Journal of the Royal Musical Association, 2017
Vol. 142, No. 1, 109–136, http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/02690403.2017.1286129

Speaking German, Hearing Czech, Claiming Dvořák

EVA BRANDA

Referring to Antonín Dvořák's Symphony no. 6, op. 60 (1880), Michael Beckerman wrote: 'It is perhaps the most conventional of Dvořák's symphonies – a kind of dues-paying to the Viennese symphonic tradition.'[1] Indeed, discussions of Dvořák's Sixth Symphony – henceforth referred to as the D major Symphony[2] – typically focus on its connections with Vienna. This is not surprising: Dvořák wrote the symphony specifically for the Vienna Philharmonic to be performed during the 1880–1 season; he dedicated it to the Viennese conductor Hans Richter (1843–1916); and he solicited Brahms's opinion on the score before submitting it to the publisher Fritz Simrock. Although the work was eventually rejected by the Vienna Philharmonic, its many allusions to the symphonies of Brahms and Beethoven have been analysed extensively by scholars,[3] and they led David

Email: ebranda@uwo.ca
My research for this article was funded by a doctoral fellowship from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (award no. 752-2009-2217). I wish to thank Caryl Clark, Sherry Lee and Ryan McClelland for reading drafts of this paper.

[1] Michael Beckerman, 'Dvořák', *The Nineteenth-Century Symphony*, ed. D. Kern Holoman (London, 1997), 273–98 (p. 282).

[2] Op. 60 is Dvořák's Sixth Symphony; however, it was generally known as his First during the late nineteenth century, since it was his first published work in the genre. Subsequently, Dvořák's Seventh Symphony was published as his Second; his Fifth as his Third; and his Eighth and Ninth as his Fourth and Fifth respectively. The composer's first four symphonies remained unpublished and largely unknown during his life. It was not until 1916 that Otakar Šourek sorted out the numbering of these works and acknowledged all nine of Dvořák's symphonies. To avoid confusion, I refer to the Sixth as Dvořák's D major Symphony.

[3] David Beveridge, 'Romantic Ideas in a Classical Frame: The Sonata Forms of Dvořák' (Ph.D. dissertation, University of California at Berkeley, 1980), 268–87; Jarmila Gabrielová, 'Antonín Dvořák und Johannes Brahms: Bemerkungen zur Kompositionsproblematik der Symphonie Nr. 6 D-Dur, Op. 60', *Die Instrumentalmusik: Struktur – Funktion – Ästhetik*, ed. Petr Macek (Brno, 1994), 157–64; Gabrielová, 'Jak spolu hovoří skladatelé: Antonín Dvořák (Symfonie č. 6 D dur, op. 60) a Johannes Brahms (Symfonie č. 2 D dur, op. 73)', *Komunikace a izolace v české kultuře 19. století*, ed. Kateřina Bláhová (Prague, 2002), 430–45; Lukas Haselböck, 'Dvořák 6. Sinfonie – ein "intertextueller" Kommentar zu Brahms 2. Sinfonie?', *Hudební věda*, 41 (2004), 341–54.

© 2017 The Royal Musical Association

https://doi.org/10.1080/02690403.2017.1286129 Published online by Cambridge University Press

Brodbeck to describe it as a piece in which Dvořák 'speaks German with an unusual degree of clarity'.[4]

Dvořák's Czech critics tell a different story. After its première in Prague on 25 March 1881 as part of the city's Slavonic concert series, it was dubbed the 'Czech Spring Symphony' in the music journal *Dalibor*.[5] Contemporary Czech critics repeatedly drew attention to the symphony's Czechness, calling it 'a work with an eminently Czech character' and 'purely Czech in the shape of all of its motifs'.[6] Nowhere is this reading of the symphony more apparent than in a statement made following its performance in Brno in 1883: 'We Czechs were in a state of bliss', the critic recalls, 'over the fact that this orchestral masterpiece speaks to us in pure Czech.'[7] The critic goes on to assert that the language of the symphony is a kind of refined Czech such that 'even the Germans could not resist [it]'.[8] Regardless of the work's Viennese associations and the comparisons with Austro-German composers made in the German press, Czech critics were certain that when they listened to Dvořák's symphony they were hearing Czech.

These two conflicting narratives may seem irreconcilable; however, a study of the symphony's Czech context reveals that, in portraying the work as a distinctly nationalist composition, Czech critics were laying claim to Dvořák. Political tensions and Dvořák's growing international renown in the early 1880s made Czech critics eager to take ownership of the composer, giving Czech labels to a work that could be interpreted as conforming to the Austro-German tradition. Although Czechs were still under Habsburg rule at this time (and would remain so until 1918), the Czech nationalist cause was steadily gaining ground. Dvořák's symphony had its début in Prague in the wake of the controversial Stremayr language ordinance – an ordinance that benefited the Czechs and widened the rift between the Czechs and Germans of Bohemia and Moravia, giving rise to the kind of territoriality that is evident in reviews of this work. Its Prague première also came after a period of negative attention to Dvořák in the Czech press over his apparent willingness to allow exclusively German titles and texts to appear on his printed scores. Suspecting that Dvořák was beginning to give priority to the German public, Czech critics were quick to redirect the

[4] David Brodbeck, 'Dvořák's Reception in Liberal Vienna: Language Ordinances, National Property, and the Rhetoric of *Deutschtum*', *Journal of the American Musicological Society*, 60 (2007), 71–132 (p. 97); Brodbeck, *Defining Deutschtum: Political Ideology, German Identity, and Music-Critical Discourse in Liberal Vienna* (Oxford, 2014), 164.

[5] N., 'Z koncertní síně' ('From the Concert Hall'), *Dalibor*, 2nd ser., 3/11 (10 April 1881), 83–5 (p. 83): 'jarní česk[á] symfoni[e]'. This was written by Václav Juda Novotný, who occasionally used the pseudonym 'N.'. Unless otherwise indicated, all translations are mine.

[6] *Ibid.*: 'dílo rázu eminentně českého'; -ý., 'Dramatické umění a hudba: Koncerty' ('Dramatic Art and Music: Concerts'), *Národní listy*, 21/75 (29 March 1881), 1 (příloha): '[je to dílo] ryze české v útvaru všech motivů'.

[7] B. Ž., 'Dopisy: Z Brna' ('Letters: From Brno'), *Dalibor*, 2nd ser., 5/11 (21 March 1883), 118: 'My Čechové jsme ovšem tonuli v blahosti, že toto veledílo orkestrální mluví k nám tak ryzí češtinou.'

[8] *Ibid.*: 'němci nemohli odolati'. The Czech word I have translated as 'refined' is 'uhlazen[ý]'.

https://doi.org/10.1080/02690403.2017.1286129 Published online by Cambridge University Press

composer's focus toward audiences at home. By concealing the symphony's Viennese background and emphasizing its 'Czech' elements, these critics sought to appropriate the work and use it to promote their nationalist agendas.

Setting the stage for Dvořák's symphony: the Stremayr language ordinance and its aftermath

The première of Dvořák's D major Symphony came shortly after the Stremayr language ordinance was instituted. Named after the Austrian Minister of Justice Karl Ritter von Stremayr (1823–1904) and established in April 1880, the ordinance recognized Czech as an 'external' administrative language, along with German, in certain linguistically mixed parts of Bohemia and Moravia. (German had previously been the only external administrative language permitted.) This meant that communication between government officials and members of the public could be conducted in Czech in these regions. German, however, continued to be the only 'internal' administrative language, used by government officials to communicate among themselves. The Stremayr ordinance was part of a larger project, spearheaded by the conservative Minister-President Eduard Taaffe (1833–95) and meant to pacify the many nationalities that coexisted in Austria. While German liberal nationalists had dominated in the early years of the dual monarchy (established in 1867), a political shift occurred when Taaffe took office in 1879. This shift seemed to work in the Czechs' favour, since Taaffe – with his anti-liberal, pro-Slavic 'Iron Ring' government – was perhaps more willing than previous Austrian leaders to address Czech concerns. Having boycotted the provincial diets and the Reichsrat for several years over issues of Bohemian state rights,[9] the Czechs put an end to their practice of passive resistance in the late 1870s and submitted a memorandum to Emperor Franz Joseph in 1879, petitioning for linguistic equality. In this document, they drew attention to Article 19 of the Fundamental Laws of 1867, which states that 'each nationality has an inviolable right to preserve and cultivate its nationality and language. The equal rights of all languages customarily spoken in the lands, in the schools, government offices, and

[9] The term 'Bohemian state rights' refers to notions of the essential unity and autonomy of the historical lands of the Bohemian Crown. In 1871, efforts to grant the Czechs greater independence within Austria had been mounted under Minster-President Karl Sigmund von Hohenwart and had failed. After this abortive 'Czech compromise', delegates of the National Party initiated a boycott of the provincial diets and the Reichsrat, just as they had done in the late 1860s, following the *Ausgleich*. Disagreements among Czech politicians over this policy of passive resistance even led to the official foundation in 1874 of two separate parties: the Old and Young Czechs. The Young Czechs became active in government as early as 1873. It was, however, not until later that the Old Czechs ended their boycott, re-entering the provincial diets in 1878 and the Reichsrat in 1879.

https://doi.org/10.1080/02690403.2017.1286129 Published online by Cambridge University Press

public life are recognized by the state.'[10] The Austrian government's response to this memorandum was speedy: within months of its submission, Taaffe introduced the Stremayr ordinance, which was to have far-reaching implications for both the Czechs and the Germans who populated the regions in question.

The ordinance was a significant gain for the Czechs: for the first time, they were granted the right to use their native language for all business transactions with 'certain designated courts and governmental agencies'.[11] Peter Bugge writes that, in many respects, the ordinance merely gave formal sanction to something that had been going on in practice for some time.[12] Although it appeased the Czechs, the policy placed German Bohemians and Moravians at a disadvantage, since they were far less likely than the Czechs to be bilingual. Jeremy King summarizes the situation well when he writes that

> imperial-royal civil servants who spoke only German […] faced a dilemma. They could limit themselves henceforth to serving in districts and on cases in which only German was used, thereby crippling their chances for advancement, or they could tackle the humiliating chore of mastering a language widely regarded as culturally inferior, yet dauntingly difficult for non-Slavs.[13]

Naturally, Germans protested against the ordinance in a number of ways. Shortly thereafter, a new organization – the Deutscher Schulverein (German School Association) – was formed, with its headquarters in Vienna and a large following throughout Austria. The members of this organization sought to create and maintain German-language schools in areas of the empire where German-speakers were in a minority and state-funded education was being conducted in a language other than German.[14] The Stremayr ordinance also gave momentum to the burgeoning Joseph II cult,

[10] Quoted in Robert A. Kann, *The Multinational Empire: Nationalism and National Reform in the Habsburg Monarchy, 1848–1918*, 2 vols. (New York, 1970), i: *Empire and Nationalities*, 196, 405. The phrase 'all languages customarily spoken in the lands' posed a problem in the years leading up to the ordinance. Brodbeck explains: 'Whereas Czechs held that Czech should be treated as a [language customary in the land] in all Bohemia and Moravia, even in those realms inhabited mostly by Germans, the Germans insisted that only German count as such in areas where few Czechs lived, arguing that no accommodation was necessary because virtually all Czechs could speak German in any case. For that reason alone, the Germans saw the Czechs' insistence on their point as being based not in practical need, but in political assertiveness.' Brodbeck, 'Dvořák's Reception in Liberal Vienna', 88.

[11] Bruce M. Garver, *The Young Czech Party, 1874–1901, and the Emergence of a Multi-Party State* (New Haven, CT, 1978), 84.

[12] As Bugge expresses it: 'To a large degree the ordinance only legalized an existing state of affairs while leaving the exclusive use of German in the internal service untouched, but the German liberals protested loudly and countered by proposing that German be made the official language of Austria.' Peter Bugge, 'Czech Nation-Building, National Self-Perception, and Politics, 1780–1914' (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Aarhus, 1994), 159.

