

Editorial Note

The concept of cultural transfer was developed in the mid-1980s in Germany and France. Originally focused on processes of cultural exchange between these two countries in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, it has been expanded, comprising transfers between religious denominations, social levels, regions, and cities, before 1700 and after 1900 as well.¹ Recently, terms like ‘cultural exchange’ and ‘cultural translation’ have surfaced, replacing the term ‘cultural transfer’.² This shift in terminology points to the fact that cultural transfer does not constitute a unidirectional process but mostly consists of the mutual influences of two or more spheres at various levels.

This journal, the work of thirteen musicologists and theatrologists from research institutes and universities, focuses on cultural and artistic transfers in art music and theatre in Central Europe. The contributions of the authors, who have already collaborated as team members in the *Poetics of Contemporary Performance Art* (VEGA 2/ 0110/19) and *Towards a Common Regional History of Our Nation Building Strategies. Traveling Directors, Musicians* (Visegrad Grants 2020 – 2021) projects, deal with the topic not only with regard to history and the present, but also in terms of future perspectives. They bring information on the role and status of music and theatre art and ponder over their possibilities in the open cultural environment of the twenty-first century. Cultural transfer/cultural exchange thus highlight the cultural conjunctions, as well as differences, in regions which used to be homogeneous.

The first thematic unit of the journal focuses on the period of the nineteenth century and the early twentieth century up to 1918 when musical theatre in Austria and, later, in Austria-Hungary, fulfilled a representative role in the bourgeois society. The musicologist Péter Bozó (Institute for Musicology, Research Centre for the Humanities, Budapest) deals with intersections

1 See e.g. ESPAGNE, Michel – WERNER, Michael. Deutsch-Französischer Kulturtransfer im 18. und 19. Jahrhundert. Zu einem neuen interdisziplinären Forschungsprogramm des C.N.R.S. In *Francia*, 1985, Vol. 13, pp. 502 – 510; WERNER, Michael – ZIMMERMANN, Bénédicte (eds.). *De la comparaison à l'histoire croisée*. Paris, 2004.

2 BEIDELMAN, Thomas (ed.). *The Translation of Cultures*. London, 1971.

in the reception of the works of Richard Wagner and Jacques Offenbach in nineteenth-century Budapest. It is uncommon to juxtapose these two composers, so different in terms of genre and ideology. Nevertheless, as Bozó points out, contemporaneous Hungarian press compared them to each other and evaluated them against each other, and this stemmed from the fact that their works appeared roughly at the same time and in the same institution, the National Theatre, and both composers gave guest performances there within a short span of time.

In her study, the musicologist Jana Laslavíková (Institute of History of the Slovak Academy of Sciences, Bratislava) focuses on cultural transfers between imperial Vienna and Upper Hungarian Pressburg. In the late nineteenth century, memories of the bygone glory of this coronation city still lingered on, although only indirectly, and Pressburg and Vienna remained in close contact despite growing Hungarianization. On the example of benefit performances in the Municipal Theatre (built in 1886), the author discusses the characteristic features of theatrical life in the city, with an emphasis on the close connection of the repertoire of Viennese theatres, which gave regular guest performances in Pressburg, and the local Municipal Theatre.

The study of the musicologist Cristina Scuderi (Karl-Franzens-University Graz) takes the reader to the southern parts of the monarchy, to the shores of the Adriatic Sea. From the aspect of cultural transfers, this region is remarkable indeed. Situated on the crossroads of the Slavic, the Germanic, and the Latin world, it is characterised by a diverse mixture of cultures. The author focuses on cultural transfer on the example of the operations of opera houses in Istria and Dalmatia between 1861 and 1918. Although each had its own history, different funding, and varying opera seasons, the impresarios did their best to create an interconnected theatre network, partly with the aim to reduce operating costs.

The study of the musicologist Tomasz Pudłocki (Institute of History, Jagiellonian University, Krakow) transports us from the south of the monarchy to its eastern parts. The author focuses on the growing significance of music in the life of the inhabitants of Eastern Galician provincial towns in a period ranging from 1867 to 1914. He sheds light on the prominent guest performances of Polish, Jewish, and Ukrainian ensembles and instrumentalists, and on the concerts of Czech and German ensembles. Local musicians (composers, instrumentalists, singers) were forced to fulfil their national obligations and they focused not only on the local implementation of the latest European musical trends but, primarily, on emphasising national ele-

ments in their ethnic musical culture. The author asks a fundamental question whether these professional musicians were local ambassadors for elite European culture, promoting the universal meaning in music, or whether they primarily utilised music for national purposes.

The subsequent case studies focus on prominent figures in art and analyse their lives and activities in the theoretical framework of cultural transfer. Tatjana Marković (Austrian Academy of Sciences, Austrian Centre for Digital Humanities and Cultural Heritage, Vienna) discusses the fate of two Serbian musicians, the violinist Dragomir Krančević (1847 – 1929) and the soprano Karola Jovanović (1879 – 1958). Both artists built a successful career in Vienna and in other towns of the Habsburg Monarchy (Budapest, Olomouc), and the author explores how they were influenced by adapting to their new environments, i.e. to the dominant cultural politics expressed by repertoire, gender policy, guest performances etc. The study of Veronika Kusz (Institute for Musicology, Research Centre for the Humanities, Budapest), the curator of the legacy of Ernő (Ernst von) Dohnányi (1877 – 1960), offers an original perspective on this composer, conductor and pianist, whose fate took him from Pressburg and Budapest as far as Argentina and the USA. The author focuses on Dohnányi's performing and pedagogical activities. She conveys Dohnányi's views on teaching musical performance based on his lectures, interviews, prefaces, and memoirs.

