re-interpretation of Hussitism (Smetana’s *Tábor* and *Blaník*). A *locus communis* between all those paradigms featured the self-identification of Czechs as ancient and extraordinary lovers of music and singing. This contemporary self-representation, together with the ideals of Pan-Slavism and Austro-Slavism, also increased the spread of Czech musicians, teachers and patriots in Central Europe and along the Adriatic coast; that is, in the regions of the Austro-Hungarian Empire inhabited by Slavic peoples.

## GLASBA, IDENTITETA IN ČEŠKA NARODNA MITOLOGIJA V 19. STOLETJU

### Povzetek

V 19. stoletju je češki narodni preporod doživel hitro in raznoliko preobrazbo. Sodobno zgodovinsko je v procesu prepoznalo kulturno večplastnost, ki je vplivala na glasbo. V začetku 19. stoletja je češki narodni preporod iskal način, kako združiti različne politične usmeritve (panslavizem, avstroslavizem) in različne kulturne tradicije (katoliško in protestantsko). Problem se je razrešil z odkritjem dveh literarnih spomenikov, ki sta se zgledovala predvsem po Ossianovi literarni fikciji, južnoslovanskih junaških pesmih in zgodnjih srednjeveških epih. Ta rokopisa (*Rukopis královédvorský*, 1818, *Rukopis zelenohorský*, 1819) sta ponujala lastno narodno mitologijo in krepila zavest o nacionalni identiteti s starodavno, predhusitsko kulturno dediščino, ki je bila sprejemljiva za vse. O avtentičnosti teh rokopisov so se spraševali šele v osemdesetih letih 19. stoletja, ko se je že utrdila nova oblika liberalnega nacionalizma, osnovana na oživitvi husitskega gibanja. V razvoju narodne identitete v 19. stoletju so zato soobstajale vsaj tri različne kulturno-zgodovinske paradigme, ki so se izrazile tudi v glasbi. Prva paradigma je izhajala iz idej predrazsvetljenskega deželnega patriotizma, ki so jih razvili katoliški intelektualci in osnovali na veri in jeziku (Dvořákova *Svatá Ludmila*), druga je zrasla iz idej romantičnega historicizma in literarne fikcije staroslovanskega sveta (Smetanovi kompoziciji *Libuša* in *Vyšehrad*, osnovani na delu *Rukopis Zelenohorský*), tretja paradigma novega nacionalističnega programa pa je temeljila na reinterpreteraciji husitizma (Smetanovi skladbi *Tábor* in *Blaník*).

## THE INVENTION OF MUSICAL ILLYRISM

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**Izvleček:** *Star rimski izraz »Illyricum«, ki ga je Katoliška cerkev v 17. stoletju uporabljala za provinco Dalmacija, Hrvaška, Bosna in Slavonija, so ideologi hrvaškega narodnoprorodnega gibanja »ponovno izumili« v tridesetih letih 19. stoletja kot nadnacionalni konstrukt. Izraz so v glasbi na Hrvaškem v 19. stoletju uporabljali tudi številni skladatelji, izvajalci, muzikologi, občinstvo in mediji.*

**Gljučne besede:** *ilirizem, Hrvaška, južnoslovensko področje, glasba, koncept »kulturni narod«.*

**Abstract:** *The ancient Roman term “Illyricum”, reintroduced by the Catholic Church in the seventeenth century to denote the provinces of Dalmatia, Croatia, Bosnia and Slavonia, was “re-invented” by the ideologists of the Croatian National Revival movement in the 1830s as a supra-national construct. It was also used in music by many composers, performers and musicologists, as well as broader audiences and public media in nineteenth-century Croatia.*

**Keywords:** *Illyrism, Croatia, South Slavic area, music, “cultural-national” concept.*

In identifying the idea of “Illyrism” as applied in nineteenth-century Croatian musical culture, it seems useful to first present the genesis of the term itself and its usage in both Croatian and South-Slavic, as well as in the broader regional cultural and social history. In this, the long temporal development in its construction manifests a multi-layered character, unveiling the complex parallel structure of its sometimes elusive and vague denotations and meanings.

It is well known that the term itself, mostly in the form of the noun “Illyricum” (→ Illyria Romana, Illyria Barbara), was used in ancient Rome to geographically denote its province from 167 BC to 10 AD along the eastern shores of the Adriatic Sea and its hinterlands.<sup>1</sup> Between AD 10 and 35 Roman administrators dissolved the province of Illyricum and divided its lands between the new provinces of Pannonia and Dalmatia. After a long period of oblivion, at the dawn of the Modern Era the term once again started to be used extensively in documents and literature, during the late Renaissance within the humanist revival-of-Antiquity trends, and after the Tridentine Council within the

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<sup>1</sup> Katičić, “Ilirci i ilirski jezik”, 681.

Catholic Counter-Reformation movement, especially from the beginning of the seventeenth century onward. The term “Illyria” is more often found in texts written in Latin, but terms such as “Dalmatia” and “Slavonia” were also used as synonyms.<sup>2</sup> In any case, it should be pointed out that during ancient Roman times the term was used to denote the indigenous Balkan population of the Illyrico-Celtic tribes such as the Liburnians, Dalmatians, Japods, Istrians, Pannonians and so on. From the early Modern Age it was used in a substantially different way: to denote the population with Slavic origins which, mixed with indigenous peoples, had started to gradually infiltrate and later dominate the area from the beginning of the seventh century. Thus a shift can be identified, by which it became customary to use the name of “Illyricum” for the territory, the term “Illyrians” for the population and the word “Illyric/Illyrian” as an adjective referring to the ethnicity, nationality and language of the corresponding population. This shift was given a decisive push on 10 December 1655, when the Roman Rota proclaimed that the physical space of *Dalmatia seu Illyricum* was “part of the territory which encompassed Dalmatia, Croatia, Bosnia and Slavonia”.<sup>3</sup> (It is also worthy of note that the very same act excluded the Slavic [i.e., future Slovenian] population in the provinces of Carniola, Gorizia, Carinthia and Styria from the denotative field of “Illyria”.) Within this context all future official Roman Catholic institutions, documents and publications used the term “Illyria” and its derivations to denote persons and artefacts springing from the prevalently Catholic population and its culture at the eastern shores of the Adriatic, with its corresponding hinterland up to the Drava River to the north and the Danube and Drina rivers to the east. In this, special importance should be given to the fact that the terms “Illyrian”, “Croatian” and “Slavic/Slavonic” were used and interpreted as synonyms from the publication in 1604 of Bartol Kašić’s (a.k.a. Bartholomaeus Cassius) first grammar of Croatian, *Institutiones linguae illyricae*, throughout the seventeenth century with two printed dictionaries and all the way up to the mid-eighteenth century with a further three printed dictionaries. Thus, for example, in his dictionary entitled *Blago jezika slovinskoga* (Loreto-Ancona, 1649–1651), Jacobus Micalia gives the translation “Illyricus, Croata” for the ethnic name “Hrvat” (a Croatian). Almost one hundred years later, in his dictionary *Lexicon Latinum interpretatione Illyrica, Germanica, et Hungarica* (Zagreb, 1742) Andrija Jambrešić offered an Appendix entitled *Index Illyrico sive Croatico-Latinus*; moreover, under the entry “Illyricus” he explains that it is “Illirianski ali Szlovenski, Horvatczki etc.” (“Illyrian or Slavonian, Croatian etc.”); and in German: “Illyrisch das ist Croatisch, Dalmatinisch etc. oder zum Croaten, Sclavoniern etc. gehörig” (“Illyrian is Croatian, Dalmatian etc. or that which belongs to Croatians, Slavonians etc.”). Thus, to cite the prominent contemporary Slavist Radoslav Katičić, it can be stated that

As soon as one takes into account this long and firm tradition of the Illyrian language and the way it was commonly understood up to the 1830s . . . , it is no more unusual [to

<sup>2</sup> Moguš, “Seventeenth and Eighteenth Century Croatian Grammars”, 421.

<sup>3</sup> Katičić, “Ilirci i ilirski jezik”, 682; Moguš, “Seventeenth and Eighteenth Century Croatian Grammars”, 421.

understand] that in those times everybody knew [what was meant] when the Illyrian language was mentioned.<sup>4</sup>

This familiarity of learned people with the interchangeability of the terms “Illyrian”, “Croatian” and “Slavic/Slavonic” (with their overlapping semantic clusters denoting the principal connotational component universally labelled “Croatian” from the second half of the nineteenth century to the present) received a further push with events resulting from the Napoleonic Wars. Namely, one of the various short-lived political entities created by Napoleon’s drawing of new boundaries was given the name “Illyrian Provinces” (1809–1813). It encompassed some of present-day Slovenia’s territory (Carniola, western Carinthia, Gorizia) and approximately one-half of present-day Croatia’s territory (Istria, Dalmatia, parts of inner Croatia and the Military Frontier), with Ljubljana as the capital. Its quasi-mechanical geographical articulation disregarded the previous delineation between Slovenian and Croatian territories and populations, but it left – by some of its innovative and fresh ideas in education, transport and commerce – a prevailing positive impression, thus helping both the local public imagination and intellectual engagement to preserve the memory of the term and its ethnic/national connotations. (It must be pointed out here that the administrative territory of the “Illyrian provinces” encompassed people of Catholic, Orthodox and Muslim confessions, and of Croatian, Slovenian, Bosnian Muslim and Serbian ethnic and cultural backgrounds, but with a Croatian Catholic majority.) This connotational shift within the semantic cluster of the term “Illyria” could be interpreted as a notional and factual decline in the Roman Catholic seventeenth/eighteenth-century ethnic and religious delimitation between the Catholic Croats and Slovenians to the west, and the Orthodox Serbs and Islamized Bosnians to the east.

Moreover, the idea and socio-political reality, as well as the very use of the term “Illyrian”, figured as a prelude to the new political constellations and social realities after the 1814–1815 Congress of Vienna, which introduced a new geo-ethnic pattern in the south-eastern part of the Habsburg Monarchy. The formerly Venetian Dalmatia, the Republic of Ragusa, the Military Frontier and Istria were now administrated directly by the Austrian authorities, and the provinces of Croatia proper and Slavonia came under the stricter Hungarian administration. Perhaps based on the French model (Napoleon’s “Illyrian Provinces”), its first administrative form was named the “Kingdom of Illyria”; it was created by the Habsburg Emperor Francis I (II) in 1816 and abolished in 1822.

This whole development, along with some others, inspired Croatian political and intellectual circles to begin “recycling” this ancient term, or re-inventing it as an old/new construct to be used as a “supra-regional” label acceptable to the majority of the population in the creation of a new Croatian “cultural-national” concept. This was first articulated in the famous *Dissertation* by Count Janko Drašković, written in Croatian and published in Karlovac in 1832. It consists of political, economic, cultural and, last but not least, linguistic topics, with language being at the core of the “Illyrian” issue. Namely, the question of what languages were used in public affairs of the Habsburg Empire started to

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<sup>4</sup> Katičić, “Ilirci i ilirski jezik”, 676; Moguš, “Seventeenth and Eighteenth Century Croatian Grammars”, 421.

provoke vivid discussions that resulted in long-term consequences. This began in 1784, when Joseph II introduced German as the official language for the territory of the whole multi-ethnic Habsburg Monarchy.<sup>5</sup> The Hungarian answer came very soon: the joint Diet of Hungary and Croatia, held in Pressburg/Pozsony (Bratislava), requested as early as 1790 that Hungarian be introduced as the official language for the Kingdom of Hungary,<sup>6</sup> including Croatian areas. Because “at that time, patriotism was manifested in the public use of the vernaculars, or *linguae patriae*”,<sup>7</sup> the Croats, or “*Croatae*, the noble *natio politica* of the Kingdoms of Dalmatia, Croatia and Slavonia”,<sup>8</sup> initiated political debates with Hungarian politicians on the language issue for the next three decades. Finally, in 1832, it was precisely Count Drašković’s *Dissertation* (aimed at future Croatian delegates to the joint Diet of Hungary and Croatia) that presented the Štokavian dialect as the “Illyrian language” and as a standardized national Croatian language “with a continuity of literature ever since Humanism”. This was the argument offered against the 1827 attempt by the joint Diet to introduce Hungarian as an obligatory subject in Croatian institutions, administration and the school system, and to refute the prejudice that the Croats were a “nation without a mother tongue”.<sup>9</sup> Drašković pointed out the “natural right of nations to cultivate their own language – the ‘spiritual connection between peoples and countries’”, and – equally importantly – introduced the “new political concept of the ‘Kingdom of Illyria’, grounded in historical and natural rights and based on a common language. This construct, which would incorporate Dalmatia, Bosnia, and even the Slovenian provinces, [was] named ‘Great Illyria’ (*Cro. Velika Ilirija*)”.<sup>10</sup> Hence, “the ‘Dissertation’ established itself among the public from the very beginning as the most complete and the most basic program of the whole Romantic movement of [the Croatian] ‘national awakening’, and as such it became incorporated into the national canon as early as the nineteenth century”.<sup>11</sup>

What immediately followed Drašković’s initiative were the ideas, writings and actions undertaken by Ljudevit Gaj (1809–1872), which substantially improved and refined the initial impulse. Following his university studies in philosophy and law, undertaken in Vienna, Graz, Pest and Leipzig, he made a name for himself by publishing *A Short Foundation of the Slavic-Croatian Orthography* (Buda, 1830), which proposed a reformed phonetic orthography based on the one introduced for Czech, which would lay down the foundation of modern Croatian spelling. Equally important was his success in 1835 of publishing the first newspapers with a literary supplement entirely in Croatian. In 1836 he replaced their initial titles of *Novine Horvatske* (The Croatian Newspaper) and *Danica Horvatska, Slavonska i Dalmatinska* (The Croatian, Slavonian and Dalmatian Morning Star) with, *Ilirske narodne novine* (The Illyrian National Newspaper) and *Danica ilirska* (The Illyrian Morning Star), respectively.

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<sup>5</sup> *Discourses*, 340.

<sup>6</sup> *Discourses*, 340–341.

<sup>7</sup> *Discourses*, 341.

<sup>8</sup> *Discourses*, 341.

<sup>9</sup> *Discourses*, 342–343.

<sup>10</sup> *Discourses*, 343.

<sup>11</sup> *Discourses*, 343–344.

What were the semantic reasons behind this shift? “Since Gaj wanted to address a broader South Slavic literary public, he preferred the neutral and inclusive supra-national historical name ‘Illyrian’ instead of the too narrow and exclusive ‘Croatian’”.<sup>12</sup> The semantic narrowness of the term “Croatian” at that time (which in its Kajkavian dialect could be applied only to three counties in the “Ban’s Croatia”) induced Gaj to propose the term “Illyrian” as an artificial construct encompassing all South Slavic dialects, which broadened the basis for the new literature.<sup>13</sup> Thus the practical tendency to overcome locally patriotic cultural particularisms lead to the proposition of a virtual reunification of the defunct Triune Kingdom of Croatia, Slavonia, and Dalmatia, at least linguistically. It also led to the creation of a single literary language<sup>14</sup> following the Herderian model created within the context of the early nineteenth-century disunited Germanic lands.

However, the attempts to extend the idea of this linguistic unification to the Slovenian, Serbian and even Bulgarian socio-cultural circles failed, because their scholars and politicians clearly rejected the idea in its very core.<sup>15</sup>

Be that as it may, the term “Illyrian” was accepted in Croatia proper and Slavonia during the 1830s and 1840s, and later also in Dalmatia and Istria, as a nominal label for a series of newly established institutions. Thus, for example, the central cultural institution (which later became what is even today one of the most influential cultural societies in Croatia), established in 1842, was named *Matica ilirska* (The Illyrian Literary Society); somewhat earlier, in 1838, the first Illyrian Reading-Room was established in Zagreb; in 1842 a *German-Illyrian* dictionary was published by Ivan Mažuranić and Jakob Užarević; earlier, in 1838, Count Drašković directed a programmatic letter to young Croatian women, calling them “Illyrian daughters”; in 1841 the Illyrian People’s Party was established; and in 1846 the department of the Illyrian language was created at the Royal Academy in Zagreb. The overall enthusiasm was of such intensity that political circles in Pest, Vienna and even the Vatican expressed their serious concern about “Illyrian Pan-Slavism” as a threat to stability in central Europe, and so the Viennese authorities officially banned the name and symbols of Illyrism between 1843 and 1845. However, even from 1842 it was already clear to Croatian “awakeners” (i.e., members of the Illyrian National Movement) that the term “Illyrian” should thereafter be used only for denoting the idea of the “ethnic and cultural community” of South Slavic peoples, and that the political drive to unify all the Croatian provinces with the aim of independence should be led under the name “Croatia”.<sup>16</sup>

<sup>12</sup> *Discourses*, 234.

<sup>13</sup> *Discourses*, 233.

<sup>14</sup> *Discourses*, 233.

<sup>15</sup> The Serbian linguist and lexicographer Vuk Stefanović Karadžić “would be the main oponent of the Illyrian project among the Serbs, which he refuted as early as in 1836 by the text ‘Serbs all and everywhere’ (*Srbi svi i svuda*). There he radically rejects the name Illyrian, and extends his concept of Serbianness (one language – one nation) from ‘Trieste to the River Bojana in Montenegro, thus renaming the Croatian, Slavonian, Bosnian and Montenegrin nationalities as Serbs. Such ideological permeation of the language, which, by means of ‘performative naming’ (Bourdieu), ontologically changes the named object (in this case, ‘nationalities’), would be the cornerstone of future Croatian-Serbian linguistic clashes.” *Discourses*, 234.

<sup>16</sup> Stančić, “Pretpreporod i narodni preporod”, 60 → Lj. Vukotinović.

## And what about musical “Illyrism”?

With regard to musical culture in the Croatian lands, no mention of the term “Illyria” and its derivations in connection with music can be found prior to the nineteenth-century National Movement. Of course, opinions about the peculiar beauty of Croatian folk tunes started to appear publicly from the very beginning of the nineteenth century (e.g., in the newspaper *Télégraphe* in Ljubljana around 1810, or in Bishop Maksimilijan Vrhovac’s order of 1813 to his clergymen in Zagreb to start collecting the treasures of folk music production). Such ideas and actions could be understood as a prelude to one of the “Illyrian” obsessions: the collection of folk tunes, which was pursued in the 1830s and 1840s by Sabo Franković (1830), Stanko Vraz (prior to 1844), Carlo Catinelli-Bevilaqua-Obradić (1847) and others. The term “Illyrian” was extensively used in naming various phenomena in Croatian and primarily Zagreb musical life, including a concert of arias and opera fragments in the “Illyrian language” in 1838; Count Drašković’s holding the “first Illyrian musical party” in 1839; the founding of the *Narodno ilirsko skladnoglasja društvo* (Illyrian People’s Music Society) by Zagreb seminarians in 1839; the founding of the *Prvo ilirsko glasbeno društvo* (First Illyrian Music Society) by the students of the Zagreb Royal Academy in 1840; and so on.<sup>17</sup> About one hundred rousing songs have been preserved from the period from 1833–1850, most of them labelled as “Illyrian” both by the intentions of their authors and performers and the audience reception.

Ljudevit Gaj, the leading personality of the Illyrian movement, represents a special case regarding ideas about music. He explicitly wanted a musical setting for his most important literary product, the early poetic-political manifesto *Još Hrvatska ni propala dok mi živimo* (*Croatia Is Not Doomed As Long As We Live*) from 1833 to be “national”. In 1837 he crystallized this idea as the following:

We have laid the foundations for Croatian music and given it direction: let it draw from the people, and when it creates something new, let it also be in the spirit of the people – but not as unadorned and naive as the products of the simple people are, but rather sophisticated, refined, according to the rules of art and aesthetics; thus, we shall achieve what other nations lack: true national music.<sup>18</sup>

Within the musical context one outstanding feature can be stated for the entire Illyrian Movement period: the terms “Illyrian”, “Croatian” and “national” had been used in music quite freely and practically synonymously. To the contrary, these terms were much more carefully used in politics and literature, with a clear insight into what was “Croatian” and what was “Illyrian” (i.e., belonging to the broader community of other South-Slavic ethnicities). Thus it could be stated that the musicians of the Illyrian period considered themselves “Illyrian” musicians mostly because they were active within the period called “Illyrism”, because they used the “Illyrian” language in the songs they composed and performed, and because they declared themselves as ideologically belonging to the

<sup>17</sup> Andreis, *Music in Croatia*, 140–149.

<sup>18</sup> Cited in: Andreis, *Music in Croatia*, 141–142 (according to Kuhač’s *Glasbeno nastojanje Gajevih Ilira. Povjestna crtica*, Zagreb 1885).

“Illyrian” socio-cultural movement. The aspect of using “Illyrian” folk music material as the basis for their art music was usually articulated within the consciousness that they were using Croatian folk tunes (sometimes in their regional variants).