[13] Jeremy King, *Budweisers into Czechs and Germans: A Local History of Bohemian Politics, 1848–1948* (Princeton, NJ, 2002), 56.

[14] As Nancy Wingfield points out, Czechs had established an analogous organization (the Ustřední Matice Školská), which strove to defend the rights of Czech minorities in German industrial regions. Wingfield, *Flag Wars and Stone Saints: How the Bohemian Lands Became Czech* (Cambridge, MA, 2007), 8–9.

https://doi.org/10.1080/02690403.2017.1286129 Published online by Cambridge University Press

which idealized the rule of the iconic emperor.[15] The Germans of Austria were already inclined to reflect upon Joseph II's reign, since 1880 marked his centenary; however, the Stremayr ordinance seemed to cast the emperor in a whole new light. It had been Joseph II who had made German the official language of the state and the language of instruction in all institutions of higher education in Austria. While Derek Sayer suggests that Joseph's language policy was motivated by a desire for efficiency, rather than a desire to 'Germanize' Austria,[16] the policy was reinterpreted by Germans in the 1880s and understood in increasingly ethnic terms. Likewise, the Stremayr language ordinance served to strengthen the growing pan-German movement in Austria. In an effort to distance themselves from the other nationalities of the empire, these pan-Germans advocated closer partnerships with Germany on the basis of linguistic ties.

A monarchy-wide census was held decennially, but for the first time in 1880 citizens were asked to cite their language of daily use (*Umgangssprache*), as opposed to their national language (*Landessprache*). Since the census did not allow people to claim allegiance to the monarchy as a whole and contained no direct questions about nationality, language was interpreted by many as a marker of national affiliation.[17] As Robert Evans puts it, at the time of the 1880 census 'linguistic self-ascriptions quickly became subsumed in national ones'.[18] When the census was published in early 1881, the numbers were staggering: Czech-speakers were far more widespread than anyone had previously thought, which added fuel to a debate that had already been raging for the better part of the previous year. By 2 April 1881 – a year after the Stremayr ordinance had been established – a committee met with Taaffe, seeking not only to reverse the ordinance, but to legalize German as the official state language (*Staatssprache*) of Austria. Similar efforts would continue to be mounted on the part of the Germans in the coming years in what William Jenks calls the 'German counterattack'.[19] On the local level in Prague, the most significant outcome of the ordinance was the split in 1881 of the Charles University into two separate Czech and German institutions, with minimal contact between them.[20] What was meant to be a benevolent gesture, designed to pacify relations between the diverse groups coexisting in a multinational state, seemed only to widen the gulf between them.

[15] *Ibid.*, *passim*.

[16] Derek Sayer, *The Coasts of Bohemia: A Czech History* (Princeton, NJ, 1998), 67.

[17] King, *Budweisers into Czechs and Germans*, 59.

[18] Robert J. W. Evans, 'Language and State Building: The Case of the Habsburg Monarchy', *Austrian History Yearbook*, 35 (2004), 1–24 (p. 14).

[19] William A. Jenks, *Austria under the Iron Ring, 1879–1893* (Charlottesville, VA, 1965), 90–1.

[20] See Pieter M. Judson, *Exclusive Revolutionaries: Liberal Politics, Social Experience, and National Identity in the Austrian Empire, 1848–1914* (Ann Arbor, MI, 1996), 196–8. Judson writes that the Stremayr language ordinance helped to accelerate 'a decisive change in attitude already current among German speakers in Bohemia. These groups began to envision the possible administrative division of Bohemia into autonomous Czech and German districts as a way to protect so-called purely German areas from a growing Czech influence in Bohemian affairs' (p. 197).

https://doi.org/10.1080/02690403.2017.1286129 Published online by Cambridge University Press

The impact of these politics on Dvořák's D major Symphony was inevitable, since the work was written with the intention that it be premièred by the Vienna Philharmonic. The symphony had been commissioned by the orchestra's conductor, Richter, during Dvořák's visit to Vienna in 1879, when a performance of *Slavonic Rhapsody* no. 3 had met with moderate success. By the time that Dvořák offered up the finished symphony to Richter in the autumn of 1880, however, the controversial language ordinance had been set in place, putting a damper on relations between Czechs and Germans. Although Richter assures Dvořák several times in his letters that he considers the new symphony to be beautiful,[21] the planned Viennese performance of it was deferred several times throughout the 1880–1 concert season and eventually cancelled. Reasons for the Vienna Philharmonic's reluctance to perform the symphony are never fully articulated in the correspondence between Dvořák and Richter. Richter is perhaps most candid in a letter written at the end of the season, reassuring Dvořák that 'it was not artistic reasons that made it impossible for me to perform [the] beautiful work [in Vienna]',[22] but offering no further explanation. According to John Clapham, the symphony was rejected because members of the orchestra had raised objections to performing the work of a Czech composer in two successive seasons.[23]

Brodbeck takes this interpretation a step further, making a connection between the Stremayr language ordinance and the symphony's cancellation. He points out that the Vienna Philharmonic had hardly maintained a position of political neutrality in these debates about language; in February 1881, for example, the orchestra participated in a benefit concert in order to further the cause of German hegemony.[24] Brodbeck argues that, in spite of the symphony's references to the Austro-German mainstream, the work was ultimately dismissed in Vienna because it had been composed by a Czech.[25] In other words, the members of the Vienna Philharmonic did not judge Dvořák's symphony on the basis of what they heard, but on the basis of the composer's ethnicity. In the same way, when the symphony was premièred in Prague, the Czech critics chose to ignore its affinities to Brahms and Beethoven and were bent upon claiming it as their own, even if the work itself did not quite fit the bill. As a result, descriptions of

[21] Antonín Dvořák, *Korespondence a dokumenty: Kritické vydání* (*Correspondence and Documents: Critical Edition*), ed. Milan Kuna *et al.* (Prague, 1987–2004), v: *Korespondence přijatá 1877–1884* (*Correspondence Received 1877–1884*) (1996), 267 (26 December 1880: 'Nun habe ich Ihr *schönes* Werk in das 6. Konzert (Anfangs März) verlegt') and 285 (6 March 1881: 'ich Ihre *schöne* Symphonie nicht für den 6. März ansetzen'). Emphasis added.

[22] *Ibid.*, 299: 'Es nicht künstlerische Gründe waren, welche es mir unmöglich machten, Ihr schönes Werk aufzuführen' (June 1881).

[23] John Clapham, *Antonín Dvořák: Musician and Craftsman* (London, 1966), 71–2. Decisions about repertoire were made by all members of the orchestra, not just Richter. See Otakar Šourek, *Antonín Dvořák a Hans Richter: Obraz uměleckého přátelství* (*Antonín Dvořák and Hans Richter: A Portrait of an Artistic Friendship*) (Prague, 1942), 24.

[24] Brodbeck, 'Dvořák's Reception in Liberal Vienna', 90.

[25] *Ibid.*, 84–97.

https://doi.org/10.1080/02690403.2017.1286129 Published online by Cambridge University Press

the symphony's Czechness in the reviews are often vague. Although most critics were convinced that they heard Czech, very few of them substantiated their assertions with concrete musical evidence. More than the music, it was the politics of the day that conditioned responses to Dvořák's symphony both in Vienna and in Prague.

Threats of losing Dvořák: 'The covetous Germans will write […] "unser Dworzak!"'

The D major Symphony's Prague première in 1881 also followed hot on the heels of some negative criticism of Dvořák in the Czech press. Only a few years earlier, Dvořák had made an international breakthrough, and since he was the first Czech composer to receive such attention outside his homeland, the Czechs did not quite know how to come to terms with it. While Czech critics were immensely proud of Dvořák's accomplishments and reported regularly on his activities abroad,[26] the composer's foreign successes, particularly in German-speaking Europe, gave them cause for concern. Some critics felt that Dvořák was catering too much to non-Czech audiences at the cost of neglecting the home crowd. One such critic was Václav Juda Novotný (1849–1922), who wrote several articles for *Dalibor* in autumn 1880, accusing Dvořák of pandering to the German public.

The first of these articles, dated 1 October 1880, is worth quoting in full. It reads as an emphatic warning to Dvořák, urging him to pay more heed to Czech audiences if he wishes to maintain a loyal following in the Czech lands:

> The Czech edition of Dvořák's *Moravian Duets* is completely sold out. The composer sold this work to the Berlin publisher Simrock, who printed it with the German text only. No one here has the rights to a new Czech publication, and so our audience is forced to buy the German translation. A composer like Dvořák, over whom German publishers are fighting, would be able to demand the publication of each of his vocal works perhaps in five languages, not to mention German and Czech, and his wishes would always be accommodated; it is with regret that we have to take note of the fact that Dvořák has thus far not shown enough consideration toward our repertoire and audience as to take care that Czech texts and titles be printed next to the German ones. We are convinced, and it

[26] For example, one critic for *Dalibor* informs readers of the incredible speed with which Dvořák's music was being disseminated beyond the Bohemian borders and includes a list of all the non-Czech cities in which his *Slavonic Dances* and *Slavonic Rhapsodies* had been performed to date. Anon., 'Drobné zprávy' ('Brief News'), *Dalibor*, 2nd ser., 2/10 (1 April 1880), 78. In the later press coverage of Dvořák's American sojourn, the composer would be described as one who was 'called to spread the glory of the Czech name in foreign lands' ('[on] jenž povolán jest, aby šířil slávu českého jména po dálné cizině'). Anon., 'Vřelé uvítání mistra Dvořáka krajany v Americe' ('A Warm Welcome for Dvořák by his Countrymen in America'), *Dalibor*, 2nd ser., 14/43–4 (5 November 1892), 338–45 (p. 338).

https://doi.org/10.1080/02690403.2017.1286129 Published online by Cambridge University Press

> will not take long, that the covetous Germans will write of our ingenious Dvořák: 'unser Dworzak!' If Dvořák cares to remain one of us – and we think that he does – he ought to make a firm agreement with his German publishers so that he might safeguard himself against unpleasant consequences in time![27]

Here, Novotný expresses a genuine fear of losing Dvořák to the Germans. The remark 'if Dvořák cares to remain one of us' is particularly striking, as it shows that, even though national affiliations were becoming increasingly consolidated in the Czech lands toward the century's end, nationality was, to some extent, still malleable. Novotný uses terms that denote ownership, contrasting 'our ingenious Dvořák' ('geniální náš Dvořák') with a hypothetical proclamation made by the 'covetous Germans': 'unser Dworzak', where the composer's name is deliberately spelt in German, perhaps to heighten the absurdity of such a statement.

Novotný reiterates his point in another article penned some weeks later. In this case, he does not mention Dvořák by name:

> Recently, we pointed quite openly to the habits of two Czech composers who, when making their vocal pieces available to the public in foreign places, completely ignore the language of their nation. We want to believe that this was not done deliberately, but rather that the matter was left to the will and intentions of the publisher. It was, however, the abnormality of it that was bothersome in the songs: an excellent Czech composer, in whose pieces everyone over here is interested, and who nevertheless publishes his songs only with a German text, offends his countrymen, for it is as if he were saying: I do not care to have my things sung in Czech! We spoke out against this bad habit, and everyone agreed with us; we were, however, most pleased that our words did not fall upon deaf ears for one of the composers; Mr. Václav Laub has announced to us that he asked his publisher (the Berlin firm Bote und Bock) to add a Czech text to his first book of songs, *Slavische Lieder*, which has thus far appeared only with a German text, and that the Berlin publisher willingly conceded to his request.[28]

[27] Václav Juda Novotný, 'Drobné zprávy: Dvořákovy "Moravské Dvojzpěvy"' ('Brief News: Dvořák's *Moravian Duets*'), *Dalibor*, 2nd ser., 2/28 (1 October 1880), 222: 'Dvořákovy *Moravské Dvojzpěvy* v českém vydání úplně již jsou rozebrány. Skladatel prodal toto dílo berlínskému nakladateli Simrockovi, který je vytiskl pouze s německým textem. K novému českému vydání právo u nás nikdo nemá, a tak jest obecenstvo naše nuceno kupovati německý překlad. Skladatel jako Dvořák, o jehož práce se němečtí nakladatelé derou, mohl by si poručiti vydání každého svého vokálního díla třeba v pěti jazycích, neřku-li v německém a českém, a stalo by se vždy po jeho vůli; s politováním však musíme poznamenati, že Dvořák dosud neměl tolik šetrnosti k naší literatuře hudební a k našemu obecenstvu, aby se postaral o tisk českých textů a titulů vedle německých. Jsme přesvědčeni, a nebude to dlouho trvat, že hrabiví Němci budou psáti o genialním našem Dvořákovi: "unser Dworzak!" Záleží-li Dvořákovi na tom, aby zůstal našincem – a myslíme, že záleží – tož ať rázným vstoupením vůči německým nakladatelům předejde pozdějším neblahým konsekvencím ještě v čas!'

