

Entertainment or National Duty? The Role of Music in the Life of Eastern Galician Provincial Towns 1867 – 1914

Tomasz Pudłocki

*Jagiellonian University / The Archive of Sciences of the Polish Academy of Sciences
and the Polish Academy of Arts and Sciences in Krakow, Poland*

Abstract: The author cites a number of examples of musical life in provincial towns of Eastern Galicia in the autonomy period (1867 – 1914). The centres promoting musical culture were music societies (mostly for Poles) and “Bojan” singing societies (organized by local Ruthenians/Ukrainians, promoting mostly their national music). In every town, there were a few, or even over a dozen, private music schools, and musical education – very popular before the First World War – followed the educational models for middle and upper classes, popular at the turn of the nineteenth and the twentieth centuries. Although music was largely perceived as entertainment, musical life in Galician provinces showed clear gender divisions and some artistic initiatives were perceived as manifestations of national rivalry.

Keywords: Eastern Galicia, provincial towns, music societies, private music schools, entertainment, national rivalry

On 4 January 1900, a correspondent for the “Kurier Stanisławowski” newspaper reported with embarrassment how members of the Stanisław Moniuszko Music Society from Stryi were received when giving a guest concert in Kalush: “Last time I already wrote about our symbolic school, the Kalush Music Society, and Ruthenian theatre. I have not written yet about our exemplary hospitality, the evidence of which may be the evening performance the Moniuszko Music Society from Stryi organized in our town the other day. Over twenty people came to us, sparing no expense or effort, so that we could listen to some new songs unknown to us, and some exciting poems and skilfully rehearsed choral pieces, but we are not interested in such delicacies. Perhaps, if a circus had arrived... but some kind of a music society, and non-professionals as well! Yes, this is our gratitude, this is our hospitality. Over twenty people arrived to sing for us, and the number

of audience members also amounted to twenty. The members of the Stryi Music Society were not even able to cover their travel expenses; and leaving our town, they promised they would forbid even their grandchildren to ever go and perform in Kalush. The same evening the Ruthenian theatre was packed fully, even though nothing special was on. It was “Baby” (Women), a comedy by [Zygmunt] Przybylski, poorly translated and even more poorly enacted.”¹

The quoted excerpt by no means applied to the people of Kalush only. Other correspondents from the provincial towns of Galicia also frequently complained about the audiences, who preferred light-hearted and unsophisticated comedies to a more serious and ambitious repertoire. In the report from Kalush, one more motif stands out: a Polish music society from the nearby Stryi is trying to develop their activities and promote Polish composers, and the people of Kalush – apparently regardless of their nationality and social groups – prefer a comedy, poorly translated from Polish to Ukrainian. Later in the article, the author stressed that, although the director of the theatre of the Ukrainian Ruska Beskida Society, Tytus Gembicki², had performed in Kalush for six weeks with success, the concert by the people of Stryi was a novelty and, as such, should have met with more interest from the public. Obviously, even poorer performances by the Lviv actors’ troupe must have been of much better quality, especially when directed by a famous professional like Gembicki, than the singing of the amateur artists from Stryi. Yet, this is not the main message of the article; rather, it implies Polish-Ukrainian rivalry in the fields of art and culture.

This seemingly immaterial report of a concert in a small town, in Kalush, seems to be a perfect introduction to the discussion about the extent to which music was subject to national rivalry between Poles and Ukrainians in Eastern Galicia at the time of its autonomy. Although the Kingdom of Galicia and Lodomeria was not officially divided into eastern and western parts, 1850 saw a separation of court jurisdiction (of the appellate court of second instance) into two districts with their seats in Lviv and Kraków. Other institutions, including law societies, notaries’ offices, medical asso-

1 *Kurier Stanisławowski*, 1900, Vol. 15, Issue 746, p. 2, 7 January 1900.

2 GEMBICKI, T. In *Słownik Biograficzny Teatru Polskiego 1765 – 1965*. (Ed. Z. Rzaszewski). Warszawa : Państwowe Wydawnictwo Naukowe 1973, p. 186. About the Ukrainian theatre in Galicia see more in ЧАРНЕЦЬКИЙ, С. *Історія Українського театру в Галичині. Нариси, статті, Матеріали Світлини*, Львів : Літопис 2014.

ciations, pharmaceutical associations, chambers of commerce, and chambers of industry, also adjusted to this situation and this became the basis for the later division into Western and Eastern Galicia as well. The court of appeal in Lviv had ten subordinate court districts in larger cities of the region, in Kolomyia, Ternopil, Stanyslaviv, Berezhany, Zolochiv, Stryi, Sambir, Przemyśl, Sanok, and the capital – Lviv. In this article, I would like to take a look at selected examples of music in the life of Eastern Galicians, in particular such issues as musical education (both in public secondary schools and in private music schools), the promotion of musical culture by specially appointed societies, the role of musical performances in national celebrations, and music as a form of entertainment. The key question I would like to provide an answer to is whether music in the last decades of the Habsburg Monarchy was a neutral area for shaping aesthetic impressions and increasing sensitivity to art, thus propagating musical trends from large cities in the provinces, or – using examples from Eastern Galicia – whether it was also a tool of power, indicating the cultural “superiority” of some nations over others. It is not my intention to discuss the content promoted by particular composers as part of the national schools popular at the time, as Galician provinces were not usually the place of their musical activities or the place where new models of musical expression came into being. I am more interested in the reception of their work and the manner of writing about artists at a time summed up by Richard Wagner as a period in which it was impossible to separate poetizing from politicizing.

