

FROM THE PATRIMONIAL TO THE CIVIC STANDARD OF MUSIC  
FOR ALL: THE TRANSFORMATIONS OF MUSICAL INSTITUTIONS  
IN NINETEENTH-CENTURY BOHEMIA AND THE PROBLEMS  
OF THEIR MUSIC-HISTORICAL INTERPRETATION

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*Abstract*

The topic of institutionalisation of musical life in the nineteenth century invites a new perspective on the transformation processes in multinational Austria. The Kingdom of Bohemia is an example of a bilingual country in which the development of civil institutions together with a national movement was quite successful. These processes took place in a peaceful way, without revolutions and with the cooperation of different layers of society. A consensus between Czechs and Germans, conservatives and liberals, aristocracy and bourgeoisie, was necessary. However, this consensus was later undermined by the sharpening of nationalism on both sides, and finally retroac-

tively denied. Therefore, the interpretation of the Czech revival as a national and social struggle was firmly established in music historiography. This study will focus on the founding of modern musical institutions as stories of transformations, as well as on the issue of various concepts of the Czech national revival.

**Keywords:** history of music in Bohemia; Czech musical life in the nineteenth century; Czech national revival; Austro-Slavism; musical patronage

**Ključne riječi:** povijest glazbe u Češkoj; češki glazbeni život u 19. stoljeću; češki narodni preporod; austroslavizam; glazbeni mecenat

When considering the emergence of modern musical institutions in the Kingdom of Bohemia (today Czechia), we are faced with a challenge to develop a new perspective on the cultural history of nineteenth-century multinational Austria. In the European context, Austria was an example of a large but relatively poor state that was able to guarantee the peaceful coexistence of peoples in an ethnically

mixed territory.<sup>1</sup> In Austria, an old model of patrimonial society, based on a sense of duty, was gradually transformed into a new civil society consensus based on a sense of rights. The exception was the years of civil war 1848–49 and the lost wars (1859, 1866), which accelerated the reforms leading to the abolition of absolutism (1848, 1860, 1867). Today, historians have already overcome the clearly negative image of Austria as a »prison of the peoples«, in favor of the concept of a multicultural state that did not use the ideology of the »grand nation« and allowed the cultures of small nations to develop.<sup>2</sup> This happened with some turbulence, but in principle much more peacefully than in Western and Eastern Europe, where many national cultures were persecuted while consolidating large nation-states.

### *The Specifics of Austria*

Post-Napoleonic Austria was characterized by the inevitable necessity to ensure the coexistence of different nations. Initially, Metternich's regime (1809–1848) tried to repress any nationalism, including pan-Germanism. The result of the tumultuous year of 1848 was that Austro-Slavism emerged as a common concept for the Slavic peoples who sought to preserve Austria.<sup>3</sup> Austro-Slavism arose as a programmatic rejection of pan-Germanism, which threatened the existence of the Austrian commonwealth, and simultaneously as a rejection of pan-Slavism, which was used as a hidden justification for the efforts to expand the Russian empire.<sup>4</sup> František Palacký (1798–1876) and Josip Jelačić (1801–1859) defined the new con-

<sup>1</sup> Cf. John DEAK: *Forging a Multinational State. State Making in Imperial Austria from the Enlightenment to the First World War*, Stanford: Stanford University Press 2015; Pieter M. JUDSON: *The Habsburg Empire. A New History*, Cambridge, MA – London: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2016; Steven BELLER: *The Habsburg Monarchy 1815–1918*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 2018.

<sup>2</sup> Steven BELLER: *The Habsburg Monarchy 1815–1918*, 274.

<sup>3</sup> The formative text of Austro-Slavism was an open letter by František Palacký (1798–1876) from April 1848, known as »Writing to Frankfurt«, in which he justified the Czechs' refusal to accept an invitation to the German parliament. František PALACKÝ: Hlas o připojení se Rakouska k zemi německé [Opinion on the Annexation of Austria to Germany], *Národní noviny*, 1 (15 April 1848) 10, 37 – 1 (18 April 1848) 12, 45. Palacký formulated his arguments anew as »The idea of the Austrian state« (*Idea státu rakouského/Oesterreichs Staatsidee*). For the edition of both texts see: Franz PALACKÝ: *Oesterreichs Staatsidee*, Prag: J. L. Kober, 1866.

<sup>4</sup> »You know, gentlemen, which power controls the entire East of our continent. You know that this power has already grown to an enormous magnitude, is itself growing stronger and stronger every decade, more than can happen in Western countries. Being inaccessible to almost any attack, it has long since become dangerous to its neighbors. And although it has an open path in the North, it will always naturally seek to expand southward, and every further step forward that can be made in this way threatens to be made more and more rapidly, and with the danger of establishing a universal monarchy, and that may be an unimaginable and an unspeakable evil, a calamity without measure and bounds, which I, as a Slav in body and soul, would very much regret for the good of humanity, even if this monarchy claimed to be Slavic.« František PALACKÝ: *Hlas o připojení se Rakouska k zemi německé*, 37.

cept of Austria as a voluntary union of small nations<sup>5</sup> that would not be able to face a common danger separately.<sup>6</sup> The federalization project encountered strong opposition among German nationalists who sought to prevent the dominance of the Slavs in Austria. Their instrument was first state centralism, later the struggle for schools and electoral geometry.<sup>7</sup> In the long nineteenth century, there was a visible and invisible struggle of small nations for cultural identity, linguistic equality and political autonomy in a common state. The effort to federalize Austria failed, but the mutual cooperation of nations in the common cultural world was more successful.