[28] Václav Juda Novotný, 'Drobné zprávy: O hudebních publikacích v cizině' ('Brief News: Music Publications in Foreign Places'), *Dalibor*, 2nd ser., 2/33 (20 November 1880), 262: 'Zcela otevřeně poukázali jsme před nedávnem k nechvalnému zvyku dvou českých skladatelův, kteří při vokalních svých skladbách, jež v cizině uveřejňují, úplně ignorují jazyk svého národa. Chceme věřiť, že se tak

https://doi.org/10.1080/02690403.2017.1286129 Published online by Cambridge University Press

By bringing the composer Václav Laub (1857–1911) into the discussion, Novotný strives to prove to Dvořák that it is possible to insist upon Czech texts when working with German publishers. The article contains even stronger language than the previous one, as Novotný sees the publications as instances of Czech composers 'completely ignor[ing] the language of their nation'. At a time when language was seen as a signifier of nationality, this was a serious accusation indeed.[29] For Novotný, Dvořák's involvement on the international scene and, more specifically, his attempts to court a German audience were allowable only as long as they did not pose a threat to the composer's Czech identity or prevent the Czech public from having equal access to his music.

The results of this public reprimand of Dvořák were twofold. At first, the composer was essentially ignored in *Dalibor*. As Alan Houtchens observes, Dvořák is conspicuously absent from the journal for three months, being given only passing mention in occasional concert advertisements.[30] The message behind this silent treatment is clear: if Dvořák had seen fit to 'ignore the language of [his] nation', the writers for *Dalibor* would respond by ignoring Dvořák. By early 1881, however, Dvořák had reached an agreement with Simrock. As a reaction to Novotný's accusations, Dvořák had written to the German publisher in October 1880, explaining the situation and declaring: 'I am also obliged to show consideration for my countrymen, so that they too would be able to sing my songs in Czech.'[31] After some hesitation,[32] Simrock complied,

nestalo z úmyslu, nybrž že věc ponechána byla na vůli a dobrém zdání nakladatele. Byla to však abnormita, jež hlavně při písních nemálo vadila: český komponista vynikající, o jehož skladby se každý u nás interesuje, a jenž přes vše to vydává písně své pouze s textem německým, uráží své krajany, neboť jest to tolik, jako kdyby řekl: nestojím o to, abyste mé věci po česku zpívali! Vyslovili jsme se proti zlozvyku tomu, a souhlasil s námi každý; ovšem nás nejvíce potěšilo, že slova naše aspoň u jednoho ze skladatlův těch padla na dobrou půdu: oznamujeť nám pan Václav Laub, že požádal svého nakladatele (berlínskou firmu Bote a Bock), aby k prvnímu sešitu písní *Slavische Lieder*, který dosud vyšel pouze s německým textem, přitiskl původní český text, a že nakladatel berlínský ochotně svolil v jeho žádosť.'

[29] More than in the earlier article, Novotný strives here to speak for the Czechs as a whole, using phrases like '[the composer] offends his countrymen' and 'everyone agreed with us'.

[30] H. Alan Houtchens, 'A Critical Study of Antonín Dvořák's *Vanda*' (Ph.D. dissertation, University of California at Santa Barbara, 1987), 27.

[31] Dvořák, *Korespondence a dokumenty*, ed. Kuna *et al.*, i: *Korespondence odeslaná 1871–1884* (*Correspondence Dispatched 1871–1884*) (1987), 231–2 (14 October 1880): 'ich doch auch meinen Landsleuten die Aufmerksamkeit schuldig bin, daß sie auch meine Lieder in böhm[ischer] Sprache singen können'.

[32] *Ibid.*, v, 256–7 (19 October 1880): 'Adding the Bohemian (Czech) text to op. 55 [*Gypsy Melodies*] would ruin the whole edition; you should have mentioned this earlier! A new (or special) edition would be even more expensive; send me a copy with a clearly written Bohemian text, as soon as you get the chance. I will see how it might be done!' ('Den bömischen (tschechischen) Text in Op. 55 [*Zigeunermelodien*] noch unterzulegen würde die ganze Ausgabe ruinieren, hätten Sie das doch vorher gesagt! Eine neue (oder besondere Ausgabe) ist doch wieder teuer, schicken Sie mir gelegentlich ein Exemplar mit deutlich geschriebenem bömischen Text, ich will dann sehen, wie sich's etwa machen ließe!').

https://doi.org/10.1080/02690403.2017.1286129 Published online by Cambridge University Press

and a promise always to include Czech texts along with the German translations had managed to put Novotný's fears to rest. Novotný is most direct in his last article on the subject, written after the matter had been resolved:

> Of Dvořák's pieces that have been published lately, it is mainly his *Zigeunermelodien*,[33] composed on the German translation of poems by Heyduk (the poet himself translated the poems), that are original and in all respects perfect – the best that he has written so far. That Dvořák published this, his most perfect and most Czech work in the realm of song, with Simrock in Berlin only with a German text was what made me the most sorry, and I communicated to him in this journal, as is well known, openly and honestly that the Czech public deserves more attention from him [and] that a Czech composer has to write, first and foremost, for a Czech audience. What good would Dvořák be to us if his works were not accessible to our audience? And with a German text only, [his works] would become inaccessible to our audience. I have confirmed, however, that Dvořák did not do so deliberately: I have found out that Simrock will publish a new edition of these songs with Czech texts for our audience and that, in future, every vocal work of Dvořák's will always be published with a Czech text next to the German translation. I am grateful to our composer for this, for it eliminates the danger that his pieces could be estranged from our repertoire.[34]

Satisfied with the way in which Dvořák had handled the situation, Novotný, who served as editor of *Dalibor* at that time, was no longer compelled to give him the cold shoulder on the journal's pages.

What followed as a second result of this negative attention in the press was an exaggerated need to prove to the readers of *Dalibor* that Dvořák's works were, in fact, very Czech.[35] It was especially important for Czech critics to do so in the case of the symphony – a genre that had long held German connotations. Prior to Dvořák,

[33] Given Novotný's complaints about language, it is strange that he refers to this piece by its German title rather than its Czech one (*Ciganské melodie*).

[34] Václav Juda Novotný, 'Drobné zprávy: Dvořák co skladatel písní' ('Brief News: Dvořák as a Song Composer'), *Dalibor*, 2nd ser., 3/1 (1 January 1881), 7: 'Z posledně vydaných skladeb Dvořákových hlavně jeho *Zigeunermelodien*, komponované na německý překlad básní Heydukových (basník učinil překlad do němčiny sám) jsou originalní a v každém ohledu dokonalé písně, nejlepší, jež dosud napsal. Že Dvořák toto z oboru písně nejdokonalejší a nejčestější dílo vydal u Simrocka v Berlíně pouze s německým textem, toho mi právě bylo nejvíce líto, i řekl jsem mu na tomto místě, jak známo, otevřeně a zpříma, že české obecenstvo zasluhovalo si větší pozornosti s jeho strany, že český skladatel především komponovati musí pro české obecenstvo. Co by nám byl Dvořák platen, kdyby nám díla jeho nebyla přístupna? A pouze s německým textem vydána stala by se obecenstvu našemu nepřístupnými. Přesvědčil jsem se však, že Dvořák neučinil tak zúmyslně; neboť dovídám se právě, že Simrock vydá pro naše obecenstvo nové vydání těchže znamenitých písní s českým textem, a příště, že každá vokální práce Dvořákova vydána bude vždy s českým textem vedle německého překladu. Jsme za to povděčeni našemu skladateli, neboť tím odpadne nebezpečí, že by skladby jeho mohly býti odcizeny naší hudební literatuře.'

[35] In 'Drobné zprávy', his final article on the topic of Dvořák's vocal publications, Novotný emphasizes the irony of Dvořák's 'most Czech work' being published with a German text.

https://doi.org/10.1080/02690403.2017.1286129 Published online by Cambridge University Press

the symphony was not much cultivated in the Czech lands,[36] where opera reigned supreme as the medium with which composers could best serve the Czech cause.[37] Moreover, the symphony as a genre lacks explicit extramusical associations, offering the possibility for various meanings to be inscribed onto it. Karen Painter describes the symphony as 'an open arena to be invested with meaning […] prey to the broadest cultural and political aims'.[38] The review of Dvořák's D major Symphony for *Dalibor* was one of the first extensive articles on the composer to appear in the journal after the controversy over his published scores. Written by Novotný himself, the review gave the critic occasion to redeem Dvořák by characterizing this piece as a Czech nationalist composition;[39] critics writing for other newspapers and journals, probably aware of the recent incident involving Dvořák's vocal publications, portrayed it in much the same way.

The incident would not be soon forgotten, as is evident in an article that appeared in *Dalibor* in 1883. Here, the unnamed author writes in no uncertain terms about Dvořák's commitment to making his printed scores accessible to Czech audiences:

> Between the lines, [Hanslick] insults our Dvořák, if he thinks that he can take him as an example of what kind of success might be achieved if one is nationally indifferent. Dvořák is a self-conscious, enthusiastic Czech – a fact that will certainly be demonstrated in the future, as it was in the past. Sometimes his publishers insulted us by ignoring the audience for which Dvořák is writing first and foremost, but the composer himself has shown clearly that he sees it as a question of his honour that the purely Czech origins of his works never be denied, that all published vocal music have Czech words, and that they be based on a Czech text; indeed, he ensured that even his instrumental works with particular Czech significance be given Czech titles.[40]

[36] Jan Smaczny, 'The Czech Symphony', *A Companion to the Symphony*, ed. Robert Layton (London, 1993), 221–61.

[37] Dvořák himself would later identify opera as 'für die Nation […] die vortheilhafteste Schöpfung' ('the most beneficial genre for the Nation') in 'Bei Meister Dvorzak', *Die Reichswehr*, 3/612 (1 March 1904), 7; trans. in Houtchens, 'A Critical Study of Antonín Dvořák's *Vanda*', 32.

[38] Karen Painter, *Symphonic Aspirations: German Music and Politics, 1900–1945* (Cambridge, MA, 2007), 4.

[39] N., 'Z koncertní síně', 83–5.

