

**THE CIMBÁL (CIMBALOM) IN MORAVIA:  
CULTURAL ORGANOLOGY AND INTERPRETIVE COMMUNITIES**

by

**Jesse Alan Newhouse Johnston**

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of the requirements for the degree of  
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**Doctoral Committee:**

**Professor Judith O. Becker, Co-Chair  
Associate Professor Amy K. Stillman, Co-Chair  
Professor Michael D. Kennedy  
Professor Joseph S. C. Lam  
Assistant Professor Christi-Anne Castro**

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## **DEDICATION**

*To*

*Grandpa Mayo,  
who didn't finish his;*

*Ricky P.,  
who has one to write;*

*and my family,  
who made this possible.*

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My greatest thanks go to my friends, family, and advisors who have sustained my dedication. Through the many times when I was unsure of how to proceed, their support has been the true backbone of this project. In addition to everyone I thank here, there are countless others whom I met and talked with in the field, interacted with at conferences, and socialized with at every stage of this project to whom I owe unknown thanks. I am endlessly happy that I was able to rely on the assistance and advice of so many people and institutions in the U.S., the Czech Republic, and elsewhere. Although it was not a major theme in the dissertation, place was a significant factor during my writing process: my heaviest writing periods in 2007 and 2008 are unimaginable without my apartment on Cornwell Place and the academic community of the Michigan campus. Without all of those long walks in the Nichols Arboretum, I am not sure that I would have been able to maintain the peace of mind to finish work on this document.

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## PREFACE

I trace my interest in music to my great-grandfather Jaroslav, who I knew as “Grandpa Jerry.” He was one of ten children in a family of Czech immigrants to Iowa. Although he was a lifelong farmer, I believe that music was one of Grandpa Jerry’s true passions. With his Czech love of music, he learned to play the violin by listening to musicians at country dances, or at least, so the story goes in our family. My memory of Grandpa Jerry playing the fiddle and singing on the stairs of his house in Riceville—from before I went to elementary school—has been an inspiration to me throughout my musical life. After hearing him play, I started to dream of myself as a concert violinist and asked my parents if I could take violin lessons.

My musical career has taken many different directions since those early lessons. After moving to northern Wisconsin in 1989, I began studying the euphonium. The school band became a community of friends and musicians with whom I felt at home in this new place. Playing in the band was one of my first experiences of music’s power for bringing people together with a sense of community—not only did I have a circle of friends outside the band room, but during rehearsals I participated in intense, communal music-making.

Midway through college I changed my focus from music performance to academic studies. Upon discovering the broad offerings in Slavic studies at the University of Michigan, I took the opportunity to learn about my cultural roots. I took an early course in Slavic folklore, classes in East European film, and learned about the



orchestral music of Leoš Janáček, a natural favorite for a euphonium player. My courses in Czech, which had initially just been a way to fulfill my undergraduate language requirement, became the first steps toward the present project. I ultimately applied to graduate school in ethnomusicology because I wanted to learn about how music was socially meaningful to so many people. The experience of playing instrumental music with others and music's power to create community—two integral aspects of my own musical experiences—became central themes of this dissertation.

In June 2002, I visited the Czech Republic for the first time. While there, I visited Grandpa Jerry's hometown, the village of Pěčín in the Orlické Hory mountain range, which I had previously known only through photographs. On this first trip to the Czech Republic, I also met many hospitable members of the Kopřivnice Community Band whose passion and dedication to community music making was inspiring. I was impressed to learn that music was such a large part of many Czech communities—as one Czech saying claims, “Every Czech is a musician” [*Co Čech to muzikant*]. I hope that this first visit and my subsequent trips to Moravia and Bohemia have been only the first of many visits still to come.

This dissertation theorizes the concept of cultural organology through a detailed study of the cimbalom (*cimbál*) as it is played in eastern and southern Moravia, the Czech Republic. Organology is often understood as the description and classification of musical instruments; however, cultural organology takes a broader approach that considers instruments as evocative objects that connect musical, historical, experiential, and cultural knowledge. Musical instruments are artifacts that focus musical thought and

tangibly center personal and collective musical experience. Instrumental performance practices enliven instruments from material artifacts into objects that open up and center musical worlds. Musical instruments imply a player, history, pedagogy, repertory, audience, and ethos—all of which, I argue, constitute an interpretive community. As objects, musical instruments may be understood as coherent textual units. Musical instruments are locally “understood” in meaningful ways. I develop this idea through an object-centered approach to ethnography and apply it in a series of case studies centered on themes important to the cimbalom as it is played in Moravia.