Musical Education

According to the convention of the time, all members of the upper and middle classes, and pretenders thereto, were expected to be familiar with music at least to some extent. Musical education was obligatory in the case of children from so-called “good families”. No wonder that, in all towns and cities, the children of the urban middle class and intelligentsia were sent to private music schools, of which there were plenty. Whether the students were talented at all was of minor importance; mastering the rudiments of playing an instrument was mandatory if one belonged to a specific social class. Town residents had a lot to do with music, though it is not always sure on what level. This is how Tadeusz Porembalski recalled growing up in Przemyśl before the First World War: “In my time, Przemyśl was the Polish *Napoli qui canta* – Naples, the Singing City. Apart from the

Ruthenian (Ukrainian) choir, there were choirs of the Music Society, of cathedrals, of the Salesians, school choirs. Singing in a choir was the done thing.”³

Residents of Galicia would come in contact with music almost everywhere. In Roman Catholic churches, singing to the accompaniment of the organ was one of the basic settings for the liturgy; in Greek Catholic and Orthodox churches, the people responsible for the music were the deacons and the choirs and, in synagogues, cantors. Obviously, the quality of music depended on a lot of factors, including the generosity of the higher – or lower – rank spiritual leaders (bishops, parish priests, rabbis) and their understanding of the role of music in shaping religious attitudes. On the eve of the First World War, there were plenty of gifted leaders of cathedral choirs and composer priests in Przemyśl, the third largest city in Galicia and the seat of two dioceses, a Latin and a Uniate one.⁴

Up until the early twentieth century, singing was an optional subject in public *gimnazjums* (grammar schools) in Galicia; students could choose between music, calligraphy, or extra lessons of a foreign language (usually French, rarely English, as these were not obligatory subjects). Despite the small number of lessons devoted to musical education (two hours a week, usually in junior forms), some schools boasted student choirs, largely thanks to the involvement of catechists and headmasters.⁵ That was the case e.g. in the *gimnazjum* in Sanok. The rich choir traditions of this school were recalled years later by Bronisław Filipczak: “I enrolled at the *gimnazjum* in the 1888/89 school year [...] At that time, only Ukrainian youths had a mixed vocal ensemble, with boy sopranos and altos, for the sake of the Greek Catholic church rite. There was always a student among them who knew how to lead a choir, which the catechist of that rite, Rev. Moskalik, was aware of. Some Polish students also belonged to that group and took part in the services at the Orthodox church on holidays according to the Greek Catholic rite. And likewise, the group (Ukrainians as well as Poles) would perform in church masses in the Latin rite, singing Polish hymns.”⁶

3 Zakład Narodowy im. Ossolińskich we Wrocławiu, manuscript 15394/II: POREMBALSKI, T. *Wspomnienia z lat 1896 – 1960*, p. 111.

4 See more in PUDEŁOCKI, T. *Iskra światła czy kopczyca pochodnia? Inteligencja w Przemyślu w latach 1867 – 1939*. Kraków : Historia Jagellonica, 2009.

5 See more in WAŚACZ-KRZTOŃ, J. *Edukacja muzyczna młodzieży gimnazjalnej w Galicji Zachodniej w dobie autonomii*. Rzeszów : Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Rzeszowskiego, 2019.

6 FILIPCZAK, B. *Chór i orkiestra gimnazjalna w najwcześniejszych latach*. In *Księga Pamięt-*

When, in 1890, Tomasz Tokarski became the head of the Sanok *gimnazjum*, a secular instructor was employed to teach singing to the students; he set up a separate choir composed of Polish students. Secular songs were included in the repertoire and, at events requiring a larger number of choristers, the group was joined by students from the Ukrainian choir, who, as a rule, used to perform mainly during services in the Orthodox church. Both choirs were the school's showpieces until the outbreak of the First World War.⁷

However, the situation in the Sanok *gimnazjum* was not typical. Galician schools would rarely have their own choirs. Even if a teacher happened to set up and conduct an ensemble, when he was moved to another school, which happened quite often, the work was discontinued for the lack of a suitable successor. It was only the liberalization of the education law at the beginning of the twentieth century, allowing for a lot of new initiatives in schools, that provided a broader scope for developing interests and talents also in the field of music. In some schools, not only choirs but school orchestras were also established. To a large extent, this depended on the school staff with suitable musical education. This was the case e.g. in *Gimnazjum No. 3* in Przemyśl, where the professors Jan Barącz, Tadeusz Gawryś, and Witold Nowak decided to establish a school orchestra after a successful Mickiewicz poetry evening.⁸

Its first performance before a larger audience from outside the school was the idea of the headmaster, Stanisław Goliński. He had decided to establish a dormitory for the students and the idea required a lot of funds. That is why, in May 1908, a fundraising concert was organized with the participation of the orchestra, the school choir, and the female soloists Maria Pillerówna from Przemyśl and Maria Glazerówna from Lviv. The highlight of the concert was the overture to the opera *Tancredi* by Gioachino Rossini.⁹ In subsequent years, the orchestra enjoyed great success and performed in the town at various events.¹⁰ This is how Tadeusz Porembalski described those times: "Our

kowa Gimnazjum Męskiego w Sanok 1888 – 1958. (Ed. Józef Stachowicz). Kraków : Państwowe Instytut Wydawniczy 1958, p. 157.

7 Ibid., pp. 157 – 159.

8 *Słowo Polskie*, 1907, Vol. 12, Issue 573, p. 7, 9 December 1907; *Sprawozdanie Dyrekcji c.k. Gimnazjum z wykładowym językiem polskim w Przemyślu na Zasaniu za rok szkolny 1908*, Przemyśl 1908, p. 14.

9 *Gazeta Przemyśka*, 1908, Vol. 2, Issue 36, p. 3, 5 May 1908; Issue 37, p. 3, 8 May 1908.

10 Cf. *Gazeta Przemyśka*, 1909, Vol. 3, Issue 24, p. 2, 23 March 1909; Issue 36, p. 1, 4 May

orchestra was invited to various shows, fairs, festivities etc. I loved music and participating in the orchestra. [...] Our music skills were pretty high, which we owed to the organizational abilities of our conductor, professor Witold Nowak, and his persistent and hard work. He was assisted by professors Jan Barącz, who introduced a number of Wagner's pieces, and Leon Pilecki, who was a very good French horn player, and also professor Gawryś, a violinist. [...] Our repertoire was quite extensive, as the conductor's file included a lot of marches, waltzes, polkas, mazurkas, cracoviennes, and polonaises. We played various potpourris, numerous other pieces (usually German), a lot of classical music, like overtures to operas and concertos, oratorios, and violin and piano concertos with the accompaniment of the orchestra. The scores and the instruments were brought from Weinhold in Dresden."¹¹