[40] Anon., 'Drobné zprávy' ('Brief News'), *Dalibor*, 2nd ser., 5/9 (7 March 1883), 89–90 (p. 89): 'Mezi řádky [Hanslick] také uráží našeho Dvořáka, domnívá-li se, že může jej dáti ostatním umělcům našim za příklad, jakých uspěchů možno dosíci národní lhostejností. Dvořák jest uvědomělým, nadšeným Čechem, což jako minulosť, tak i celá budoucnosť jeho zajisté ukáže. Jeho nakladatelé urazili nás někdy ignorováním toho obecenstva, kterému nejprv a původně Dvořák píše, ale skladatel sám ukázal již rozhodně, že v tom spatřuje otázku cti své, aby ryze český původ jeho děl nebyl nikdy zapírán, aby vše, co od něho vychází pro zpěv, mělo slova česká a bylo na slova česká původně skládáno, ano provedl i to, aby také instrumentální díla jeho zvláštního národního významu měla též český titul.'

https://doi.org/10.1080/02690403.2017.1286129 Published online by Cambridge University Press

It was a review by Eduard Hanslick (1825–1904) of Fibich's Piano Quartet, op. 11, that had incited this outburst.[41] The Czech critic's comments in response to Hanslick show, as Brodbeck has demonstrated, how vastly Prague in the 1880s had changed since the time of Hanslick's youth, when language was not yet taken as an earmark of nationality per se.[42] For composers of Dvořák's generation, something as seemingly trivial as the language of a work's title could mean the difference between 'nationally indifferent' and 'self-consciously Czech'.[43]

[41] The following excerpt from Hanslick's review for the *Neue freie Presse* is quoted in the *Dalibor* article: 'The name of this Prague composer [Fibich] has been completely unfamiliar to us until now, even though, according to some kind of Czech calendar, he has written numerous works from the age of ten: operas, symphonies, overtures and sonatas. The reason the European music world did not know about these pieces is probably that they have Czech titles and dedications and poetic titles taken from Czech legends and history. Mr Fibich, whose musical education was conducted in Vienna, Leipzig and Mannheim, will, I hope, relinquish these childish fancies that would completely cut him off from the music world – a world in which Fibich no doubt wants to be active. Among Czech youths, there are probably other talented musicians who deserve to be known beyond their own homeland, but they deprive themselves of their futures with petty national flaunting (verily I say, this is "petty national panache")' ('Jméno tohoto pražského skladatele bylo nám posud úplně neznámo, ačkoli podle jakéhosi českého kalendáře hudebního od deseti let napsal četná díla, opery, symfonie, ouvertury a sonaty. O skladbách těch hudební svět evropský neví, asi proto, že mají české tituly a dedikace z části též poetické nápisy z českých bájí a dějin. Pan Fibich, jehož hudební vzdělání pochází z Vídně, Lipska a Mannheimu, nechá, jak doufám, tohoto dětinského rozmaru, který by jej úplně oddělil od hudebního světa, v nějž předce Fibich působiti chce. Mezi mladými Čechy jsou asi ještě jiní nadaní hudebnící, kteří by zasloužili, aby byli známi také mimo svůj domov, ale sami se připravují o svou budoucnosť malicherným národním vypínáním (ipsissima verba jsou "kleinationale Grossthuerei")').

[42] David Brodbeck, 'Hanslick's Smetana and Hanslick's Prague', *Journal of the Royal Musical Association*, 134 (2009), 1–36. For a study of Hanslick's Prague connections, see Jitka Ludvová, 'Několik pražských reálií k biografií Eduarda Hanslicka' ('Several Prague Facts in the Biography of Eduard Hanslick'), *Miscellanea theatralia: Sborník Adolfu Scherlovi k osmdesátinám* (*Miscellanea theatralia: A Collection of Essays on the 80th Birthday of Adolf Scherl*), ed. Eva Sormová and Michaela Kuklová (Prague, 2005), 379–90.

[43] Dvořák and Simrock did battle during the 1880s over issues such as whether Dvořák's first name ought to appear as 'Antonín', 'Anton' or simply 'Ant.' on the title pages of his printed scores – a matter of no small importance to Dvořák. In a series of letters (July–September 1885), Dvořák makes it clear to Simrock that he objects to the practice of printing the Germanized form of his name, 'Anton'. On 8 August 1885, Dvořák wrote: 'Include only Ant., not Anton. This is good for both languages' ('Dann lassen Sie bloß Ant., nicht Anton, es ist für beide Sprachen so gut'). Dvořák, *Korespondence a dokumenty*, ed. Kuna *et al.*, ii, 75. Simrock's flippant response to this letter and his failure to appease Dvořák provoked the composer to the following remarks: 'What I asked of you was only a personal wish, and if you cannot fulfil it, I am justified in seeing in it a lack of goodwill on your part, such as I have not come across either among English or French publishers' ('Das, was ich von Ihnen verlangte, war bloß mein Wunsch, und wenn Sie mir das nicht erfüllen können, so habe ich Recht, es als eine Ungefälligkeit von Ihnen zu betrachten, die ich weder bei englischen noch franz[ösischen] Verlegern gefunden habe'). *Ibid.*, 87 (English trans. taken from Houtchens, 'A Critical Study of Antonín Dvořák's *Vanda*', 21).

https://doi.org/10.1080/02690403.2017.1286129 Published online by Cambridge University Press

It has already been noted that Novotný's complaints against Dvořák in 1880 were motivated by a fear of losing him to the Germans. This fear was not wholly unfounded, since the composer was lured to Vienna several times throughout his career by some of his colleagues. The most overt invitation came from none other than Hanslick. In a letter to Dvořák dated 11 June 1882, Hanslick offers two pieces of advice. First, he urges Dvořák to familiarize himself with 'good German poetry' and to use these poems as texts for his vocal works. As Hanslick phrases it:

> The world expects larger vocal works from you, and those will hardly completely satisfy if they are not grown [or developed] out of and composed to German poetry. You should not, I believe, persist in always composing only on Czech texts for a very small public, while your large public is put off by poor translations and easily makes a skewed assessment [of your work].[44]

These words stand in stark contrast to Novotný's, showing just how much Dvořák was being pulled in different directions. Hanslick's second suggestion to Dvořák is that he consider spending some time away from his homeland: 'In general,' writes Hanslick, 'it would, in my opinion, be a great advantage for your artistic development and for your success if you lived for one or two years at a distance from Prague; Vienna would be best.'[45] Understanding that such a suggestion might be met with considerable hesitancy on Dvořák's part, Hanslick continues: 'You do not have to become a defector as a result. However, after such big early successes, your art needs wider horizons, a German environment [and] a larger non-Czech public.'[46] Whether Czech critics were aware of Hanslick's advice is unclear.[47] If they knew about it, they certainly would have seen this as a potential threat, since any recommendations made by Hanslick were likely to be taken very seriously: the critic had been instrumental in launching Dvořák's international career, and Dvořák held him in high regard.[48] A further beckoning to

[44] Dvořák, *Korespondence a dokumenty*, ed. Kuna *et al.*, v, 387 (11 June 1882): 'Die Welt erwartet von Ihnen auch größere Vokalkompositionen, und diese werden kaum vollständig befriedigen, wenn sie nicht aus deutscher Poesie herausempfunden und herauskomponiert sind. Sie dürfen, glaube ich, nicht dabei bleiben, immer nur bömische Texte zu komponieren für ein sehr kleines Publikum, während Ihr großes Publikum mit schlechten Übersetzungen abgespeist wird und leicht ein schiefes Urteil fällt.'

[45] *Ibid.*, 388: 'Überhaupt wäre es, nach meiner aufrichtigen Meinung, ein großer Gewinn für Ihre ganze künstlerische Entwicklung, wie für Ihre Erfolge, wenn Sie 1 bis 2 Jahre fern von Prag lebten, am besten wohl in Wien.'

[46] *Ibid.*: 'Sie brauchen deshalb kein Abtrünniger zu werden. Aber Ihre Kunst braucht nach so großen ersten Erfolgen einen weiteren Horizont, eine deutsche Umgebung, ein größeres, nicht-tschechisches Publikum.'

[47] Dvořák's reaction is likewise unclear. Scholars have been unable to locate a letter from Dvořák to Hanslick in response to this.

[48] Otakar Hostinský claims that Hanslick was considered by many Czechs to have 'infallible' ('neomyln[ý]') authority. Hostinský, 'Antonín Dvořák ve vývoji naši hudby dramatické' ('Antonín Dvořák's Role in the Development of our Dramatic Music'), *Antonín Dvořák: Sborník statí o jeho díle*

https://doi.org/10.1080/02690403.2017.1286129 Published online by Cambridge University Press

Vienna may have come from Dvořák's other staunch supporter in the Austrian capital, Brahms. Though perhaps not as forthcoming as Hanslick, Brahms does confess in a letter to Simrock dated 7 November 1887 that he had wanted Dvořák to move to Vienna several years earlier.[49] Dvořák would not be persuaded, but the pressures that he faced from these men – especially Hanslick, who had left his own Bohemian origins far behind – are not to be underestimated. Eager to quell any signs that Dvořák was making the German public a priority, critics in Prague did not hesitate to remind the composer that his ultimate loyalty lay with the Czechs.

A 'Czech Spring Symphony'

Language was a heated topic of debate in the Czech lands among both politicians and music critics; it had been a large point of contention for representatives in the Austrian parliament in the spring of 1880 and for Novotný on the pages of *Dalibor* in the autumn of the same year. Becoming increasingly synonymous with nationality, language – whether used for business transactions or for music publications – was not insignificant, but sent a powerful message. It was against this political and cultural backdrop that Dvořák's D major Symphony was premièred in Prague in March 1881. Issues of language in Dvořák's symphony are complicated by the fact that the genre lacks words. The unnamed critic for *Dalibor* cited in note 40 above stipulates that vocal compositions and 'instrumental works *with particular Czech significance* be given Czech titles'.[50] This would seem to exclude the symphony; yet the genre was by no means immune to language politics, as Dvořák himself would later demonstrate. Some of his most fiery exchanges with Simrock in 1885 had to do with the language in which the title of his Symphony in D minor, op. 70, was to appear on the opening page of its published score.[51] Language figured no less

a životě (*Antonín Dvořák: A Collection of Essays about his Work and Life*), ed. Boleslav Kalenský (Prague, 1912), 208–26 (p. 219).

[49] David Beveridge, 'Dvořák and Brahms: A Chronicle, an Interpretation', *Dvořák and his World*, ed. Michael Beckerman (Princeton, NJ, 1993), 56–91 (p. 71). For further reading on the interactions between Dvořák and Brahms, see John Clapham, 'Dvořák's Relations with Brahms and Hanslick', *Musical Quarterly*, 57 (1971), 241–54; Peter Petersen, 'Brahms und Dvořák', *Hamburger Jahrbuch für Musikwissenschaft*, 7 (1984), 125–46; Beckerman, 'Dvořák and Brahms: A Question of Influence', *American Brahms Society Newsletter*, 4/2 (1986), 6–8; Beveridge, 'Vliv Antonína Dvořáka na Johannese Brahmse' ('The Influence of Antonín Dvořák on Johannes Brahms'), trans. Jitka Slavíková, *Hudební rozhledy*, 44/3 (1991), 35–7.

[50] Unsigned, 'Drobné zprávy', 89: 'instrumentální díla jeho *zvláštního národního významu* měla též český titul'. Emphasis added.

[51] Since the Czech 'symfonie' differs from the German 'Sinfonie' by only two letters, this was not a question of legibility, but a matter of principle. In a letter to Simrock (8 August 1885), Dvořák writes: 'Would it not be better if you had the Czech and German titles printed separately? I think that this would help the Czech and the German public. Some do not like to see German, others do

https://doi.org/10.1080/02690403.2017.1286129 Published online by Cambridge University Press

prominently in critical discussions of the D major Symphony. No gesture as simple as changing a text from German to Czech could be used to persuade the public that the symphony was a nationalist work. In the absence of a Czech text, the critics had to find other means of doing so.

One such means was failing to acknowledge that the symphony had anything to do with Vienna. Nowhere in these reviews is there mention that the piece was supposed to be premièred in the Austrian capital and that its performance in Prague had been arranged only after it was rejected by the Vienna Philharmonic. Czech critics could hardly have been ignorant of the symphony's backstory. Journalists in Prague were generally well informed about musical events taking place in other European cities, and *Dalibor* had a Viennese correspondent, entrusted with the task of reporting on musical activities there. Furthermore, Dvořák's attempt to have the symphony performed in Vienna had been quite an ordeal – one that could scarcely have been kept quiet. It involved lengthy negotiations with Richter and required Dvořák to visit the city in November 1880. All of these factors suggest that the critics withheld this information deliberately, even if divulging it might have given them an opportunity to show that the Viennese were prejudiced.[52] It would have been difficult to convince readers of the work's Czechness if they had known that this 'Czech Spring Symphony' had actually been designed for the Vienna Philharmonic and that Prague had been only Dvořák's second choice for its première.