### *Kingdom of Bohemia*

The Bohemian Kingdom was an important part of the so-called hereditary lands of the Habsburg dynasty,<sup>8</sup> extending in the north-west of the state as a bilingual area inhabited by Czechs and Germans. František Palacký formulated the concept of Bohemian history as a contact area between the German and Slavic world.<sup>9</sup> Seen from the outside, the Bohemian Kingdom successfully built modern structures of cultural life in the nineteenth century. Modern music schools were established there, whose graduates were known all over the world. After 1860, civic associations began to be formed.<sup>10</sup> The national theater with its own opera repertoire became a representative form of national culture. It might seem that the cultural conditions in Bohemia were ideal and exemplary. However, taking a closer look, we will find that our knowledge is still incomplete. The reason is not

<sup>5</sup> »Truly, if the Austrian imperial state had not existed for a long time, one would have to hurry to create it in the interest of Europe, in the interest of humanity itself.« *Ibid.*, 83.

<sup>6</sup> »Imagine Austria dissolved into a multitude of republics and little republics – what a welcome basis for the Russian universal empire!« *Ibid.*, 85.

<sup>7</sup> For the development of the Czech National Party led by František Ladislav Rieger (1818-1903) and for the dilemmas of its position between Austrian centralism and German nationalism, see Robert SAK: *Rieger – konzervativce nebo liberál? [Rieger – a Conservative or Liberal Politician?]*, Prague: Academia, 2003.

<sup>8</sup> The concept of hereditary lands was codified by Charles VI's Pragmatic Sanction (1713), which was adopted by the Bohemian parliament (1720). It codified the indivisibility and inheritance of this union of states and was then the basis of state law until 1918.

<sup>9</sup> »The main content and basic thrust of the entire history of Bohemia and Moravia is, therefore, [...] the constant contact and struggle of Slavism with Romanism and Germanism, in the sense now explained; and since Romanism touched the Czechs not by itself, but almost entirely only through the medium of Germany, it can also be said that the history of the Czechs is based mainly on the struggle with Germany, that is, on the perception and rejection of German manners and systems by the Czechs. František PALACKÝ: *Dějiny národu českého v Čechách a v Moravě* [History of the Czech Nation in Bohemia and Moravia], I/1, Prague: J. G. Kalve, 1848, 12-13.

<sup>10</sup> For a detailed overview of the development of music institutions, see *Instituce and Hudební spolky*, in: Jiří FUKAČ – Jiří VYSLOUŽIL: *Slovník české hudební kultury* [Dictionary of Czech Musical Culture], Prague: Supraphon, 1997, 373-376 and 335-336. For the history of musical institutions in individual cities of Bohemia, Moravia and Austrian Silesia, see *ibid.*

only the number and variability of sources, but also the deliberate neglect of some topics in the past. For a long time, Czech music historiography focused only on Czech-language culture and interpreted it as the history of preparation for national emancipation, excluding everything else from the historical canon, i.e., for example, the work of bilingual authors.<sup>11</sup> This situation was caused, among others, by the long-term authority of Zdeněk Nejedlý (1878-1962) and his canon of Czech musical history, based on the paradigm of Czech history created by the French historian Ernest Denis (1849-1921).<sup>12</sup> The object of silent elimination was primarily the culture associated with Habsburg rule, with the German-speaking ambience, and with the pre-revolutionary social classes generally.<sup>13</sup> Therefore, the subject of history writing was logically only a segment of contemporary culture, normatively selected according to language, sometimes even according to political affiliation. Wanting to draw a complete panorama, we must follow newer researchers and pay attention to issues that did not fit into such a paradigm, or were excluded from it.<sup>14</sup>

### *Transformation of Music Education*

In building modern institutions, the Kingdom of Bohemia had a remarkable lead in developed music education. However, at the beginning of the nineteenth century, contemporaries did not talk about building, but about preventing decadence. When the Prague Conservatory (*Konzervatoř hudby v Praze / Konservatorium für Musik in Prag*)<sup>15</sup> was founded (1811), there was talk of the need to save the presence of existing well-educated musicians.<sup>16</sup> The »Golden Age« of music

<sup>11</sup> Zdeněk Nejedlý (1878-1962) was the first Czech professor of musicology (1909) and the founder of the Department of Musicology at Prague University (1919), and simultaneously an active participant in three coups d'état (1918, 1945, 1948) and finally the minister of education and culture in the communist authoritarian governments.

<sup>12</sup> This paradigm was adopted by Tomáš G. Masaryk. Denis, Masaryk and subsequently Nejedlý see the Czech national revival, from the geopolitical perspective of the time, as an echo of the French Revolution, to which the politically redefined epochs of Hussitism and partly the Czech Reformation are retroactively related. Nejedlý gradually integrated this quite old paradigm, being originally developed for the political needs of the early twentieth century, for later state ideologies.

<sup>13</sup> These views on Czech musical institutions and their role in the national movement are explicitly formulated in: Zdeněk NEJEDLÝ: Tschechische/Čechische Musikinstitutionen, *Čechische Revue*, 1 (1907), 243-249.

<sup>14</sup> To this day, the most comprehensive treatise on Czech music history that went beyond the Nejedlý paradigm is Jaromír ČERNÝ and al.: *Hudba v českých dějinách. Od středověku do nové doby* [Music in Czech History. From the Middle Ages to Modern Times], Prague: Supraphon 1980. Chapters devoted to the nineteenth century in their time courageously returned to the discussion hitherto neglected or excluded topics, including an effort to define the full spectrum of the musical culture of the Bohemian lands.

<sup>15</sup> For names of institutions, their Czech and German equivalents their historical forms and changes, see the entries in J. FUKAČ – J. VYSLOUŽIL: *Slovník české hudební kultury*.