In Porembalski's memories, the school orchestra appears as an ensemble of a professional music school, not of a mere *gimnazjum* where learning music was optional. The very number of instrumentalists and the multitude of music initiatives were impressive for the school's conditions. Porembalski mentioned that the bandmaster of the orchestra of the 77th Infantry Regiment, Jan Pešta, was also of great support to the adolescents by sending some soldiers to the school as additional teachers of particular instruments. Pešta also composed a special *Studenten Overture* for the student orchestra. Porembalski adds that he himself used to conduct rehearsals with the sixteen-member school choir twice a week. "I taught them myself, ran rehearsals, egged on the reluctant ones, and was the life and soul of the events."¹²

Among the schools which rose above mediocrity as regards the quality of their choirs and instrumental ensembles, we should mention the Ukrainian *gimnazjum* in Kolomyia. On 3 March 1913, the students of the school organized an evening in memory of the composer Mykola Lysenko, who had died a few months before, and performed a number of his pieces.¹³ The *gimnazjum* in Jasło, with its large school orchestra, also distinguished itself in Galicia.

1909; Issue 37, p. 2, 7 May 1909; Issue 92, p. 2, 16 November 1909; *Echo Przemyskie*, 1910, Vol. 15, Issue 23, p. 2, 20 March 1910; *Słowo Polskie*, 1909, Vol. 14, Issue 139, p. 5, 24 March 1909. See more in PUDŁOCKI, T. Zanim doszło do odnowienia Towarzystwa Muzycznego w Przemyślu... – karta z działalności muzycznej profesorów i uczniów gimnazjum zasańskiego. In *Wczoraj i dziś Towarzystwa Muzycznego w Przemyślu. 150 lat działalności 1862 – 2012*. (Ed. M. Betleja). Przemyśl : Towarzystwo Muzyczne w Przemyślu, 2012, pp. 51 – 71.

11 POREMBALSKI, T. *Wspomnienia z lat 1896 – 1960*, pp. 84 – 85.

12 *Ibid.*, p. 85.

13 *Kurier Kołomyjski*, 1913, Vol. 5, Issue 199, p. 3, 2 March 1913.

The credit for that went mostly to a local teacher, Dr Roman Molenda. The achievements of the Jasło orchestra at a concert in Gorlice on 28 April 1912 were even reported by the Lviv newspaper “Słowo Polskie”: “A concert of classical music: Haydn, Mozart... we had had our doubts, but the result convinced us that it had not been mere bragging. The violin solo to the piano accompaniment, Mozart’s Concerto in D major, fared generally well, the soloist, a seventh grader, deserves genuine praise, and the 44-strong orchestra played Haydn’s *Symphony in E flat major* (especially the Andante) excellently. The Jasło *gimnazjum* orchestra leaders should perhaps think twice before selecting a typical Austrian military march to end a classical music programme; however, the positive results are definitely to their credit.”¹⁴

As soon as a few days later, on 2 May, the students performed in the Jasło “Sokół” Society. Here, also, the audience was delighted with the performance of the soloist, the seventh grader Wiktor Fabian. Apart from the already mentioned symphony by Haydn, the orchestra played the composer’s *Serenade*, as well as *Elegiac Polonaise* by Zygmunt Noskowski. The concert, which met with great appreciation by the audience, was repeated in late June in Rymanów and Iwonicz for spa visitors.¹⁵

Of course, it was rare for public or private *gimnazjums* in the provinces to have such first-rate orchestras. Usually, young students would learn music in private music schools. For instance, before WW1, there were more than ten school owners in Przemyśl, who ran their institutions for over a decade.¹⁶ In provincial Eastern Galicia, the person who distinguished himself above all was Kazimierz Lepianka.¹⁷ Initially, Lepianka was active in Sambir. After moving to Przemyśl, he was a teacher and art director of the school of the Music Society; he also taught at Grzywieński’s school. From 1 September 1901, he ran his own violin school (which survived until the outbreak of the

14 *Słowo Polskie*, 1912, Vol. 17, Issue 206, p. 8, 3 May 1912.

15 Центральний державний історичний архів України у Львові, fond 178 Rada Szkolna Krakowa, opis 3, case 21, pp. 16 – 17.

16 See more in GLINIĄK, S. *Szkoły Muzyczne w Przemyślu (1878 – 1939)*. In *Musica Galliciana*, 2000, Vol. 5, pp. 129 – 144; *Nowy Głos Przemyński*, 1911, Vol. 10, Issue 5, p. 3, 29 January 1911; 1913, Vol. 12, Issue 25, p. 3, 22 June 1913; 1928, Vol. 25, Issue 42, p. 2, 14 October 1928; *Gazeta Przemyńska*, 1911, Vol. 5, Issue 41, p. 3, 15 September 1911; Issue 47, p. 2, 27 October 1911; *Echo Przemyńskie*, 1905, Vol. 10, Issue 11, p. 3, 4 February 1905.

17 See more in BOBOWSKA-HRYNIEWICZ, A. Lepianka Kazimierz. In *Przemyski słownik biograficzny*. (Eds. E. Grin-Piszczek, T. Pudłocki, A. Siciak), Vol. 3. Przemyśl : Towarzystwo Przyjaciół Nauk w Przemyślu, 2016, pp. 105 – 108.

Second World War) and taught in public schools.¹⁸ Lepianka was one of the best virtuosos, who not only repeatedly performed at many events in and outside Przemyśl but was also a popular composer of smaller musical forms. For example, on 8 June 1900, he performed at a concert in the Moniuszko Music Society in Stanyslaviv.¹⁹ However, despite his success in the provinces, Lepianka never had a chance to make a name for himself by giving concerts in large cities. His fate is a good example of an artist whose talent was absorbed by the provinces and who had to earn extra money in public schools to make ends meet.

Many reports on annual student shows in particular schools, as well as their ambitious repertoire, point to considerable competition among the music teachers in Przemyśl, but also to a demand for their services. In every town or city in provincial Galicia, there were between one and over a dozen private music schools. As a rule, they taught one instrument plus music theory, but there were also quite a lot of schools with a wider offer.