Dvořák's early Czech biographer Otakar Šourek (1883–1956) goes so far, in the second volume of his monograph (originally published in 1917), as to construct a counter-narrative for the symphony's origins. In Šourek's words,

> [Dvořák's symphony] is a work that is, in its spirit and expression, among the most Czech! Its roots lie in the soil of the Czech countryside, and Dvořák's love for the Czech land that gave birth to him, his love for Czech landscapes, Czech nature and the Czech people is communicated in every bar, which sings out with full sincerity in the clearest and liveliest colours. The merriment, humour and passion of the Czech people live in this symphony; from it, there flows the fragrance and there sounds the song of the Czech meadows and forests. Perhaps his visit to Zlonice, for a concert that took place a day before he started writing the symphony, reminded Dvořák of a time long past, when he was growing up among the country folk and experiencing years of happy, carefree youth. [It is possible]

not like to see Czech. So please do this; it is in my [best] interest and the costs are certainly not so big' ('Wäre es nicht besser, wenn Sie den bömischen und deutschen Titel auf das Umschlagsblatt extra drucken lassen? Ich glaube ja, es wäre damit dem böhm[ischen] und deutschen Publikum geholfen. Viele sehen das Deutsche, viele das Böhm[ische] nicht gern. Also bitte, tun Sie das, es ist auch in meinem Interesse und die Unkosten sind ja nicht so groß'). Dvořák, *Korespondence a dokumenty*, ed. Kuna *et al.*, ii, 75.

[52] Czech critics did not keep readers in ignorance of the scandalous way in which Dvořák's *Šelma sedlák* (*The Cunning Peasant*) was received in Vienna in 1885: the opera had sparked a riot when it was performed at the Hofoper. For a detailed discussion, see Brodbeck, 'Dvořák's Reception in Liberal Vienna', 104–10.

https://doi.org/10.1080/02690403.2017.1286129 Published online by Cambridge University Press

> that his brief contact with the town, where he first became musically active, and his contact with its inhabitants inspired a work that is so joyfully youthful and warm with love for the Czech countryside.[53]

Apart from claiming that the symphony evokes images of rural Bohemia, Šourek hypothesizes that it was inspired by Dvořák's trip in the summer of 1880 to the town of Zlonice, where he had attended school from 1853 to 1856. Šourek then proceeds to downplay the work's similarity to Brahms's Second Symphony.[54] Although he recognizes that the two works are written in the same basic tonality and that they resemble each other at the beginning of their respective finales, he writes:

> In terms of content, mood and the character of the material, the two symphonies as a whole and in their individual parts are immensely distant. Brahms moves from the half-wistful, half-sentimental, yet noble Romanticism of the first movement, in which every accent is used apprehensively and sparingly, to the Byronic pessimism of the Adagio, and only in the shy, adorable grins of the Minuet does he start to get to the joyous mood of the final movement. In contrast, each movement of Dvořák's symphony is an expression of life's radiance, courage, joy and merriment.[55]

Much like the early critics, Šourek strives to weaken the work's ties to the Viennese symphonic tradition.

In addition to deflecting attention away from Vienna, Dvořák's Czech critics use their reviews to underscore the one aspect of the symphony that was indisputably Czech: the Scherzo. The idea that the Scherzo was the most 'Czech' movement in any given symphony by a Bohemian composer was well established. It had been

[53] Otakar Šourek, *Život a dílo Ant. Dvořáka* (*The Life and Works of Ant. Dvořák*), 4 vols., 2nd edn (Prague, 1922–33), ii (1928), 102–3: 'Je to dílo duchem a výrazem z nejčeštějších! Kořeny svými tkví v půdě českého venkova a Dvořákova láska k půdě, jež ho zrodila, jeho láska k českému kraji, k české přírodě a k českému lidu mluví v něm z každé myšlenky, z každého taktu, rozezpívávajíc se s plnou upřímností v barvách nejjasnějších a nejživějších. Žije v symfonii veselí, humor i vášeň českého lidu, dýše vůně a jásá zpěv českých niv a lesů. Snad že návštěva Zlonic u příležitosti koncertu, jenž konal se právě den před započetím partitury symfonie, ožila v Dvořákových myšlenkách dobu dávno minulou, kdy vyrůstal ještě mezi venkovským lidem a prožíval léta šťastného, bezstarostného mládí, že krátký styk s městečkem, jež bylo kdysi jeho prvním hudebním působištěm, i styk s jeho obyvatelstvem inspirovaly dílo tak radostně mladistvé a láskou k českému venkovu prohřáté.'

[54] The notion that Brahms's Second Symphony served as a model for Dvořák has become so ingrained that it does not need to be rehearsed here. Also, Brahms's symphony enjoyed remarkable success when it was performed by the Vienna Philharmonic in 1877 – only a few years before Dvořák wrote his D major Symphony for the same orchestra.

[55] Šourek, *Život a dílo Ant. Dvořáka*, ii, 102: 'Obsahem, náladou, i povahou myšlenkového materiálu jsou obě symfonie v celku i v jednotlivých částech nesmírně vzdáleny. Brahmsova přechází z polo roztoužené, polo rozcitlivělé, ovšem nejvýš ušlechtilé romantiky ve větě prvé, v níž jakoby s každým akcentem bylo přímo úzkostlivě spořeno, v byronovský pessimismus adagia a teprve přes nesmělé, roztomilé úsměvy menuetu dostává se k rozradostněné náladě věty finální. Ve Dvořákově symfonii naproti tomu co věta, to projev životního jasu, odvahy, radosti a veselí.'

https://doi.org/10.1080/02690403.2017.1286129 Published online by Cambridge University Press

the Scherzo of Smetana's 'Triumphal' Symphony (*Triumph-Sinfonie*, 1853) that had continued to be performed during the 1860s and 1870s, even as the rest of the work faded into oblivion.[56] Critics had also emphasized the 'Czechness' of the Scherzo movements in the Dvořák symphonies that had previously been given in Prague. Premièred as a stand-alone movement in 1874, the Scherzo of his D minor Symphony, now referred to as his Fourth, was considered to be Czech to its core – a piece in which the composer 'uses motifs from Czech folk songs with masterful skill'.[57] Likewise, following the 1879 performance in Prague of his F major Symphony, currently known as his Fifth, the Scherzo was called a 'true Czech pearl' that 'speaks to us in a completely Czech way', while the symphony's other movements were thought to be foreign in their conception.[58] This Czech criticism from the past set up the expectation that the Scherzo movement of Dvořák's D major Symphony was also going to be uniquely Czech.

The piece did not disappoint: in fact, the D major bears the distinction of being the only Dvořák symphony explicitly to include a furiant movement in place of the Scherzo.[59] A furiant is, by definition, a fast-paced dance in triple metre, with regular four-bar phrases; its most characteristic feature is the hemiola rhythm that temporarily displaces the basic beat in the opening two bars. In a series of anecdotes written for *Dalibor* in 1911 – exactly 30 years after the symphony's Prague première – Novotný claims that the idea of composing a furiant occurred to Dvořák after attending Mass with his friend Alois Goebl (1841–1907) in Vysoká – a small town in which Dvořák would later purchase a summer home. Novotný

[56] It was the Scherzo that received the warmest praise at the work's 1854 première, and Dvořák seems to have been particularly fond of it. Upon hearing the movement at a rehearsal, he allegedly said: '[Now] that was a Scherzo! As long as I live I will never write one like it.' Quoted in Smaczny, 'The Czech Symphony', 231.

[57] X., 'Slavnostní hudební akademie' ('Celebratory Musical Concert'), *Dalibor*, 1st ser., 2/22 (30 May 1874), 173–4 (p. 174): '[V Scherzu Dvořák] využitkoval motivy národních písní českých.'

[58] Václav Juda Novotný, 'Slovanský koncert' ('Slavonic Concert'), *Dalibor*, 2nd ser., 1/10 (1 April 1879), 76–8 (p. 77); 'pravá česká perla'; 'k nám úplně po česku hovoří'. According to Novotný, Dvořák composed the first movement 'under a foreign influence' ('pod vlivem cizím') and the second and final movements after having embarked on 'a diligent study of the folk music of Ruthenia' ('pilné studium národní hudby maloruské').

[59] The inclusion of a furiant movement seems to have been a clever strategic move on Dvořák's part. The furiant is given prominence in his *Slavonic Dances*, op. 46, framing the work as the first and last numbers; thus, the furiant in Dvořák's symphony could be interpreted as a subtle nod to the collection of dances that had helped to establish his international reputation. In his study on the symphony as a genre, Hermann Kretzschmar makes an explicit connection between the furiant in Dvořák's D major Symphony and the *Slavonic Dances*: 'The markedly national movement in this symphony (op. 60) is the Scherzo. It scarcely distinguishes itself in form and character from this composer's well-known and significant *Slavonic Dances* and should no doubt be assigned to this genre through its title, "furiant"' ('Der ausgesprochen nationale Satz in dessen D-dur Sinfonie (Op. 60) ist das Scherzo. Es unterscheidet sich in Form und Charakter kaum von den bekannten und bedeutenden "Slavischen Tänzen" dieses Componisten und soll wohl auch durch den überschriebenen Titel: "Furiant" dieser Gattung zugewiesen werden'). Hermann Kretzschmar, *Führer durch den Concertsaal* (Leipzig, 1887), 235.

https://doi.org/10.1080/02690403.2017.1286129 Published online by Cambridge University Press

tells a colourful tale, complete with dialogue, about how Dvořák was struggling with the Scherzo movement of his symphony in the summer of 1880, whereupon Goebl invited him to a festive Mass taking place in the town as part of a pilgrimage:

> 'Come,' urged Goebl, 'you cannot keep your nose buried in the music for so long, and if [your work] is not going as well as you would like, a short break might be just what you need. Besides, a pilgrimage may provide the best material for a Scherzo.' Finally Dvořák gave in […] [Upon leaving the church after the Mass was over, Dvořák declared:] 'I have it!' Turning in that moment toward Goebl, [he said] with a smile: 'Instead of the usual scherzo, I will include the national Czech dance, the furiant, in my symphony. It has a dynamic rhythm, well suited for the Scherzo, and note well that it will be a novelty!' 'You see,' said Goebl, smiling; 'I told you that you would find material for your Scherzo here.'[60]

Although the accuracy of Novotný's story is questionable, this excerpt is telling for what it reveals about perceived notions of 'Czechness' in Dvořák's Scherzo. Providing an account that is similar to Šourek's, Novotný situates Dvořák not in cosmopolitan Vienna nor even cosmopolitan Prague, but in the Bohemian countryside, and attempts to demonstrate that the composer was keenly attuned to his rural Czech roots when writing the furiant movement of his symphony.

Indeed, the furiant had clear Czech associations during the late nineteenth century. No definition of the dance is given in the reviews of the D major Symphony, but a striking description can be found in a critique from 1879 of Dvořák's *Czech Suite* – a piece that concludes with a furiant. The critic writes: 'The most successful number, which prominently surpasses all the others, is the closing "furiant". Here the orchestra is all laughs and jokes […] The second part [of the piece] shows the furiant spirit of the stubborn Czech skull – this purely Czech obstinacy.'[61] Writing in 1924, Zdeněk Nejedlý (1878–1962) provides a more nuanced definition of the furiant, noting that the dance is meant to be taken as a parody, mocking the haughtiness, self-importance

[60] Václav Juda Novotný, 'Pestré obrázky z Dvořákova života' ('Vivid Pictures from the Life of Dvořák'), *Dalibor*, 2nd ser., 33/29 (17 March 1911), 206–8 (p. 206): '"Jen pojďte" domlouvá mu pan tajemník "pořád a pořád v těch notech tak nesmíte vězet, a nejde-li vám vše podle vůle, nuž takové malé vyraženíčko přivede vás na jiné myšlenky. Ostatně taková pouť je právě pro scherzo nejlepší látkou, že ne?" Konečně Dvořák povolil […] [Když Dvořák s panem tajemníkem vycházeli z kostela, Dvořák říká] "Už to mám" obrátí se v tom okamžiku se smíchem na pana tajemníka – "místo obvyklého scherza napíšu do symfonie národní český tanec furiant. Je to božský rhythmus pro scherzovou formu jako stvořen – a nota bene bude to něco nového!" "Nu tak vidíte" – směje se pan tajemník "vždyť jsem vám řekl, že tu najdete látku pro své scherzo."'