<sup>16</sup> For the history of the Prague Conservatory see Jan BRANBERGER: *Das Konservatorium für Musik in Prag. Zur 100 Jahrfeier der Gründung im Auftrage des Vereines zur Beförderung der Tonkunst in Böhmen*, Prague: Verlag des Vereines zur Beförderung der Tonkunst in Böhmen, 1911.

in Bohemia was consensually remembered at the time before the reforms of Joseph II (1781-1791) which damaged the existing system of education by abolishing monasteries, religious brotherhoods and church foundations<sup>17</sup> that provided stable music ensembles and supported students.<sup>18</sup> As G. J. Dlabacž (1815) writes in elegant allusions,<sup>19</sup> and as E. Meliš (1861) testifies more explicitly according to generational memory,<sup>20</sup> the bright side of re-Catholicization (1648-1781) was seen in general access to education, a good level of musical training,<sup>21</sup> and the subsequent presence of solidly trained musicians in non-musical professions.<sup>22</sup> The English traveler Charles Burney (1772) observed this situation more critically, pitying well-trained Bohemian musicians whose only future was service or emigration.<sup>23</sup> Although the patrimonial model of society did not allow

<sup>17</sup> See *Fundace*, in: J. FUKAČ – J. VYSLOUŽIL: *Slovník české hudební kultury*, 234.

<sup>18</sup> »Auf solche Art also wurde die Tonkunst bis auf die Epoche, in welcher sowohl die Jesuiterkollegien und Semenerien, als andere Klöster aufgehoben, und die Stadt- und Landschulen reformirt sind worden fortgepflanzt, und zum grössten Ruhm der Böhmen in ihrem eigenen Vaterlande erhalten. Durch diese grosse Reform, aber verlohren die armen Singknaben alle Hülfe, und die Schullehrer die Zeit, welche die zuvor der edlen Ausbildung der Tonkunst widmen konnten.« Gottfried Johann DLABACŽ: *Abhandlung von den Schicksalen der Künste in Böhmen*, in: Gottfried Johann Dlabacž: *Allgemeines historisches Künstler-Lexikon für Böhmen und zum Theil auch für Mähren und Schlesien*, Erster Band A-H, Prague: G. Haase, 1815, 1-20; here 18.

<sup>19</sup> »Ja darum werden auch viele Eltern abgeschreckt, weil sie keine Unterstützung mehr für ihre Kinder zu hoffen haben, dieselben in der Tonkunst ausbilden zu lassen; wo man doch häufige Beispiele anführen kann, dass viele grosse Männer, die in Staatangelegenheiten manche wichtige Rolle spielten, und noch heute mehr bekannt sind, als dass sie hier anführen sollte, ihre ganze Bildung den musikalischen Stiftungen zu danken hatten.« G. J. DLABACŽ: *Abhandlung von den Schicksalen der Künste in Böhmen*, 18.

<sup>20</sup> Emanuel MELIŠ: *Stav hudby v 18. století v Čechách* [The State of Music in Eighteenth-century Bohemia], *Dalibor*, 4 (1861) 2, 12; 3, 19-20; 4, 30; 5, 40; 6, 46-47; 7, 54-55; 8, 62-63; 9, 70-71; 10, 78-79; 11, 87-88; 12, 95-96.

<sup>21</sup> »In Jesuit and other seminaries, music was a major part of pleasant recreation and entertainment. [...] The student and the musician were two beings always merged together; and certainly it was seldom possible to find a proper son of the Muses who could not play at least one instrument. Music was a recommendation for admission to the monastery, for admission to respected houses, and even for servants, music served as a letter of intercession. Music provided students with sustenance and hope for the future.« Emanuel MELIŠ: *Stav hudby v 18. století v Čechách*, 20.

<sup>22</sup> »Some followed music as their profession and became musical artists, others continued their studies and became state, religious or economic officials, maintaining their love and enthusiasm for music throughout their lives. [...] In the countryside, the same happened with former singing boys. They became either artisans or farmers and later sang and played instruments in church or in pubs.« Emanuel MELIŠ: *Stav hudby v 18. století v Čechách*, 20.

<sup>23</sup> »Now, the Bohemians are never tranquil long together; and even in the short intervals of peace, their first nobility are attached to the court of Vienna, and seldom reside in their own capital; so that those among the poorer sort, who are taught music in their infancy, have no encouragement to pursue it in riper years, and seldom advance further than to qualify themselves for the street, or for servitude.« Charles BURNEY: *The Present State of Music in Germany, the Netherlands, and United Provinces, or the Journal of a Tour through those Countries, Undertaken to Collect Materials for a General History of Music*, vol. II, London: T. Becket – J. Robson – G. Robinson, 1773, 11-12.

individual careers, it resulted in a general musicality that affected everyone.<sup>24</sup> The patrons of estates considered it their privilege to be able to show, in addition to representative buildings, a higher level of music,<sup>25</sup> so they preferred capable musicians when employing teachers (cantors). Enlightenment school reforms (beginning 1774), caused a significant improvement in the elementary school network, but simultaneously also caused the disappearance of music from teacher training, leaving this to the initiative of teachers' (cantors') families. The initiative of the patriotic aristocracy to establish the Conservatory in Prague (1811) aimed to address the situation of the lack of instrumentalists. From the proven practice of pre-Enlightenment schools, free access to education at the expense of benefactors and an emphasis on the pedagogical ability of graduates was adopted. In a similar way, a specialized organist school was founded in 1830 for the education of future rural teachers.<sup>26</sup> Also worth mentioning is the short existence of the music courses on the Lobkowitz estate (1830-32) being organized by a private patron who was not satisfied with the musical education of future rural teachers in state schools.<sup>27</sup> The traditionally good level of music education at Bohemian schools persisted even after the abolition of patrimonial obligations (1848), mostly thanks to private initiatives. Its definitive demise was caused by the Austrian school reform (1868-1869), which severed the last ties between the school, the castle and the parish church. This abolished personal responsibility to the benefactors, with all its advantages and disadvantages. The teacher became a state servant and his school became the scene of national and political struggles for the education of future voters. At this point, it should be noted that the Prague Conservatory had the status of a private school until its nationalization (1919),

<sup>24</sup> »Indeed many of those who learn music at school go afterwards to the plough, and to other laborious employments; and then their knowledge of music turns to no other account, than to enable them to sing in their parish-church, and as an innocent domestic recreation, which is, perhaps, the best and most honourable use, to which music can be appropriated. It has been said by travelers, that the Bohemian nobility keep musicians in their houses; but, in keeping servants, it is impossible to be otherwise, as all the children of the peasants and trades-people, in every town and village throughout the kingdom of Bohemia are taught music at the common reading schools, except in Prague, where, indeed it is no part of school-learning; the musicians being brought thither from the country.« *Ibid.*, 12.