More extensive musical education was mostly offered by schools run by music societies. These would often monopolize the musical education offer in the town. On the other hand, talented teachers would sometimes argue with the society's board, not agreeing to work for low wages, leaving and setting up their own private schools – thus the music society's schools often collapsed due to their private school competitors. Advertisements referred to tradition and eminent teaching figures ensuring high-quality education.²⁰

Music Societies – from Music Lovers to Professionals

Music societies existed in almost all provincial Galician cities, though only two of them – in Stanyslaviv and Przemyśl – rose above mediocrity.

In Stanyslaviv, a music society was established in 1871, which later took the name of Stanisław Moniuszko, the most popular Polish composer of songs and operas. Its founder and long-time president was a talented amateur pianist, Baron Franciszek Romaszkan. The first professional art director of the society from 1 September 1880 was a student of the Warsaw Conser-

18 See Archiwum Państwowe w Przemyślu, fond 357: I Państwowe Seminarium Nauczycielskie Żeńskie w Przemyślu, sign. 24; *Echo Przemyśkie*, 1901, Vol. 6, Issue 55, p. 3, 11 July 1901; Issue 86, p. 3, 27 October 1901. See also GLINIĄK, S. *Szkoły Muzyczne w Przemyślu (1878 – 1939)*, p. 137 – 138.

19 In *Kurier Stanisławowski*, 1900, Vol. 15, Issue 767, p. 3, 3 June 1900.

20 In *Gazeta Samborska*, 1907, Vol. 7, Issue 42, p. 2, 18 October 1907.

vatoire, violinist Michał Biernacki; his brother conducted the violin class in the society's music school. Besides Polish and European repertoire, the choir and the orchestra performed also pieces composed by its art director.²¹

The elections for the society's board on 30 March 1900 were quite typical in terms of gender structure and authority in the organizational life of Galicia. Despite its extensive structure and as many as thirty positions in the particular bodies of the society, among so many men (and some of them holding two posts) there was not a single post held by a local woman. Whereas, paradoxically, out of the four teachers in the society's music school, as many as three were women who often gave concerts in Stanyslaviv: Adelman-Majewska (piano), Maria Gembarzewska (solo singing), Karola Pająkowa (recitation, elocution).²² It turns out, therefore, that in the late nineteenth century, even in music societies where women had long occupied an important place, gender division in the authorities was very clear. It is all the more surprising given that the press did not attempt to conceal the musical talents of women. "Ms Adelman-Majewska is a one-time world-famous artist who, having withdrawn to the privacy of her home, became a pillar of the Music Society, always ready to contribute to its welfare with good advice or a good deed. It is to her that we owe the Society's revival [...]. And Ms Gembarzewska's singing? Why, it is the voice that speaks strongest to the human heart – this voice is so skilled, there is so much passion, wistfulness and force in it [...]."²³

The reforms undertaken in the institution were so successful that, in 1904, under director Wiktor Miller, a new section was set up – a permanent opera department. Under Miller's baton, the first operetta performances began to appear in Stanyslaviv. Their success and approval by the local press allowed them to reach for a more ambitious repertoire. On 2 June 1906, *Faust*, Charles Gounod's opera in five acts, was staged and it opened a golden era in the history of the Music Society. This is how Eustachy Bukowski, an amateur singer who became a local music star thanks to *Faust*, remembered it: "The decorations were painted by amateurs, the costumes were borrowed with difficulty from the Lviv theatre (I had to give my word

21 See more in CIWKACZ, O. Z dziejów opery amatorskiej Towarzystwa muzycznego im. St. Moniuszki w Stanisławowie (1871 – 1914). [online]. [cit. 7. 11. 2020]. Available at: <http://stanislawow.net/historia/opera.htm>.

22 *Kurier Stanisławowski*, 1900, Vol. 15, Issue 759, p. 3, 8 April 1900; Issue 784, p. 2, 30 September 1900.

23 *Kurier Stanisławowski*, 1900, Vol. 15, Issue 795, p. 2, 16 December 1900.

that they would be returned the same night, right after the performance). All tickets had been sold out, people would leave the box office with nothing, yet we could not repeat the opera, as we could not get the costumes for a second performance. Our rehearsals took place from 8 p.m. until midnight and our three-month work resulted in a single performance. Feeling bitter, I decided I would never stage an opera again without our own decorations, costumes, props, and scores.”²⁴

When it transpired that the audience demanded a Polish opera, on 4 January 1907 the society staged *Janek* by Władysław Żeleński. The final rehearsals were conducted by the composer himself, who had come down from Kraków specifically for this occasion.²⁵ The premiere and the author were fêted but, despite the enthusiasm, the undertaking was a failure from the financial aspect. Eventually, however, after paying off its debts in 1909, the Society established its own permanent orchestra. A few years later, they decided to give a concert outside Stanyslaviv for the first time, and the slightly larger Przemyśl was chosen for a guest performance of this amateur orchestra. Here, on 4 June, it performed *Halka* by Stanisław Moniuszko and, on the next day, *La bohème* by Giacomo Puccini.²⁶ As Bukowski recalled: “In 1911, we already had a few operas in our repertoire. As our amateurs were busy with their regular work, preparing one opera would take some three months. In our little town, an opera could be repeated six times at the most, even though every time some variety was added to the performances by inviting some stars. The satisfaction was actually disproportionate to the efforts. That is why we wanted to expand our activities by organizing trips to other towns.”²⁷

Unluckily, on the first night, the Stanyslaviv ensemble had to compete with Henry’s Circus from Ternopil, widely advertised in Przemyśl by processions of the circus artists with exotic animals through the streets. Bukowski came up with the idea to do a similar thing for their performance. In the afternoon, the musicians walked around the whole town. The director headed the procession, followed by the ladies, the singers, and the whole orchestra

24 Quoted after CIWKACZ, O. Z dziejów opery amatorskiej Towarzystwa muzycznego im. St. Moniuszki w Stanisławowie (1871 – 1914).

25 In *Kurier Stanisławowski*, 1907, Vol. 22, Issue 1111, p. 3, 6 January 1907; *Kurier Lwowski*, 1907, Vol. 25, Issue 10, p. 2, 6 January 1907.