[61] -ý, 'Akademie uspořádaná spolkem čes. žurnalistů v "Novém českém divadle" dne 16. května' ('Academy Organized by the Society of Czech Journalists in the "New Czech Theatre" on 16 May'), *Dalibor*, 2nd ser., 1/15 (20 May 1879), 116–18 (p. 118): 'Nejzdařilejším číslem, jež vysoko nad ostatní vyniká, jest závěrečný "furiant". Orkestr je tu samý vtip, samý žert, zvonivý smích a bujarý skok […] v druhém dílu působí tím účinněji ten furiantský duch tvrdé české lebky, ryze českého justamentu.'

https://doi.org/10.1080/02690403.2017.1286129 Published online by Cambridge University Press

and presumptuousness of a Czech farmer.[62] Even so, the dance's origins are not quite as simple as these critics would have their readers believe. The first notated furiant – included in Rittersberg's collection of folk songs from 1825 – actually sets a German text: 'Furiant, furiant, furiant, du bist mein lieba Monn.'[63] This furiant melody acquired a Czech text by 1844; however, even as late as 1863, in *Rieger's Encyclopedia* (*Riegrův slovník naučný*), the furiant – though defined as a Czech dance – is still described as a type of piece that is well known to both nationalities in Bohemia. A German text is provided in the entry, alongside the Czech one.[64] Mirko Očadlík reportedly added another layer to the story, suggesting in the course of a university seminar that the root of the word 'furiant' is neither German nor Czech, but French, coming from the expression *fou riant* ('laughing fool') and originating at the time of the Napoleonic wars.[65] In spite of its broader associations in the early nineteenth century, the furiant had developed exclusively Czech connotations by the time Dvořák's symphony was premièred in 1881, especially after the dance's appearance in what would become the quintessential Czech work: Smetana's *Prodaná nevěsta* (*The Bartered Bride*), first heard in 1866 and having risen to immense popularity by the early 1870s. With his D major Symphony, Dvořák no doubt played a role in further consolidating these perceptions of the furiant.

The significance of introducing a Czech dance into the symphony was not lost on the critics, and the furiant is highlighted in their reviews, usually being discussed ahead of the other movements. Several critics attest that the furiant was a crowd favourite and had to be repeated at the symphony's première. As Novotný puts it in his review for *Dalibor*, 'Czech character springs forth in the most apparent way from the third movement, the adorably worked-out "furiant" […]. This number seized and fired up the abundant audience at once, inspiring thunderous expressions of praise, and it had to be repeated.'[66] The third movement is also singled out by the reviewer for *Pokrok*,

[62] Zdeněk Nejedlý, *Bedřich Smetana*, 4 vols. (Prague, 1924–33), ii (1924), 317. The word Nejedlý uses to describe this characteristic of Czech farmers is 'domýšlivost'.

[63] *Nejstarší sbírky českých lidových písní*, ed. Jaroslav Markl (Prague, 1987), 549.

[64] Zř, 'Furiant', *Riegrův slovník naučný*, ed. František Ladislav Rieger (Prague, 1863), 267.

[65] *Nejstarší sbírky českých lidových písní*, ed. Markl, 184 n. 6. Milan Kuna observes that, of all the Czech dances that were current during the nineteenth century, the strašák and the furiant were the ones that had political implications as early as the pre-Revolutionary period. Kuna, 'Dílo Antonína Dvořáka druhé poloviny sedmdesátých let' ('The Work of Antonín Dvořák from the Second Half of the 1870s') (Ph.D. dissertation, Charles University, Prague, 1954), 253.

[66] N., 'Z koncertní síně', *Dalibor*, 2nd ser., 3/11 (10 April 1881), 83: 'Nejzjevněji vytryskuje tento český ráz z třetí věty, z rozkošně pracovaného "furianta" […]. Číslo to též rázem zachvátilo a rozohnilo přečetné posluchačstvo k bouřným projevům pochvaly, i muselo býti opakováno.' Elsewhere Novotný considers the Minuet/Scherzo of a symphony to be the most important: 'The original formal core of the symphony lies here in this movement, which usually can be found between the calm movement (Andante or Adagio) and the finale. Here, in the Minuet, the secret of the symphonic form appears to us in its simple-minded naivety; though [this form] advanced to a high rank, it is not ashamed here of its low origins, taken from dance' ('Formelní původní jádro symfonie vězí právě zde v této větě, která pravidelněji své místo mívá mezi klidnou větou ("andante" či "adagio") a finale. Zde v "menuetu" se nám objeví v prostoduché naivnosti tajemství celé té symfonické formy, která, až k vysoké již hodnosti postoupila, předc se zde nestydí za svůj

https://doi.org/10.1080/02690403.2017.1286129 Published online by Cambridge University Press

who states that 'the outward result of the performance of Dvořák's symphony was very honourable; from each movement to the next, the interest of the audience increased, and the praise did not want to let up until the third movement was repeated and until the composer made two appearances on the podium'.[67]

Even more than the third movement, it is the fourth that the reviewer for the newspaper *Národní listy* characterizes as particularly Czech. Here, the critic detects references to 'numerous folk songs' which, in his view, are so 'familiar' as to give the Finale 'an almost excessive rural nationalist character'.[68] Novotný also hints at this idea, asserting that the Finale as a whole lacks unity because it is too much of a 'mosaic' of 'trivial' motifs.[69] Although the critics do not identify any of these tunes or motifs by name, their approach set the pattern for much of the subsequent Czech scholarship on the piece. Efforts to show that some of the symphony's principal themes were derived from Bohemian folk songs continued well into the twentieth century (see Table 1).[70] While some theories are more convincing than others (Antonín Sychra, for instance, uses an early sketch of the symphony's opening theme to support the claim that this material was loosely based on the Czech folk song 'Já mám koně' ('I Have Horses')), such endeavours are problematic. Rather than clarifying Dvořák's inspiration, this scholarship points to a clear trope in the Czech reception of the D major Symphony that can be traced back to its first performance.

---

nízký původ, jejž byla vzala z půdy taneční'). Václav Juda Novotný, 'Sonata a symfonie – symfonická báseň' ('Sonata, Symphony, Symphonic Poem'), *Dalibor*, 1st ser., 1/15 (11 April 1873), 117–21; 1/16 (18 April 1873), 127–9; 1/17 (25 April 1873), 135–6; 1/18 (2 May 1873), 145–8; 1/19 (9 May 1873), 153–6; 1/20 (16 May 1873), 161–4; 1/21 (23 May 1873), 169–71; 1/22 (30 May 1873), 177–9; 1/24 (13 June 1873), 193–6; 1/25 (20 June 1873), 201–3; 1/26 (27 June 1873), 209–12 (1/18, p. 146).

[67] -f-., 'Divadlo, literatura, věda, a umění: Dnešní slovanský concert' ('Theatre, Literature, Science, and Art: Today's Slavonic Concert'), *Pokrok*, 13/74 (27 March 1881), 6 (příloha): 'Zevní výsledek provozování Dvořákovy symfonie byl velmi čestný; od věty k větě patrně vstoupal interes obecenstva, a pochvala nechtěla ani ustáti, dokud třetí věta nebyla opakována a k závěru skladatel sám dvakráte nezjevil se na podiu.' Discussions of the Scherzo's 'Czechness' stand in pointed contrast to Max Kalbeck's description of the movement for the *Wiener allgemeine Zeitung* (20 February 1883): 'Beethoven beats the time, but Dvořák sets it to music' ('Beethoven schlägt der Takt, aber Dvorzak musicirt dazu'). Quoted in Brodbeck, *Defining Deutschtum*, 174.

[68] -ý., 'Dramatické umění a hudba: Koncerty': 'nesčísln[y] popěvk[y] národn[í]'; 'ráz poněkud […] příliš prostonárodn[í]'.

[69] N., 'Z koncertní síně', 83: 'mosaikovitě se rospadá, postrádá jednotlivého proudu, mimo to vadi nám nemálo triviální ráz obou hlavních motivů'.

[70] Antonín Sychra would take this idea the furthest, claiming that Dvořák sought to forge a connection with folk-song traditions. Sychra, *Estetika Dvořákovy symfonické tvorby* (*The Aesthetics of Dvořák's Symphonic Compositions*) (Prague, 1959), 277. To an extent, contemporary Czech critics looked for signs of folk inspiration in some of Dvořák's other symphonies. In a review of the D minor Symphony, op. 70, for *Dalibor*, the critic claims that the 'principal theme [of the finale] bears a casual resemblance to the folk song "I am the Coachman"' ('základní thema vyznívá v nahodilou reminiscenci národní písně "Já jsem forman"'). Stkr., 'Z koncertní síně' ('From the Concert Hall'), *Dalibor*, 2nd ser., 7/45 (7 December 1885), 444–6 (p. 445).

https://doi.org/10.1080/02690403.2017.1286129 Published online by Cambridge University Press

TABLE 1
FOLK SONGS MENTIONED IN THE CZECH LITERATURE IN RELATION TO DVOŘÁK'S SYMPHONY IN D MAJOR

Czech folk song	*Movement of the symphony*	*Source*
'Vosy, vosy, vosy, sršani'	third movement	Milan Kuna
'Sedlák, sedlák, sedlák'	third movement	Milan Kuna
'Já mám koně'	first movement	Antonín Sychra
'Ševcovská'	first movement	Antonín Sychra
'Když jsem k vám chodíval'[a]	first movement	Antonín Sychra

[a] This folk song ('When I walked to your house') is similar in its opening melodic contour to the Viennese *Groß-Vater Tanz*; Brodbeck detects allusions to the latter dance in Dvořák's symphony. Brodeck, 'Dvořák's Reception in Liberal Vienna', 97; Brodbeck, *Defining Deutschtum*, 163.

The context in which the symphony was premièred in Prague was one that further encouraged critics to exaggerate the work's 'nationalist' features. First heard at the Slavonic concert of the Academic Readers' Society at Žofín Hall, the piece was part of an all-Slav programme.[71] In use since 1830 and capable of seating an audience of 400, Žofín Hall, though small by Viennese standards, remained the most spacious concert hall in Prague until the opening of the Rudolfinum in 1885 and played host to most of the city's orchestral concerts.[72] The Slavonic concert series itself was established in 1877, and performances were held annually for 19 consecutive seasons. During the 1880s, these concerts became a meeting ground for the Czech intelligentsia and often provided opportunities for national and political demonstration.[73] The Academic Readers' Society, with which the concert series was initially affiliated, was even forced to disband in 1889 for its participation in 'provocative' political manifestations.[74] While the reviews of Dvořák's symphony do not suggest that the event was associated with any specific political activity, the composition was premièred before a sizeable audience and in an environment that was hospitable to overt displays of nationalism; this only served to reinforce Czech readings of the piece being published in the press.

Appropriating Dvořák's D major Symphony: a question of genre

In their attempts to claim Dvořák's symphony as a distinctly Czech composition, critics were inevitably forced to confront its genre. Appearing alongside the

[71] Anon., 'Divadlo, literatura, věda, a umění: Dnešní slovanský koncert' ('Theatre, Literature, Science, and Art: Today's Slavonic Concert'), *Pokrok*, 13/72 (25 March 1881), 3.

[72] Vladimír Lébl and Jitka Ludvová, 'Pražské orchestrální koncerty v letech 1860–1895' ('Prague Orchestral Concerts in the Years 1860–1895'), *Hudební věda*, 17 (1980), 99–137 (p. 105).

[73] *Ibid.*, 113.