The “Illyrian” name almost disappeared from public use after 1850. It was to a certain extent replaced by the new term “South-Slavic” or “Yugoslav”; for example, in the title of the Yugoslav Academy of Sciences and Arts, founded in Zagreb in 1866; in the name of the *Društvo za Jugoslavensku povjestnicu i starine* (Society for Yugoslav History) and its journal *Arhiv za povjestnicu jugoslavensku* (Archives of Yugoslav History) published between 1851 and 1875; in Ivan Kukuljević’s *Slovník umjetnikah jugoslavenskih* (A Dictionary of Yugoslav Artists) from 1858; in the title of Kuhač’s epoch-making collection of *Južno-slovenske narodne popievke* (South-Slavic Folk Tunes; 1878–1881); and so on. Of these, it was Franjo Ksaver Kuhač, the outstanding ethnomusicologist, music historian and collector of folk tunes, who rehabilitated the term “Illyrian” in 1893, by publishing the important book entitled *Ilirski glazbenici. Prilozi za poviest Hrvatskoga preporoda. Glazbotvorci, ishitrioci, pjevači, pjevačice i sakupljači hrv. pučkih popievaka* (Illyrian Musicians. A Contribution to the History of the Croatian Revival. Composers, Poets, Male and Female Singers, and the Collectors of Croatian Folk Tunes). It is obvious that here again the terms “Illyrian” and “Croatian” are used as synonyms, and that the syntagm “Illyrian musicians” is used only to define a historical period with a certain dominant ideology (“in the time of Illyrism; that is, between 1835 and 1850” – “u vrijeme Ilirizma ili ako ćemo reći od godine 1835 do godine 1850”<sup>19</sup>), and not as an indication of the existence of some imaginary “Illyrian” music as such. It is also interesting to note that the personalities Kuhač listed among Illyrian musicians were selected and presented exclusively by ideological and not national criteria: among the eighteen “Illyrians” cited and elaborated in this book, two were of Austrian origins (Ferdo [Wiesner] Livadić and Karlo von Prandau), two Hungarian (Dragutin von Turányi and Sidonija Rubido Erdödy), two Czech (Vatroslav Vernak and Franjo Pokorni), one Slovenian (Stanko Vraz), one Serbian (Josip Runjanin), and only ten were Croatians (Fortunat Pintarić, Ivan Padovec, Franjo Ksaver Čačković-Vrhovinski, Josip Juratović, Pavao Stoos, Mijo Hajko, Vjekoslav Karas, Ferdo Rusan, Pajo Kolarić and Marijan Jaić).<sup>20</sup>

<sup>19</sup> Kuhač, *Ilirski glazbenici*, LXIV.

<sup>20</sup> Their original presentations in Croatian are as follows: Ferdo Livadić – hrvatski glazbotvorac (Croatian composer); Fortunat Pintarić – crkveni glazbotvorac i orguljaški virtuoz (church composer and organ virtuoso); Ivan Padovec – kitaraški virtuoz i glazbotvorac (guitar virtuoso and composer); Karlo barun Prandau – glazbotvorac (composer); Franjo Ksaver Čačković-Vrhovinski – flautista i hrv. glazbotvorac (flautist and Croatian composer); Josip Juratović – regens chori i crkveni glazbotvorac (choirmaster and church composer); Pavao Stoos – pjesnik i uglazbatelj crkvenih pjesama (poet and arranger of church songs); Dragutin pl. Turanji – glazbotvorac (composer); Mijo Hajko – uglazbatelj hrv. pjesama (arranger of Croatian songs); Vjekoslav Karas – slikar i diletantski glazbotvorac popievaka (painter and amateur composer of songs); Vatroslav Vernak – pjesnik i uglazbatelj hrv. pjesama (poet and arranger of Croatian songs); Franjo Pokorni – glazbotvorac (composer); Ferdo Rusan – pjesnik i ishitrilac pievnih melodija (poet and composer of singable melodies); Josip Runjanin – ishitrilac melodija za hrv. pjesme (inventor of melodies for Croatian songs); Pajo Kolarić – ishitrilac hrv. pievnih melodija i vješt tanburaš (inventor of singable Croatian melodies and skilful tamburitza player); Sidonija

Kuhač also felt that the most outstanding composer of the Illyrian period was not Vatroslav Lisinski (later named the “founding father” of modern Croatian art music),<sup>21</sup> but Ferdo Livadić, who

can be named as the first and greatest composer of that Illyria, which was conceived by Napoleon in a political sense, and by Janko Drašković and Ljudevit Gaj in the political and literary sense. And as Gaj set in motion Slavic life in literature, thus Livadić initiated the Slavic idea in music; or, to put it in a different way, Livadić musically embodied Gaj, and he precisely noted the era of awakened Illyrism in music.<sup>22</sup>

## Conclusions

1. The term “Illyrian” is more than two thousand years old, but was not consistently used throughout history: during the Middle Ages it was practically forgotten.

2. Its primary use encompasses the areas of geography, politics, culture and linguistics, denoting the physical and conceptual world along the eastern Adriatic shores and the corresponding hinterland up to the great rivers in the north and east.

3. In music it was used during a much shorter period of time than in literature, linguistics and politics – only during the nineteenth century, notably from 1835–1850.

4. In music it was used as an ideological construct and was extended to a broader denotative field than in other areas – it encompassed an imagined virtual community of all South-Slavic music cultures; its specific continuation was manifested in the South-Slavic/Yugoslav concept and terminology.

5. In real musical life and practice it was used mostly as a synonym for denoting Croatian art music produced from 1835–1850 within the Croatian National Revival movement.

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Rubido-Erdödy – prva hrvatska primadonna (first Croatian prima donna); Marijan Jaić – sakupljač i ukajditelj crkvenih pučkih melodija (collector and transcriber of church folk melodies); Stanko Vraz – sakupljač napjeva pučkih popievaka (collector of folk song tunes).

<sup>21</sup> Andreis, *Music in Croatia*, 159.

<sup>22</sup> Kuhač, *Ilirski glazbenici*, 5.

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## IZNAJDBA GLASBENEGA ILIRIZMA

### Povzetek

Da bi pravilno razumeli fenomen »ilirizma« v hrvaški in južnoslovanski glasbeni zgodovini, je potrebno opozoriti na nekatere neglasbene pomene izraza in ideje same v širši zgodovinski perspektivi. Sama ideja »Ilirov« kot slovanskega tipa avtohtonih prebivalcev kontinentalnega področja severovzhodno od jadranske obale izhaja iz splošnega hrvaškega zgodovinopisja zgodnjega novega veka. Pomemben dogodek se je zgodil leta 1655, ko je Rimska cerkev *Sancta Rota* razglasila »del teritorija, ki obsega Dalmacijo, Hrvaško, Bosno in Slavonijo« za *Dalmatia seu Illyricum*. S tem so se imena Illyricum (za ozemlje), Iliri (za prebivalstvo) in ilirski (kot pridevnik, ki se nanaša na narodnost,

jezik itd.) uporabljala v uradnih cerkvenih dokumentih in objavah za označevanje oseb in predmetov teh področij. V skladu s tem so se izrazi »ilirski«, »hrvaški« in »slovanski/slavonski« pogosto alternativno uporabljali za označevanje fenomenov, ki so se nanašali na zgoraj omenjeni fizični in duhovni prostor. To pojasnjuje, zakaj je bila raba pojma »ilirski« med hrvaškim narodnoprepornim gibanjem v tridesetih in štiridesetih letih 19. stoletja v intelektualnem in kulturnem krogu med večino prebivalstva že udomačena.

»Ponovni izum« in uporabo izraza »ilirski« v 19. stoletju za hrvaški kulturo in glasbo bi lahko pojasnili tudi s težnjami vodilnih ideologov hrvaškega narodnega prepornega, kot so bili Ljudevit Gaj, Janko Drašković in kasneje (etno)muzikolog Franjo Ksaver Kuhač.

Čeprav je prejšnja raba imena »ilirski« označevala etnično/versko delitev med katoliškimi Hrvati in Slovenci na zahodu ter pravoslavni Srbi in islamiziranimi Bosanci na vzhodu, je bil po letu 1815 kot posledica takratne družbenopolitične situacije izdelan nov geo-etnični model južnovzhodnega dela habsburške monarhije: Dalmacija z Dubrovnikom ter vojaško mejno področje in Istra so bili pod avstrijsko, banska Hrvaška in Slavonija pa pod madžarsko upravo. Ta delitev je nujno spodbudila izum in rabo nadregionalnega imena, da bi bila ideja o združitvi podobnih kulturnih (in glasbenih) območij in koncept »kulturne nacije« sprejemljiva za večino prebivalstva. Najprej je bila ta oznaka »ilirski«, konec štiridesetih in v petdesetih letih 19. stoletja pa se je delila v »hrvaški« za ožje področje in »južnoslovanski« ali »jugoslovanski« za pojave, ki so zajeli južnoslovansko prebivalstvo habsburške monarhije (Slovence, Hrvate in delno Srbe).

Ti splošni kulturni in družbeno-politični koncepti so odmevali tudi na glasbenem področju. Ideja zbiranja ljudskih napevov je zaživela že v prvem desetletju 19. stoletja in do zgodnjih osemdesetih let omenjenega stoletja je bilo v epohalni Kuhačevi zbirki zbranih 1600 južnoslovanskih napevov. Glasbeno-ideološka raba zbirke ljudskih pesmi je od štiridesetih let 19. stoletja naprej vidna v prizadevanjih za komponiranje umetne glasbe (pesmi, opera in instrumentalna glasba Vatroslava Lisinskega in Ivana Zajca) na osnovi izvirne ljudske glasbe in njene izpeljanke, novo-ljudske glasbe. S tem se je, v zvezi z vprašanjem »ilirskega«, folklorno gradivo pretežno hrvaškega izvora alternativno uporabljalo z drugimi južnoslovanskimi ljudskimi glasbenimi idiomi. Ta situacija se je v hrvaški glasbeni kulturi nadaljevala še do dvajsetih in tridesetih let 20. stoletja v delih pretežno neo-nacionalnega glasbenega sloga.

Na kratko, »glasbeni ilirizem« je bil tako ideološki konstrukt kot tudi realni produkt širšega hrvaškega in delno južnoslovanskega kulturnega in družbeno-političnega procesa v 19. stoletju, ki se je pojavil in izginil znotraj zgodovinskega okvira.

## HOW TO CREATE A NATIONAL OPERA? THE LISINSKI CASE IMAGINARY MEMOIRIST SKETCHES WITH AN EPILOGUE

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**Izvillek:** Članek obravnava razmere v štiridesetih letih 19. stoletja, ko so rodoljubi zaprosili mladega skladatelja Vatroslava Lisinskega (1819–1854), da napiše nacionalno opero. Ni bil dovolj glasbeno izobražen za tako nalogo, pa tudi pesniki niso bili dovolj izkušeni s pisanjem libretov. V obliki izmišljenega skladateljevega monologa so predstavljeni njegovi dvomi in ravnanje, zasedba in izvedba njegove opere *Ljubav in zloba*.

**ključne besede:** Vatroslav Lisinski / Ignaz Fuchs, *Ljubav i zloba*, Porin, nacionalna opera, ilirizem.

**Abstract:** The article deals with the situation in the 1840s, when the young composer Vatroslav Lisinski (1819–1854) was asked by Zagreb patriots to compose a national opera. He was not musically well-educated for such a task, and the poets were not experienced in writing librettos either. The author presents these issues, the ensemble, and the performance of *Ljubav i zloba* (Love and Malice) by way of an imagined monologue by the composer.

**Keywords:** Vatroslav Lisinski / Ignaz Fuchs, Love and malice, Porin, national opera, Illyrian movement.

When a historian looks back on a particular past event, he is more or less able to construct a series of events according to the facts known. This type of bird's-eye view perspective enables him to observe it in its totality and to perceive the results of certain actions by the persons involved in it. However, very often he can only assume, or even only imagine, the possible impetus or direct cause of certain actions. Yet it is possible to imagine how a person would feel and react to finding oneself in the very same situation, and to hypothesize what knowledge and facts the person was aware of. I felt the impact of such questions and issues when dealing with this topic. Therefore, I have decided to try to slip into Lisinski's shoes and tell the story through a sort of "imaginary memoir" from his perspective, with some additional commentary for the reader.

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One of my crucial memories from my student days dates back to the summer of 1841: on a small stage in the backyard of my family home,<sup>1</sup> the *Domorodno kazališno društvo* (Patriotic Theatre Company) performed a historical play, *Juran and Sophia, or the Turks*

<sup>1</sup> The house where Vatroslav Lisinski (1819–1854) was born is in Zagreb, Ilica 206 (today no. 37).

at Sisak,<sup>2</sup> by the 26-year-old historian and writer Ivan Kukuljević Sakcinski, who was only three years older than I was.<sup>3</sup> The play had already been performed two years earlier at the fortress of Sisak,<sup>4</sup> but for the performance at our new beautiful theatre in Zagreb<sup>5</sup> new music had to be composed, as patriotic as the play itself. Therefore, Ferdinand Wiesner, who was already known under his Croaticized name Ferdo Livadić,<sup>6</sup> composed some songs. The instrumentation was completed by an orchestra member, Wilhelm Weisz.<sup>7</sup>

For me, a young law student and almost an amateur musician,<sup>8</sup> the artistic director of the patriotic students' singing society, already known among my friends under a Croaticized version of my name as Vatroslav Lisinski (although I was baptized as Ignatius Fuchs, and only later carried out the official change),<sup>9</sup> that performance meant a feast of patriotic emotions. Therefore, I decided to use my whole energy and musical creativity in the service of the Illyrian movement, which I had already joined during my secondary-school years in the mid-'30s. I was aware that my musical education had lacked consistency; I had started to learn music very late. In my early teens my parents came to the idea that training for a teacher's profession (which included the tasks of an organist) might be suitable for my weak health, so they arranged private teachers in piano and basic music theory for me, not knowing that this would result in my choosing music as a profession. Unfortunately, the music school of the Zagreb Music Society (usually called

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Lovro Županović carried out a thorough study on Vatroslav Lisinski and presented information on many sources and documents. See Županović, *Vatroslav Lisinski (1819–1854)*.

<sup>2</sup> *Juran i Sofija, ili Turci kod Siska*. The play was performed for the first time in Sisak in 1839, then the next year in the Zagreb theatre, and also in 1841 on the open-air stage.

<sup>3</sup> Ivan Kukuljević Sakcinski (1816–1889).

<sup>4</sup> On that occasion only some already existing epic songs were performed. Županović, "Važnost Ljudevita Gaja za hrvatsku glazbu preporodnog razdoblja", 171–172, after the writings of Franjo Ksaver Kuhač, or: Katalinić, "Paralelni svjetovi ili dvostruki identitet?" 336, according to the journal *Danica*.

<sup>5</sup> The first purpose-built theatre in Zagreb was opened in 1834, on a municipal lot, financed by the merchant Kristofor Stanković. It was quite badly damaged in the 1880 earthquake. However, it was later repaired to some extent and used until 1895, when the new theatre building by Fellner and Helmer was opened. Today the old theatre is a municipal building, having no trace of its former function. The festive curtain, preserved in the City Museum in Zagreb, portrays some national symbols characteristic of the still-young national movement: a grandfather playing the national epic instrument the *gusle*, telling/singing (obviously national) poems to his grandson, and a fairy under the coat of arms of the Triune Kingdom of Croatia, Slavonia and Dalmatia. On the topic of national symbols in the theatre see: Katalinić, "The visualisation of the national in nineteenth-century opera in Zagreb", 45–65.

<sup>6</sup> Dimitrija Demeter called him Livadić in his review of a patriotic soirée at the house of Count Janko Drašković on 5 April 1839. See Majer-Bobetko, "Ferdo Livadić u tisku svoga doba", 31. Livadić (1799–1879) was a popular composer of heroic songs, lyrical songs and piano pieces.

<sup>7</sup> Some songs are still kept at the Croatian Music Institute in Zagreb.

<sup>8</sup> After gaining some basic piano skills from his sister Maria, Lisinski took private lessons in music theory: possibly with Johann Reyschil, and undoubtedly with Joseph Sojka and Georg Carl Wisner-Morgenstern.

<sup>9</sup> On the change of Lisinski's name, see Franković, "Molba Vatroslava Fuchsa za promjenu prezimena u Lisinski", 297–299.

the *Musikverein*), founded in 1829, at that time offered lessons only in strings, winds and singing, so my entire music education was gained outside any institution. Nevertheless, my conducting and occasional arrangements of folk and traditional tunes for the singing society founded by my classmate Alberto Štriga (1821–1897), a singer and jurist, gave me the impetus to try my skills in composition as well. My own first “real” output – a choir piece on lyrics by the Croatian writer Pavao Štoos (“Iz Zagorja od prastara”) – was publicly performed for the first time in the summer of 1841, for a birthday party prepared for Ljudevit Gaj, one of the “fathers” of the Illyrian movement, held on the very day of my own twenty-third birthday. This rousing song immediately became very popular, even more after some musical and textual revisions were made. The enthusiasm expressed both by my friends and the audience stimulated my desire to make further musical contributions to the national movement. I was encouraged to continue with composing dances for popular Illyrian balls and feasts, as well as solo songs and heroic choral songs. These were the results of my hard work in music theory with the best-educated musician in Zagreb – Georg Carl Wisner von Morgenstern.<sup>10</sup> My family home became a centre for patriotic gatherings and discussions. The fundamental guide for my musical ideas was the proclamation on national art by Ljudevit Gaj, in which he wrote that national music “should be drawn from the people, and when it creates something new let it also be in the spirit of the people – but not as unadorned and naïve as the products of the simple people but rather sophisticated, refined, according to the principles of art and aesthetics: thus we shall achieve what other nations lack: true national music”.<sup>11</sup> Therefore, I practised the combination of simple compositional skills and national ideas by introducing and arranging various Slavic pieces (e.g., Slovene, Russian and Polish) for my singing society’s repertoire. Of course, I also enjoyed some of the opera performances given in the Zagreb theatre, although the quality and success of the itinerant theatre companies (usually from Austria, performing the international operatic repertoire) did not always display the expected level of quality. One can easily remember Carl Mayer’s company in 1838 and, even more, the following one of Heinrich and Carl Börnstein from Linz, who not only performed operatic pieces by Bellini, Donizetti, Auber and even Mozart quite well, but also invited some respectable guest singers. On the other hand, the national theatrical repertoire was only to be established in the times to come: other than Kukuljević’s play with incidental music, there existed mostly translated German comedies and plays with local and national music, sometimes even performed in national costume. The audiences were eager for national art and they often accepted such light pieces with enthusiasm only because they were performed in the national language. Although my financial situation – especially after 1842, when I started to volunteer as a municipal clerk – did not allow me to attend these theatre events regularly, I stayed in contact with musical performances

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<sup>10</sup> Georg Carl Wisner-Morgenstern (1783–1855), a native of Arad, first arrived as the secretary to Count Ladislaus Erdödy to his manor in Veliki Marof near Varaždin, and after two years moved to Zagreb. Although a jurist for his primary profession, he turned out to be a well-educated musician, and music became his definitive source of income.

<sup>11</sup> Cited after Kuhač, *Glasbeno nastojanje Gajevih Ilira. Povjestna crtica*, 19–21 and in: Andreis, *Music in Croatia*, 124.

mostly by attending concerts at the *Musikverein* and various other singing societies, which were even more nationally coloured.

In 1844, by which time I had composed only a scant two dozen musical pieces, mostly songs and piano compositions in which I tried to imitate the sound and simple structure of the local folk music, my ambitious friend Alberto Štriga came up with a new idea and formulated it almost as a command: You have to compose an opera! This was only the final and most definitive expression of this idea, which had been on his mind ever since our newspaper had published a brief report on the performance of the opera *A Life for the Duke* [*sic*] by Mikhail Glinka in St Petersburg,<sup>12</sup> and after an extensive article on Russian music was published in *Danica ilirska*.<sup>13</sup> Still, was I – a young and inexperienced musician – being invited to offer an answer to such a demanding task? Some critics were already pointing to Ferdinand Wiesner (a.k.a. Livadić), as, for example, in the review of one of the nationally-coloured entertainments at the palace of Count Janko Drašković, which stated:

It is a pity that Mr. Livadić, who – as an Illyrian – could be with some more care what Glinka is for the Russians and Tomašek for the Czechs, because he is full of musical imagination and knowledge. Therefore, it is a pity that his national compositions have not been published, for they are delicate – as it seems to us – in their sensibility awakened by the beautiful nature surrounding the town of Samobor. By his published output, he would have given the most beautiful present not only to us Illyrians, but also to all Slavic brothers and all music lovers.<sup>14</sup>

However, the national idiom in the theatre did not make any significant progress. I remember the enthusiastic call of the theatre director Heinrich Börnstein already in 1839 in our journal *Danica*,<sup>15</sup> trying to raise the national self-awareness and to stimulate the foundation of the national theatre. Despite being a German, he was entirely aware of its importance! We all agreed with his words that the theatre is the right place to bring the national idiom to life, as the Hungarians did in Budapest, and our Czech brothers in Prague. However, I felt too weak to carry out a part of the task. My repeated resistance, supported by the fact that there were no similar national works in Croatia, no adequate libretti in Croatian and that I had never composed such a demanding instrumental work, was not taken seriously. Štriga himself constructed the fundamental plot, and found an amateur poet, Janko Car, who was willing to write a libretto. He forced me to put aside all my other musical duties and stick to the composition of the opera, named *Ljubav i zloba* (Love and Malice). I thought to write a few arias, some ensembles and choruses, with simple harmonisations, all bound together with a series of spoken dialogues, and accompanied by the piano or a chamber ensemble. Such a *Singspiel* might then be performed

<sup>12</sup> The title is cited after *Ilirske narodne novine* III/4, 14 January 1837, 3–4, meaning the opera *A Life for the Tsar*. The short article describes the reopening of the theatre after its renovation.