The study begins with a narrative description of a concert in south Moravia that opens up a theoretical discussion of ways that musical instruments are understood (Chapter 1). This is followed by an introduction to the cimbalom as it has developed in cultural and musical contexts in Moravia (Chapter 2). Four detailed case studies follow that demonstrate the way that the cimbalom centers interpretive communities and is understood in specific, Moravian ways: nineteenth-century efforts to transcribe and sponsor performances (Chapter 3); the relationship of the cimbalom to folk culture and Communist ideology, as mediated through urban folklore groups and radio orchestras of folk instruments (Chapter 4); a history of cimbalom teaching in Moravia and an investigation of cognitive and kinesthetic concepts of playing the instrument (Chapter 5); and a study of the cimbalom’s recent use in world music as heard in the performances of two contemporary Moravian artists (Chapter 6).

My research uses the emphasis on a musical instrument to open up wider issues of culture, history, identity, politics, artistry, and society. I illustrate the relationship of contemporary Moravian folk music performance with nineteenth-century models, suggest

an organic relationship between the ensembles supported under the Communist regime and previously extant “traditional” folklore, theorize ways in which instruments are learned and “practiced,” and discuss the implications of recent forays into world music by individual Moravian musicians. The study applies a cultural approach to organology that investigates instrument, performer, and interpretive communities by way of emergent cultural discourses that bring together a more complete understanding of the importance of musical instruments. The *cimbál*, as the focus of many significant Moravian cultural formations that elucidate interpretive communities, is an object that is understood through locally (in)formed contexts even as it is an instrument in global circulation.

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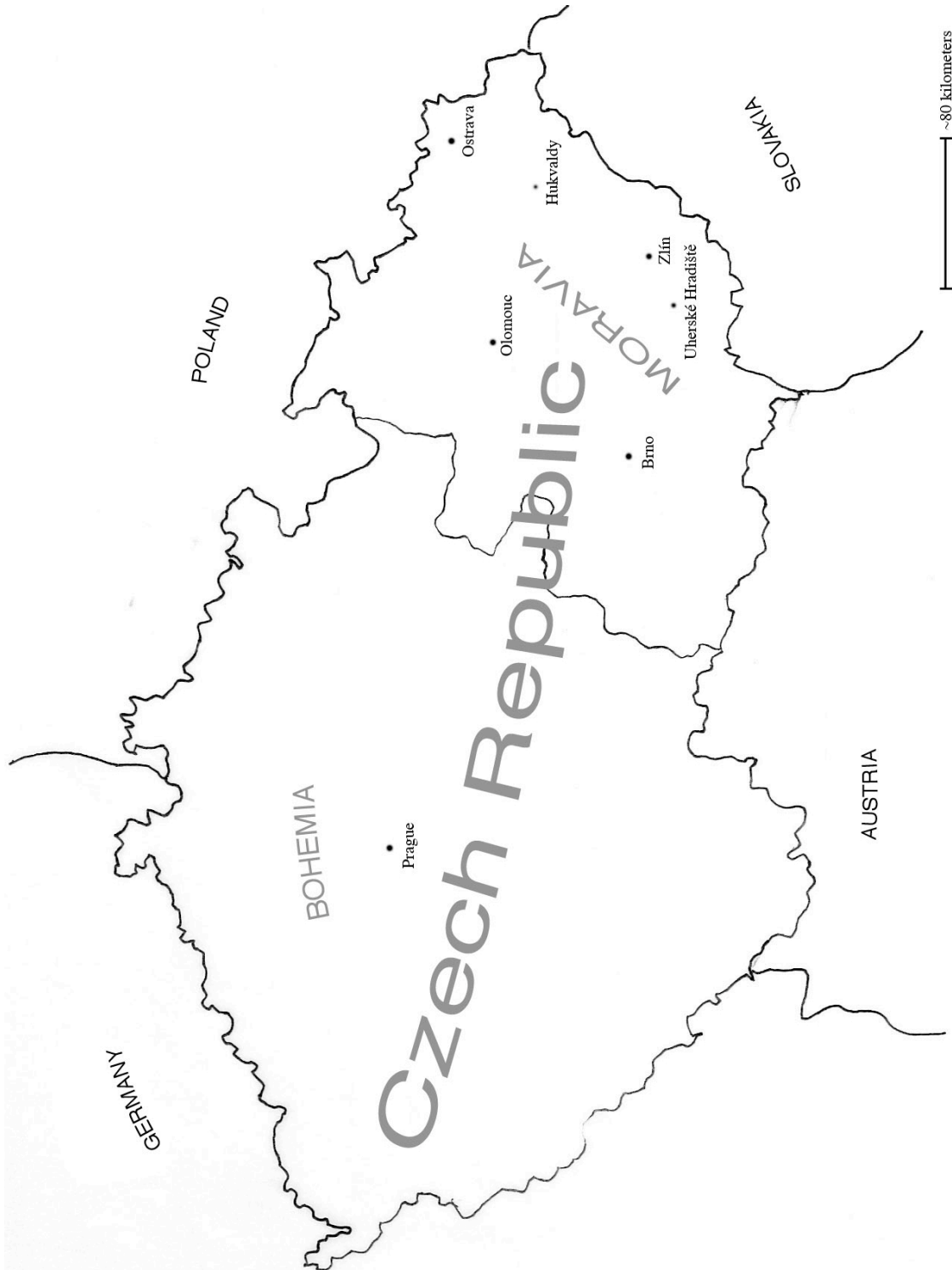
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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ADKD	<i>Antonín Dvořák, korespondence a dokumenty: kritické vydání</i> [Antonín Dvořák, Correspondence and Documents: Critical Edition], ed. Milan Kuna (Prague: Supraphon, 1987).
BROLN	<i>Brněnský rozhlasový orchestr lidových nástrojů</i> [Brno Radio Orchestra of Folk Instruments].
CM	<i>Cimbálová muzika</i> [Cimbalom Band, Cimbalom Ensemble], also informally shortened to <i>cimbálovka</i> and <i>cimbálka</i> . The plural forms are, respectively, <i>cimbálové muziky</i> , <i>cimbálovky</i> , and <i>cimbálky</i> .
EU	European Union
EÚB	<i>Etnologický ústav Akademie věd České republiky, pracoviště Brno</i> [Ethnology Institute of the Czech Academy of Sciences, Brno].
JA	<i>Janáčkův archiv v Oddělení dějin hudby, Moravské zemské muzeum v Brně</i> [Janáček Archive in the Department of Music History at the Moravian Provincial Museum] (located in Brno at Smetanova 14).
JAMU	<i>Janáčková akademie muzických umění</i> [Janáček Academy of Musical Arts] (music academy in Brno).
JAWO	<i>Janáček's Works: A Catalogue of the Music and Writings of Leoš Janáček</i> , ed. Nigel Simeone, John Tyrrell, and Alena Němcová (Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 1997).
JZ	<i>Janáčkovy záznamy hudebního a tanečního folkloru</i> [Janáček's Records of Musical and Dance Folklore], Jarmila Procházková (Brno: Etnologický ústav Akademie věd České republiky, 2006).
LJOLP	<i>Leoš Janáček o lidové písni a lidové hudbě</i> [Leoš Janáček on Folk Song and Folk Music], ed. Jiří Vysloužil (Prague: Státní nakladatelství krásné literatury, hudby, a umění, 1955).