<sup>25</sup> »The countless number of skilled Bohemian musicians in the eighteenth century, which one could best be convinced of by looking at the lists of European court orchestras from that time – this can be explained by the fact that the high nobility demanded from each of their servants – from the courtier to the stableman, to be immersed in music and to be able to play at least one instrument perfectly.« E. MELIŠ: *Stav hudby v 18. století v Čechách*, 96.

<sup>26</sup> The founding and later maintenance of the organ school (varhanická škola / Organistenschule) was the result of the activities of the Association of Friends of the Arts for Church Music in Bohemia (*Spolek přátel umění pro církevní hudbu v Čechách / Verein der Kunstfreunde für Kirchenmusik in Böhmen*). Until the merger of the organ school with the Conservatory (1890), it was customary for leading Prague organists to teach here without the right to a salary.

<sup>27</sup> Jarmila HANZALOVÁ: *Lobkovičká hudební škola v Jezeří, Ústí nad Labem: Okresní archiv, 1970.*

being financed almost exclusively by the aristocracy,<sup>28</sup> and remaining one of the few higher schools spared from national segregation.<sup>29</sup>

### *Emergence of a National Movement: The Various Currents of Czech National Revival*

Wanting to understand the continuity and discontinuity of Czech cultural history in the nineteenth century, we must admit that the Czech national revival was not uniform, but used several competing paradigms.<sup>30</sup> Historian František Palacký successfully tried to reconcile them. At the end of the nineteenth century, however, the Czech national representation was divided into Austroslavist »Old Czechs«<sup>31</sup> and liberal nationalist »Young Czechs«, who emerged victorious from mutual struggles.<sup>32</sup> The omnipresent division, stimulating healthy competition but paralyzing organizational abilities, has been typical for Czech society since the Hussite wars (1419-1436). At the time, when modern nationalism was born, the Czechs already had two paradigms of their history and identity. The first conception was the majority one, formulated by Catholic intellectuals and emphasizing the antiquity of language and culture. The second concept emerged among the Protestant emigration (1621-1781), and was defined by resistance to the Habsburgs and the Catholic Church. This view was adopted by the Young Czechs and later transformed into the Czechoslovak state idea.<sup>33</sup> Also in the realm of music production in the nineteenth century, supporters of the St Wenceslas tradition (associated with Austro-Slavism and regional patriotism) and promoters of politically updated Hussitism (associated with irredentism and modern nationalism) were divided.<sup>34</sup>

<sup>28</sup> For more see Markéta HALLOVÁ: Zestátnění pražské konzervatoře a osud jejího ředitele Jindřicha Káana z Albestu [Nationalisation of the Prague Conservatory of Music and the Fate of its Director Jindřich Káan z Albestu (Heinrich Káan von Albest)], *Clavibus unitis*, 7 (2018) 1, 27-62.

<sup>29</sup> As part of the language equalization, higher schools were divided, including the Technical University (1869) and Charles University (1882) in Prague.

<sup>30</sup> For more see: Tomáš SLAVICKÝ: Musica, identità e mitografie nazionali dei Cechi nel diciannovesimo secolo, *De musica disserenda*, 12 (2016) 1, 45-56.

<sup>31</sup> National Party (*Národní strana*, 1848-1918), later called Old-Czech Party, was the first political party representing Czech interests in the regional and state parliaments, striving a consensus between Czechs and Utraquists, aristocracy and bourgeoisie.

<sup>32</sup> National Liberal Party (*Národní strana svobodomyšlná*), called Young-Czech Party (1874-1918), formed as an opposition party, adopting the rhetoric and methods of German and Hungarian liberal nationalists. It became a dominant political force from the end of the 19th century.

<sup>33</sup> The formative text is the political writing of the later president T. G. Masaryk (1850-1937), which provides a political interpretation of the Czech national revival: Tomáš G. MASARYK: *Česká otázka: Snahy a tužby národního obrození*. [The Czech Question: Efforts and Desires of National Revival], Prague: Čas, 1895; Tomáš G. MASARYK: *The Meaning of Czech History*, translated by Peter Kussi, Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, [1974].

<sup>34</sup> Viktor VELEK: Searching for a Programme, Searching for an Identity, or the Association and the Struggle between the Saint Wenceslas and Hus-Hussite Traditions in Czech Music of the Second Half of the 19th Century, *Musicalogica Olomucensia*, 33 (2021) 2, 373-408.

### *Linguistic Utraquism*

In the first half of the nineteenth century, the cultural life of Bohemia developed according to a regional patriotism, using mostly the identity of the Bohemians (Böhmen) as a nation with two languages.<sup>35</sup> The so-called linguistic Utraquism consisted in the consensual use of both languages: German was necessary for written communication, while Czech prevailed as the spoken language. Among the institutions based on the principle of regional identity, the *Vlastenecké muzeum / Vaterländisches Museum* (1818)<sup>36</sup> and *Společnost Národního muzea / Gesellschaft der vaterländischen Museum* (1822), which established the publishing foundation *Matice česká / Schatzkammer für die Herausgabe tschechischer Bücher* (1830),<sup>37</sup> were among the most active. The national segregation taking place throughout the state<sup>38</sup> was later fatal to a number of common music institutions, for example for the Prague charitable *Tonkünstler-societät*, called *Società* (1803-1918), which operated the first regular orchestra in Prague,<sup>39</sup> or for the *Cäcilien-Verein* (1840-1865) and *Prager Singacademie* (1840-1899).