<sup>13</sup> *Danica ilirska* VII/47, 20 November 1841, 194–195.

<sup>14</sup> *Danica ilirska* V/16, 20 April 1839, 64.

<sup>15</sup> His proclamation “O utemeljenju ilirskog narodnog kazališta” was published in *Danica ilirska* V/46, 1 December 1839.

by a circle of national enthusiasts.<sup>16</sup> Nevertheless, Štriga's ideas were much more ambitious because he realized the importance of such a work for the national movement: a representative form as an opera in the national language would be a confirmation of national strivings and would fill the lack of national repertoire on the musical stage. On the other hand, Štriga insisted on immediate performance of the first arias as soon as I had finished them in order to check the reaction of the audience and to prepare them for the entire work. The reviews were enthusiastic and stimulating, especially the one in the German cultural newspaper *Luna*:

In the entr'acte Mr. Frasinelli sang with tumultuous applause an artistic and very demanding aria also in the national language by Mr. V. L., a gifted young man, whose promising musical talent is proved by many of his musical attempts – among them many favourite folk melodies – and from whom a performance of a valuable larger composition is soon to be expected. Mr. Frasinelli performed in an imposing Dalmatian-Croatian costume and was called out repeatedly, as well as the composer.<sup>17</sup>

Our Croatian newspapers were also full of enthusiasm;<sup>18</sup> even the German *Agramer politische Zeitung* brought some flattering words: “Mr. Frasinelli sang a demanding virtuoso aria with the text in the national language, composed by Mr. Fuchs, as a specimen from an opera, which would be – as said – executed by an amateur company as a benefit performance.”<sup>19</sup> A few months later, Štriga himself performed an aria, but the most successful was, of course, Countess Sidonija Rubido Erdödy, who sung an aria of the main female role, named Ljubica, and gained ovations with her crystal-clear voice. She was always an ardent and important promotor of our national ideas. With another aristocrat, Count Janko Drašković, she was very helpful in organising patriotic feasts and balls.

However, as I proceeded with this demanding task, I realized the many weak points of the libretto: it was clumsy and not dramatic at all. Štriga gave his hand here too. He found a professional librettist, Dimitrija Demeter, a famous playwright and director of the national theatre company, who rewrote the entire first act, and finished the second one; he placed the plot – an eternal love triangle and rivalry of two youngsters for a beautiful and demure girl – into the historical frames of sixteenth-century Dalmatia. For the musical part, I got my satisfaction in the newspaper reviews, when the critics realized that the spirit of the national popular music gave the decisive tone to my creation. It was the most difficult task, because I had nothing to lean on, and here my experience in arranging popular tunes for my singing society was most useful. I tried to create simple melodies imitating the folk tunes and lyric atmosphere in the love scenes; on the other hand, the heroic tunes of our epic songs gave the tone to the scenes of action and combat. My problem – the lack of practical knowledge in orchestration – seemed immense to me. Therefore, Štriga persuaded the musician and teacher Wisner-Morgenstern to complete the instrumentation

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<sup>16</sup> That idea was pointed out by F. Ks. Kuhač in *Vatroslav Lisinski i njegovo doba*, 36.

<sup>17</sup> *Luna* XIX/21, 16 March 1844.

<sup>18</sup> *Danica horvatska, slavonska i dalmatinska* X/11, 16 March 1844, 4.

<sup>19</sup> *Agramer politische Zeitung* XIX/20, 9 March 1844, 6.

for a reasonable price and thus fulfil his patriotic duty.<sup>20</sup> I could tell that his work was valuable, but in my opinion it was too “classical”, traditional and complicated, sometimes opposing the simple and clear melodic shapes of my melodies, but my knowledge of compositional handicraft was too weak for me to be able to give sufficient impulse in the right direction. In spite of all this, I was more than pleased with his help, and started immediately to rehearse with the singers. Some political events directly influenced the advancement of our work. In July 1845, there was a protest against Ban Franz Haller and the fraudulent local elections, and almost 50 patriotic students were shot in front of the government building.<sup>21</sup> Our very young tenor singer, Franjo Stazić,<sup>22</sup> was also among the wounded, so that we had to wait for his recovery to proceed with our rehearsals.

The eminent patriots worked hard on the task of establishing a national theatre. One of the outcomes that Börnstein urged with his proclamation in 1839 was the Parliament’s decision to found the national theatre board, named by our bishop Juraj Haulik.<sup>23</sup> The historian Kukuljević had also recently pointed out in his proclamation the importance of the national theatre in the education of the nation, in addition to the university and a learned society with the museum.<sup>24</sup> However, the German and Italian opera companies still governed our musical stage, because there were not enough educated local musicians to take this task over for a longer period. Therefore, we gathered a rather odd ensemble for the performance. As Zagreb did not have its own professional opera company who could perform well in the Croatian language, there were my amateur friends (though very professional in their attitude to do their best). Franjo Stazić, who was working hard to become a good professional tenor (and whose later career proved his abilities), got the role of Vukosav. There was also my friend Alberto Štriga as Obren, actually a lawyer with a beautiful baritone. In the opera plot, both of them were in love with Ljubica, sung by our eminent soprano and patron of the national movement, Sidonija Rubido (born

<sup>20</sup> His involvement in orchestrating the opera was mentioned in the press, as well as in all Lisinski’s biographies (Kuhač, *Vatroslav Lisinski*, 47; Kassowitz-Cvijić, *Vatroslav Lisinski u kolu Ilira*). According to the critic in *Danica*, Lisinski made the piano version, and Wisner-Morgenster did the entire orchestration (“Pārva izvorna ilirska opera ‘Ljubav i zloba’ od Vatroslava Lisinkoga,” *Danica horvatska, slavonska i dalmatinska* XII/14, 4 April 1846, 3).

<sup>21</sup> A monument to the 1845 “July victims” was erected in 1855. The thirteen deceased victims were buried at the Jurjevsko graveyard, later transferred to the Mirogoj graveyard together with the monument.

<sup>22</sup> It was said that Stazić – whose real name was Franz Steger (1824–1911) and came from Buda via Novi Sad to Zagreb – had his dēbut in Lisinski’s first opera. However, he took part not only in 1846 (as in: Barbieri, *Hrvatski operni pjevači*, 12), but already during 1845 in Mazza’s opera company in Donizetti’s *Lucia di Lammermoor*; he also participated as a soloist in patriotic festivities and benefit parties (cf. *Danica horvatska, slavonska i dalmatinska* XI/11, 15 March 1845). He became a celebrated singer of the Vienna Opera, and sang in Prague and Budapest too.

<sup>23</sup> By the proclamation of the Parliament, according to article XXVII, Bishop Haulik named nine members with Count J. Drašković as its president (cf. *Ilirske narodne novine* VI/72, 8 September 1840, 1). On that topic, see more in: Katalinić, “Paralelni svjetovi”, 337.

<sup>24</sup> Ivan Kukuljević-Sakcinski, “Einige Bedürfnisse Kroatiens und Slawoniens”, *Agramer politische Zeitung* XX/76, 20 September 1845, 336–338.

Countess Erdödy).<sup>25</sup> The pharmacist Kamilo Wiesner (a.k.a. Livadić), the son of our renowned composer, sang with his beautiful basso the role of her father, Count Velimir, a young nobleman was played by Ljudevit Pihler (tenor) and Vukosav's servant Branko was played by Franjo Wisner-Morgenstern (bass-baritone), the son of the composer Georg, who arranged the instrumentation. The theatre orchestra took part in the performance, reinforced by some *Musikverein* professors, and with some military as well as amateur musicians; their conductor Eduard Angel from Mazza's Italian opera company, as well as the stage designer Steiner and director Eduard Hörenstein were rare professional members of our *ad hoc* and mostly amateur crew. After various problems had been resolved, the opera was able to be staged. The plot, published in the newspaper before the premiere, was very simple: two young men (Obren and Vukosav) are in love with Ljubica (the daughter of the Dalmatian count Velimir), but she prefers Vukosav. Obren, jealous and mean, captures them in order to prevent their reunion, but Vukosav's servant releases them. The fact that my music was characterized as national, in combination with the sweetness of our national language, could have resulted in the success not only of my work but also in our national strivings in general. The opera was heralded as an original national piece in all the journals and newspapers,<sup>26</sup> the plot was presented there, too, and the libretto was printed and sold in bookshops. Special attention was given to the fact that "in many choruses the best-known forces of domestic patriotic ladies and gentlemen will be united", and "the first musical eminencies of Zagreb and Karlovac will take part in the orchestra".<sup>27</sup> Finally, the 28th of March 1846 arrived, and I was so nervous that I could hardly breathe when the curtain was rising.

I could never have imagined how successful the first performance of the opera *Love and Malice*<sup>28</sup> would be. The theatre was sold out for all five following performances, including the one for the birthday of King Ferdinand II, as well as the sixth one the next year, on the day the Croatian parliament proclaimed Croatian the official language, thus

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<sup>25</sup> Sidonija Erdödy (1819–1884) took part in the national revival movement, singing patriotic songs in the Croatian language since she was 14. She took music lessons in Zagreb with the Czech alto Nanette Karlitzky and the Berlin Opera star Johanna Ennes.

<sup>26</sup> In addition to local Croatian and German newspapers, the announcements and/or reports on the "original national opera" were published not only in Vienna, but also in Milan (*Gazetta musicale di Milano* V/18, 3 March 1846, 143; Notizie: Agram (Croazia) and Paris (*Revue et Gazette musicale de Paris* XIII/16, 19 April 1846, 127; Nouvelles. Chronique étrangère. Agram (Croatie)), along with short notifications about its performances. For example, the Viennese *Der Humorist* (9 April 1846, 4 (348), edited by the famous satirical writer and journalist Moritz Gottlieb Saphir, published a few lines on "Die erste kroatische Originaloper 'Ljubav i zloba', Text von Dr. Demeter, Musik von dem jungen Komponisten Vatroslav Lisinski, instrumentirt von Franz [*sic*] Wisner von Morgenstern, ist kürzlich vier Mal mit steigendem Beifall von Dilettanten in Agram aufgeführt worden."; *Il Pirata* (5 May 1846, 6) wrote (with many errors): "Anche un'Opera croata! Quanto prima si udrà in Agram un'Opera scritta in lingua croata, intitolata *Ljutavi* [*sic*] *Zloba*, parole del signor Demetes [*sic*], musica di Varoslav [*sic*] Linsinski [*sic*]."

<sup>27</sup> *Luna* XXI/22, 17 March 1846.

<sup>28</sup> *Ljubav i zloba*, translated into German as *Liebe und Bosheit*, or *Liebe und Kaballe*.

replacing Latin.<sup>29</sup> One newspaper critic enthusiastically considered the opera to be rightly called an Illyrian one, “because in it musical characters of all Illyrian provinces have been united”,<sup>30</sup> which was certainly my intention. The beautiful review in two issues of *Danica*, signed by an anonymous reviewer, was poetic, professional and literarily worthy.<sup>31</sup> The singers were always called back to the stage repeatedly, especially Countess Rubido. On the wings of this success, Štriga supported me in my wishes to devote more energy to music than to law, and started at once to arrange additional musical training for me. In Zagreb, I would have been able to receive only the basic education at the Music Society School, so to go to Prague seemed to be an optimal choice for a Slavic patriot with my compositional sensibility. Stanko Vraz made some efforts to promote my opera in Slavic countries and to get it published, but the lack of patrons of Slavic music eventually made this impossible.<sup>32</sup> My finances were more than dire; therefore, Štriga arranged various concerts and guest performances in order to get financial support from patriotic noblemen and citizens. During our concert tour in Serbia in 1847, my first composition was published in Graz: a solo song on a Slovakian text, which brought my name into the newspapers again.

The political atmosphere in Zagreb and Croatia during the late 1840s became more and more vibrant, but I experienced the revolutionary year 1848 in Prague. I was too old for the Conservatory – I was already 28 when I arrived there – and I decided to look for private studies in composition and orchestration; after examining my compositions, Jan Bedřich Kittl, the director of the Conservatory himself, offered help in this matter. I was grateful to my teacher for his systematic efforts, and did my best to satisfy him, but I also did not want to neglect my own musical impulses. Orchestral and choral works, solo songs and some arrangements were my initial results. But the dream of a national opera was awakened again from my homeland: the good old man Demeter, who had re-created the libretto of my theatrical first-born, found a new topic, which seemed to be suitable for a real national opera: a theme placed in early Croatian national history, when Duke Porin fought against the Frankish invaders (in the ninth century). In Prague I was able to enjoy very good theatre and operatic performances and – combined with my musical progress – I considered myself ready for this challenge. However, Dr. Demeter was very slow, so I had to urge him onward, especially because the patriotic atmosphere could be felt in Prague so intensely that I was able to draw parallels with the heroic news received from my sister and friends back home. Moreover, the Czech people had done a lot of work on collecting their national treasures; I have to point out above all Karel Jaromír Erben, for whom I brought recommendations from our patriot Stanko Vraz, and who

<sup>29</sup> That happened on 23 October 1847, when Ivan Kukuljević-Sakcinski demanded that Croatian should be the official language of the Croatian parliament.

<sup>30</sup> “Pàrva izvorna ilirska opera ‘Ljubav i zloba’ od Vatroslava Lisinkoga”, *Danica horvatska, slavonska i dalmatinska* XII/15, 11 April 1846, 3 (59).

<sup>31</sup> It is said that the patriotic poet Stanko Vraz stood behind the text, as he probably wrote the sonnet to Sidonija Rubido published on the title page of *Danica horvatska, slavonska i dalmatinska* XII/14, 4 April 1846.

<sup>32</sup> Županović (*Vatroslav Lisinski*, 48) cites the correspondence between Stanko Vraz and František Palacký.

had already published two collections of folk songs. In that sense, I tried to recollect all the folk songs that I had notated and arranged, to analyse them and to reconstruct their formal and structural compositional characteristics. How important it would be to have such a collection of Croatian folk songs, which could serve as a source and a basis for the creation of national art music! My few transcriptions, gathered from my friends in and around Zagreb, were nothing but a weak start that I wanted to continue and expand.

The liberal ideas in Prague did not pass me by, so I was able to share my feelings with those who stuck to Austro-Slavic ideas. I attended the Slavic Congress, but I did not have much time, and, even more, I did not have enough money to waste my time with never-ending political discussions. To the contrary, these events encouraged me to stick to my work, to be as patriotic as possible by means of my music. The glorious news from Croatia,<sup>33</sup> like the election of Ban Josip Jelačić, was spiritual nourishment for me, who was hungry almost every day, and my composing was progressing with satisfaction, although I did interrupt it twice for long visits to my beloved hometown. Even in hard times, when I received the report of my dear sister's passing away, music was my sanctuary, especially vocal pieces and piano miniatures. I tried to develop a feeling for the Czech language and set it to music too, but my main task became composing the new opera. After a year, I had already finished the overture and three acts. Demeter imagined it as a grand romantic opera in five acts, but he was always late with sending me fragment by fragment, so that I was not able to receive the entire work almost until the end. My last few months in Prague were not as happy as the earlier ones, although my pieces were performed in concerts and received with warm enthusiasm. My further publications in Prague were mentioned in the newspaper more often.<sup>34</sup> The depressing news on the absolutist rule established at home, my illness and my poverty forced me to return home to rest and recover, but the hard times continued there, too. I finished my second opera *Porin*, and every now and then I was able to have my orchestral work, and an aria or two, performed publicly with good reviews by the critics. I also organized and conducted the *Musikverein* ensemble in a series of concerts where mostly my music was played but, as my engagement was treated as a honorary one, my finances remained generally worse than poor. I also tried to organize a performance of my new opera in its entirety, but the

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<sup>33</sup> On the situation in Croatia in 1848–49 see: Katalinić, “Die Musikkultur in Zagreb im Jahr 1848/49”, 209–219.

<sup>34</sup> For example, the *Wiener Zeitung* (nr. 206, 29 August 1850, 16) published following news: “Vatroslav Lisinsky's neulich angekündigte Kompositionen cechischer [*sic*] Lieder mit beigefügter kroatischer Uebersetzung haben bereits die Presse verlassen und geben ein neues Zeugniß von der Befähigung dieses jungen südslawischen Komponisten; Lisinsky's Lieder sind dem bekannten Ambros von Vranicany dedicirt.” It is a collection of six solo songs on texts by Czech poets (with Croatian translation) entitled *Šestero českých písní*, published in Prague in 1850. The collection was dedicated to Count Vranicany, probably because he was the first on the list of financial supporters of Lisinski's studies in Prague (cf. Županović, *Vatroslav Lisinski*, 55–56, fn 177). Others were Ban Jelačić and a series of noblemen (Janko Drašković, Ladislav Pejačević, Franjo Kulmer etc.) and renowned citizens (Ljudevit Gaj, Franjo Stauduar, Josip Juratović etc.). However, that support radically diminished in 1849 and 1850 because of general poverty and some other, mostly political, reasons.

Patriotic Theatre Society was abolished, the professional singers went abroad, and the performing demands in my score were too difficult for the local soloists and ensemble. The orchestra was quite modest, too, predominantly consisting of military musicians, professors of the *Musikverein* and some amateurs. Concerning the opera, my idea was to confront two military and national entities in music – the Croats and the Franks – thus identifying the first with simple, folk-like melodies in arias and choruses, and the second with virtuoso arias in the style of Bellini; the sample pieces that were publicly performed met with enthusiasm for my musical skill. I was especially proud of a chorus of Croatian women, where I tried – in Gaj’s sense – to use the quality of the modal character of the folk tradition, built upon the foundation of classical harmony.

Now that I am lying ill and weak in my bed, becoming completely dependent on the help of my friends, I think of my decision to follow the path of music instead of sticking to my juridical career. I do not regret anything although I remained poor, but I hope to have satisfied my friends and my compatriots, figuring as the musical voice of my nation.

### The epilogue

Vatroslav Lisinski died in 1854, at the age of 35. He left an opus of some 170 works: in addition to his two operas mentioned above, it consists of some 70 solo songs on German, Croatian, Czech and Slovak texts, some 40 choral pieces, notated and harmonized folk songs, some 30 piano works, 15 chamber pieces and 15 orchestral pieces – mostly overtures.

His first opera, *Love and Malice*, was heralded and received as the first Croatian national opera. In fact, it was a type of rescue opera, not fulfilling the complete aim of a national piece primarily because of the lack of a national topic.<sup>35</sup> However, its music was recognized as national because its style was close to the national music and folk tradition – not the rural, but the urban one, mostly in the heroic spirit of rousing songs, up-to-date and known to the audience at that time. It seems that this melodic simplicity, almost naiveté, and the transparent instrumentation, along with naive verses in the national language, were decisive in defining this opera as a national one. The parallel can be drawn to Lisinski’s instrumental compositions, as judged by the critic Ljudevit Vukotinić in 1843: “His tunes are good; and it is right that Mr. Lisinski sticks to his own original magic simplicity and that he is not yielding to Italian colour painting or difficult German music, which is not at all suited to our folk songs.”<sup>36</sup> The fact is that at the early stage of the national revival the national identity had to be confirmed through national culture, as well as by means of an opera. Therefore, all energy was focused in its creation and realization, which was acclaimed by the audience.

<sup>35</sup> Demeter did somehow place the plot in the historic frame of sixteenth-century Dalmatia, thus pointing to one of the important myths of the nation – its territory – i.e., Dalmatia being the part of the “once glorious” Triune Kingdom, although in the nineteenth century it was actually under direct Viennese rule.

<sup>36</sup> Ljudevit Vukotinić, *Lětošnje poklade u Zagrebu, Danica hrvatska, slavonska i dalmatinska* IX/10, 11 March 1843, 3 (39).