[74] Garver, *The Young Czech Party*, 144.

https://doi.org/10.1080/02690403.2017.1286129 Published online by Cambridge University Press

symphonic poems of Smetana (*Richard III*) and Fibich (*Vesna*) as well as Władysław Żeleński's First Polonaise, the symphony must have seemed rather anomalous on the 1881 concert programme. Since the early 1870s, the leading critics in the Czech lands had upheld the symphonic poem as the most appropriate vehicle for expressing 'Czechness' in the realm of instrumental music. Otakar Hostinský (1847–1910) published a lengthy defence of programme music in *Dalibor* in 1873.[75] That same volume of *Dalibor* carried a series of articles by Novotný, outlining the history of the sonata, the symphony and the symphonic poem.[76] In both studies, the critics champion programmatic genres in the name of progress and modernity. Novotný, in particular, makes note of the nationalist direction that the symphonic poem was taking in more recent works like Fibich's *Záboj, Slavoj a Luděk* (*Záboj, Slavoj and Luděk*, 1873) and the cycle *Má vlast* (*My Country*, 1872–9) that Smetana had just started to write. Czech composers continued to add to this growing body of programme music during the mid- to late 1870s. While Hostinský alludes to a certain sense of scepticism from Czech audiences toward the symphonic poem in 1873, the genre had become deeply entrenched in the musical culture of the Czech lands by 1881, and as a symphonist, Dvořák stood outside this emerging tradition. Czech critics sought to take ownership of Dvořák nonetheless, while simultaneously explaining how it was that he had deviated from the course they had prescribed for Bohemian composers. For all of their dismissive remarks about the symphony and the 'German' connotations it seemed to carry, the genre actually proved to be very well suited for this kind of appropriation.

In order to reconcile Dvořák's cultivation of the symphony with their nationalist project, Czech critics employed several strategies in their reviews of the D major Symphony. They present the symphony as proof of Dvořák's ability to handle more complex forms than mere dance pieces and orchestral miniatures, thereby demonstrating that Czechs could boast remarkable achievements in so-called 'serious' genres of music. Novotný takes this approach in his review, stating that Dvořák,

> at the point of the most beautiful flowering of his creative strength, gathered up all of his precious art, so that he might show the world that he is capable of ruling over stricter forms than those of dance. It was now time for Dvořák, having relinquished his tendency to expend his energy on miniatures, to venture toward grand works in expansive symphonic forms, and by doing this, he was able to add a new, everlasting sparkle to Czech musical art.[77]

[75] Otakar Hostinský, 'O hudbě programní' ('About Programme Music'), *Dalibor*, 1st ser., 1/35 (29 August 1873), 281–3; 1/36 (5 September 1873), 289–91; 1/37 (12 September 1873), 297–300; 1/38 (19 September 1873), 305–9; 1/41 (10 October 1873), 333–6; 1/42 (17 October 1873), 341–3; 1/43 (24 October 1873), 349–51; 1/44 (31 October 1873), 357–9; 1/47 (21 November 1873), 381–4.

[76] Novotný, 'Sonata a symfonie – symfonická báseň'.

[77] N., 'Z koncertní síně', 83: '[Dvořák] v nejkrásnějším rozkvětu své tvůrčí síly sebral všechno své vzácné umění, aby světu dokázal, že umí též vládnouti formami přísnějšími, než jsou ony taneční. Byl již

https://doi.org/10.1080/02690403.2017.1286129 Published online by Cambridge University Press

In some of his earlier writings, Novotný had disapproved of the symphony, even declaring on one occasion that 'only a fool would continue to write in the old forms [of the symphony], when he has newer, more flexible ones at his disposal'.[78] But he was willing to put all this aside in 1881 so that he might claim Dvořák's work as a substantial acquisition for the Czechs. Echoing Novotný, the critic for the conservative newspaper *Pokrok* speaks of the symphony as the genre in which 'orchestral music reaches its pinnacle'[79] and asserts that because of the genre's prestige, Dvořák's new symphony was met with considerable anticipation from Czech audiences.[80] The symphony had long served as a marker of compositional maturity. As Mark Evan Bonds shows, it was universally regarded as 'the most ambitious and challenging of all instrumental genres in the nineteenth century'.[81] Dvořák's engagement with it was, thus, taken as a matter of Czech pride. Perhaps as a manifestation of this pride and as a means of indicating the weightiness of the genre, the D major would be referred to in *Dalibor* as Dvořák's 'Great' Symphony for some time after its première, long after the subtitle that Novotný had given it – 'Czech Spring Symphony' – had fallen into disuse.[82] Even if Czech critics believed that Czech energies would best be expended in other areas of instrumental composition, they took advantage of the symphony's illustrious position when addressing Dvořák's work.

čas, že Dvořák zanechav všeho rozptylování sil v drobnostech, odhodlal se k mohutnému rozmachu v širých formách symfonických a tak leskem novým, nepomíjejícím přiodělí hudební umění české.' Dance forms rank lower than the symphony in the hierarchy that Novotný establishes in his 'Sonata a symfonie – symfonická báseň'.

78 'Blázen kdo komponuje v starých formách, když má novější, ohebnější po ruce.' Novotný, 'Sonata a symfonie – symfonická báseň', 1/24 (13 June 1873), 196. Novotný also writes: 'It is a strange "testimony of poverty" that one gives when he reaches for a form that is less perfect, outdated, incapable of giving life [to a composition]. Such is the relationship between a "symphony" and a "symphonic poem"' ('Podivné si dává "testimonium paupertatis" onen, jenž sáhne po formě méně dokonalé, zastaralé, života neschopné. Tentýž poměr panuje mezi "symfonií" a "symfonickou básní"'). *Ibid*.

79 -f-, 'Divadlo, literatura, věda, a umění', 6: 'v této umělecké formě povznáší se hudba orchestrální zajisté ke sve výši největší'.

80 *Ibid*.: 'For this reason, the anticipation was considerable and felt by all, even though, judging from Dvořák's other pieces related to the symphony (his suites and serenades), no one doubted its complete success' ('Napnutí bylo veliké a obecné, ačkoliv soudě dle skvělých úspěchů Dvořákových v jiných skladbách symfonií příbuzných (suitě a serenádě) již a priori nikdo nepochyboval o úplném jeho zdaru'); 'The main number on the programme, not only in terms of its scope, but also in terms of its weight was Dvořák's symphony (in D major)' ('Hlavním číslem programu nejen svou rozsáhlostí, nýbrž i svou závažností byla Dvořákova Symfonie (z D-dur)').

81 Mark Evan Bonds, *After Beethoven: Imperatives of Originality in the Symphony* (Cambridge, MA, 1996), 7.

82 Czech critics also called it Dvořák's 'Large' Symphony in D major ('mohutná symfonie v D-dur') and his 'Grand' Symphony in D major ('velk[á] symfoni[e] do D-dur'). Ant. Mikenda, 'Přehled činnosti hudební v Čechách roku 1881' ('An Overview of Musical Activity in the Czech Lands in 1881'), *Dalibor*, 2nd ser., 4/8 (10 March 1882), 61–2 (p. 62), and Anon., 'Drobné zprávy: Česká hudba v cizině' ('Brief News: Czech Music in Foreign Lands'), *Dalibor*, 2nd ser., 4/30 (20 October 1882), 239, respectively.

https://doi.org/10.1080/02690403.2017.1286129 Published online by Cambridge University Press

By 1881, Czech readers did not have to be convinced of Dvořák's skill in this area. He had no Czech 'giant' marching ahead of him, and as early as 1873, absolute instrumental music had been described by the Czechs as Dvořák's domain. In an article for *Dalibor* dated 4 April 1873, Novotný reflects on the recent performance of Dvořák's orchestral composition *Májová noc* (*May Night*) with the following words:

> We can expect great things from Dvořák in the future, which can only be to the glory of the Czech name, not so much in the realm of dramatic art – since, [thus far], Dvořák lacks deeper aesthetic studies, defter treatment of the human voice and, finally, true expression in declamation that would befit the Czech language – but mainly in *the field of instrumental music*, as we can judge on the basis of everything that we have heard from the composer so far. Instrumental music is his true home, for it is certainly not innate for everyone to think in such a pure orchestral manner, in such a lofty polyphonic style.[83]

Novotný's phrase 'the field of instrumental music' does not necessarily exclude programmatic genres. Ludevít Procházka (1837–88) carves out a narrower niche for Dvořák: writing in *Národní listy* within a few days of Novotný and commenting on the same orchestral piece, he declares that 'the extraordinary loveliness pouring forth in [Dvořák's] instrumentation points especially to his true calling *in the realm of absolute instrumental music*'.[84] David Beveridge marvels at the swiftness with which these critics seem to be willing to dismiss Dvořák's vocal works, considering that no Dvořák opera had yet been performed in the Czech lands at that time,[85] and barely a month earlier, both men had borne witness to the tremendous success in Prague of Dvořák's *Hymnus: Dědicové bílé hory* (*Hymnus: Heirs of the White Mountain*), a choral piece. Perhaps even more surprising is the degree of confidence that the critics place in Dvořák's instrumental works, which likewise had been given little exposure up to that point. Although it would appear that critics drew these conclusions after a very limited sampling of Dvořák's oeuvre, the composer's alleged area of

[83] x., 'Zpávy z Prahy a z venkova: Druhý koncert filharmonického spolku' ('News from Prague and Rural Areas: The Second Concert of the Philharmonic Society'), *Dalibor*, 1st ser., 1/14 (4 April 1873), 112–16 (p. 113): 'Od Dvořáka smíme již pro budoucnost očekávati činy velké, jaké jen k oslavě sloužiti mohou jménu českému, ani ne tak na poli dramatického umění – scháziť zde (dosud) Dvořákovi hlubších esthetických studií a obratnějšího zacházení s hlasem lidským a konečně pravého výrazu při deklamaci přiměřené duchu jazyka českého – nýbrž hlavně *na poli hudby instrumentální*, jak souditi můžeme dle všeho, co jsme dosud od skladatele našeho slyšeli. Hudba instrumentální jest jeho pravým domovem; neboť mysliti tak čistě orkestrálně, v tak vznešeném slohu polyfonním není věru každému popřáno.' Novotný used the pseudonym 'x.' during the early 1870s. Emphasis added.

[84] P., 'Literatura a umění' ('Literature and Art'), *Národní listy*, 13/98 (10 April 1873), 2: 'Půvabnost nevšední, která rozlívá se nad instrumentací jeho, poukazuje zejmena k pravému jeho povolání v říši *absolutní hudby instrumentální*.' Emphasis added.

[85] David Beveridge, 'A Rare Meeting of Minds in Kvapil's and Dvořák's *Rusalka*' (programme note), *Antonín Dvořák: Rusalka* (Prague, 2009), 64–77 (p. 75).

https://doi.org/10.1080/02690403.2017.1286129 Published online by Cambridge University Press

expertise was demarcated quite early in his career. His reputation would remain intact throughout his life, as is evident in the writing of Emanuel Chvála (1851–1924). In his contribution to the collection of essays on Dvořák from 1912, Chvála characterizes Dvořák as a symphonist at heart, even when working in other genres:

> That Dvořák is, at the core of his talent, *a symphonist*, that his personality and way of working gravitate toward symphonic creation, is a fact that is not denied by his old love for the opera, his abundant work in the realm of vocal music, nor in the least by his inclination at a ripe age toward programmatic music. […] The whole method of musical thought for Dvořák, when creating instrumental music, is symphonic.[86]

The symphony's lack of extramusical associations further worked in the Czech critics' favour when they reviewed Dvořák's D major Symphony, as it gave them the opportunity to fill in what the composer had left unspecified. This meant not only accentuating the Czechness of Dvořák's symphony, but also invoking the language of the favoured symphonic poem. Beckerman considers the D major to be the 'most absolute' of Dvořák's symphonies – that is, 'the least likely of [the composer's] later symphonies to have a program lurking behind it'.[87] Yet this symphony, perhaps more than any of Dvořák's other works in the genre, inspired poetic effusions from Czech critics. The reviewers for *Dalibor* and *Národní listy* make frequent mention of imagery from spring in their articles on the symphony, even though no such extramusical ideas are suggested in the score.[88] Once again it is Novotný who takes this the furthest, arguing that the difference between Dvořák's symphony, to which he applies the epithet 'spring', and Fibich's symphonic poem

[86] Emanuel Chvála, 'Symfonické skladby Dvořákovy' ('Dvořák's Symphonic Works'), *Antonín Dvořák: Sborník statí o jeho díle a životě* (*Antonín Dvořák: A Collection of Essays about his Work and Life*), ed. Boleslav Kalenský (Prague, 1912), 129–59 (p. 129): 'Že Dvořák v podstatě svého nadání jest *symfonikem*, že svojí povahou i způsobem práce tihne ku tvorbě symfonické, jest faktum, které nepopře ani jeho stará láska k opeře, ani jeho vydatná práce v oboru skladby vokální, nejméně pak v zralém jeho věku vzniklá náklonnost k hudbě programní […] Celý způsob hudebního myšlení při tvorbě instrumentalní jest u Dvořáka symfonický.' Emphasis added.