The original program of Czech politics from 1848 was based on the consensus of the Czech national movement and the German speaking patriotic aristocracy, striving for the restoration of the autonomy of the Bohemian kingdom and the equal rights of both languages. Czech politics became irreconcilably divided after the failed attempt at a Czech-Austrian equalization (1871). During Taaffe's government (1879-1893), linguistic equalization was undertaken, consisting primarily of the division of institutions and schools into Czech and German. Although confrontational rhetoric prevailed in politics, bilingualism and Austro-Slavism was relevant until the First World War.

### *The Bourgeoisie and the National Question*

As in other European cultures, the initiative of the bourgeoisie was decisive for social change. Czech-speaking society initially had a big disadvantage in this

<sup>35</sup> The concept of the Czech nation of two tribes and two languages was developed by Bernard Bolzano (1781-1848), later it was strictly rejected by the Young Czechs.

<sup>36</sup> *Vlastenské muzeum v Čechách/Vaterländisches Museum in Böhmen*, later Bohemian Museum (1848), Museum of Bohemian Kingdom (1854), National muzeum (1922).

<sup>37</sup> *Matice česká* was defined regionally, although conceived as a basis for the preservation of Czech as a literary language. *Matice Moravská* (1869) and *Matice Opavská* (1877, later *Matice slezská*) worked next to her. *Matice Slovenská* was active in Hungary (1863, banned 1875, restored 1919).

<sup>38</sup> Viktor VELEK: »Wiener Böhme – Wiener Tscheche«. *Vliv hudebního života české (slovanské) menšiny ve Vídni na genezi českého národního uvědomění*, *Musicologica Olomucensia*, 31 (2020) 1, 145-158.

<sup>39</sup> See: Pavel SYKORA: *Jednota umělců hudebních ku podpoře vdov a sirotků (Tonkünstler Wittwen-und-Waisen Societät)*, *Český hudební slovník*, <<https://www.ceskyhudebnislovník.cz/>> (Accessed 2 March 2023).



area: German was necessary for access to higher education and social status.<sup>40</sup> The primary task of the national movement was therefore to return the Czech language to the cities and to higher society. The organization of Czech Balls (from 1840) was the first ambitious social enterprise in Prague that overcame the language revival. As the political leader F. L. Rieger recalled, the initial intention was to convince Prague women of the solidity of the Czech national movement and to convince them of the compatibility of the Czech language with a higher social status.<sup>41</sup> The long-term effort to build a Czech salon required the project of a Czech conversational dictionary.<sup>42</sup> The next cultural goal of the Czech bourgeoisie was the national theater.

### *Efforts to establish a Czech National Theater*

Prague already had a public opera stage in the eighteenth century.<sup>43</sup> The first stable theater was built by the Enlightenment-minded Count Franz Anton Nostitz-Rieneck (1725-1794) as *Gräfllich Nostitzsches Nationaltheater* (1783). Later, the theater was bought by the Czech estates (1799) and operated as the Royal Estate Theater (*Königliches Ständestheater*). Mozart's Prague premieres,<sup>44</sup> as well as the first experiments with translations of opera librettos into Czech,<sup>45</sup> took place in this building. The initiative to establish the Czech National Theater was created in 1845 as a priority of the national movement.<sup>46</sup> F. L. Rieger decided to start the construction of the Provisional Theater (1862) after founding the Theater Society (1845) and

<sup>40</sup> Immediately after the abolition of the Jesuit order (1773), school reform began in Austria and Bohemia in 1774. From the Normal (upper) school upwards, the lessons were conducted exclusively in German.

<sup>41</sup> For more see R. SAK: *Rieger – konzervativce nebo liberál?*, 49-51. Another horizon opened up with the organization of Slavic balls in Vienna (since 1846, for more see Anna HODEL: *Jenseits der Nationalen. Der »Kolo« als Identitätstopographierende (Tanz-)Figur in den südslawischen Romantiken, Zagreber Germanistische Beiträge*, 26 (2017) 1, 131-148; here 141.

<sup>42</sup> A conversational dictionary in Czech was prepared by F. L. Rieger and published in 11 volumes as František Ladislav RIEGER (ed.): *Slovník naučný*, Praha: I. L. Kober, 1860-74.

<sup>43</sup> History of Prague Theatres see Oscar TEUBER: *Geschichte des Prager Theaters. (Von den Anfängen des Schauspielwesens bis auf die neueste Zeit*, Prague: A. Haase, I. 1883, II. 1885, III. 1888; recently: Václav ŠTĚPÁN – Markéta TRÁVNÍČKOVÁ: *Stavovské divadlo 1824-1862: Českojazyčný repertoár* [Estate Theatre 1824-1862. Czech-language repertory], Prague: Academia – Národní muzeum, 2022.

<sup>44</sup> *Le Nozze di Figaro* (1787), *Don Giovanni* (1787) and *La Clemenza di Tito* (1791) after commissions from Prague.

<sup>45</sup> The first singspiel translated into Czech was *Schweizerfamilie/Rodina švýcarská* by Joseph Weigl (1823) and the first opera on a Czech libretto was *Dráteník* by František Škroup (1826).

<sup>46</sup> Regarding the report on the establishment of the Croatian National Theatre (1836), F. L. Rieger wrote: »Perhaps we Czechs here in Prague will not have to wait as long as we are waiting for our own theatre. And then we, all three Slavic tribes who are under Austrian rule, would have, to the great benefit of our national theatre: Poles, Czechs, Illyrians.« Cit. along: R. SAK: *Rieger – konzervativce nebo liberál?*, 63.

purchasing the land (1852). The construction of the large National Theater (1868-1883) was designed with representative artistic decoration, in which artists, later known as the »generation of the National Theater« participated. After a fire in 1881, public collections were conducted and the theater reopened after two years (1883). In the new portal there is an inscription which reads »The nation for itself« (*Národ sobě*). However, the society of donors was very broad: from the imperial family, the aristocracy and the provincial government, through donations from abroad, to collections in towns and villages. The history of the National Theater also includes the parallel building of the New German Theater in Prague (1886).<sup>47</sup> Many of the private patrons supported the construction of both buildings.