However, Lisinski's music was not always judged so favourably: Kuhač names Leopold Alexander Zellner, a pianist and journalist originating from Zagreb, editor of the Viennese *Blätter für Musik, Theater und Kunst*, as a "great admirer of Lisinski".<sup>37</sup> However, in 1864, he published a series of articles presenting the music situation in Zagreb during 1840s and 1850s by a certain A.D.K.,<sup>38</sup> who wrote:

“Eines der gewichtigsten dieser Hindernisse war der mittlerweile eingetretene sociale Umschwung, der im Nationalitätsprincipe seinen potenzierten Ausdruck fand. Man wollte ein Kunstleben, aber bloß ein nationales, ohne zu erkennen, daß ein specifisch nationales Kunstleben eine große ausgebildete Kunstvergangenheit zur unbedingten Voraussetzung haben muß . . . Da tauchte plötzlich eine Persönlichkeit auf, in welcher die nationale Partei den gesuchten Kunstmessias zu erblicken glaubte. Der Mann, ein schwacher Musikdilettant, seines Stammes ein Deutscher, der auf den Namen Fuchs hörte, wußte sich die Situation zu Nutzen zu machen. Er verwandelte sich in Lisinsky, schrieb ein paar unbedeutende croatische Lieder, und ward somit der Abgott und Vertreter der nationalen Kunst. Man brachte Mittel auf, dieses nationale Genie ausbilden zu lassen, sandte ihn auf's Prager Conservatorium, wo er sich in der Composition die letzten Grade erwerben sollte. Nach etwa Jahresfrist kehrte Lisinsky zurück und brachte die Partitur einer croatischen Oper mit, die indessen bis zur Stunde ihrer Aufführung harrt, denn womit hätte man sie aufführen sollen?”<sup>39</sup>

However, this series of half-truths did not represent the opinion of the majority, and the performance practice during more recent history has testified to the gifted musical output of the composer and made his works regular parts of the national repertoire.

After his improvements in the study of composition and related disciplines, Lisinski's approach to the idea of national in music advanced too, above all based on the folk songs that he tried to collect and analyse in order to apply their compositional characteristics in his compositions. Regrettably, the first collection of Croatian folk tunes<sup>40</sup> – compiled by Councillor Karlo Catinelli (1807–1864) was published in Vienna, presumably, in 1849, but it seems that Lisinski did not take advantage of it because he probably did not know about it, having spent so much time in Prague.

He did not live to see his second opera *Porin* staged – this only happened almost 50 years after its creation, on 2 October 1897. At that time, when operas by Wagner, Massenet and Bizet dominated the Zagreb musical stage, Lisinski's second opera, actually a grand early romantic piece, was accepted with respect due to its national importance, but described as antique and old-fashioned.

Due to this delay in the first performance of *Porin*, a large lacuna occurred in the

<sup>37</sup> Kuhač, *Vatroslav Lisinski*, 116.

<sup>38</sup> According to the bitterness of the text, one might presume that the author was Alexander Kovácsics, a pro-Hungarian-oriented composer, conductor and pianist in Zagreb, an opponent to the Illyrian movement and secretary to the Hungarian Casino in Zagreb. In 1848 he emigrated to Paris, returning to Zagreb in 1856, where he died in the 1860s, impoverished and forgotten. (cf. Ajanović, “Kovačić, Aleksandar”, 785).

<sup>39</sup> “Aus Agram”, *Blätter für Musik, Theater und Kunst*, 24 July 1864, 1.

<sup>40</sup> *Južno slavljanske pučke pësme. Svezak I. Pësme iz Slavonie* (South Slavic Folk Songs. Vol. I. Songs from Slavonia), containing some 25 tunes from the region of Požega, Slavonia.

national operatic repertoire. Namely, from the performance of *Love and Malice* in 1846, and the foundation of the Zagreb national opera theatre in 1870, when the national-historical productions by Ivan Zajc started to be staged, not a single national opera was performed, and, beside *Porin*, not even composed, due to political, cultural and personal reasons.

Moreover, a sort of paradox occurred: Lisinski was always complaining about the lack of collections of Croatian folk songs. Apart from the small collection by Catinelli, the most extensive one was arranged and edited by Franjo Kuhač only later, in 1878–81, offering composers a foundation on which they could build “national works”. Still, in a review of Zajc’s opera *Pan Twardowski* in 1880 Kuhač himself complained: “We think that the duty of our poets was to leave the field of cosmopolitanism and to devote themselves to domestic themes,” and further on concerning music: “If we charged the libretto not to grow out of Croatian history or everyday life, the same is to be said for the music [...] Since our folk-songs were published, the musicians of other nations have thrown themselves onto them like bees onto honey. And Herr Zajc, who sits here at their sources, has he made no profit out of this richness?” It shows how the situation radically changed when comparing the first and the second halves of the nineteenth century: the national issue no longer had to be proved at any price – the question of finding a national identity was no longer dominant in Croatian society, culture and music at large.

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## KAKO USTVARITI NACIONALNO OPERO? PRIMER LISINSKI. IZMIŠLJENE SPOMINSKE SKICE Z EPILOGOM

### Povzetek

Sredi štiridesetih let 19. stoletja je skupina hrvaških navdušencev pod vplivom novice o uspešni izvedbi Glinkine opera *Žizn' za carja* (*Življenje za carja*) v Rusiji zaupala precej neizkušenemu, a nadarjenemu skladatelju Ignazu Fuchsu / Vatroslavu Lisinskemu nalogo, da napiše hrvaško nacionalno opero. V Zagrebu, kjer je narodnostno mešano hrvaško, nemško in madžarsko prebivalstvo večinoma poslušalo predstave gostujočih nemških in občasno italijanskih opernih družb, so narodni jezik začeli normirati šele nekaj let prej. Najprej se je narodna kultura pojavila v budnicah in na plesih, mladi skladatelj pa je imel skladateljske izkušnje le iz pisanja klavirskih in vokalnih miniatur. Komponirati opero je bila zanj več kot ambiciozna naloga. Izvor, vplivi, dejavniki in rezultati prizadevanj Lisinskega so predstavljeni, analizirani in vključeni v širši okvir hrvaškega narodnega gibanja in izraženi kot namišljen monolog skladatelja samega.

## CROATIAN HISTORICAL MYTH, SOUTH-SLAVIC BROTHERHOOD AND THE DEATH OF THE OPERA

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**Izleček:** Na podlagi analize tistega, kar se je ohranilo od opere Petar Svačić, ki jo je leta 1902 v Trstu uglasbil Josip Mandić na besedilo Karla Lukeža, članek obravnava idejo narodnosti, ki je krožila med mladimi Hrvati, ohranjanje patosa sublimnosti v okviru desublimacije in vpliv političnega pragmatizma na nastanek nacionalne opere in njeno recepcijo.

**Ključne besede:** Josip Mandić, Karlo Lukež, Petar Svačić, hrvaška opera, desublimacija.

**Abstract:** Starting from the analysis of what remains of the opera Petar Svačić, composed in 1902 in Trieste by Josip Mandić to a libretto by Karlo Lukež, the paper discusses the ideas of nationhood then current among young Croats, the survival of sublime pathos in the context of desublimation and the impact of political pragmatism both on the creation of the national opera and on its reception.

**Keywords:** Josip Mandić, Karlo Lukež, Petar Svačić, Croatian opera, desublimation.

In Trieste in 1902 two young artists – the composer Josip Mandić<sup>1</sup> and the librettist Karlo Lukež<sup>2</sup> – created their first opera, *Petar Svačić*. The work was an attempt to stage the story of the last Croatian king, Petar Svačić, who reputedly died in battle against the Hungarians in 1102, so 1902 was believed to be the 800th anniversary of his death. Svačić's defeat meant the end of the Croatian kingdom and brought Croatia into a political union with Hungary that would last until 1918. During the 19<sup>th</sup> century nation-building process the defeat offered the basis for the creation of a powerful narrative about how the golden age

<sup>1</sup> Mandić was born in 1883 in Trieste. His musical training took place in Zagreb, Trieste, Vienna and Prague. After early works combining the South-Slavic musical heritage and the influence of R. Wagner, he followed the currents of European music of his time. Critics noticed echos of G. Mahler, R. Strauss and L. Janáček in his work. See *Muzička enciklopedija*, s.v. "Mandić, Josip"; *Primorski slovenski biografski leksikon*, s.v. "Mandić, Josip"; Leverić, "Josip Mandić", 3–46; particularly detailed about his musical education is *Edinost*, "Podlistek – Petar Svačić".

<sup>2</sup> Lukež was born in Istria in 1869. He completed his schooling in German (in Istria, Trieste, Vienna and Graz), worked as a lawyer, and wrote patriotic verses in Croatian, inspired by the South-Slavic brotherhood. See *Znameniti i zaslužni Hrvati*, s.v. "Lukež, Karlo"; Car Emin, "Dr. Karlo Lukež"; Strčić, "Preporodni pjesnik Karlo Lukež", 1–38.

ended and how it would be reestablished by the return of national statehood. The choice of plot suggests that the two artists intended to create a *national opera*, but, unexpectedly enough, both *nation* and *opera* present themselves as needing to be discussed.

*Petar Svačić* enjoyed a remarkable success at its first concert performance in Trieste in 1903<sup>3</sup> and an enormously enthusiastic audience response at its first theatrical performance in Ljubljana in 1904.<sup>4</sup> It fell into complete oblivion, however, soon thereafter. Today, just fragments survive: the libretto, published in Pula in 1902,<sup>5</sup> some contemporary newspaper and journal reviews and a few bits of the score discovered recently by the Croatian musicologist Davor Merkaš.<sup>6</sup> Certainly insufficient for a musicological analysis, but quite enough – I will dare to say plenty – for an understanding of the cultural, political and social context of a musical event that reflected some important currents of thought in fin-de-siècle Central Europe. What makes it particularly fruitful for a reflection on “opera and ideas”<sup>7</sup> is that it was conceived and written in an area that is both peripheral vis-à-vis the Austrian empire and remote from the new centres of national cultures then being created: in that periphery, that (non)place, that forces us, by simultaneously lagging behind and anticipating the new, to re-examine and redefine many of the concepts that are often taken for granted in the national and political centres.

History is the main means by which the narrative is constructed that the national

<sup>3</sup> The concert was organised by the society *Dalmatinski skup*, and was held on 19<sup>th</sup> February at the Rossetti theatre. The society was founded by Croats living in Trieste, but their activities were also supported by Slovenians and Serbs in a common effort to oppose German and Italian cultural domination in the city. Reports on the concert in Croatian and Slovenian newspapers in Trieste welcomed the event as a sign of the growing cultural and economic power of their communities. It is worth noting, however, that Italian and German newspapers also wrote positively about the concert, praising the composer’s promising talent. See the non-bylined newspaper articles: *Edinost*, “Konzert Dalmatinskega skupa”, *Trieste*, “La festa del Club Dalmatino”, and *Edinost*, “O koncertu Dalmatinskega skupa” (the latter is a translation of the article published in *Triester Zeitung*).

<sup>4</sup> The opera could not be staged in Zagreb, since the Hungarian governor of Croatia Károly Khuen-Héderváry abolished opera performances in Zagreb in 1902, and they were staged again only in 1909. The ovations, cheers for the author and demands for encores at the first performance in Ljubljana on 15<sup>th</sup> January 1904 (there was only one subsequent performance, on 4<sup>th</sup> February) are described in *Edinost*, “Triumf mladega hrvatskega skladatelja J. Mandića v Ljubljani”. Unlike the audience, the critics were less positive this time; the theatrical production seems to have brought out the weaknesses of the dramaturgy of the opera. “The vocal part of the opera is not of the same excellence as its orchestral part” states *Edinost* (“Opera Petar Svačić v Ljubljani”). The journal *Ljubljanski zvon* considers the plot static and boring, unsuitable for performance and uneasy for the singers, who “don’t know what to do with themselves on the stage” (Pahor, “Petar Svačić”). For more details on the performance see Badurina, “Petar Svačić u Trstu”, 153–156.

<sup>5</sup> Lukež (pseudonym dr. Trnoplesar), *Petar Svačić*. The libretto had previously been published in the journal *Naša sloga*.

<sup>6</sup> Davor Merkaš gathered scattered pieces of the composer’s opus in Prague, Vienna and Opatija. It is also thanks to him that Mandić’s later opera, *Mirjana* (composed in the thirties, with a surreal content), was staged in Zagreb in 2008.

<sup>7</sup> The reference is, of course, to the methodologically pioneering work by Paul Robinson, *Opera and Ideas*.

community tells itself about its birth, suffering and survival: a narrative whose powerful mobilising effect derives precisely from the analogy with that of a living being and its need to be protected. For these purposes, however, one particular narrative procedure for the use of historical material is more suitable than others: the template of tragedy. Thus historical events become the story of a guiltless<sup>8</sup> hero (or community) who is compelled to succumb to catastrophe but gains the moral victory and with it the prospect of future reward. The importance of the elements of tragedy, fatality and moral victory in this narrative pattern has been correlated by Hayden White with the concept of the *sublime*.<sup>9</sup> The sublime historical discourse draws mainly on the classical idea of the sublime, and often ignores its romantic developments towards Leopardian melancholy or self-annihilation; it promotes, on the contrary, the sense of offended greatness and the belief in future revenge, often understood as the final realisation of the national state. Sometimes this kind of discourse nurtures a collective sense of being innocent victims in eternal conflict with, and genuinely superior to, the others. This is why this narrative has often been accused of encouraging or even producing nationalisms and providing the full range of 20<sup>th</sup> century antidemocratic and totalitarian regimes.<sup>10</sup>

A similar narrative pattern was detected by Michel Foucault in English and French historiography of the early 17<sup>th</sup> century, when history started to be narrated by *political* historians who renounced the ideals of neutrality, legitimacy and universality, and identified themselves with oppressed communities claiming their rights and desiring a revenge achievable only through war.<sup>11</sup> The new discourse defended the specificities of the races rooted in language and kinship<sup>12</sup> and was deeply interested in history as the origin of current unrighteous power relations. Its idea of history is close to mythology, with its motifs of glorious ancestors, sainted heroes, lost golden ages and future restorations typical of cyclical, antimodernist interpretations of the past. Among other examples, Foucault finds this kind of discourse in the 19<sup>th</sup> century national movements against big empires like the Austrian one.<sup>13</sup> His analysis, however, is not intended merely to criticise or refute such a discourse. On the contrary, Foucault argues that we should take seriously the connections

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<sup>8</sup> The absence of guilt is very important for this kind of narrative and requires some specific character types. Since any intentional interference with fate might make the victim seem less innocent, the figure of “the naïve king” began to occur very frequently. According to Darko Suvin, “in this kind of dramaturgy it is almost unpatriotic to be intelligent. On the contrary, the signs of a good Croat are absolute naïvety and political illiteracy” (Suvin, “Norme hrvatske povijesne dramatike”, 483). The king in Lukež’s libretto is a good example of this type, with his *Hamletian* doubts before the crowning: “I am too respected [...] I don’t know if I merit it.” (Lukež, *Petar Svačić*, 22).

<sup>9</sup> White, “The Politics of Historical Interpretation”, 113–137.

<sup>10</sup> See, for example, Banti, *Sublime madre nostra*, 50.

<sup>11</sup> Foucault, *Society Must Be Defended*, 45–65.

<sup>12</sup> The similarity of Foucault’s diagnosis with the distinction between “liberal, civic Western” and “illiberal, ethnic Eastern” nationalism made by Hans Kohn in 1944 is only superficial. In describing his type of the “war discourse” Foucault avoids any historical, regional, ideological or evaluative determination, maintaining it as an open and dynamic *dispositif*, thus permitting its reappearance through the ages in many different forms and areas.

<sup>13</sup> Foucault, *Society Must Be Defended*, 57–63.

between war, violence, history and dismissed legitimacy that are displayed by this discourse and are, according to him, particularly visible in the literary genre of historical tragedy. Thus, historical tragedy and, if I may add, national opera,<sup>14</sup> function as a ritual intersection of these painful issues, including during those historical periods in which a legitimist historiographic discourse prevails.

Nevertheless, the experience of totalitarianism in the 20<sup>th</sup> century has forced us to view the sublime interpretations of national histories with a certain concern. It was for this reason that one of the most influential Croatian writers of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Miroslav Krleža, rejected the whole corpus of 19<sup>th</sup> century Croatian historical tragedy. In one of his ironic passages, he quoted the popular verse from the Croatian national opera *Nikola Šubić Zrinski* (“To arms, to arms, | take your swords out of the scabbards, | brothers!”) and added sarcastically that “in the end the brothers actually pulled the swords from their scabbards”, alluding to Croatian-Serbian conflicts during the Second World War.<sup>15</sup> It should be said, however, that much of Croatian 19<sup>th</sup> historical tragedy, especially those works belonging to high literature and demanding to be performed in national theatres, was speaking, on the contrary, about Croatian-Serbian friendship and South-Slavic brotherhood. Krleža’s critique applies more to popular dramas with openly nationalistic propaganda like those written in the same period by Higin Dragošić. In 19<sup>th</sup> century Croatian culture, unlike in Italy, the opera is much closer to high literature and to the strict genre of historical tragedies in verse than to the popular novel.<sup>16</sup> Too expensive and too important in national cultural policy, it was not usable for radical nationalist propaganda. The above mentioned *Nikola Šubić Zrinski* is the only opera that provoked exclusively Croatian national pathos – and it has continued to provoke it until today – but it speaks about a Croatian battle fought on the side of the emperor of Austria, against the Turks, which renders metaphorical and arbitrary all the interpretations referred to by Krleža (*antemurales christianitatis*, referring to Catholic defence against orthodox Serbs). One thing is, however, crucial for our analysis: all historical tragedies and operas – high-brow or low, presenting universal human ideals or unadorned nationalism – contain the same sublime pathos of history narrated through the tragic formula.

There is, still, one confusing point regarding the popularity of the sublime historical discourse in the 19<sup>th</sup> century: the fact that, for other elements in the culture, the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century is the era of desublimation. The development of science and technology, of political ideas aspiring to the improvement of society (liberalism, socialism) and of a certain sense of the general progress of humanity seemed to have created the conditions for the decisive abandonment of mythical discourses. According to George Steiner, this is the time of the “death of tragedy”,<sup>17</sup> in whose place the modern drama was

<sup>14</sup> On the closeness between national opera and historical tragedy, particularly in the Croatian case, see Badurina, *Utvara kletve*, 271–300.

<sup>15</sup> Krleža, “O našem dramskom repertoaru”, 265.

<sup>16</sup> The relation between Italian opera and the popular novel has been described well by Folco Portinari, *Pari siamo!*, 125–134. Portinari does not mention Antonio Gramsci, but the influence of Gramsci’s ideas about Italian melodrama is manifest in his work.

<sup>17</sup> Steiner, *The Death of Tragedy*.

born. *A Doll's House* by Ibsen, for example, was written in the same decade as *Nikola Šubić Zrinjski*, but belongs to a completely different world. Nora's story suggests that her unhappiness could have been avoided if society had been organised differently: she was not, that is, simply the victim of her tragic fate. The inevitability of classical tragedy (what could Oedipus do, for example, to avoid his fate?) was considered old-fashioned in the new literature. 19<sup>th</sup>-century historical tragedy is, thus, a strenuous attempt to keep sublime pathos alive in a world of desublimation.

These contrasting currents of thought also competed on the very terrain of historiography. Croatian 19<sup>th</sup> century historiography followed the general trend of *scientification*, drawing principally on German historicism and believing that it was possible to establish a genuine objectivity that would tell the facts "just as they happened". At the same time, however, the new historiography was not free of political influences, and nor thus of rhetoric forms. One of the aims of Croatian historians' intense, methodical archival research in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century was to find evidence of Croatia's right to its own state after joining the union with Hungary in 1102, evidence that could be used as a strategic tool in Croatia's diplomatic dialogue with Vienna and Pest. This conjoining of scientific criteria with subjective involvement resulted in histories that combined scientifically proven facts *and* the story of the tragic and cathartic *collective fatum*. Tadej Smičiklas, for example, was trained as a historian in Vienna, but his *History of Croatia*, published around 1880 (and quoted by Lukež as the primary source of his libretto), presented the history of the Croats as a "seamless struggle with stronger and bigger nations who were threatening their survival"; the book was aimed at "motivating the readers to resist foreign rulers and to reach big national goals".<sup>18</sup>

The literary corpus of the period of Croatian national awakening contains many works about Petar Svačić and his predecessor, king Zvonimir, also regarded as the last king (Svačić was, legally, only a pretender). They were both victims of betrayal by their own people (hence the topos of "Croatian discord", also present in Lukež's text). According to the legend, Zvonimir pronounced a deathbed curse that his own people would not have their own state for centuries, and this became the very heart of Croatia's tragic fatalism.<sup>19</sup> In 1902, when Mandić and Lukež chose the topic for their opera, the Zagreb literary critic Branko Vodnik offered a severe diagnosis of what he called "the abnormal moment in the development of our literature".<sup>20</sup> Some years later he would explain: "In our historical dramas the characters are nothing else than sentimental patriots, demagogues and journalists of political fractions, dressed in the clothes of Tomislav, Svačić and Petar Zrinski [...] these characters satisfy the nerves of a sick political chauvinism".<sup>21</sup> Focused on Croatian history and wearing old historicist clothes, these works very rarely mention Serbs who, in fact, were not involved in those historical events. The only exception is

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<sup>18</sup> Gross, *Suvremena historiografija*, 178.

<sup>19</sup> The re-establishment of Croatian national independence in 1991 was often interpreted by leading politicians and media of the time as the end of the Zvonimir's curse, which attests the vitality of the sublime historical discourse.

<sup>20</sup> Vodnik, "Abnormalni momenat", 20.