26 In *Echo Przemyśkie*, 1911, Vol. 16, Issue 46, p. 3, 8 June 1911.

27 CIWKACZ, O. Z dziejów opery amatorskiej Towarzystwa muzycznego im. St. Moniuszki w Stanisławowie (1871 – 1914).

behind, with instruments in their hands. It turned out that the Stanyslaviv artists had intrigued the people of Przemyśl enough to get all their tickets sold out in two hours, and *Halka* became a great success.²⁸ Also, the local press appraised the ensemble very highly. What is more, their subsequent performances met with a very positive response from the audience and the local critics to such an extent that, in the autumn of 1911, the Stanyslaviv opera came to Przemyśl again. The performances also provided an opportunity to reflect upon the organization of life in the town: "We left the hall with our spirits lifted and with a certain regret that, in our third-rate town, we cannot even dream of creating such an artistic ensemble, even though we have the oldest music society in Galicia. How we wish there were a radical change in this respect to fulfil the hopes of our Stanyslaviv guests that 'the results of the Society's efforts will encourage local musicians to take up similar work'."²⁹

The reporter for the *Echo Przemyckie* newspaper was right: the Music Society in Przemyśl was older than the one in Stanyslaviv, as it had been established back in 1865.³⁰ Thanks to its art director, Ludwik d'Arma Dietz, the institution used to organize music evenings for many years, promoting not only the work of famous foreign composers but also of Polish artists, including Przemyśl ones.³¹ Dietz, a graduate of the Music Conservatoire in Warsaw, who took up his post in April 1873, set up a music school at the society and, in October 1878, a women's choir.³² When organizing concerts, private connections would often come in useful. Thanks to the fact that the local music teacher Władysław Cyrbes was friends with the well-known Lviv composer Jan Gall (from 7 Nov 1888 when they played their first concert together in Przemyśl at the Music Society), Gall often gave concerts in Przemyśl.³³

28 Ibid.

29 Ibid.

30 *Gazeta Przemycka*, 1890, Vol. 4, Issue 38, p. 3, 11 May 1890.

31 See, among others, *Gazeta Przemycka*, 1887, Vol. 1, Issue 20, p. 2, 9 October 1887; Issue 22, p. 3, 23 October. Ludwik d'Arma Dietz was one of the most talented Przemyśl composers, most frequently awarded at Galician competitions, e.g. on 12 May 1889, at the ceremonial concert "The Lute" in Lviv, his work *Pieśniarz na chór mieszany, kwintet i fortepian* was played and received the first prize at the annual composition competition announced by the music society in Lviv (see *Gazeta Przemycka*, 1889, Vol. 3, Issue 30, p. 2, 16 May 1889).

32 *Gazeta Przemycka*, 1890, Vol. 4, p. 3, 11 May 1890.

33 *Gazeta Przemycka*, 1888, Vol. 2, Issue 45, p. 4, 4 November 1888. Cyrbes, a renowned artist of his time, also tried his hand at composing. In October 1907, he received the second and

Sometimes, the Music Society tried to present a more serious offer to the local music lovers. For instance, it performed fragments of the oratorios *St. Paul* by Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdy and *The Creation* by Joseph Haydn on 22 January 1879, fragments of *Christus* by Mendelssohn-Bartholdy, *The Seasons* by Joseph Haydn, and *Piano concerto in F minor* by Frédéric Chopin on 6 March 1879, *Athalie* by Mendelssohn-Bartholdy in May 1882, and *The Coronation Mass* by Luigi Cherubini on 3 May 1891.³⁴ From the early twentieth century onward, the society also organized thematic concerts to promote compositions by famous masters. The most successful initiatives included the Moniuszko concert on 10 March 1907, with *Bajka* (A Fable), *Widma* (Apparitions), and a polonaise from *Halka*.³⁵ However, at the beginning of the twentieth century, the society saw a crisis. This can be seen from the fact that, on 2 October 1909, its general meeting was attended by merely sixteen members, giving an incentive to the following reflection in the “Gazeta Przemyska” newspaper: “When Przemyśl was a tiny town without any music schools licensed by the governor, the conductor of the cathedral choir, the late Lorenz, and Ratyński, together with over a dozen music lovers, first in St Cecilia Society and then in the Music Society, cultivated divine music with reverence, instilled the cult of music in this place, organized music evenings and concerts with select repertoire, and staged masses by classical masters at the cathedral and at the Franciscan Church.”³⁶

National Celebrations

The various patriotic celebrations, very popular in the autonomy period, always provided a perfect opportunity to display drama and music skills.³⁷

the third prize at the Lviv “Echo” competition for his polonaise *Hej gromadę waszmoścową* and for a mazurka; in 1909, he published these and his other pieces in Kraków (see *Gazeta Przemyska*, 1907, Vol. 1, Issue 43, p. 23, 4 October 1907; 1909, Vol. 3, Issue 44, p. 3, 1 June 1909).

34 *San*, 1879, Vol 1, Issue 4, p. 3, 26 January 1879; Issue 10, p. 3, 9 March; *Reforma*, 1882, Vol. 1, Issue 113, p. 3, 18 May 1882; *Gazeta Przemyska*, 1891, Vol. 5, Issue 35, p. 2, 30 June 1891.

35 *Gazeta Przemyska*, 1908, Vol. 2, Issue 18, p. 3, 3 March 1908.

36 *Gazeta Przemyska*, 1909, Vol. 3, Issue 80, p. 1, 5 October 1909.

37 SIERŻĘGA, P. Obchody rocznic narodowych w Galicji autonomicznej. Stan i perspektywy badań. In *Galicja 1772 – 1918. Problemy metodologiczne, stan i potrzeby badań*. (Eds. A. Kawalec, W. Wierzebień, L. Zaskilniak), Vol. 2. Rzeszów : Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Rzeszowskiego, 2011, pp. 420 – 433.

Both dominant nationalities, the Poles and the Ukrainians, organized annual celebrations in honour of their artists, particularly of national poets, on the occasions of the numerous anniversaries of fights for independence, in honour of major politicians (monarchs), or key events like unions, battles, and constitutions. The Poles would celebrate the anniversary of Adam Mickiewicz's death at the turn of November and December, and the Ukrainians the anniversary of the birth and death of Taras Shevchenko in March. There were plenty of other occasions, too, and the struggle to remain visible in the urban space and emphasize a community's cultural superiority was by no means region-specific.