### *Civic Societies and Music*

In the era of absolutism (1815-1848), and neo-absolutism (1851-1859) civic associations were limited to charitable enterprises. The year 1860 brought the possibility to freely establish civil associations. In Bohemia, the new social movement manifested itself primarily in the founding of organized singing choirs (*Beseda brněnská*, Brno 1861, *Hlahol*, Prague 1862) and their federations, both German (*Deutscher Sängerbund im Böhmen*, 1864) and Czech (*Jednota zpěváckých spolků českoslovanských*, 1868). The most influential cultural corporation was *Umělecká beseda* (1863), which organized fine art, literary and musical sections. The music section later started its own publishing activities (*Hudební matice Umělecké besedy*, 1871) and built a public music archive. In smaller towns, it was common for civic associations of all kinds to establish their own brass band, engaging veterans of military music. The *Sokol* sports association (1863) emerged as the most influential national association, and later organized its own brass bands, choirs and volunteer theaters. In musical Prague, all important functions were maintained for a long time, until the founding of the Czech Philharmonic in 1896, by the theater and conservatory orchestras.

### *The Background of the Establishment of Institutions – Patronage of the Aristocracy in Enlightenment Absolutism and Civil Society*

If there is still a real debt today, it belongs to the Bohemian aristocracy and its patronage. The Young Czechs' reinterpretation of the national revival reinforced the narrative of the estrangement of the nobility. The principal role of the nobility

<sup>47</sup> After the construction of the Czech Provisional Theatre (*Prozatímní divadlo*, 1863), the previously shared Royal Estates Theater (*Královské stavovské divadlo / Königliches Ständetheater*) was renamed the Royal State Theater (*Královské zemské divadlo / Königliches Landestheater*) and was used for German performances until the opening of the New German Theater (*Neues deutsches Theater*, 1886).

in founding and financing national institutions was kept silent. At the end of the nineteenth century, many aristocrats joined the Czech side in protest against the aggressiveness of German nationalism. However, they did not join the similarly confrontational politics of the Young Czechs, and instead were excluded from the canon of national history.<sup>48</sup> At the beginning of the nineteenth century, a new generation of patriotic nobility emerged who were influenced by the ideals of the Enlightenment. They had a sense of responsibility towards the state and towards the entrusted people, which manifested itself during the long and economically exhausting coalition and Napoleonic wars (1792-1815). The options of the nobility changed dramatically after the abolition of serfdom (1781) and patronage duties (1848). The result was a reorientation of the economy towards industry, which enabled the renewal of patronage. An extraordinary example is Josef Franz Maximilian Prince of Lobkowitz (1772-1816). From the revenues of his Bohemian estates, he supported J. Haydn and L. van Beethoven, co-founded the Vienna and Prague music societies, co-financed both conservatories, and ran his own theater and orchestra at his castle. However, his son Ferdinand Josef (1797-1868) first had to rehabilitate the indebted property by selling several estates (1829). After modernizing the economy and opening new iron works and sugar factories built on new technologies, he renewed his father's beneficence as one of the patrons of the Prague Conservatory, the National Theatre and other institutions and associations. The patriotic aristocracy initiated the formation of important associations for science<sup>49</sup> and industry,<sup>50</sup> to which educated people of all statuses had access. Many private musical events were held in aristocratic salons and residences and important musical works were created. We can name, for example, Dora Pejačević's (1885-1923) visits to Baroness Sidonie Nádherná (1885-1950) at the Vrchotovy Janovice castle.<sup>51</sup>

### *Church and Civil Society*

Similarly, the activities of the church and the clergy were retroactively excluded from the history of national revival. Today, it must be emphasized that the efforts to restore the pre-Enlightenment religious brotherhoods, based on the

<sup>48</sup> T. G. Masaryk's political program (T. G. MASARYK: *Česká otázka*), which is an interpretation of the Czech national revival, mentions the participation of the nobility only with the argument that no literary activity in the Czech language was developed in this society (*Ibid.*, 1908, 162) and with an explicit criticism of the political orientation (*ibid.*, 90).

<sup>49</sup> The Learned Society (*Společnost učená*, 1769), since 1790 the Royal Bohemian Society of Sciences (*Královská česká společnost nauk / Königliche böhmische Gesellschaft der Wissenschaften*).

<sup>50</sup> Association for the promotion of industry in Bohemia (*Jednota ku povzbuzení průmyslu v Čechách / Verein zur Ermunterung des Gewerbsgeistes in Böhmen*, 1833).

<sup>51</sup> Alena WAGNEROVÁ: *Das Leben der Sidonie Nádherný. Eine Biographie*, Hamburg: Europäische Verlagsanstalt, 2003.

activities of the laity, played an important role in the establishment of civic musical associations of the modern type.<sup>52</sup> It was emphasized that their abolition by Joseph II (1787) accelerated not only the decline of musical life, but also the retreat of the Czech language from the cities.<sup>53</sup> The post-Enlightenment period also saw a change in the mechanisms of patronage. In Bohemia, there was no personality which could compare to that of Josip Strossmayer (1815-1905) in Croatia. The church lacked its own funds,<sup>54</sup> and it became the recipient of support from private individuals and associations. In order to support church music, the *Verein der Kunstfreunde für Kirchenmusik in Böhmen / Jednota k zvelebení kostelní hudby v Čechách* was founded in 1862, which supported the Prague Organ School (1830), and later a similar *Jednota na zvelebení církevní hudby na Moravě* was established in Brno in 1881. On the initiative of Ferdinand Lehner (1837-1914), the Christian Academy (1875) was founded as an institutional support for monument care and for the cultivation of sacred art based on historicist aesthetics. The most active department was the department of music, *Obecná jednota cyrilská* (1879-1953).<sup>55</sup> It was inspired by the Cecilian Unity in German lands (1870), replacing paid musical ensembles with voluntary choirs, organized as civic associations. However, the proposal for bilingual Cecilian unity in Bohemia was rejected as a project hostile to the state (1874), Lehner waited for the new Taaffe government and founded the independent Czech-language Unity (1879). Editing activities were part of the work. *Cyril* magazine (1874-1948) supported the awareness of the task of continuing the once high level of Czech church choirs, there were also regular reports on events in the neighboring Slavic nations in the common state.