<sup>21</sup> Vodnik, *Franjo Marković. Studija*, 94–95.

probably the tragedy by Jovan Subotić, a Serbian author working in Zagreb, who used the story of Zvonimir, very loosely, in order to create an amusing drama about Croatian-Serbian friendship in 1862. His tragedy was very successful, being staged at the national theatre in Zagreb to mark Zvonimir's anniversary in 1876, but it was still just a populist elaboration of Illirian heritage, and quite obsolete in the new political arena of the time.

During the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century the idea of South-Slavic brotherhood, although promoted by Croatia's main political party, underwent a crisis and opposition to it gained ground through the influence of the radical Party of Rights (the "rights" here referred primarily to Croatia's right to independent statehood) before finally, towards the end of the century, growing again as a concrete political programme. The literature that accompanied this new Yugoslav ideology, early literary modernism, promoted new poetics, quite different from the historicism that had dominated the historical tragedies of the Croatian past written in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Because of the lack of a common Croatian and Serbian political or institutional medieval history, the new poetics used abstract, atemporal and symbolic elements drawn from folk epics and songs about Croatian and Serbian heroic battles against the Turks. The new poetic depicting Slavic brotherhood was, thus, less historical and more "provocatively irrational".<sup>22</sup>

The anomaly of Mandić and Lukež's operatic project remains in the fact that they chose the Croatian historicist theme of Petar Svačić, but they arranged it with the poetic tools that were used in the art of their time to promote the idea of the union of Southern Slavs. Although the theme did not permit this idea to be explicitly mentioned, there are many undoubtable references to it. The Prologue of the opera, placed after the overture, is written in decasyllabic verses and simulates the folk epic with its whole repertoire of rhetorical figures, including the "Slavic anthitesis" (question – two hypotheses – negation of the hypothesis – correct answer). It was sung by a baritone dressed as a *gusle* player, and, according to newspaper critics, the music was heavy and monotonous, recalling the genre of the folk song. The verses of the Prologue *Rode rode, zar ti do slobode | i do časti stalo toli malo?* ("Do you, my people, care so little about freedom and honour?"), in which the term *rod* (people) is intended to convey Croatian and Serbian kinship, are repeated at the very end of the opera, thus making clear what is its essential political meaning. The language elsewhere in the libretto also contains lexical and stylistic elements of the common Croatian and Serbian folk heritage, like fixed epithets (*mrki Vuče*) and animal metaphors (the king a hawk, the queen a turtledove). The folk epic worldview introduces a cyclical vision of history, in which the collective trauma is relieved by the belief that all the suffering will be remembered in folk song.<sup>23</sup> All this must have led the spectator to associate the crucial battle scene in which Svačić dies with another topos: that of the battle of Kosovo polje, the epic Serbian defeat by the Turks in 1389 and the basis of the Serbian myth of lost statehood, which has been extensively elaborated in folk songs.

The specificity of this assemblage can be understood only within the peripheral and transnational context of Trieste at the turn of the century. The two young authors were

<sup>22</sup> Kravar, "Ideologem nacionalnog srednjovjekovlja", 165.

<sup>23</sup> Observing the battle from the hill, the queen comforts herself: "Into the distant future the *guslar* will still sing | About this Croatian glory". Lukež, *Petar Svačić*, 32.

colleagues on the Croatian journal edited in Trieste, *Jadran*; Mandić wrote articles about music,<sup>24</sup> while Lukež worked as the editor and stood in for the editor-in-chief, Ante Tresić Pavičić, when he was away. The journal was launched with the intention of promoting radical Croatian politics,<sup>25</sup> and Tresić Pavičić, who was among the most respected Croatian authors of historical tragedies, was at the time close to the Party of Rights. However, the multi-national competition for cultural and economic domination in Trieste and the Slavic communities' need to oppose the much stronger German and Italian influences induced *Jadran* and his editors to become more open towards the heritage of the Illirian idea, which had never faded in this area.<sup>26</sup> For the same reason the two young authors re-elaborated the Croatian pathos that was implicit in the theme of Petar Svačić and redirected it towards the new Yugoslav ideology, combining the use of elements of the folk tradition in the traditional Illirian literary manner with the new modernism, in a highly stylized form in terms both of plot and of music.

The modernism is also, however, manifest in another aspect of the opera, in a detail of the plot that tarnishes its otherwise perfect aura of sublimity. In any sublime narrative, the death of a hero is essential; it is the martyrdom out of which grows the promise of the future resurrection of the whole community. The survival of a knight in battle can bring that indelible shame on which whole tragedies might be built (*Siget* by Higin Dragošić, for example). In Lukež's libretto, conversely, the king's main companion, his bravest soldier with the glorious name Vuk (the wolf), flees the battlefield and fetches up alive before the astonished queen. He justifies his decision thus: "I don't crave | to go to the grave |

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<sup>24</sup> Mandić had short news items about musical events in the first numbers of 1903, and the article "Nekoliko refleksija". The article criticises the fashion in Italian romantic opera of reducing Wagner's style to musical and theatrical exaggeration. Puccini's *Tosca*, according to Mandić (who attended its performance in Trieste, in March 1903), seduces its spectators with its dramatic tension, abundance of blood, sufferings, torture, violence and death. Mandić advocates a return to moderation and good taste in both music and plot, without, however, blaming the audience for their enthusiasm.

<sup>25</sup> The opening article by Tresić Pavičić, "Program Jadrana", is sufficient evidence of this intention. It was noticed immediately by the Slovenian journal *Edinost* (in the short news item "Na polju slovanskega novinarstva", 3 March 1903).

<sup>26</sup> The first period during which the Illirian idea was promoted in Trieste, starting in 1836 with the journal *La Favilla*, is described accurately by Cavallini in "Morlacchismo, illirismo, involuzioni esotiche"; 375–382. Cavallini notes the curious absence of Slovenians from the journal's Illirian project, ascribing it to a fear on the part of its writers that the Slovenian language – which is quite unlike Croatian and Serbian – might undermine the imaginary South-Slavic homogeneity. The supposition of this fear was also supported by the fact that none of the main Slovenian intellectuals and writers from the central national territory (apart from Stanko Vraz) joined the Illirian movement. In this connection it is interesting to observe the relations between the Triestine Slavic communities some decades later, at the time of the opera *Petar Svačić*. The desire to hold together is still visible, as we saw above in the reactions to the concert production of Mandić's opera. Tresić's journal, however, contains many articles describing the serious difficulties the three communities met in trying to collaborate, with frequent mentions of the language barrier between the Slovenes and the Croats and the Serbs as the main reason for this (see, for example, *Jadran*, 1904, n. 23). For historic data about Slovenian-Croatian economic and cultural relations in Trieste see Pahor, *Slavjanska sloga*.

now, when my death | would be of no help | to my sad country. | [...] If the sword | can't serve any longer, | what's the use of the tears?". The statement is left without comment by the queen or the others, but since Vuk declares that he would hide Svačić's crown to prevent the foreign ruler seizing it, it is clear that the action of leaving the battlefield has not disqualified him from becoming the custodian of the continuity of the Croatian state. The idea that there is no purpose in dying, that it is better to survive and to be useful to your country in some other way than martyrdom, belongs to the rationalism and optimism of the bourgeois world which, according to Steiner, killed tragedy. Practical reasoning characterised the politics of those years, particularly among the young Croatians who emigrated to Prague after 1895 and became ardent followers of Tomáš G. Masaryk.<sup>27</sup> The article "What we want", published in the launch issue of their journal *Hrvatska misao* in Prague in 1897, used the quotation mentioned above from *Nikola Šubić Zrinjski* as the clearest, best known and most self-explanatory symbol of the old fashioned romantic nationalism: "Croatian young people today are full of romanticism, they still sing 'To arms! to arms!' and with the highest enthusiasm they pronounce 'Let the Turk know how we die'. We want these young people to start thinking realistically, to understand that the Croatian people are at the limit of their endurance, they are desperate, in moral decadence and material extinction. Thus, instead of enthusiastic toasts, telegrams and declarations of loyalty, we ask for rigorous work in the economic, educational and political fields".<sup>28</sup> Another summary of the new programme was written in the same journal by Milan Šarić: "Everyone wants to die for their country, is there anybody who would like to live and work for the country?"<sup>29</sup> Lukež and Mandić were evidently part of this same generation. The problem, however, remains the fact that they introduced their modernist ideas in the sublime world of the national historical opera. Is this not risking the death of opera, just as happened to tragedy?

The classical work on the death of the opera, written in 1980 by Philippe-Joseph Salazar adopts a sociological, semiotic and anthropological approach.<sup>30</sup> The reason for the death of the opera, which for Salazar happened at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, consists in the excessive rigidity of the operatic roles, which is strictly related to the singers' voices and to the male-female binarism (the king is baritone, the queen soprano etc.) of the bourgeois and patriarchal family model.<sup>31</sup> Such rigid schemata could not survive

<sup>27</sup> Masaryk's influence on Croatian, Slovenian and Serbian students has been widely researched in history and literature. Gantar Godina's *Masaryk in masarykovstvo*, 22–44, is worth quoting here for its focus on the different views of individual national communities on the idea of South-Slavic unity. Czech influences in Croatian literary journals are analysed in Šabić, *Iz zlatnog Praga*, 149–170. For an historic overview of the Czech presence in Trieste see Klabjan, *Češkoslovaška na Jadrano*.

<sup>28</sup> Quoted in Gantar Godina, *Masaryk in masarykovstvo*, 22–23. The author of the article is, very probably, Stjepan Radić.

<sup>29</sup> Quoted in Frangeš, *Povijest hrvatske književnosti*, 232.

<sup>30</sup> Salazar, *Ideologije u operi*. Salazar's inspiring ideas have recently been applied in Vlado Kotnik's anthropological analysis, *Antropologija opere* and Kotnik, *Opera, Power and Ideology*.

<sup>31</sup> This distribution of roles was followed only a year later in Italy by Folco Portinari (Portinari, *Pari siamo!*, 4). See also Chiappini, *Opatria mia*, 5–18, 96, 103, about the opera's job of masculinizing

long in the modernist era of innovation and transformation in social roles. The mortality of the opera, according to Salazar, derives from its being inseparably bound to its society. This *bond* is intended to refer not simply to how opera reflects society but also to the way in which any artistic work is part of the discourse, and thus promotes political practices that produce meanings. The analysis of the relationships that the opera establishes with other parts of the discourse – relationships that together form the society – is exactly the type of archeological research that Salazar advocates for the restoration of the essential historicity of the opera.

Although fully engaged in showing the utility of the sociological approach to the opera, towards the end of his essay Salazar discusses the ideas of Ferruccio Busoni, who tried in the 1920s to give new life to the opera by liberating it from its referentiality and its social context. For Busoni the opera should find its roots in the voice, not the words, thus liberating it from everything that ties it to drama or theatre. What intrigues Salazar in Busoni's theory is the fact that, once liberated from language and meaning, the voice evades sociological analysis. The opera does not belong entirely to the language – or, as Salazar puts it in concluding his comments – “the opera is an uncomfortable question for the humanities”.<sup>32</sup>

Salazar's discussion of Busoni is important for the methodological question of whether the reading of the libretto is a valid basis for the study of the opera. It also relates quite interestingly with some recent theories on the voice. Giorgio Agamben's philosophical approach to voice and language,<sup>33</sup> the Lacanian interpretation in Mladen Dolar<sup>34</sup> and the feminist questioning of the same problem in Adriana Cavarero<sup>35</sup> share the idea that there is a voice that escapes language and reason, that exists before the word, and alludes to the unspeakable. While it is true that what alludes to the unspeakable Idea or Thing is, from Kant to Leopardi, the sublime, it is also clear that this is not the kind of *political sublime* described in Hayden White. On the contrary, this sublimity belongs to the voice that is dissociated from society. The sublimity of the voice is an always relevant warning against any easy sociological analysis of the opera. There are always some “remnants”, some sublime and/or traumatic experiences, that cannot be narrated or analysed.

On the other hand although the voice precedes linguistic expression, it is also true that it cannot be separated from the uttered word. The voice makes the word possible, and is inscribed in it, contained within language, meaning and sociability. A simple exteriority from language does not exist. The inseparable “politics of the voice” echoes for Dolar the impossibility, explained by Agamben in *Homo sacer*, of the bare life (*vita*

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the nation. Despite the urge to greatness detectable in the Mandić's two-hour orchestration, the plot of *Petar Svačić* had had to be tailored to fit the numbers of singers available: unlike the classical pattern of historical operas with two couples at the centre of the plot (the mature king and queen, and the young lovers), in *Petar Svačić* there is only one male-female couple: their relationship is that of young lovers in the first part and of mature and responsible rulers later on. The king is, thus, sung by a tenor.

<sup>32</sup> Salazar, *Ideologije u operi*, 213.

<sup>33</sup> Agamben, *Quel che resta di Auschwitz*, 36.

<sup>34</sup> Dolar, *A Voice and Nothing More*, 34–57.

<sup>35</sup> Cavarero, *A più voci*, 43–52.

nuda) outside the polis.<sup>36</sup> It seems that Salazar encountered exactly this aporia when, at the end of his book, he admitted that the theoretical attempt by Busoni to give new life to the opera by freeing it from words and social roles has failed. Despite Busoni's experiment, the opera remained inseparably linked to historical contingency. But despite his pessimism, it also survived.

Salazar's final surrender before the historicity of the opera permits us to reflect on the opera even when all that remains is libretto, a few pages of the score and some newspaper reviews. It seems, too, that reflecting on Mandić and Lukež's work can still be meaningful today in at least two senses, mirroring its inherent and inspiring inconsistencies. In the first place, it is a reminder of the importance of understanding those who, feeling humiliated, need to tell their own history on the sublime scale. At the same time, and no less importantly, it reminds us of the need to retain our rational control over all the ways of presenting history as tragic fatality. Therefore, while enjoying the national operas, we should be as shrewd as Ulysses: listen to the mermaid's voices, but resist their sublime appeal.<sup>37</sup>

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## HRVAŠKI ZGODOVINSKI MIT, JUŽNOSLOVANSKO BRATSTVO IN SMRT OPERE

### Povzetek

Libreto Karla Lukeža, nekaj strani partiture in številne časopisne kritike so ohranjene sledi opere *Petar Svačić*, ki jo je Josip Mandić zložil leta 1902 v Trstu. Čeprav ohranjeno gradivo ne zadostuje za muzikološko analizo, nudi možnost za razmislek o tedanjih narodnostnih idejah mladih Hrvatov, o preživetju patosa sublimnosti v obdobju desublimacije in o vplivu političnega pragmatizma na ustvarjanje in recepcijo nacionalne opere.

Mandićevega opera obravnava hrvaški zgodovinski mit o smrti zadnjega kralja in izgubi narodove državnosti. Dogodek je predstavljen skozi diskurz o sublimnem, ki je bil ključen tako za proces izgrajevanja nacionalne zavesti kot tudi za samo opero. Značilnosti zgodovinskega diskurza o sublimnem so predstavljene s sklicevanjem na Haydna Whita in Michela Foucaulta, s posebnim ozirom na možne povezave z nacionalizmom in militarizmom ter odgovornosti zanj.

Tematika v operi *Petar Svačić* ni predstavljena z značilnim historicističnim pristopom, tipičnim za 19. stoletje, pač pa s poetskimi, jezikovnimi, slogovnimi in glasbenimi elementi južnoslovanskih ljudskih pesmi in z jasnim namenom podpiranja jugoslovanske ideje. Razprava pojasnjuje takšno poetiko v povezavi s posebnostmi tedanjih političnih razmer v Trstu in s potrebo slovanske skupnosti po skupnem uporju proti italijanski in nemški kulturni prevladi v tem mestu. Druga posebnost, ki spodbuja razmislek, je odmaknitev od patosa sublimnosti v zadnjem prizoru drugega dejanja, ko se vitez upira smrti v bitki. Ta ideja je obravnavana v smislu vpliva novih pragmatičnih političnih idej modernizma na tedanje hrvaške študente, še posebno misli Tomáša G. Masaryka.

Prisotnost anti-junaškega elementa močno nakazuje odklon nacionalne in/ali zgodovinske opere od čisto mitološkega, tragičnega in fatalističnega nazora. Obravnavana je razprava Philippha-Josepha Salazarja o smrti opere in njegove opombe k Busonijevi ideji o operi, ki je zakoreninjena v čisto vokalnem in osvobodjena zgodovinskosti.

V zaključku razprava sprejema Salazarjevo tezo o neizogibni zgodovinskosti opere in uporabnosti sociološkega pristopa k njenemu preučevanju. Kot lahko vidimo iz tega obrobnega, toda pomembnega glasbenega dogodka, je zgodovinskost opere še danes relevantna in zgovorna.



## LANGUAGE, LITERATURE AND MUSIC IN SLOVENIAN CULTURAL AND POLITICAL ASPIRATIONS BEFORE 1914

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**Izleček:** Članek predstavlja prepletenost kulturnih in političnih prizadevanj Slovencev v večnarodni habsburški monarhiji pred letom 1914. Študija primera (samo)reprezentativnih podob Slovencev v literaturi in glasbi izpostavlja odnos med popularnim repertoarjem v ljudskem duhu in izvorno ustvarjalnostjo ter njegov pomen pri oblikovanju narodne identitete in kulturnega spomina.

**Gljučne besede:** 19. stoletje, kulturni nacionalizem, politični nacionalizem, kulturna identiteta, slovenska književnost, slovenska glasba.

**Abstract:** The article presents the interplay between cultural and political aspirations of Slovenians within the multinational Habsburg Empire before 1914. The case study of self-defined images of Slovenians in literature and music outlines the relation between canonical and popular folk-like repertoires vs. original creativity and its meaning in formation of national identity and cultural memory.

**Keywords:** nineteenth century, cultural nationalism, political nationalism, cultural identity, Slovenian literature, Slovenian music.

Considering music in relation to society, culture and politics is currently an established way to understand nineteenth-century music. The perspective generally accepted in the humanities – that post-1848 demands for political independence of the nations of the Habsburg Empire were premised on a sense of cultural identity – has also been taken up by contemporary musicological thought.<sup>1</sup> Cultural nationalism, as sociologist Anthony Smith states, cannot be strictly separated from political nationalism.<sup>2</sup> Given that the quest for cultural identity based on the language and folk heritage was common to all nineteenth-century national aspirations within the European cultural frame, the differences should be found in the interplay between the cultural and political aspirations of the individual nations. The starting point for a broader reconsideration of the interplay between cultural and political nationalisms should be their individual quests for cultural distinctiveness premised on the political aspirations for independence.

<sup>1</sup> Richard Taruskin writes in the *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians* that nationalism is “a major factor of European cultural ideology.” Taruskin, “Nationalism”, 689.

<sup>2</sup> See more in the chapter “Cultural and Political Nationalism” in Smith, *Nationalism and Modernism*, 177–180.

The role of politics is evident if literary and music creativity is observed in its social context. A prominent English musicologist, Jim Samson, has adopted Hobsbawm's and Gellner's theories on the relationship between social class and nationalism and asserted a sociological thesis by distinguishing between Western and Eastern variants of nationalism based on the varying social statuses of different promoters of national ideas.<sup>3</sup> Samson also outlined the process of transformation of Herder's *Volksgeist* idea into political slogans in favour of independence in the lands of the "eastern Habsburg Empire": "There is perhaps something in the argument that nationalism in Eastern Europe was qualitatively different from that in the west, that it was collectivistic and ethnic rather than individualistic and political in character."<sup>4</sup> Though his assumption seems to be generally acceptable, one must not overlook the "small nations" of the European periphery and their historical particularities. In the light of cultural diversity within the multinational Habsburg Empire it seems necessary to verify Samson's assumption on the examples of the cultural and political aspirations of the individual nations (populations), as Bojan Bujic has already pointed out in his review article of Samson's book *Music in the Balkans*.<sup>5</sup> To draw a more authentic cultural-historical image of Central Europe within the Habsburg Empire, we should look at more details regarding "music at the edge" and especially on their relation to the supremacy of the dominant (official) German culture. This article therefore lays out some historical details concerning nineteenth-century cultural and political aspirations of Slovenians, in order to avoid the inconsistencies in some other published discussions on nationalism that also address the geographical area inhabited by Slovenians.

Unable to constitute themselves within the framework of their own state until 1991, the Slovenes, an ethnic community and ahistorical "small nation" at the edge of Habsburg Monarchy, took culture as their existential purpose. In contrast to some other nations that lived under the Habsburg Monarchy until 1914, the Slovenian nation was not formed from the ideology of historical law, but it was the language and literature that have always been its essence.<sup>6</sup> The central issue in this respect is how Slovenians in the past defined themselves as a nation through and with culture. The question of how the language, literature and music have been used to create identity should be considered in view of the past interaction of cultural and political aspirations on one hand, and the history of literary and musical ideas, i.e., self-defined images in literature and music, on the other. A reaction against the dominant and also official, state German culture is evident in the efforts to institutionalise Slovenian culture. On the other hand, the ways in which Slovenians have conceived of and valued their own, "authentic" literature and music are also recognisable in this relationship.

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<sup>3</sup> Samson, "Nations and nationalism", 568.

<sup>4</sup> Samson, "Nations and nationalism", 571.

<sup>5</sup> Bujic, "Weaving Historical Strands", 452–455.