The line-up during such evenings was pretty schematic. Reciting fragments of poems was combined with staging parts or whole theatrical plays, and occasional lectures or speeches. Of course, music was also present. In the early twentieth century, the Women's Circle in Kolomyia was famous for organizing Adam Mickiewicz poetry evenings and the musical setting was usually provided by the local Moniuszko Music Society.³⁸ A report on a Shevchenko poetry evening which took place on 4 April in Stanyslaviv was symptomatic for such celebrations: "[...] what was most enjoyed was a soprano solo by Miss Proskurnicka, sung with great ease; the sincere and prolonged applause made her add one more song and then repeat it; then there came a violin solo by Miss Jasienicka, a mixed Bojan choir, a baritone solo by Dr Biliński [...] and, finally, Bojan's male choir. Everything fared very well, almost all items had to be repeated; the hall was packed full with local people, a lot of them country folk. The atmosphere was very solemn throughout the evening. After the performance, there was a party at the town club."³⁹

One needs to remember that a serious programme and the nature of such celebrations did not always cater to general taste. When half a year later, on 1 December 1900, the seventieth anniversary of the November Uprising was celebrated in Stanyslaviv, besides the lecture by the local *gimnazjum* teacher Paweł Bryła for this occasion and a drama production, the main task of organizing the programme was taken up by the Moniuszko Music Society. Solo and choir songs were sung. The interest from the public was scarce.⁴⁰

38 *Gazeta Kołomyjska*, 1905, Vol. 17, Issue 47, p. 3, 25 November 1905; Issue 50, p. 3, 16 December 1905; 1906, Vol. 18, Issue 50, p. 5, 14 December 1906; Issue 51, p. 2, 29 December 1906.

39 *Kurier Stanisławowski*, 1900, Vol. 15, Issue 760, p. 3, 15 April 1900.

40 *Kurier Stanisławowski*, 1900, Vol. 15, Issue 794, p. 2, 9 December 1900.

Also, in all secondary schools, the educational authorities allowed to hold annual celebrations in honour of national poets, but only twice a year; Poles commemorated Adam Mickiewicz and Ukrainians – Taras Shevchenko. The programme of these meetings, open to everyone and often organized outside school buildings, was quite similar to the other celebrations in the town. A teacher would deliver a lecture for the occasion and this was followed by recitations and music performances. The latter could be more or less extensive, depending on the programme. For example, on 26 November 1905, at *Gimnazjum No. 1* in Kolomyia during a Mickiewicz poetry evening, *Dziady* (Forefathers' Eve) was staged, directed by the teacher Kazimierz Missona, with music by Jan Głowacki.⁴¹

Normally, such events did not exceed the standard of typical school celebrations; however, there were exceptions. On 4 May 1912, the orchestra and choir of *Gimnazjum No. 3* in Przemyśl organized an open poetry evening to commemorate the centenary of the birth of the poet Zygmunt Krasiński in a large hall at the "Sokół" Society. The music programme was quite extensive and included pieces by Górczycki, Beethoven, Wagner, Niemczycki, Moniuszki, and a local composer, Rev. Józef Polit. The school report said: "The evening drew crowds, fared pretty well and met with appreciation by the local press."⁴² Many other similar evenings were organized by this group till the outbreak of World War I.⁴³

Not only national and patriotic attitudes were emphasized at these events. An interesting initiative was a concert organized in Stanyslaviv on 10 March 1911 in a local theatre to promote ideas of the social democratic party. As the press reported, the evening was full of solo and choir singing as well as recitations of appropriate poems, praising the working class. "The attractions are: Maria Paszkowska-Daszyńska, an MP's wife, former artist of the Kraków theatres, Mr Adam Ludwig, our old friend, currently a singer at the Lviv opera, and... fabulously low ticket prices."⁴⁴

41 *Gazeta Kołomyjska*, 1905, Vol. 17, Issue 47, p. 3, 25 November 1905; Issue 49, p. 2, 9 December 1905.

42 *Sprawozdanie Dyrekcji CK Gimnazjum z wykładowym językiem polskim w Przemyślu na Zasaniu za rok szkolny 1912*. Przemyśl, 1912, pp. 6, 14.

43 *Echo Przemyskie*, 1912, Vol. 17, Issue 39, pp. 2 – 3, 16 May 1912; Issue 97, p. 3, 5 December 1912; *Słowo Polskie*, 1912, Vol. 17, Issue 575, p. 3, 4 December 1912.

44 *Kurier Stanisławowski*, 1901, Vol. 16, Issue 808, p. 3, 17 March 1901.

A Culture of Leisure

Although musical performances were also used to add variety to the programmes of official celebrations, music in the provincial towns of Galicia at the turn of the nineteenth and the twentieth centuries was treated above all as a form of entertainment and pastime. It is worth quoting Jadwiga Hoff, who said that the leisure time of the residents of towns and cities in the region had a largely seasonal character.

“Autumn and the period of Advent, as well as the time of Lent were – as it was written – a time of “sad autumn weeks”, “boring long evenings” or “times of prayer and calming down”. What followed was a period of carnival follies, spring picnics, open-air festivities and, finally, summertime, a special season regarded by many (including women) to be the only time when one could feel genuinely free.”⁴⁵

During the carnival period, there were balls, banquets, dances, parties – some more sumptuous, some less so, some more successful, some less so. The residents of provincial towns modelled their entertainment after Lviv, Kraków, and Vienna, and usually organized the dances themselves. The biggest problem was getting a good orchestra. Military bands were the most popular ensembles; to secure the participation of instrumentalists (for a fee or even free of charge), the best way was to find influential patrons in church or military circles. This stratagem was often successful and, additionally, it ensured the appearance of a considerable number of unmarried military officers at the parties. This was the case also on 3 February 1894 in Stanyslaviv, when a charity ball for the Kraszewski Hall of Residence was organized in the theatre hall of the Moniuszko Society. The event was held under the patronage of the commander of the local garrison, and the Greek Catholic bishop Julian Kuilovsky. The evening was very successful and the credit for that went largely to the excellent military band.⁴⁶

By the early twentieth century, balls had been events where the intelligentsia and the urban middle class mingled regardless of their nationality and religion. When, in September 1888, the Ukrainian intelligentsia organized a charity ball for St Nicolas Boys’ Hall of Residence, not only Ukrain-

45 HOFF, J. Czas wolny mieszkane miasta galicyjskiego w XIX w. In *Kobieta i kultura czasu wolnego*. (Eds. A. Żarnowska, A. Szwarz). Warszawa: Wydawnictwo DiG, 2001, pp. 88 – 89.