### *The Role of the Austrian State – Military Bands and Society*

A specific musical tradition, in which Bohemian musicians played a significant role, was the military music network. As Eduard Hanslick wrote, no other musical event was as democratic as the public productions of the regimental

<sup>52</sup> An important example is the *Cecilská hudební jednota* (Cecilian Music Society) in Ústí nad Orlicí, which arose from the illegal continuation of the activities of the Confraternity of St Cecilia (dissolved 1787), and was newly founded (1803) on the model of the Viennese *Tonkünstlersocietät*.

<sup>53</sup> The musical activities of the religious brotherhoods are documented in detail by Karel KONRÁD: *Dějiny posvátného zpěvu staročeského od XV. věku do zrušení literátských bratrstev* [The History of Old Czech Sacred Singing from the 15th Century until the Abolition of Literary Fraternities], Prague: Dědictví sv. Prokopa, I, 1881; II 1893). This comprehensive documentation of the extinct pre-Enlightenment culture is to some extent a polemic against the contemporary celebrations of the jubilee of Joseph II's reforms by German liberal nationalists.

<sup>54</sup> The confiscated property of church institutions was transferred to the state-administered Religious fund (*Náboženská matice/Religionsfond*, 1782), which was retained even after the concordat (1855).

<sup>55</sup> For the history of the Christian Academy see: Václav BABIČKA: *Dějiny Akademie Křesťanské (1875–1952)*, *Sborník archivních prací*, 61 (2011) 2, 464-557.

bands.<sup>56</sup> The Austrian state found an effective way of presenting itself in public space.<sup>57</sup> A specific tradition of Austrian military bands, able to cover the musical needs of every city, emerged in cooperation between patrons of the regiments, bandleaders and manufacturers of brass instruments. Bilingual Prague played an important role in establishing this environment. The Prague Conservatory responded to the new challenges by introducing the teaching of valved brass instruments. Most of the graduates found employment as bandleaders in all cities of the monarchy.<sup>58</sup> After the reorganization of Austrian military music (1850), the Society for the Support of Military Music was founded in Prague (1851), which ran its own military music school. It was intended for graduates of the conservatory with an interest in band leading.<sup>59</sup> The sudden demand for thousands of musicians found a response in the Bohemian lands, where there was unprecedented poverty caused by the war and the demise of domestic textile production. The specificity of the Austrian system consisted in the regular rotation of regiments and in the method of financing. French observers were amazed that Austrian military musicians were financed not by state subventions but by musical societies formed by regimental patrons and officers.<sup>60</sup> This system greatly encouraged the mobility of musicians, many of whom remained as music teachers and founders of civic brass bands. The Austrian state thus created an environment, which united the initiatives of various layers of society. Military bands later also established string groups and became a welcome addition to the local music associations. At the end of the nineteenth century, serious competition arose for them in the form of civil brass bands.

<sup>56</sup> »Es gibt keinen Kunstgenuß, der in so hohem Grade demokratisch heißen kann als das Spiel der Militärbanden. Da darf ein Jeder theilnehmen, ohne Eintrittsgeld und Salontoilette [...]« Eduard HANSLICK: *Die Musik in Wien, Die österreichisch-ungarische Monarchie in Wort und Bild. Wien und Niederösterreich. 1. Abtheilung: Wien*, Vienna: k. k. Hof- und Staatsdruckerei, 1886, 135.

<sup>57</sup> For more cfr. Simon KOTTER: *Die k. (u.) k. Militärmusik. Bindglied zwischen Armee und Gesellschaft?*, Augsburg: historische Studien, Band 4, Augsburg: Universität Augsburg, 2015.

<sup>58</sup> For more cfr. Tomáš SLAVICKÝ: *Czech Bandmasters in Dalmatia and Littoral Croatia during the Austrian Period (1867-1918) and the Tradition of Civic Brass Bands*, in: Ivana Tomić Ferić – Antonela Marić (eds.): *Between Central Europe and the Mediterranean: Music, Literature and the Performing Arts*, Split: Filozofski fakultet Sveučilišta u Splitu, 2021, 221-236.

<sup>59</sup> Cfr. Vlasta VALEŠ: *Pavlisova Vojenská hudební škola [Pavlis's Military Music School]*, in: Jitka Bajgarová (ed.): *Vojenská hudba v kultuře a historii českých zemí*, Prague: Etnologický ústav Akademie věd České republiky, 2007, 325-333.

<sup>60</sup> For more cf. Tomáš SLAVICKÝ: *Josef Sawerthal's Reisebericht (1846) as a Testimony to the Conditions and Functions of Military Bands in Hungary and Austria before 1848*, in: Stanislav Tuksar – Vjera Katalinić – Petra Babić – Sara Ries (eds.): *Glazba, umjetnosti i politika: revolucije i restauracije u Europi i Hrvatskoj 1815.-1860. / Music, Arts and Politics: Revolutions and Restorations in Europe and Croatia, 1815-1860*, Zagreb: Croatian Academy of Sciences and Arts, Department for History of Croatian Music – Croatian Musicological Society, 2021, 501-515.