The second thematic unit of this publication concentrates on the period that followed the birth of the Czecho-Slovak Republic (1918). In Slovakia, it brought about, *inter alia*, the establishment of the Slovak National Theatre. Last year, we commemorated the centenary of this first national stage of ours, and this gave the primary impetus to the birth of this publication. This unit opens with the study of Katarína Haberlandová and Laura Krišteková (Institute of History of the Slovak Academy of Sciences, Bratislava), bridging this part symbolically with the previous one through the stories of the buildings of the Slovak National Theatre. The first one, the historical building, was erected at the time of the monarchy (1886), and simultaneous theatre operations began in the second one in 2007. In their study, the authors verify the thesis that, similarly to the establishment of the Slovak National Theatre being a key event in the cultural history of Slovakia, the choice of the location for both theatre buildings represents fundamental phases of urban planning in Bratislava in these two different historical periods.

The subsequent studies shed light on the operations of the Slovak National Theatre from the beginning of its existence until the end of World War II.

Jiří Kopecký's study (Institute of Czech Literature of the CAS) traces how the repertoire was shaped in the first decade of its existence from the viewpoint of tender procedures for composing new operas. The analysis of the Czech element of its repertoire motivated the author to formulate the research question how such a massive and relatively easy transfer of works written for concrete Czech stages at least a quarter of a century earlier could take place. In his view, the opera tenders, which strictly prescribed the conditions for the character of the operas, were one of the possible keys. Jiří Kopecký's topic of the status of Czech works in the repertoire of the Slovak National Theatre in the inter-war Czechoslovak Republic is further explored by Lenka Křupková (Department of Musicology, Faculty of Arts, Palacký University in Olomouc) in her case study of the stagings of Vítězslav Novák's operas. The ambition of the composer was to assert his operas on German stages, but the dissolution of the monarchy was not conducive to this. In other foreign opera houses, his works, which had exclusively Czech themes, did not receive a warm welcome. Nevertheless, the Slovak National Theatre showed great interest in Vítězslav Novák's oeuvre and, through a tour of the Slovak National Theatre in the Viennese Stadttheater, it finally made its way to this metropolis of the former Austria-Hungary, too.

The new socio-political conditions arising from the dissolution of Czechoslovakia and the birth of the Slovak Republic (1939 – 1945) brought about significant changes in the field of culture, too. The study of Branko Ladič (Department of Musicology, Faculty of Arts, Comenius University, Bratislava), situated in this turbulent period of European history, focuses on cultural exchange between allied countries. He traces the stagings of opera novelties in the Slovak National Theatre composed by composers from such countries, their musical and theatrical rendering, and their perception by the Bratislava audience.

The third unit of our publication focuses on cultural and artistic transfers today when, in the context of a globalised Europe, the mobility of composers and performers naturally leads to a globalisation of music and theatre art, too.

As it was between the first and the second unit, this unit also opens with a study that bridges the topic over a century, from the birth of the Slovak National Theatre to the present day. Michaela Mojžišová (Institute of Theatre and Film Research, Art Research Centre of the Slovak Academy of Sciences, Bratislava) focuses on the development of Slovak opera staging practice from the viewpoint of cultural transfer. She concludes that, whether directly or

indirectly, the most valuable inspirations for musical theatre came from the international artistic milieu. Her study traces the reception of key European drama poetics of the twentieth century on the stage of the Opera of the Slovak National Theatre from the inter-war period, influenced by the aesthetics of expressionism, through the aesthetics of socialist realism under the aegis of the Russian director and pedagogue Konstantin Stanislavski and the subsequent era of music-psychological realism in the spirit of the works of the director and pedagogue Walter Felsenstein, up to the new era of Slovak opera formed in direct contact with the latest European trends in theatre, partly intermediated by guest staging teams.

The study of the teatrologist Martin Hodoň from the same academic institution explores another area of music drama: contemporary dance. In his case study examining contemporary dance in the context of Slovak and European discourse, the author focuses on the dance ensemble Les SlovaKs, which was active in Brussels. In an effort to characterise the poetics of this ensemble which fuses “local” and “global”, his text concentrates on the work of its choreographer Anton Lachký, who uses extreme tools of musical expression in his creations, balancing between classical music and techno. The publication closes with the study of Martin Hodoň’s colleague from the Institute of Theatre and Film Research, teatrologist Zuzana Timčíková. She analyses the creations of the independent Slovak theatre ensemble Odivo, which fuses different genres. Since its productions are based primarily on non-verbal images enhanced with visual and musical elements, they have a growing potential to make their way to the international theatre scene, too.

A tendency to internationalise theatre is a strong phenomenon in our time. This publication aims to open a discussion on what the various European cultures can mutually offer today. One of the principles of cultural transfer is a search for understanding, which enriches not only the recipient of the art, but culture as a whole, too. It is this quest for understanding that forms the central motto of our publication.

Michaela Mojžišová