<sup>6</sup> Slovenian literary historian Tomo Virk considers the language and literature as an entity, a "meaning and foundation of national existence". Virk, "Slovenska nacija in slovenska literatura", 255.

## Self-descriptions of Slovenians as a community before 1848

The community of Slovenes was initially expressed by linguistic, ethnic and religious self-descriptions. It is already clear that first unified form of community was based on the common language; it was the crucial element in the formation of Slovenian community awareness from the mid-sixteenth century onwards. The first book in Slovenian, a translation of religious texts by Protestant Reformer Primož Trubar, promoted religion and the Church among people that spoke Slovenian. Trubar's translation *Catechismus* (1550) also contains six melodies. Although at least three of them were taken from German collections, Slovenian musicologists have recognised singing in Slovenian as a starting point for ethnically defined music.<sup>7</sup> From Trubar's time the language became the essential identification marker for Slovenians, but the dynamism of this identification process has changed over the centuries.<sup>8</sup> Historian Peter Vodopivec cites *Kraynska grammatika* (1768) by Marko Pohlin, the first Slovenian grammar written in German and one that codified the Slovenian language, as a work that proved important to the nascent national revival.<sup>9</sup>

The national revival gained new impulses from the spread of Enlightenment ideals at the end of the eighteenth century. In Carniola, the central Slovenian province at the edge of the Habsburg Empire, the population had higher social status and education levels; its citizens were multilingual and Italian and German dominated.<sup>10</sup> Slovenian was then considered to be the language of uneducated inhabitants; it did not have well-developed vocabulary for more demanding uses and cultural needs.<sup>11</sup> The language was thus simply a means of communication: it was a social sign and not yet an ethnic identifier. Interest in the Slovenian language itself emerged from Enlightenment ideals together with interest in folk heritage. The Franciscan priest, teacher, writer, linguist, translator and poet Valentin Vodnik (1758–1819) collected folk songs and wrote the first simple verses in Slovenian with texts similar to folk songs (*Pesme za pokušino*; Poems for Sampling, 1806). An inventory of the collected music folk material from Slovenian lands Carniola and Carinthia that the Ljubljana Philharmonic Society sent to Vienna in 1819 shed light on the ethnic situation of rural areas: songs in Carniolan (Slovenian) prevailed, whereas some collected songs were also German (among these also an “operetta”).<sup>12</sup> Most of

<sup>7</sup> Bedina, “Zgodovinska izhodišča identitete slovenskega glasbenega dela”, 163–164; Loparnik, “Slovenska glasba in slovenska cerkev”, 167–168.

<sup>8</sup> In addition to Trubar's translations, other important publications increased awareness of community included the first Slovenian grammar (explained in Latin) *Articae horulae succisivae* by Adam Bohorič (1584) and Jurij Dalmatin's translation of the Bible (1584). See Rotar, “Narodnokonstitutivni pojmi začetnih obdobj slovenske narodne integracije”, 125–132; Pogačnik, “Slovenska samobitnost v delu protestantskih piscev”, 69–79.

<sup>9</sup> Vodopivec, *Od Pohlinove slovnice do samostojne države*, 14–15.

<sup>10</sup> In 1754 the capital of Carniola, Ljubljana, had 9400 residents. See Vilfan, “Ljubljana. Zgodovina”, 225.

<sup>11</sup> Kmecl, “Kako so Slovenci v 19. stoletju pojmovali pomen literature za narod”, 84.

<sup>12</sup> The Ljubljana Philharmonic Society had encouraged collecting of folk songs, folk dance melodies and hymns in Carniola and Carinthia at the initiative of the Viennese Music Society (Gesellschaft der Musikfreunde). Due to its modest results and ethnological purpose, this collection was not of much significance for Slovenian identity.

the songs in Slovenian were hymns, some of them with the note “translation from the German”.<sup>13</sup> On the other hand, literary and musical efforts in Slovenian were artistically irrelevant; in the late eighteenth century they were “only of partial indirect importance for self-identification of Slovenians”, as Andrej Rijavec stated.<sup>14</sup> Literary texts in Slovenian were “merely” translations or adaptations from Italian and French literature. The modest incidental music of Slovenian composer Janez Krstnik Novak (around 1756–1833) *Figaro* evidently followed Mozart’s example.<sup>15</sup>

In the pre-March era, the only nationally defined music in Slovenian was Catholic hymns. Singing in Slovenian was an expression of an awareness of the religious and ethnic community. Their texts identified the moral with the social and the religious with the secular. The composers, mainly amateur musicians, wrote emotional melodies with simple homophonic accompaniments.<sup>16</sup> These songs were popular and their tunes were close to folk songs of the Austrian-German musical idiom. As Borut Loparnik noted, they represented a symbiosis between folk-, *Liedertafel* and *Biedermeier* entertainment.<sup>17</sup>

### Slovenian cultural aspirations after 1848

The first political tendencies toward unifying Slovenians settled in different Austrian provinces emerged in the mid-nineteenth century. The first Slovenian political programme from 1848, called United Slovenia (*Zedinjena Slovenija*), encouraged the national consciousness with the demand of uniting the lands with Slovenian populations on the basis of unifying the written language without regional speaking variants. The founding members of the Slovenian Society (*Slovensko društvo*), which was active from 1848 to 1853 in Ljubljana, shared the opinion that the language was that true foundation on which the consciousness of belonging to the Slovenian nation could grow. In its aims and goals, the society was a cultural rather than political association. Patriots endeavoured to promote Slovenian language<sup>18</sup> and its development with speeches and choral singing, while the

<sup>13</sup> See Keesbacher, *Philharmonische Gesellschaft*, 46–49.

<sup>14</sup> Rijavec, “Glasbene težnje na Slovenskem ob vstopu v 19. stoletje”, 108.

<sup>15</sup> The most prominent Slovenian scholar and writer at the end of the eighteenth century, Anton Tomaž Linhart, adapted Beaumarchais’s comedy *La Folle Journée ou le Mariage de Figaro*. It was published under the Slovenian title *Ta veseli dan ali Matiček se ženi* in 1790. Janez Krstnik Novak composed music to some parts of this text, *Figaro*, evidently following Mozart’s example. The exact date of the first performance of this incidental (theatre) music is unknown. Nowadays it is recognised for its historical value. See Nagode’s commentary in his edition of Janez Krstnik Novak’s *Figaro*, IX–X.

<sup>16</sup> The most important composer of Catholic hymns in the pre-March era was Gregor Rihar (1796–1793), choirmaster and organist of the Ljubljana Cathedral. His songs were very popular and some of them have been adopted as folk songs. He composed about five hundred chants, of which almost four hundred were published.

<sup>17</sup> Loparnik, “Slovenska glasba in slovenska cerkev”, 167–168.

<sup>18</sup> It should be noted that Slovenian was in the middle of the nineteenth century still in the development stage at that time and had acquired the necessary linguistic foundations to be comparable with other developed and widely spoken languages.

official German language continued to have a communication role in everyday and social life among educated citizens.

After the end of absolutism in the Habsburg Monarchy the source of growing bourgeois nationalism among Slovenian patriots was the quest to find the “Slovenian spirit”; Matjaž Barbo used the phrase “musical emotions of the lower layer”.<sup>19</sup> Slovenian bourgeois music-making was music of the “folk” and was created to be performed. In the call for the best musical setting of a poem by the (then renowned but today already forgotten) Slovenian poet Jovan Vesel Koseski, the Slovenian conservative politician, editor and cultural arbiter Janez Bleiweis wrote in 1862: “the song should be composed in the national spirit, as easy to sing as possible and melodious, so that it would secure a place in the nation and not remain locked in the concert hall [...] to hear it sung by the folk”.<sup>20</sup> “A national spirit” was equated with the “folk spirit” and demands for simplicity were pragmatic. Such an imperative that emphasised the needs of “common man” followed the pragmatic and educational principle of cultural nationalism, that is, according to John Hutchinson, striving for “a moral regeneration of the community”.<sup>21</sup>

Amateur Slovenian musicians with the syncretistic type of creativity wrote melodies and simple verses imitating folk songs in the 1850s and 1860s or set to music simple national-awakening verses by other patriots.<sup>22</sup> After 1870, lyrical poems by younger generations of poets<sup>23</sup> were also set to music. Music production was a direct response to the national need and (national) desire for a “common man”. This music, written according to a collectively accepted pattern, was the direct expression of patriotic feelings and followed the musical patterns of generally accepted popular Catholic hymns and the universal *Liedertafel* style. The melodies and lyrics were the product of collective creativity, closely connected with the “folk song”. In view of the creative process the “folk song” and “art song” were not separate notions. Until the 1860s, the most popular songs were those by Miroslav Vilhar (1818–1871) and Jurij Flajšman (1818–1874). Despite the absence of individualist characteristics in Flajšman’s artistic production, the Slovenian pre-war writer and composer Pavel Kozina considered him “the father of Slovenian art music”,<sup>24</sup> only later have musicologists come to see Flajšman’s work as a preliminary phase of art music.

In his own time, Flajšman was compared with the “first Slovenian poet” Valentin

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<sup>19</sup> Barbo, “Slovenski duh' kot poetska kategorija”, 36.

<sup>20</sup> Bleiweis, “Razpis darila za najbolji napev”, 155: “Pesem mora biti v narodnem duhu zložena in kolikor mogoče lahka za petje, melodična, da bo segla v narod, ne pa se zaprla samo v dvorano 'besede' ali koncerta [...] da jo slišimo prepevati od ljudstva.”

<sup>21</sup> Cit. in Smith, *Nationalism and modernism*, 177.

<sup>22</sup> The *Songbook (Pesmarica)*, edited by patriot Radoslav Razlag and printed in Graz in 1863, includes three hundred texts of the song that were “well known and sung on Slovenian ethnic territories”. Simple national-awakening verses wrote among others well known Slovenian patriots and politicians: Davorin Terstenjak, Lovro Toman, Gregor Krek, Radoslav Razlag, Fran Cegnar and Andrej Praprotnik. See *Učitejski tovariš* 3, no. 16 (1863): 256.

<sup>23</sup> The texts of poets Simon Jenko (1835–1869), Josip Stritar (1836–1923) and Simon Gregorčič (1844–1906).

<sup>24</sup> Kozina, “Jurij J. Fleišman, oče slovenske umetne glasbe”, 209.

Vodnik, the most valued Slovenian poet until the 1860s.<sup>25</sup> In addition to Vodnik's pragmatic poetry, around the middle of the nineteenth century a book of poetry appeared by a man of more liberal views, a "free thinker" (*Freigeist*), who broke with this conservative and collective accepted creativity. This was a change from what had until then been regarded as Slovenian. France Prešeren's book *Poezije (Poetry)*, published in 1847, at first was not well received. Prešeren (1800–1849), who studied law in Vienna, was a bilingual poet: he wrote in Slovenian and German. His poetry elevated the Slovenian language to an artistic level and was a departure from the form and content of poetry with which Slovenians then identified themselves; that is, from simple songs "in the spirit of the people" that glorify the beauty of the Slovenian land and people.<sup>26</sup> Only two decades after Prešeren's death, his poetry was acknowledged as a nationally representative literary achievement. Due to its "bourgeois content", according to Matjaž Kmecl, a situation similar to that of Prešeren's poetry happened with the reception of Josip Jurčič's novel *Deseti brat (The Tenth Brother)* in 1866;<sup>27</sup> today it is heralded as the first Slovenian novel.

In 1877 the first historical overview on music in Slovenian lands *Frau Musica in Krain* (Madame Musica in Carniola) was published by historian Peter Radics; this booklet, with the note "a cultural-historical outline", was written in German. The music was observed as cultural praxis and not as art. The title of the booklet reveals also the author's mental habitus and views; it express his provincial (Carniolan) but not yet national consciousness. A decade later the teacher Fran Rakuša wrote a Slovenian-language overview of musical works by Slovenians with the indicative title *Slovensko petje v preteklih dobah* (Slovenian Singing in Past Eras, 1890). The title exposed the importance of the language and text for nationally-defined music-making in Slovenian ideas of culture and music at the end of nineteenth century.

### Slovenian cultural and political nationalism at the end of the nineteenth century

Demands for cultural unification were a prelude to demands for political unification of the lands inhabited by Slovenians. The interplay of Slovenians' cultural and political aspirations was more evident in the last decades of the nineteenth century. After 1870 the Slovenian nationalist movement, together with the increasing separation of liberal and Catholic thought, obtained an actively political form. There was a noticeably stronger political impact in the Slovenian requirements for independence in their cultural endeavours as well. These changes also influenced the programme of the Ljubljana Music Society (*Glasbena matica*, est. 1872), which explicitly supported Slovenian music. With this declarative nationalist founding principle, the Music Society considered the "German" Philharmonic Society

<sup>25</sup> Every year on Vodnik's birthdate, a special patriotic cultural event was held in Ljubljana in honour of the poet; a monument to him was erected in 1889.

<sup>26</sup> Although the musical settings of his poems did not have national-awakening content, the first setting of his Slovenian poem was performed during the poet's lifetime in 1848. See the list of the musical settings of Prešeren's poems in: Bulovec, "Prešeren v glasbi", 90–116.

<sup>27</sup> Kmecl, "Kako so Slovenci v 19. stoletju pojmovali pomen literature za narod", 89–90.

to be a rival. The Philharmonic Society (Philharmonische Gesellschaft), established in 1794 and posing its cultural aspirations against the previously dominant Italian music culture, promoted German (Austrian) as well as cosmopolitan musical culture. In this, it followed the musical trends of the imperial capital, Vienna. In contrast to its German counterpart, the Slovenian Music Society distinctly identified itself as a nationalist association. It endeavoured to ensure the autonomy of Slovenian musical culture and the institutionalisation of musical interests on a national basis; objectives it clearly defined in its regulations as “supporting and cultivating Slovenian national music”.<sup>28</sup> Its cultural connections with similar music and cultural societies of various Slavic nations facilitated successful competition against the German culture.

The concept of identity within the framework of the society’s activity included two aspects: first, being distinct from “the other”; that is, distinct from the official German language-based culture; and second, establishing an awareness of continuous cultural presence (historicity). The substance of the Music Society’s work was strengthening musical culture on a national basis. Their programme followed three main guidelines: concern for the development of vocal music, especially of mass choral singing; collecting the folk and artistic music heritage of Slovenians; and the gradual professionalisation of musical work. With the founding of their own Slovenian music school, music-publishing house and concert agency, which operated entirely in Slovenian, they planned to support endeavours for Slovenians’ cultural independence. Their consistent commitment to the Slovenian language in the publishing, educational and concert activities of the Music Society reveals the political aspirations of the society’s board. The Music Society established Slovenian music schools at the end of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries all over Slovenian ethnic territory and gradually developed significance as the central Slovenian music association. The concept of Slovenians’ own “otherness” was still based on use of the Slovenian language and folklore, which represented the essence and point of identification for the entire Slovenian culture even in the last decades of the nineteenth century. The Music Society had the texts of foreign musical works translated into Slovenian for concert performances, and likewise the texts of Croatian, Serbian and Bohemian choruses that they published. The music of the “folk” was still the symbol of nationalism and collective expression of national identity. The Society fostered belief in the originality of the Slovenian musical idiom by publishing the simple arrangements of folk songs for choral singing and by encouraging new compositions to be created “in the folk spirit”. Folksiness (Ger. *Volkstümlichkeit*) mainly had a social connotation and was not codified by concrete musical parameters. Solo songs with emotional melodies and simple accompaniments were imitations of folk songs. Most of the editions published in the 1870s and 1880s contained new choral works following the universal *Liedertafel* style. Close to folk music in its content, and utterly uncomplicated in its musical and technical aspects, this music was recognisable, comprehensible and accepted. It was thus easily accepted and became very popular. One could say that at the end of nineteenth century “simplicity

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<sup>28</sup> *Pravila Glasbene Matice v Ljubljani*, 1.

was attendant to popularity”, as Matthew Gelbart wrote,<sup>29</sup> and “folk music”, “art music” and “popular music” in regard to their contents were not yet strictly separate categories.

The Music Society consolidated the idea of a permanent cultural existence (historicity) at the end of the nineteenth century by presenting historical concerts: one featuring the works of Iacobus Handl Gallus, a Renaissance composer of Slovenian origin (1892), and one featuring Slovenian Protestant sacred songs from the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries arranged for chorus (1893). This concert characteristically revealed everything that was believed to represent identity at that time: here the language was prioritised, along with choral singing, while the originality of the melodies was not a topic of discussion.

At the end of the nineteenth century large choir of Music Society (containing over one hundred singers) and folklore were regarded as national representatives.<sup>30</sup> The choir received special acknowledgements for its performances of Slovenian vocal music, especially cantatas. Among these, the most successful were compositions by Franciscan priest Hugolin Sattner, who set texts by Simon Gregorčič (*Jeftejeva prisega, Oljki, Soči*) to music. Both authors took into account the abilities, musical tastes and expectations of the widest circles of music consumers, performers and audiences and were therefore considered a “folk poet” and “folk composer”. An exemplary musical artefact of the Slovenian variant of music nationalism is the first oratorio in Slovenian, *Assumptio (Vnebovzetje)* composed by Sattner (text by Mihael Opeka) in 1912, which was received by Slovenians with great acclaim.

With its call for the best musical setting of texts by society member, poet and priest Simon Gregorčič (1844–1906) the year after his death (1907), the Music Society anointed this most popular Slovenian “folk poet” as its literary hero. The winning compositions were performed the next year at an occasional concert to raise funds for the poet’s monument. In addition to the Gregorčič concert, the Music Society held some other occasional concerts that were dedicated to popular Slovenian writers and composers. Their names also reveal the literary and musical reception of the time: poet France Prešeren (1900), composer Davorin Jenko (1910)<sup>31</sup> and composers Gustav, Benjamin and Josip Ipavec (1914). The selection of both the conservative Gregorčič and more liberal and individualistic poet Prešeren shows that Slovenians identified themselves with the collective, “folksy” creativity as well as with individual achievements. This (apparent) dichotomy is less

<sup>29</sup> Matthew Gelbart feels that folk-like music was “popular” because it was simple, touching and universal. See Gelbart, *The Invention of “Folk Music” and “Art Music”*, 257.

<sup>30</sup> In this respect is indicative the reception of a concert given by the Slovenian Music Society choir in Vienna in 1896. Accompanied by the Vienna Opera orchestra, the Slovenian choir performed Austrian, Bohemian and Slovenian repertoire: Bruckner’s *Te Deum*, Fibich’s *Frühlingsromanze*, Dvořák’s cantata *Svatební košile (The Spectre’s Bride)* in Slovenian translation (!), a madrigal by Gallus *Musica noster amor*, two other Slovenian choruses popular at that time (by two Czech composers that worked in Ljubljana, Antonín Foerster and Antonín Nedvěď) and Slovenian folk songs arranged for mixed chorus. The later were – in addition to Gallus’s madrigal – met by the warmest acclaim in Vienna. *Izvestje Glasbene matice v Ljubljani*, 9–48.

<sup>31</sup> The reason for holding the Jenko concert was the fiftieth anniversary of his patriotic march *Naprej zastava Slave (With Slava’s Banner Forwards)* which Slovenians accepted as their (unofficial) national anthem.

pronounced in music. To some extent it is reflected in works by the Ipavec brothers. The reason for their artistic (aesthetic) diversity is hidden in their extramusical context: they lived and worked in a different national and social environment.<sup>32</sup>

At the turn of the centuries, differentiation between German and Slovenian music seems acceptable only if the focus is on the conditions for musical work as the result of political aspirations for institutional independence. Musical life in the capital of the central Slovenian land, Ljubljana, was institutionalised on the pattern of other provincial Habsburg cities. At the end of the nineteenth century a new segregation of (musical) culture in Ljubljana came about through the establishment of the Slovenian Provincial Theatre (Slovensko deželno gledališče, 1892) and of the first civic concert orchestra, the Slovenian Philharmonic (Slovenska filharmonija, 1908–1913). The political status of the Slovenian community changed after World War I, following the disintegration of the Habsburg Monarchy and the subsequent establishment of the new Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes. The “German” Philharmonic Society was forced to halt its activities (i.e., it was abolished). This new political situation created new institutional possibilities and incentives in music. Only in 1919, after long-standing efforts, did the Music Society accomplish its most important goal by establishing a music conservatory, thus accelerating the process of separating amateur from professional musical work. The conservatory offered a higher level of music education that promoted different musical goals and also individual engagement; that is, it was the essential agent for the constitution of a musical identity. Thus, the nationalism or nationalistic attitude of the Music Society’s board was a vital factor for further development of Slovenian national music, because it put in place the institutional foundations required for the professionalization of music.