### *New Forms of Patronage*

Changes in the economy and society were also reflected in forms of patronage. Alongside the aristocrats, who gradually lost their economic background but felt obligations to society, new patrons appeared who opened up economic opportunities and shared responsibility. The nobility was gradually joined by the bourgeoisie and business firms. For example, the Prague Conservatory left the rented building in 1885, receiving a new building »Rudolfinum« with a large concert hall as a gift from the Bohemian Savings Bank (*Česká spořitelna/Böhmische Sparkasse*). The architect Josef Hlávka (1831-1908) was a prominent patron of the late nineteenth century. He programmatically invested in supporting Czech-language culture and education, and established, in addition to several charitable institutions, the Czech Academy of Sciences, Arts and Letters as a private foundation (1891), which had its own music department, and held competitions and scholarships.

The story of the founding of the Czech National Theater, the theater fire of 1881 and the reconstruction of the building from the funds gathered through national collections (1883), was often remembered as an extraordinary model of national solidarity. However, a similar kind of support in the form of a collaboration between the state, wealthy patrons and citizens had already been already common, having been proven above all in public collections for the completion of the Prague Cathedral (from 1840) or for the construction and maintenance of Prague hospitals. With a deeper interest in the history of modern patronage, it is important to pay attention to the social climate throughout Austria and, above all, to the formative experience of the Napoleonic Wars, when the need for extraordinary charitable commitments arose and the state was unable to cater to those needs. An example of the transformation of a charitable patronage is the documented history of the Prague convent of the Sisters of St Elizabeth (1719-1957), who for a long time operated the only women's hospital in Prague.<sup>61</sup> This hospital survived the wars and epidemics of the nineteenth century thanks to donors and public collections, including regular benefit concerts. In its accounting, it is possible to read a gradual shift from aristocratic and bourgeois foundations to modern forms of corporate sponsorship and contracts with insurance companies. The emergence of a new generation was evident in the founding of parallel associations such as *Kruh mladých hudebníků* (1874) or *Český spolek pro komorní hudbu* (1896) competing with the utraquist *Spolek pro komorní hudbu* (*Kammermusikverein*, 1876) and many others.<sup>62</sup>

<sup>61</sup> Jitka KŘEČKOVÁ – Hedvika KUCHAROVÁ: *Dějiny konventu sester alžbětinek. 300 let od jejich příchodu* [History of the Convent of the Sisters of Saint Elizabeth. 300 Years Since Their Arrival]. Prague: Konvent sester alžbětinek v Praze, 2020, 66-68.

<sup>62</sup> For a detailed overview of musical institutions, associations and syndicates founded between the end of the nineteenth century and the First World War, see *Institute*, in: J. FUKAČ – J. VYSLOUŽIL, *Slovník české hudební kultury*, 373-374.

The sources of the nineteenth century therefore reveal a different panorama than that offered by the traditionally established post-Young Czech narrative, which wrote the history of the Czech national movement exclusively as the history of the echoes of revolutions. Later it was even more sharpened as a reckoning with the old society and the building of a new one. Seen from the perspective of music patronage, it was part of a much broader bond of civic co-responsibility in which all social classes were involved. The transfer of competences from mutual obligations to the ideal of mutual civil solidarity was non-violent and gradual in this environment. Both the ideals of the Enlightenment and the negative experience with Josephinism, the Napoleonic regime and the civil war of 1848 played their role here. The support of a number of other institutions was also based on very similar principles, from church choirs to military bands to newly founded civic music associations and theaters, many of which were later placed at opposite poles as a result of the national and political polarization of society.

### *Conclusion*

Using the example of the Bohemian Kingdom, we can clearly see that the founding of musical institutions in Austria took place in synergy with old and new forms of patronage and with the participation of all levels of society. It was a gradual transformation during which modern civil relations were created, while at the same time the benefits of the old patrimonial system were preserved. Communication in cultural life was certainly not just a mutual struggle between nations and social classes, as was later presented. Modern nationalism supported the self-confidence of nations, but at the same time worsened their mutual communication and later caused the controlled selection of cultural memory. In the nineteenth century, political parties and associations were gradually less willing to reach a consensus, but musical life in a relatively poor state would be unthinkable without good relations and mutual help. Establishing relationships between newly formed national cultures can be an interesting topic of music historical research in the future.

*Sažetak*

OD PATRIMONIJALNOG DO GRAĐANSKOG STANDARDA  
GLAZBE ZA SVE. TRANSFORMACIJE GLAZBENIH INSTITUCIJA  
U ČEŠKOJ U 19. STOLJEĆU I PROBLEMI NJIHOVE GLAZBENOPOVIJESNE  
INTERPRETACIJE

Tema uspostave modernih glazbenih institucija izazov je za novu perspektivu transformacijskih procesa u multinacionalnoj Austriji. Kraljevina Češka (Böhmen) primjer je dvojezične zemlje u kojoj se prilično uspješno provela modernizacija glazbenog obrazovanja, a ujedno i razvoj češkog nacionalnog pokreta, uključujući izgradnju kulturnih institucija građanskih udruga. Ti su se procesi odvijali načelno mirnim putem bez revolucija, u međusobnoj suradnji različitih slojeva društva. Od velike je važnosti bilo dugotrajno nastojanje da se postigne konsenzus između Čeha i Nijemaca, aristokracije i buržoazije, češkog narodnog predstavništva i austrijske države. Međutim, taj se konsenzus tijekom 19. stoljeća narušio zaoštavanjem nacionalizma s objiju strana, a nakon obaju svjetskih ratova u 20. stoljeću odbacio se i retroaktivno negirao u interpretaciji nacionalne kulturne povijesti. Stoga se u češkoj glazbenoj historiografiji čvrsto ustalilo tumačenje češkog jezičnog i kulturnog preporoda kao nacionalne i socijalne borbe. Studija se fokusira na pojavu modernih glazbenih institucija kao priču o transformacijama, ali i na problematiku različitih koncepta češkog narodnog preporoda. Predmet su interesa procesi uspostave glazbenih institucija, modeli njihove interakcije i nastojanje da se ostvari međusobna komunikacija novonastalih nacionalnih kultura Austrije.