46 *Gazeta Stanisławowska*, 1894, Vol. 4, Issue 49, p. 3, 17 February 1894.

ians but also a lot of Poles had fun, with music played by the 77th Infantry Regiment.⁴⁷

The common carnival balls for the intelligentsia and members of the middle class, irrespective of their nationality or religion, ceased at the beginning of the twentieth century with the further development of national ideology. While in larger cities, the organization of balls only for “their folk” could be pulled off, in many smaller towns it was impossible due to the small number of guests, limited only to the national circle.⁴⁸

Military bands, often composed of very good instrumentalists, enjoyed a great success among the residents of provincial towns. They would not only be invited to grace military events, but they also co-organized the musical life of the town. This concerned, most of all, public holidays (birthdays of the emperor’s family members etc.). They often played from May to September on Sundays and holidays in public places (like town squares, main routes) or popular picnic places, providing entertainment to strollers and holidaymakers.⁴⁹ They would often support just causes. For instance, on 9 May 1900, the orchestra of the 95th Infantry Regiment gave a concert in the theatre hall in Stanyslaviv for the purpose of renovating the graves of the people killed in action in Bohemia during the 1866 war. The local reporter praised both the diversified repertoire and the high-quality performance.⁵⁰ In Przemyśl, the bandmaster from the 10th Infantry Regiment, Červenko, collaborated mainly with the Ukrainian intelligentsia (especially with the choir conductor, Rev. Teodor Pasiczyński) in organizing musical events. He conducted the orchestra at the Narodnyj Dim, among others, at a recital of Salomea Kruszelnicka on 14 November 1911 and at a Verdi evening on 16 December 1913.⁵¹

In spite of appearance, there were quite a lot of opportunities to come across world celebrities. First of all, such opportunities were provided by many travelling drama and music groups, Polish, Ukrainian and German ones. These were often ensembles from Lviv or Kraków, but some used to

47 *Gazeta Stanisławowska*, 1888, Vol. 2, Issue. 40, p. 4, 30 September 1888.

48 See more in PUDŁOCKI, T. „Lolu, gdzie mój frak?” Prowincjonalne bale Galicji Wschodniej w latach 1867 – 1914 jako przykład synkretyzmu estetyki życia codziennego. In *Powinowactwa sztuk w kulturze oświecenia i romantyzmu*. (Eds. A. Seweryn, M. Kulesza-Gierat). Lublin : Wydawnictwo KUL, 2012, pp. 79 – 102.

49 *Kurier Stanisławowski*, 1900, Vol. 15, Issue 766, p. 2, 27 May 1900.

50 *Kurier Stanisławowski*, 1900, Vol. 15, Issue 764, p. 3, 13 May 1900.

51 *Nowy Głos Przemycki*, 1911, Vol. 10, Issue 49, p. 3, 12 November; 1913, Vol. 12, Issue 50, p. 2, 14 December 1913. See more in ЗАБРОВАРНИЙ, С. *З хроніки Народного Дому в Перемишлі (1901 – 1945)*, Львів – Перемишль : Растр-7, 2019.

come from more remote regions, often presenting an interesting and ambitious repertoire. The competition for audiences was big, although, on the eve of the First World War, people were oftentimes satiated with some forms of music, and not even famous Vienna or Lviv names could guarantee the financial success of a project. Such was the case also with a concert on 10 April 1906 in Przemyśl, which was a failure despite the renowned names and the ambitious repertoire. As a commentary went, “[...] the too large a number of concerts during the past music season brought about an understandable satiety and weariness”⁵². No wonder the audience felt sometimes satiated. In November 1909 alone, there were four European-quality concerts in Przemyśl: of the famous Bohemian Quartet of Otokar Ševčík, a disciple of the Bohemian master Jan Kubelik, who played Tchaikovsky’s violin concertos and a concerto by Henri Vieuxtemps, the world-famous French violinist Jacques Thibaud, and a famous Wagnerian tenor from Bayreuth, Anton Julius Schmedes.⁵³

However, the travelling troupes usually performed light and easy pieces, addressed not at refined listeners but a wide audience, including the military, who were the major consumers of services in towns such as Przemyśl or Jarosław.⁵⁴ The advertisement of Julian Myszkowski’s operetta group from Lviv, which after four years’ absence arrived in Stanyslaviv in June 1900, shows perfectly well who was the recipient of this art form: “[...] our audience will rush to the theatre to listen to lively operetta arias and see beautiful ballet productions never seen here before.” It was emphasized that the group was made up of sixty people, including choristers and ballet masters.⁵⁵

The best way to advertise the various undertakings in the provinces was to quote the opinions of the so-called “rich and famous”. If the press in Vienna, Kraków, Lviv, or another city even slightly larger than the one where a given newspaper was published praised this or that artist or a cultural institution (a travelling theatre, an operetta, an ensemble etc.), it was quoted as a poten-

52 *Kurier Przemyski*, 1906, Vol. 1, Issue 10, p. 3, 15 April 1906.

53 *Gazeta Przemyska*, 1909, Vol. 3, Issue 83, p. 2, 15 October 1909; Issue 85, p. 2, 22 October 1909; Issue 91, p. 2, 12 November 1909; Issue 92, p. 3, 16 November 1909; *Echo Przemyskie*, 1909, Vol. 14, Issue 84, p. 2, 24 October 1909; Issue 92, p. 3, 18 November 1909.

54 See BACZKOWSKI, M. *Austriacka załoga wojskowa Przemyśla*, In *Rocznik Przemyski. Historia*, 2018, Vol. 54, Issue 1 (21), p. 3 – 16; idem. *Wojsko austriackie (austro-węgierskie) a miasta Galicji (1772 – 1918)*. In *Galicja. Studia z dziejów społeczno-gospodarczych*. (Ed. by M. Baczkowski, T. Kargol), Kraków : Historia Iagellonica, 2017, pp. 13 – 28.