### **Nineteenth-century self-defined images of Slovenians in literature and music**

Because of the decisive role of the language and folklore as identification symbols, the idiom of nineteenth-century Slovenian vocal music – although it seems paradoxical at first sight – was closer to the universal than to the national and was hence a trans-historical phenomenon. Although Catholic hymns in Slovenian and other secular vocal music after 1848 written “in the Slovenian spirit” had, according to Barbo, a “historical significance in creating a Slovenian national style”,<sup>33</sup> from a musical point of view they contained no stylistic particularities. Their national representativeness is evident only in the language and the subject matter of texts that celebrated beauty of the Slovenian land and people; that is, the ethnic and ethical essence of the nation. In this respect the subject matter of the first operetta (later adapted into an opera) in Slovenian, *Gorenjski slavček*

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<sup>32</sup> Benjamin Ipavec (1929–1908) lived and worked as a physician in the bourgeois milieu of Graz and composed salon music; his brother Gustav Ipavec (1831–1908), also a physician, lived and worked in the rural milieu of his home town Šentjur (near Celje) and composed folklorised vocal music. Gustav’s son Josip (1873–1921), who worked as a physician in Vienna, Zagreb and Šentjur, composed more ambitious works.

<sup>33</sup> Barbo, “‘Slovenski duh’ kot poetska kategorija”, 37.

(The Nightingale from Upper Carniola; Ger. *Krainer Nachtigale*), written by composer Anton Foerster, Czech by origin, is also illustrative. It glorifies a rural community of Slovenians and not any exceptional individual or national hero. Identification with folk life (the peasantry, equated with the nation) and symbols such as Mt. Triglav or a lime tree made this opera the most popular Slovenian opera.<sup>34</sup> From a musical point of view, the identification process was triggered by the inclusion of folkloristic elements. Foerster's music incorporated a generally recognised popular, Alpine idiom, that was widespread and popular not only in the Austrian milieu but all over Europe. Peasants were musically characterised by collective singing of "folk songs". It gained great national significance also in part due to the circumstances of its premiere in 1872: it won the first prize in a competition of the newly-established Slovenian Dramatic Society. Because of its "sublime melodies" and greater performance requirements it was described as an "art(istic)" work.<sup>35</sup> The more or less permanent presence of this opera in the repertoire up to today reveals that, despite the absence of content that would relate to a glorious national history, *Gorenjski slavček* is received by Slovenians as a "national opera".<sup>36</sup> Folk songs functioned as national markers even if they were sung in another language; namely, the composer Foerster himself requested that the piano-reduction of this opera be printed (1901) with both the Slovenian and German texts. This fact raises the question of whether Foerster saw himself as Slovenian, Slavic or rather as a universal, eclectic composer. However, this "folk-like" music remains popular even today despite its universal model. In contrast, *Teharski plemiči* (The Noblemen of Teharje) by Benjamin Ipavec, which was first staged in 1892 and was based on a historical subject taken from a folk tale, did not remain in the repertoire due to its lack of compelling drama in the libretto and the music.

### Cultural memory of Slovenians

Slovenian literary historian Vladimir Osolnik considers the literature "a solid foundation of Slovenian national and individual identity".<sup>37</sup> The current Slovenian cultural memory predominantly consists of Slovenian poets and writers, individuals that – each in their own era – broke away from what was then believed to be typically and "genuinely" Slovenian. The answer to why Slovenians today mainly identify themselves with literature; that is, by their "great poets and writers", is found in the Slovenian philosopher Mladen Dolar's thesis that national identity is also based on individual departures from conventional artistic norms: "Every identity requires both individual and collective engagement, which demands departure from what we consider as well-known and 'ours', to break the ties

<sup>34</sup> Smetana's opera *The Bartered Bride* was similarly received in his homeland. It is certainly not mere coincidence that Foerster, the composer of *The Nightingale of Upper Carniola*, was Smetana's pupil.

<sup>35</sup> *Novice gospodarske, obrtniške in narodne*, 1 May 1872.

<sup>36</sup> Even as late as 1940 composer Matija Tomc wrote that this was "the only Slovenian opera to have outlived all others", due to Foerster's naive easiness and warmth held dear by the Slovenian people. See Matija Tomc, "Operna sezona 1939/1940", *Dom in svet* 52, no. 7 (1940): 433.

<sup>37</sup> Osolnik, "Nekaj besed o jeziku, književnosti in nacionalni identiteti na Slovenskem", 315.

that bind us to the roots, to make foreign what has so far been domestic.”<sup>38</sup> Poet Prešeren was, according to literary historian Boris Paternu, “the first to independently supersede the tradition of pragmatic literature”.<sup>39</sup> According to literary historian Tomo Virk, the “sacralisation” of poet Prešeren as the greatest Slovenian poet self-evidently promoted the selection of his text as the current national anthem.<sup>40</sup> His verses of the seventh stanza of the poem *Zdravljica (A Toast)*,<sup>41</sup> written in 1844, glorify peaceful coexistence between nations: “God’s blessing on all nations!”<sup>42</sup> It was the poet’s personal vision of internationalism and represented a departure from the content of other poetry in Slovenian.

The “canonisation”<sup>43</sup> of poet France Prešeren reveals that Slovenians today identify themselves with his poetry and with literature in general.<sup>44</sup> The question of how Slovenians can defined their own music identity should be therefore focused on the relation between canonical and popular repertoires vs. original creativity. Unlike poet Prešeren, nineteenth-century Slovenian composers (or Czech ones that worked in Slovenian lands) were either unable to or did not want to supersede the collective creative level and the commonly expected popular music canon, based on the model of well-received Catholic hymns in Slovenian. The unambitious creative drive of Slovenian composers in the second half of the nineteenth century prevented the realisation of “a reaction against the supremacy of German music”, as Willi Apel defined musical nationalism fifty years ago.<sup>45</sup> Therefore Slovenian nineteenth-century music was only a local version of a globalised European idiom, described by Gregor Pompe as a “global fact captured in the intellectual history and political-national characteristics of Central Europe”.<sup>46</sup> In other words, due to the above

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<sup>38</sup> “Za vsako identiteto, vredno tega imena, je potrebno določeno dejanje tako na individualni kot na kolektivni ravni, ki terja odmik od dotlej znanega in ‘našega’, prerezanje niti, ki nas vežejo na korenine, potujitev dotlej domačega.” See Dolar, “Slovenska nacionalna identiteta in kultura”, 33.

<sup>39</sup> Paternu, “France Prešeren in problem identitete”, 81.

<sup>40</sup> Virk, “Slovenska nacija in slovenska literatura”, 256.

<sup>41</sup> Janko Lavrin translated the seventh stanza of Prešeren’s poem *A toast*: “God’s blessing on all nations / Who long and work for that bright day / When o’er earth’s habitations / No war, no strife shall hold its sway; / Who long to see / That all men free / No more shall foes, but neighbours be.” See: “France Prešeren: Zdravljica (A Toast)”, [http://www.vlada.si/en/about\\_slovenia/political\\_system/national\\_insignia/france\\_preseren\\_zdravljica\\_a\\_toast/](http://www.vlada.si/en/about_slovenia/political_system/national_insignia/france_preseren_zdravljica_a_toast/) (Accessed 5 January 2016).

<sup>42</sup> The text of *Zdravljica* gradually acquired a more pronounced political connotation and was, now accompanied by Stanko Premrl’s musical setting, written in 1905 in *Liedertafel* style, accepted in 1991 as the official national anthem. Premrl set Prešeren’s poem *Zdravljica* to music more than half a century after it had been written, namely in 1905. The first version of Premrl’s setting was a mixed chorus on the first, second and fifth stanzas of the poem. Only a few years later did Premrl arrange his music for male chorus and add the seventh stanza, which now serves as the national anthem. See more in: Cigoj, “Himna kot simbol naroda”, 11–28.

<sup>43</sup> Dovič, “O kulturnih svetnikih in kanonizaciji”, 5–6.

<sup>44</sup> The central square in Slovenia’s capital features a monument to Prešeren and bears his name; the day of his death has been declared a national holiday: Culture Day.

<sup>45</sup> Cit. in Taruskin, “Nationalism”, 689.

<sup>46</sup> Pompe based his argument on a comparison between some melodies by Slovenian authors and *Liedertafel* style examples by German authors. See Gregor Pompe, “Avtonomno in uporabno lokalna zgodovinska dilema ali transhistorično dejstvo?”, 59.

described interplay between cultural and political aspirations of Slovenians on one hand, and the absence of individual engagement on the other, according to Mladen Dolar's thesis, it was not even possible to seek the real musical "otherness".

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## JEZIK, LITERATURA IN GLASBA V KULTURNIH IN POLITIČNIH PRIZADEVANJIH SLOVENCEV PRED 1914

### Povzetek

Literarne in glasbene podobe samo-identifikacije, ki so se vtisnile v kulturni spomin Slovencev, odstirajo vlogo jezika, literature in glasbe v kulturnih in političnih prizadevanjih v okviru večnarodnostne habsburške monarhije v različnih zgodovinskih obdobjih do leta 1914. Petje cerkvenih pesmi v slovenskem jeziku je bilo v predmarčnem času izraz jezikovne, etnične in verske skupnosti, po letu 1848 pa je bilo zborovsko petje pesmi v slovenskem jeziku znamenje prebujene narodne zavesti. Njegova reprezentativna vloga se je navzven kazala skozi jezik, sporočilnost besedila in »slovenski duh«, ki je izhajal iz ljudsko pojmovane glasbene osnove. Nazoren primer zgodovinske samo-identifikacije, ki je izhajala iz jezika in folklore, sta tudi glasba in libreto do danes recepcijsko najbolj uspešne operete (opere) *Gorenjski slavček* (1872).

Stališče o nacionalnem profiliranju glasbenega dela se zdi sprejemljivo v primeru, ko postavimo v ospredje pogoje za glasbeno delo, še zlasti politično in etnično spodbujene težnje in s tem neumetniški kontekst. V nasprotju z ljubljansko Filharmonično družbo, ki se je prvenstveno zavzemala za umetniška načela in je sledila glasbenim trendom prestolnice habsburške monarhije – Dunaja, je načelno in dosledno zavzemanje za slovenski jezik na področju založniške, izobraževalne in koncertne dejavnosti ljubljanske Glasbene matice (ust. 1872), nekdanj tudi osrednjega glasbenega foruma Slovencev, razkrivalo jasne politične težnje njenega odbora. Kazala so se skozi osamosvojitvene cilje, prizadevanja za institucionalizacijo glasbenega dela na narodni osnovi in njegovo profesionalizacijo. Z glasbenega stališča je društvo še naprej podpiralo ustvarjalnost »v ljudskem duhu«, s katero so se identificirali najširši sloji. Prepoznaven je bolj ali manj enoten tok skupinske ustvarjalnosti, saj glasbeni ustvarjalci niso zmogli ali niso hoteli preseči splošno sprejetih kompozicijskih vzorcev, s katerimi so se Slovenci poistovetili. Na glasbenem področju so bile skladbe vsaj do 1914 avtorsko večinoma manj izrazito zaznamovane.

V nasprotju s situacijo na glasbenem področju v 19. stoletju pa so v literarni ustvarjalnosti tega časa poleg pričakovanih folkloristično obarvanih in s tem popularnih del prepoznani tudi individualni odmiki. Kanonizacija pesnika Prešerna kot največjega slovenskega pesnika je potrditev trditve filozofa Mladena Dolarja, da so (bili) za vzpostavitev nacionalne identitete potrebni tako skupinska ustvarjalnost kot tudi individualni presežki, se pravi odmik od tistega, kar je v določenem času in prostoru veljalo za tradicijo. V primeru glasbenih teženj Slovencev se dejanja glasbenega nacionalizma, ki ga je W. Apel opredelil kot reakcijo proti nemški glasbi, prav zaradi skupinske ustvarjalnosti in vztrajanja pri tistem, kar je veljalo za tradicijo, do začetka 20. stoletja niso mogla uresničiti.

## MACPHERSON, OSSIAN AND THE BARDIC IDEAL SOME IRISH REFLECTIONS ON A GERMAN PHENOMENON

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**Izvleček:** Kljub velikemu vplivu zbirke Ossianovih pesmi Jamesa Macphersona na oblikovanje nemške romantike (preko del Herderja in Goetheja) doslej vprašanje, v kolikšni meri sta obstajali poezija bardov (nem. Bardendichtung) ter zavest o škotskih in irskih melodijah v nemški glasbeni misli neodvisno, še ni bilo dovolj obravnavano. Ne glede na Beethovnova srečanja z irsko tradicionalno glasbo je bolj kot sama glasba večino nemških skladateljev po Beethovnu navdihnil ideal »ljudske glasbe«.

**Ključne besede:** Macpherson, Ossian, Beethoven, Moore, »ljudska glasba«.

**Abstract:** Despite the immense influence of James Macpherson's Ossian poems on the formation of German romanticism (through the agency of Herder and Goethe), the extent to which Bardendichtung and an awareness of Scottish and Irish melodies existed independently in the German musical imagination has been insufficiently addressed. Notwithstanding Beethoven's encounter with Irish traditional music, it was the ideal of "folk music" – an imaginary construct – rather than the music itself which inspired the work of most German composers after Beethoven.

**Keywords:** Macpherson, Ossian, Beethoven, Moore, "folk music".

In a letter of 25 August, 1829 to his sister Fanny Hensel, Felix Mendelssohn commented on the musical impressions he received during his tour of Scotland and Wales:

No national music for me! Ten thousand devils take all folkishness! A harper in the hall of every reputed inn playing incessantly so-called folk melodies; that is: infamous, vulgar, out-of-tune trash, with a hurdy-gurdy going at the same time! Anyone, who, like myself, cannot endure Beethoven's national songs, should come here and listen to them bellowed out by rough, nasal voices, and accompanied with awkward, bungling fingers, and not grumble.<sup>1</sup>

It would be hard not to conclude from such an outburst that for Mendelssohn, at least, these sentiments marked the end of German enchantment with the great "other" of

<sup>1</sup> Cited in Gelbart, *The Invention of "Folk Music" and "Art Music"*, 248.

folk music, an other which Mendelssohn himself axiomatically designates as “national music” in unruly contrast to the supreme condition of *Kunstmusik*, notwithstanding his own apotheosis of modality in such works as *Fingal’s Cave* and the *Scottish Symphony*. The disillusion and contempt which characterise Mendelssohn’s apprehension of peasant musical culture in this passage throw into sharp relief the romance and rapture of Germany’s earlier engagement with the bardic ideal in literature and music. As Matthew Gelbart has argued, Mendelssohn’s disdain is expressive of a belief not only in the superiority of German art music, but also in its universal condition.<sup>2</sup> Indeed, the centre-periphery model of musical thought which Gelbart locates in the romantic generation of German composers (Mendelssohn and Schumann in particular) entails a drastic relegation of folk music from its idealised status as an originary and universal substratum of European art to an expression of national culture, in which the marginal or local claim inevitably defers to the universal strength of the German musical imagination. One thinks, for example, of Schumann’s reception of Chopin, in which the German composer conceded the presence of a Polish “physiognomy” in Chopin’s earlier works which would (for Schumann at least) happily disappear into the melting pot of the great tradition of German art music.<sup>3</sup>

In this paper, I would like to retrace the reception history of folk music as a category in German musical thought from its dizzying presence as an ideal type in Goethe and Herder to its deracinated condition as an expression of local colour in Schumann and Mendelssohn. In this enterprise, I will create an expressly Irish perspective from which to survey this reception history, if only because Ireland is entirely absent as a musical entity in Gelbart’s work.<sup>4</sup> Rather than rehearse here those compelling arguments which Gelbart brilliantly advances in respect of ideas about Scottish music and their impact on German musical thought, it seems to me preferable to address the Irish question (so to speak) in German musical affairs, given how little attention it has received to date. In the same year that Mendelssohn wrote his impressions of Scottish music, Hector Berlioz would exclaim “L’Irlande! Toujours L’Irlande!”, not only on account of his infatuation with an Irish actress, Harriet Smithson, but more pertinently because he was reading the poems of Thomas Moore and absorbing them into his own conception of French song.<sup>5</sup> In France, no less than in Germany, the presence and influence of Irish literature would abide at exactly the same time as the influence of Scottish music went into decline. Why should it be the case that “the Bard of Erin”, as Moore was known throughout Europe, should successfully perpetuate a Celticism closely related to (but not derived from) the Ossianic lays of James McPherson at the same historical moment which witnessed the abeyance of Scottish music?<sup>6</sup> In what

<sup>2</sup> Gelbart remarks that in such passages Mendelssohn “had come to use ‘national music’ (and even ‘folk’ in this particular context) as inherently local and coarse, directly opposed to the absolute art music history he cared so much about”. See Gelbart, *The Invention of “Folk” Music*, 248.

<sup>3</sup> See Robert Schumann, *Gesammelte Schriften über Musik und Musiker*, ed. H. Simon, Leipzig, 1888, vol. 1:188, cited in Dahlhaus, *Between Romanticism and Modernism*, 84.

<sup>4</sup> See Harry White, review of Gelbart, *The Invention of “Folk” Music*, 75–77.

<sup>5</sup> For an account of Berlioz’s engagement with Moore, see Rushton, “Berlioz and *Irlande*: from Romance to Mélodie”, 224–240.

<sup>6</sup> On the decline of Scottish music as an ideal type in German culture, see Gelbart, *The Invention of “Folk” Music*, 239–245.

sense did the bardic ideal survive in the formation of German musical consciousness? And given the literary nature of *Bardendichtung*, might we be allowed to agree with Keats that “heard melodies are sweet, but those unheard are sweeter?”<sup>7</sup> I cannot hope to answer such questions comprehensively, but they underlie the argument I should like to make in this brief paper. There are three components to this argument which I nominate here as follows: (1) the linguistic sovereignty of Irish culture in relation to the bardic ideal (2) the musical sovereignty of German culture in relation to *Bardendichtung* and (3) the nature of Beethoven’s Irish musical experience.

### **The linguistic sovereignty of Irish culture and the Bardic ideal**

Almost from the moment of their first appearance in the early 1760s, the Ossianic poems published by James Macpherson in Edinburgh stimulated a degree of censure and scepticism in England and Ireland which contrasts sharply with their enthusiastic reception in Germany (principally through the translations of Michael Denis). For Irish antiquarians (in particular Charles O’Conor), the romantic stimulus of Macpherson’s “translations” was as nothing when set against their perceived, historical falsehood and their subversion of Gaelic culture, not least because Macpherson was regarded as having usurped the Fenian cycles of Gaelic Ireland in favour of his own construction of ancient Scottish civilization.<sup>8</sup> But not even Macpherson could suppress the fact that Ossian was a Scottish variant of the Irish Oisín, or that Fingal was a Scots-Gaelic version of Fionn, even if he sought to promote the spurious notion that Scots-Gaelic literature was “purer” and “older” than its Irish counterpart. Such discriminations need not delay us here (and they certainly counted for nothing in the formation of European literary romanticism, in which “Ossian” and “Scotland”, thanks to the genius of Johann Gottfried Herder, prevailed over “Fionn” and “Ireland”).<sup>9</sup> There was one exception to this: the disputes over the Macpherson forgeries at home reveal an English impatience with Celticism and an Irish struggle for national

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<sup>7</sup> The line is from John Keats’s “Ode on a Grecian Urn” (1819).

<sup>8</sup> Charles O’Conor (1710–1791) was an Irish historian and antiquarian whose *Dissertations on the ancient history of Ireland, to which is subjoined a dissertation on the Irish colonies established in Britain, with some remarks on Mr Mac Pherson’s [sic] translation of Fingal and Temora* was published in Dublin in 1766. O’Conor repudiated the Scottish origins of Macpherson’s “translations” by means of proving their derivation from Irish legend and ancient literature. In this respect at least, O’Conor was of the same party as Samuel Johnson and other English critics who disputed the authenticity of Macpherson’s work. See Ó Gallchoir, “Celtic Ireland and Celtic Scotland: Ossianism and *The Wild Irish Girl*”, 114–130.

<sup>9</sup> In this connection, it may not be irrelevant to remark that in German usage, “Scottish” and “Irish” appear to have been at least occasionally employed as synonymous designations long before the middle of the eighteenth century. For an excellent reading of Herder’s reception of Scottish music which emphasises that Herder’s coinage of the term *Volkslied* exclusively referred to poetry (and not music), see Gelbart, *The Invention of “Folk” Music*, 102–110. Herder’s enthusiasm for Ossian and his translations of Macpherson did not countenance any awareness of the Irish origins of Ossianic lore.

identity at one and the same time.<sup>10</sup> By the mid-1780s, when the Irish antiquarian Joseph Cooper Walker published his *Historical Memoirs of the Irish Bards* (1786) in which he declared that “Irish music is the voice of nature and will be heard”, this conflict was at its most acute. Charles Burney, the foremost music historian of his day, reviewed the *Irish Bards* and poured scorn on the “Milesian claims” which Walker dared to make on behalf of ancient Irish music.<sup>11</sup> Meanwhile, the renewed interest in Irish antiquities (partly occasioned by the influence of Herder himself) would lead to the Belfast Harp Festival of 1792, in which the remnants of harp music were patiently transcribed and arranged for pianoforte by Edward Bunting, who published his *General Collection of the Ancient Irish Music* in 1796/7.<sup>12</sup> It was this publication, rather than Walker’s *Irish Bards*, which consolidated the powerful (albeit essentially misleading) idea that for Irish music to be authentic it had to be remote, ancient and distinct from the currency of English and European music of the present age. It isn’t difficult to understand how this insistence chimed with the reception of Celtic literature on the continent (especially in the full romantic glare of Herderian notions of purity, nobility and natural origin), but the mystique and romance of Celticism in Europe must be distinguished, nevertheless, from the political and cultural significance of music in Ireland. The mutation from Celtic to Gaelic at the end of the eighteenth century was hastened not only by a corresponding mutation from cultural to political ferment, but also by the rapid disappearance of the Irish language itself, a steep decline which lent urgency to the preservation of Irish culture, almost as a static and inanimate object, as against its assimilation into a modern Irish political and social context. In these circumstances, the Irish language, either as a presence or an absence, would come to represent not a “lost” civilization (as in Europe) but a radically suppressed one. This meant (among much else) that the bardic ideal represented by Gaelic civilization would be carried forward, if at all, through the medium of English. It also meant that when Thomas Moore began to compose and publish his *Irish Melodies* in 1808, his express intention was to “translate” what he took to be the meaning of Irish music (“the tone of sorrow and dispossession”, as he put it) into verse.<sup>13</sup> Between the actual music of the antiquarian collections and the interpretation of this music in Moore’s *Melodies* lies an auditory imagination intent on translation. But it is a translation from Irish music into English verse, with the rider that

<sup>10</sup> See O’Halloran, “Irish Recreations of the Gaelic Past: the Challenge of Macpherson’s Ossian”, 69–95.