[87] Beckerman, 'Dvořák', 282. Beckerman has examined possible hidden programmes in Dvořák's 'New World' Symphony. Michael Beckerman, 'Dvořák's "New World" Largo and *The Song of Hiawatha*', *19th-Century Music*, 16 (1992–3), 35–48. For further reading on the fine lines between absolute and programmatic elements in the symphony, see James Hepokoski, 'Beethoven Reception: The Symphonic Tradition', *The Cambridge History of Nineteenth-Century Music*, ed. Jim Samson (Cambridge, 2002), 424–59.

[88] This imagery ties into a tradition of Czech pastoral symphonies dating back to Johann Stamitz (*Sinfonia pastorale*, op. 4 no. 2, 1758) and Jiří Ignác Linek (*Sinfonia pastoralis*, undated). Smaczny claims, however, that this tradition was short-lived: 'While undoubtedly appealing, these early pastoral symphonies comprise an episode rather than the foundations of an identifiably Czech tradition.' Smaczny, 'The Czech Symphony', 223–4. This pastoral element has also been examined in relation to Brahms's Second Symphony. Reinhold Brinkmann, *Late Idyll: The Second Symphony of Johannes Brahms*, trans. Peter Palmer (Cambridge, 1995), 200–5.

https://doi.org/10.1080/02690403.2017.1286129 Published online by Cambridge University Press

entitled *Vesna* (*Spring*), which was premièred at the same concert, lies primarily in the number of movements; otherwise, for Novotný, the two works are similarly evocative:

> Fibich called his piece *Spring*; by doing this, he wanted to say that, in his work, he is expressing various moods that fill and exhilarate the soul of the person who, after an uncomfortable winter, steps out for the first time into the ever younger-growing nature. It is certainly an appropriate topic for a musical composition. I have already mentioned that Dvořák's piece breathes forth the same spring-like, fresh mood; while Dvořák gave expression to the various moods of spring in four different, closed movements, Fibich painted all of these moods in one unified framework.[89]

In some respects, such comments were not new for Novotný, who had argued in 1874 that Dvořák's Symphony in E♭ major had been misclassified and ought to have been designated as a series of symphonic poems, rather than as a symphony.[90]

References to Czech nature and the Czech people abound in Šourek's discussion of Dvořák's D major Symphony in his biography of Dvořák, cited in note 53 above.

[89] N., 'Z koncertní síně', 84: 'Fibich nazval svou skladbu *Vesnou*; chtěl tím totiž říci, že v práci své vyslovuje různé nálady, jež naplňují a opojují nitro člověka, jenž po trapné zimě poprvé vkročil v nově mládnoucí přírodu. Jest to zajisté předmět hudbě úplně přístupný. Ostatně zmínil jsem se již, že Dvořákova skladba dýše touže jarní, svěží náladou; kdežto však Dvořák různým náladám jarním dal výraz ve čtyřech různých, vždy o sobě zaokrouhlených větách, zobrazil Fibich všechny ty nálady v jednotném rámci.'

[90] x., 'Zprávy z Prahy a z venkova' ('News from Prague and Rural Areas'), *Dalibor*, 2nd ser., 2/14 (4 April 1874), 109–11 (p. 111): 'It was not just general attention, but rather unlimited admiration that this ingenious symphonic work [the E♭ major Symphony] earned for itself; [the work was written] by our Ant. Dvořák – a brave warrior in the field of the most modern music – who himself entitled the piece "symphony". With this nomenclature, he put the sharpest weapon into the hands of his critics; they say: "Neither in its external nor in its internal construction is this [piece] in the form of the old symphony" – and they are correct […]. The whole [piece] creates a purely aesthetic impression, an impression of a work that is complete [and] perfect; yet it is not a "symphony", though outwardly it preserves the [customary] structure, for the internal development in individual movements does not follow the rules of the old symphony, but is based on modern thematic work. The [whole situation] might be remedied quite easily: the composer ought to call his work "four-movement symphonic poem" or "free orchestral fantasy"; doing this is the best way to rid himself of criticism from the admirers of the golden old forms of the grey symphony!' ('Nejen všeobecnou pozornost nýbrž i neobmezený obdiv získala sobě genialní symfonická práce statečného bojovníka na poli hudby nejmodernější našeho Ant. Dvořáka, kteroužto třívětou skladbu skladatel sám tituluje názvem "symfonie". Tímto pojmenováním dal ovšem svým soudcům nejostřejší zbraň do rukou; oni praví totiž: "forma staré symfonie to není ani dle zevnějšího ani dle vnitřního uspořádání" – a v tom mají rozhodně pravdu […]. Celek ten bude pak činit dojem čistě estetický, dojem práce celé, práce dokonalé; "symfonie" to ale předc nebude, vzdor tomu, že zevnější uspořádání čtyrvěté by bylo zachováno; neboť vnitřní propracování jednotlivých vět není u Dvořáka nikdy dle pravidel staré symfonie prováděno, nýbrž dle moderní práce thematické. Však i tu jest pomoc velmi snadná: nechť nazve skladatel svou práci "čtyrvětou symfonickou básní" nebo "volnou orchestrální fanstasií" a tím nejlépe se zbaví všech výčitek se strany obdivovatelů zlatých starých forem šedivé symfonie!').

https://doi.org/10.1080/02690403.2017.1286129 Published online by Cambridge University Press

In fact, Šourek's description of the piece is strongly akin in its language to the critic Chvála's assessment in 1880 of Smetana's *Má vlast*. Referring to this best-known cycle of symphonic poems by Smetana, Chvála writes: 'As is evident from the titles, Smetana drew poetic material for his symphonic poems from the soul of his nation: the glorious history of the Czechs, the poetry of the Czech people, the desires of the nation and its hopes for the future inspired Smetana to artistic creation.'[91] These same kinds of images surface time and time again in Czech criticism on Dvořák's symphony. By applying the subtitle 'Czech Spring Symphony' to Dvořák's work, Novotný, then, did not merely seek to give it a specifically Czech programme; the idea of giving a work a programme of any kind had itself become a Czech preoccupation by that time. In spite of its deviation from established generic norms in the Czech lands, critics took hold of Dvořák's symphony and moulded it to their purposes, capitalizing on the admiration that symphonies seemed to inspire in audiences, Dvořák's own reputation as a symphonist and the fact that the genre does not strive to refer to anything outside itself.

Conclusion

Dvořák's D major Symphony came in the midst of strained relations between the Czechs and Germans of Austria. After the Stremayr language ordinance, it became more crucial than ever to define exactly what was German and what was Czech. Although the Vienna Philharmonic had made it clear that Dvořák was to be counted as an outsider when they refused to perform his symphony, the threat that Dvořák might eventually end up on the German side of this divide was still very real for many Czech critics. It had not been uncommon in the past for musicians of Czech origin to emigrate to German-speaking Europe, and Hanslick and Brahms urged Dvořák at various points in his career to make the move to Vienna. What is more, Dvořák had recently come under fire in *Dalibor* for allegedly giving priority to German audiences. For Novotný, it was only a matter of time before the Germans would start taking ownership of Dvořák. In order to 'eliminate the danger that [Dvořák's] pieces could be estranged from [Czech] repertoire',[92] as Novotný expresses it, Czech critics used their reviews of the D major Symphony to claim Dvořák and prove to the public that his music was unequivocally Czech. They did this by concealing the symphony's Viennese connections and exaggerating its 'Czech' elements, thereby justifying

[91] Emanuel Chvála, 'Smetanovy skladby' ('Smetana's Pieces'), *Dalibor*, 2nd ser., 2/29 (10 October 1880), 225–7 (p. 226): 'Jak již ze zde uvedených jmen vysvítá, čerpal Smetana poetické látky pro své symfonické básně z duše svého národa; slavné dějiny české, poesie českého lidu, tužby národa a jeho naděje do budoucnosti nadchnuly Smetanu k uměleckému tvoření.'

[92] Novotný, 'Drobné zprávy: Dvořák co skladatel písní', 7: 'tím odpadne nebezpečí, že by skladby jeho mohly býti odcizeny naší hudební literatuře'.

https://doi.org/10.1080/02690403.2017.1286129 Published online by Cambridge University Press

Dvořák's cultivation of this 'German' genre, even as his compatriots gravitated toward the symphonic poem.

Dvořák does not react to these reviews in any of his letters; however, he would probably have seen no inherent contradiction between the symphony's Czech and German narratives and may have even played a role in constructing them. In a letter dated 13 March 1881 – less than two weeks before the Prague première – Dvořák asks Richter to return the score and parts of the symphony to him as soon as possible; he leads Richter to believe that these materials are needed for the symphony's publication in Berlin, when in fact they were required for the Prague performance.[93] Just as Czech audiences were being kept in ignorance of the symphony's Viennese backstory, so too were Dvořák's acquaintances in Vienna unaware of his plan to have the work premièred in Prague. Becoming increasingly adept at cultivating multiple audiences, Dvořák dealt with the snub from the Viennese crowd by surreptitiously bringing about a performance in an environment in which he was guaranteed to get a sympathetic response.

The Czech reception of Dvořák's D major Symphony ultimately shows just how much issues of language and nationality were intertwined in the Czech lands during the late nineteenth century. Sayer describes Prague, in particular, as 'a city where the question of the relation of language and identity has been a fraught one'.[94] At a time when the Czech lands were linguistically mixed, the decision to communicate in either Czech or German was not arbitrary, nor was it a matter of mere practicality, but it carried deep meaning. The kind of rhetoric concerning language that was common in contemporary political debates spilled over into Czech music criticism of this period, and perceived *musical* language served as an important earmark of national affiliation. Thus, when Dvořák's symphony was performed on home soil in the early 1880s, critics and audiences were determined to hear Czech, no matter how much German he spoke.

ABSTRACT

Discussions of Dvořák's Sixth Symphony typically focus on its connections with Vienna. Dvořák wrote the symphony for the Vienna Philharmonic and dedicated it to Hans Richter. Its allusions to Brahms and Beethoven led David Brodbeck to describe it as a piece in which Dvořák 'speaks German with an unusual degree of clarity'. Contemporary Czech critics tell a different story. After its 1881 Prague première, the work was dubbed the 'Czech Spring Symphony'. One critic stated that it 'speaks to us in pure Czech'. Indeed, the Sixth is Dvořák's only symphony to include a furiant, and Czech scholars have long sought to prove that the work's themes were derived from Bohemian folk songs. Can these narratives be reconciled? This article suggests that political tensions and Dvořák's growing international renown made Czech critics eager to claim him, giving Czech labels to a piece that could be interpreted as conforming to the Austro-German tradition.

[93] Dvořák, *Korespondence a dokumenty*, ed. Kuna *et al.*, i, 244.

[94] Derek Sayer, 'The Language of Nationality and the Nationality of Language: Prague 1780–1920', *Past and Present*, 45/153 (1996), 164–210 (p. 165).

https://doi.org/10.1080/02690403.2017.1286129 Published online by Cambridge University Press