55 *Kurier Stanisławowski*, 1900, Vol. 15, Issue 768, p. 2, 10 June 1900.

tial magnet to attract the local public. In July 1894, the “Głos Jarosławski” informed its readers that a renowned cellist and professor of the Agramer Musikverein music school in Zagreb, Heinrich Geiger, had been staying in Jarosław for a few days. The local elite begged him to give concerts in the town to the accompaniment of the symphonic orchestra of the 89th Infantry Regiment.⁵⁶ On 7 December 1907, a concert of the renowned Warsaw composer Henryk Malcer, and a young professor of the Warsaw Conservatoire, Paweł Kochański – an outstanding violinist and later world-famous teacher, took place in Przemyśl.⁵⁷ Malcer gave several concerts in Przemyśl; in 1912, his concert for the local branch of Saint Vincent de Paul Ladies’ Society featured local female artists: singer Helena Międzyńska and her accompanying pianist Wanda Cyrbes.⁵⁸ For both of these young and little-known artists, it was a perfect opportunity to show their connections and advertise their own private music schools, which they ran in Przemyśl.

Sometimes, reports of music events used to include content unrelated to music, resulting from ethnic friction and tensions. This happened e.g. after the two concerts of the Nadina Slavianska Russian choir on 15 and 16 January 1900. Although the correspondent could not find any fault with the music, he tried to challenge the quality of the choir’s performance, saying: “[...] its performances lack genuine artistry and intelligence, without which it is hard to imagine high art, whereas what is only too obvious is drilling. [...] After all, where from could those people get the conditions for creating art! One look at them explains everything. Except for the lady director and the accompanist, who look more or less European, there are a number of figures with barbarian, purely Mongolian physiognomies, coarse features, pouting lips, protruding cheeks, and messy hair. However can one expect high inspiration and understanding of art from such people whose very appearance is enough to put one off?”⁵⁹

When the choir from Stanyslaviv set off to perform in Lviv, the correspondent did not try to conceal his contentment when the reaction of the Lviv audience confirmed his own reflections. During the concert, rotten eggs were thrown at the Russians.⁶⁰ A few days later in Sambir, the audience was

56 *Głos Jarosławski*, 1894, Vol. 2, Issue 13, p. 2, 1 July 1894.

57 *Słowo Polskie*, 1907, Vol. 12, Issue 569, p. 7, 6 December 1907.

58 *Słowo Polskie*, 1912, Vol. 17, Issue 460, p. 8, 2 October 1912.

59 *Kurier Stanisławowski*, 1900, Vol. 15, Issue 748, p. 3, 21 January 1900.

60 *Kurier Stanisławowski*, 1900, Vol. 15, Issue 749, p. 2, 28 January 1900.

divided – some were delighted with the performance and others, opponents of the Russian ensemble, broke a window in the concert hall during the concert at the city club, and beat up some of the performers after the concert.⁶¹ At a time of increased nationalism, discourses on the superiority of some nations and peoples over others, including different racial theories, met with a favourable response and were ubiquitous. There were also tensions in the relations between Poles and Ruthenians (Ukrainians) and what united them was their dislike for the Russians. And, although the Russophile movement was quite popular among the Ruthenians, the supporters of the national movement (Ukrainians) could not forgive the Russophiles for their liking for Russia – both factions used to fight tooth and nail, and artists from the Russian Empire giving concerts in Galicia sometimes fell victim to these fights.

Café and restaurant owners also tried to outdo one another in coming up with ideas to attract audiences and it was by no means typical of larger cities only. For example, one of the largest establishments in Przemyśl, Café Habsburg, played host to chamber musicians from Vienna. In Café Edison, from 1 August 1910, an orchestra performed daily and is said to have enjoyed a great success.⁶² Obviously, owners of less refined establishments also used to hire instrumentalists and singers occasionally to entertain their clients, but usually the number of performers was limited to one or two, and the repertoire was not elaborate, either.

Conclusion

A multitude of various musical activities, from purely functional ones, through music-making in schools, to the performances of great artists at the turn of the nineteenth and the twentieth centuries show that the residents of provincial Galician towns had high ambitions. Although they did not have professional theatres or opera houses, they had halls large and fine enough to stage larger music productions like operettas, oratorios, or even operas. It seems that the middle class, trying to emulate the *modus vivendi* of the upper class, incorporated musical education and frequenting musical and theatrical salons into their leisure schedules to such an extent that they would prompt modifications in the cultural offer not only in larger centres

61 *Kurier Stanisławowski*, 1900, Vol. 15, Issue 752, p. 3, 18 February 1900.

62 *Gazeta Przemyśka*, 1910, Vol. 4, Issue 57, p. 3, 29 July 1910; Issue 59, p. 3, 12 October 1910.

but also in smaller towns. The examples of Przemyśl and Stanyslaviv (the two largest towns of Galicia after Lviv and Kraków) show that artists from the whole Habsburg Monarchy and the neighbouring countries did not ignore the region, knowing they would find there audiences large enough for their performances to be cost-effective.

At the same time, one should not forget that, at a time of increased national movements, music did not mean only entertainment. This tendency was particularly visible in the early twentieth century. Poles and Ukrainians mostly promoted the works of their own composers. Nevertheless, even though socio-political life abounded in problems and clashes, the musical culture of the two competing nations remained a relatively neutral sphere; talents who came from a different nation were appreciated. What is more, great composers like Ludwig van Beethoven, Robert Schuman, Richard Wagner, were celebrated regardless of their nationality. However, ensembles from the Russian Empire, whose politics were clearly anti-Polish and anti-Ukrainian, sometimes formed an exception. Contemporary politics, however, would rarely be reflected in the musical tastes of the residents of provincial towns in Galicia, who remained open also to other artistic trends than the ones they were used to.

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Tomasz Pudłocki
Institute of History of the Jagiellonian University
Ul. Gołębia 13
31-007 Kraków
Poland
e-mail: tomasz.pudlocki@uj.edu.pl