<sup>11</sup> Burney’s scathing review of Walker appeared in *The Edinburgh Review*, December, 1787, 425–439. His principal objections to Walker’s antiquarianism lay in the author’s claims for a vanished (and vanquished) musical civilization, claims buttressed by an unmistakable indictment of English rule in Ireland. This repudiation is in striking contrast to Burney’s enthusiasm not only for Macpherson, but for the universal “modality” of “primitive” music, including Scottish music (in contrast to the civilizing principles of tonality). See Gelbart, *The Invention of “Folk” Music*, 12–128.

<sup>12</sup> For an account of Edward Bunting’s role in the preservation, dissemination and publication of Irish music, see Moloney, “Bunting, Edward”, 139–140.

<sup>13</sup> See Kelly, *Bard of Erin. The Life of Thomas Moore*, 152–190, for an account of the genesis, development and transmission of Moore’s *Irish Melodies*. The “tone of sorrow and dispossession” which Moore associated with Irish music is a phrase taken from the author’s preface to the first number of the *Melodies* (Dublin: James and William Power, 1808).

this verse should convey the author's romantic conception of the original music intact. What is more, the *Irish Melodies* explicitly depend on the original music to justify and animate the linguistic import which they contain. The seam of imagery in the *Melodies* which relies on the commonplace projection of the bard and his harp as a metaphor of the dispossessed imagination (with its dim roots in classical antiquity and the "Aeolian harp" of Greek poetry) entails a unique address upon music itself, not as a metaphorical presence, but as a sounding form.<sup>14</sup> In this reliance, Moore is not only at odds with his romantic contemporaries in Germany, but with the Irish literary revival which came after him as well. In this reliance, too, Moore's achievement is radically distinct from the whole tradition of art song in Europe which he nevertheless influenced in significant measure. Put plainly, Moore's is a unique achievement: in writing verse which seeks to interpret pre-existing music, he reverses the normative process in Europe, by which music seeks to interpret pre-existing verse. Moore's own verse stands behind French and German music in ways which compare to Goethe's presence in Schubert (to name just one germane instance), but the *Irish Melodies* represent an act of imagination for which there is no useful parallel before or after their appearance, and certainly not in Germany. In Moore's influential but exceptional case, the order of creation is *prima la musica, poi le parole*, a plain reversal of the circumstances which governed the reception of Irish and Scottish poetry in Germany. And Moore's own reception in Europe was primarily as a poet: "Where in Germany, even today, would you find three literary heroes to set beside Lord Byron, Moore and Scott?," Goethe inquired in 1824.<sup>15</sup> Moore spoke to German romanticism not as a musician, but as a poet. His domestic reception was otherwise, because the music to which he set his verse remained in circulation. Even when Moore stood accused of having distorted its natural estate in favour of his own poetics, its essential "antiquity" was not in doubt. The music became pre-existent and immutable, an ancient borrowing to aid verbal sentiment. It is this state of affairs which led Thomas Davis to remark in 1848 that "it is not necessary for a writer of our songs to be a musician".<sup>16</sup>

### **The musical sovereignty of German culture in relation to *Bardendichtung***

When I observe that Ireland's contribution to European romanticism was through the agency of poetry rather than music, I am merely restoring Moore's presence in German and French musical affairs (particularly with regard to Schumann and Berlioz). This manifested itself half a century after Macpherson and Scotland had animated the bardic cult of German literary romanticism, above all in Denis, Herder and Goethe, with its rich musical afterlife in Löwe and Schubert.<sup>17</sup> One does wonder, nevertheless, about how much

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<sup>14</sup> See White, "The Lyre of Apollo: Thomas Moore and the Irish Harp", forthcoming.

<sup>15</sup> Cited in Boyd, *Goethe's Knowledge of English Literature*, 265.

<sup>16</sup> Thomas Davis (1814–1845) was a political journalist and poet and a major figure in the Young Ireland movement. See O'Donoghue, ed., *Essays Literary and Historical by Thomas*, 274. See also O'Connor, "Davis, Thomas Osborne", 283–284.

<sup>17</sup> For a richly detailed survey of the musical response to Macpherson and Scottish music in

Scottish music the German poets and idealists of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries actually knew. The same question could be more practicably extended to those composers who responded to the cult of Ossian, either through German translations of the original or as a result of Goethe's influence (notably in *The Sorrows of Young Werther*).<sup>18</sup> As Gelbart has observed:

German professional composers and their supporters around the turn of the nineteenth century represented a second and completely different group of outsiders shaping an idea of folk music for themselves. Tradition and nation (as "nature") were for them sources of genius that they needed to tap into for their own work. While the folk collectors were censuring the very idea of professional composers touching national music [...] the modern professionals clearly needed to define folk music in a way that was rightfully theirs to access. They sought to translate into "art" the universality and genius that were attributed to tradition – and thus to conceive folk music in aesthetic rather than historical terms.<sup>19</sup>

It is this conception – folk music at one remove, folk music as an aesthetic construct rather than as an historic resource – which finally distinguishes the German musical response to the cult of Ossian from Scottish and Irish antiquarianism. This is not to under-rate the impact of Macpherson's publications on the short-lived but immensely influential development of bardic poetry in German-speaking lands: not later than 1768, when Michael Denis began to translate Macpherson in Vienna (working from the Italian translations of Melchior Cesarotti), the process of Germanizing Ossian was well underway.<sup>20</sup> Rudolf Tombo, whose *Ossian in Germany* (1901) surveys the assimilation of Macpherson's Gaelic hero into the bloodstream of the *Bardendichtung* itself, has this to say about the influence which Macpherson exerted on Friedrich Gottlieb Klopstock (1724–1803), a pioneer of German poetry emancipated from the formal tyranny of French verse:

The dim forms of Ossian's heroes, the misty atmosphere of the Highlands in which they lived, were well calculated to cast a spell over [Klopstock]. There is certain mistiness in Klopstock's great epic (*Messiah*) that reminds one of the shadowy atmosphere in which the heroes of the Ossianic epics are enveloped. More than one passage in the *Messiah* conveys the impression of representing little more than rhetorical bombast. Macpherson was a kindred spirit.

This was, however, by no means all that Ossian held out to him. He saw something in Ossian that he seized upon even more eagerly—too eagerly, in fact—namely, he regarded Ossian as a German.

In an epistle to Denis, dated Copenhagen, Jan. 6, 1767, he says: "I beg you not to make me wait for your translation of Ossian. He is an excellent Bard!!" And in another letter to the

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Germany, see McCue, "Scottish Song, Lyric Poetry and the Romantic Composer", 39–48. McCue emphasises the elaborate and highly worked musical textures devised by Schubert in response to Macpherson's original poems (in German translation), and contrasts these with the strophic simplicity of texture and design envisaged by Herder and Goethe.

<sup>18</sup> Goethe translated several of the Ossian lyrics in this novel (1774).

<sup>19</sup> Gelbart, *The Invention of "Folk" Music*, 196.

<sup>20</sup> Denis published a German translation of Macpherson's *Fragments of Ancient Poetry* in 1769.

same, dated Bernstorff, Sept. 8, 1767, he writes: “Ossian’s works are true masterpieces! If we could discover such a bard! The desire to do so is an ardent wish.”<sup>21</sup>

It is hard not to read these comments as an adumbration of Goethe’s enthusiasm for Thomas Moore, over half a century afterwards. But there can be little doubt that in “regarding Ossian as a German,” Klopstock and his bardic adherents reconfigured the great, natural otherness of the Ossian myth to answer the profound yearning for a mythology of their own. In the new synthesis of Ossianic lore and German verse which the bardic poets achieved is a powerful precedent for the synthetic condition of German song, and for *Volkstümlichkeit* itself.<sup>22</sup> By 1779, when Herder writes the preface to the second volume of his folksongs, the distinction between “folk” and “art” music is no longer vested in a contest between nature and artifice, but rather in a progression from the raw materials of “national music” to the high art of the professional composer. The exhilaration and purity of discourse which Macpherson had claimed for his “translations”, the evidence for the “sublime” which the Ossian myth itself represented, had been a synthetic creation from the start. No less synthetic was the response of German composers to the “ideal type” of actual folksong. We might even say that just as Klopstock had Germanized Ossian, it was left to Löwe and Schubert (among many others) to invent a modal past from which their *Ossianische Gesänge* might be derived.<sup>23</sup> The one composer who did otherwise was Ludwig van Beethoven.

### **The nature of Beethoven’s Irish musical experience**

Barry Cooper’s observation that “Beethoven composed more folk song settings than any other genre and that more of them are Irish than any other nationality” is incontrovertible and disingenuous at one and the same time.<sup>24</sup> It is perfectly valid to draw attention to the 71 settings of Irish melodies which Beethoven arranged for the Scottish publisher George Thomson between 1809 and 1815 (most of these appeared between 1814 and 1816), and to acknowledge the Scottish settings which he published as his op. 108 in 1822, two years before the premiere of the Ninth Symphony in 1824. But as Gelbart remarks, even in the second edition of *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians* (2001) “Beethoven’s

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<sup>21</sup> See Tombo, *Ossian in Germany*, 83–85.

<sup>22</sup> This term connotes “naturalness” of poetic diction, in radical contrast to the artifice and mannerism of French-inflected verse.

<sup>23</sup> Some of Schubert’s Goethe settings (as in “Die Forelle” and “Heidenröslein”) undoubtedly echo the “folk song” ideal perpetrated by Herder as a literary concept, but such settings nevertheless engage a degree of artifice (as in the piano figuration and harmonic structure of “Die Forelle”) which is wholly unrelated to this ideal.

<sup>24</sup> See Cooper, “Beethoven’s Folksong Settings as Sources of Irish Folk Music”, 65. More recently, Cooper has acted as advisor to a new recording (and forthcoming edition) of Beethoven’s Irish song settings released as *Beethoven’s Irish Songs* by the DIT Conservatory of Music and Drama in 2014. See [www.beethovensirishsongs.ie](http://www.beethovensirishsongs.ie) (accessed 17 November 2015). The project was directed by Dr Kerry Houston, Head of Academic Studies at the Conservatory.

large corpus of folk song settings comes at the very bottom of the works list – even below the spurious works!”<sup>25</sup> Many of them are *ohne Opuszahl*, a highly significant designation.<sup>26</sup> “Meanwhile”, Gelbart continues, “the Ninth Symphony has gone on to become the anthem of the European Union, surely one more assertion that it represents both universal folk brotherhood and cultural capital as intellectual achievement”.<sup>27</sup> But whether or not we regard them as routine commissions or examples of serious engagement, these settings remain beneath the radar of organic idealism, not least because the reception of the “universal” element in the *Ode to Joy*, by contrast, reconfigures the folk ideal *as* ideal, as originary and unrelated to any empirical reliance on folksong. This idealism carries forward through Brahms and Wagner and into the twentieth century. The least we can argue, in light of this reception history, is that Beethoven’s engagement with Irish folk song (even the term itself is problematic, given the sources from which his arrangements were derived) had little or no impact on the organic idealism of German music, even where this was inflected by universals of modality and a self-conscious address upon the “other” of national music.<sup>28</sup> Indeed, the synonymous understanding of “national” and “natural” promoted by Herder entailed a far greater preference for the “unheard” melodies of the imagination (as in Keats’s ode) than for the “primitive” remnants of the folk collections. This is not to deny the importance of creating a synthetic “folkishness” in German song (*Volkstümlichkeit* again), a preoccupation which would endure as late as Brahms, but it *is* to affirm that as Beethoven and Mendelssohn surely realized, the actual encounter with Irish music produced far less satisfactory results than did the enchantments of Ossian and the Homeric style of Macpherson’s forgeries. This was partly because the condition of Irish and Scottish music, as it made its way into collections published from the late eighteenth century onwards, unmistakably represented a repertory of dance tunes of very recent provenance, and partly because the modern German Bards (not least Goethe himself) had invented a strain of poetry inspired by Ossian but fully formed in its own right. If Klopstock regarded Ossian as German, it is small wonder that German composers preferred the “unheard melody” of Gaelic mythology to the fixed formulas of peasant musical culture. But even if this were not the case, the results produced in Beethoven’s song settings attest an exceptional and ultimately discounted (if not superfluous) utterance, at least to judge by their immediate reception history and subsequent neglect.

This is an argument which finds support in recent scholarship, at least insofar as this

<sup>25</sup> Gelbart, *The Invention of “Folk Music”*, 224.

<sup>26</sup> The absence of opus numbers for these settings silently attests, in my view, their relative unimportance in the wider context of Beethoven’s compositional achievement, to say nothing of its reception history. This would scarcely matter were it not for the fact that Beethoven’s musical imagination is (at best) a remote presence in these arrangements.

<sup>27</sup> Gelbart, *The Invention of “Folk Music”*, 224. Neither “cultural capital” nor “intellectual achievements” are concepts easily summoned, however, by Beethoven’s adventures in Irish music.

<sup>28</sup> There is no doubt that Beethoven set airs communicated to him by Thomson through the agency of various collectors (including Bunting): in this regard, the settings do not represent original composition of any kind. By contrast, Schubert’s response to Gaelic poetry (in translation) was newly conceived.

facilitates a comparison between Moore's settings and the Beethoven collections published between 1814 and 1816.<sup>29</sup> A new recording of the Beethoven settings (and a forthcoming edition by Barry Cooper) likewise encourages a more determined consideration of the differences between Moore's enterprise and the routine commissions accomplished by Beethoven.<sup>30</sup> Moore (and his collaborators, John Stevenson and Henry Rowley Bishop) and Beethoven (aided by the Scottish publisher George Thomson) find common ground in the arrangement of Irish airs for voice and piano (notwithstanding Beethoven's addition of optional parts for other instruments, usually violin and cello), even if Beethoven seems to have been frequently unaware of the character of the airs which Thomson sent him. It was Thomson, in fact, who added "suitable" lyrics to Beethoven's arrangements, many of which he commissioned from English and Scottish poets of the day. This is a sequence not lost on Cooper, who suggests in turn that "it is not essential to use the texts Thomson chose [...] Beethoven designed most of his settings so that, as with hymn tunes, almost any texts with the right metre and character could be used, including, of course, texts in Irish".<sup>31</sup> Even if we were to set aside a musical comparison between Moore and Beethoven (which in any case would almost certainly founder on the difference between Beethoven's overwrought figurations and the comparative simplicity of the Moore-Stevenson accompaniments, notwithstanding a degree of continuity between them), Moore's verse promotes intractable difficulties on its own account. This is simply because of the unitary force of Moore's poetic, achieved in direct response to the airs themselves. The quality of "translation", as from music into poetry, and more particularly from Irish music into English verse, remains paramount throughout the *Irish Melodies*. It is scarcely necessary to add that this quality is wholly absent from Beethoven's settings; nor do we need to overplay the radical contrast that obtains between the organic force of Beethoven's compositional technique in 1814 and the constricted condition of these arrangements written for a ready market. It is, however, germane to this comparison to recognize anew the fundamental difference between a musical constituency of interest such as Beethoven's, in which words inspired music (rather than the other way around), and Moore's constituency, in which music (uniquely) inspired a sequence of poetry destined to exert a profound influence on the subsequent development of Irish letters, without reference to the music which gave it life. Ossian was the stuff of romantic legend, but Moore's poetry – albeit indirectly – spoke to the political culture of his own day. So, too, did Moore's reading of Irish music as a semantic code of dispossession and loss.

A very different afterlife awaited the cult of Ossian in Germany after its primary manifestation as a trope of romantic reawakening in Herder and Goethe. The bardic ideal in German poetry, in other words, produced a musical correlative which was no less

<sup>29</sup> In particular, see Hunt, *Sources and Style in Moore's Irish Melodies* (in press). Although this book does not enterprise a detailed comparison between Beethoven's settings and Moore's songs, its sensitive (and extremely detailed) appraisal of John Stevenson's role in the *Irish Melodies* will be of serious account in any future consideration of Beethoven's approach to Irish music.

<sup>30</sup> See note 24 above for details.

<sup>31</sup> Cooper, "Beethoven's Folksong Settings", 81–82. In this regard, it is noteworthy that the recent Dublin recording of these settings features new texts, many of which are by Moore.

idealised and organic, notwithstanding a determination to create a synthetic discourse of folk music which had very little to do with the “vulgar trash” that poor Mendelssohn had to endure in Scotland. In this respect, at least, we must distinguish between the national longing for form which animated Herder and the young Goethe in the closing decades of the eighteenth century and the nationalism which radically affected German musical identity after the Congress of Vienna in 1815. In musical terms, this longing was satisfied by a romantic nationalism which celebrated at every turn the organic prowess of German music as a narrative of German musical supremacy which drew as much authority from Zelter, Mendelssohn (and indeed Goethe himself) as it did from Beethoven, Haydn and Mozart.

Even if we leave to one side the inherent chauvinism of much German commentary (especially in relation to French and Italian music), we cannot mistake the consolidating (or colonizing) tendency of German music in its self-reliant absorption of other traditions, national and otherwise. Above all, perhaps, we should not underestimate the acutely political condition of relations between German music and literature in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. The formative influence of Macpherson in shaping a national identity for German literature (we might even say for literature *in* German) must finally be distinguished from the very different condition of German music during the same period. Whether addressing mankind through the agency of Schiller in 1824 or romancing the Orient through the agency of Thomas Moore in 1843, composers such as Beethoven and Schumann were in no doubt about the organic primacy of their musical discourse, whatever the dependencies (Irish, Scottish or Indian) of the poetry they set.

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MACPHERSON, OSSIAN IN BARDSKI IDEAL  
NEKAJ IRSKIH MISLI O NEMŠKEM FENOMENU

Povzetek

Namen razprave je ponovno raziskati zgodovino idej, v kateri je bil ugled »ljudske glasbe« kot Herderjevega in Goethejevega ideala z miselnostjo nemške romantike v 19. stoletju preoblikovan. Herderjevo navdušenje za *Ossianove pesmi* Jamesa Macphersona, nekatere izmed njih je v nemščino prevedel Goethe, imamo lahko za izviren in vzoren idealizem, ki je izginil po Beethovnovih uglasbitvah irske tradicionalne glasbe. Kljub njihovemu znatnemu številu Beethovnovih uglasbitve niso vplivale na porast glasbenega idealizma, ki je ostal brezbrizen do položaja škotskih in irskih »ljudskih pesmi«, kot se je kazal v prvih desetletjih 19. stoletja. Kontrast med Beethovnovimi uglasbitvami (izdal jih je škotski založnik George Thomson) in Mendelssohnovim prezirom »avtohtone« glasbe prikaže idejno potovanje od »ljudske glasbe« kot koncepta, skoraj soznačnega s poezijo bardov (nem. *Bardendichtung*) v poznem 18. stoletju, do odkritja in zavrnitve same glasbe kot dejavnega principa v nemški glasbeni miselnosti.

V zgodovini recepcije lahko prepoznamo tri različne faze: (a) nemško jezikovno suverenost v odnosu do irske in škotske glasbe, (b) glasbeno suverenost nemške kulture v odnosu do poezije bardov (*Bardendichtung*) in (c) ostanek Beethovnovnega odnosa do irske glasbe, predvsem v okvirih, določenih z zbirko Thomasa Moora *Irske melodije* v Dublinu in Londonu, ter izkoreninjenost te glasbe kot izraza lokalnega kolorita v Nemčiji. Komentarji »zglasno, vulgarno, nemelodično«, kot jih je slišal Mendelssohn na turneji po Škotski in Walesu leta 1829, so bili v izrazitem nasprotju z idealizirano podobo o tej glasbi prejšnje generacije. V tretjem desetletju 19. stoletja je postala »ljudska glasba« kot znanilec narodne zavesti v nasprotju s prevladujočim stanjem v nemški umetnosti.

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