MČČ	<i>malý český člověk</i> [little Czech man], Czech character archetype.
MFF Strážnice	<i>Mezinárodní folklorní festival Strážnice</i> [International Folklore Festival in Strážnice].
NÚLK	<i>Národní ústav lidové kultury</i> [National Institute of Folk Culture in Strážnice].
NVČ	<i>Národopisná výstava československá v Praze 1895</i> [Czechoslovak Ethnographic Exhibition in Prague, 1895].
PVms	<i>Pracovní výbor pro českou národní píseň na Moravě a ve Slezsku</i> [Working Committee for Czech Folk Song in Moravia and Silesia].
SNKLHU	<i>Státní nakladatelství krásné literatury, hudby, a umění</i> [State Publisher for Literature, Music, and Art].
SOkA	<i>Státní okresní archiv</i> [District Archive]; the abbreviation is usually followed by the location of the archive, e.g. SOkA Břeclav v Mikulově is the SOkA in Mikulov for the Břeclav region.
ZUŠ	<i>Základní umělecká škola</i> [Basic Arts School].

MAP OF THE CZECH REPUBLIC



## NOTE ON TRANSLATION AND LANGUAGE

Most of my research in the Czech Republic was conducted in the Czech language. Unless otherwise noted in the text or bibliographic entries, all translations from texts and interviews are my own. In my translations of interviews and texts, I have used ellipsis to indicate sections where I have skipped a portion of text or edited a text. Ellipsis in square brackets [. . .] suggests a long pause.

Modern Czech is quite hierarchical. There is a significant difference in most cases between written Czech [*spisovná čeština*] and spoken Czech [*hovorová čeština*]. In addition, there are many regional differences in pronunciation although the written language remains the same. In my translations, I have typically normalized the English version to formal academic English unless the speaker or writer used heavy colloquialisms. Disputes about spelling, grammar, and changes in language are dealt with centrally by the Czech Language Institute [*Ústav pro jazyk český*] at the Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic (<http://www.ujc.cas.cz/>).

The provinces of Bohemia, Moravia, and Silesia are often referred to as the “Czech lands” [*české země*] in English, but I follow recent scholarly usage and refer to them here as the “Bohemian Lands” (King 2002, Judson 2006). Judson (2006) observes that it is misleading to refer to the area with a lingual descriptor since in fact the region was multi-lingual and multi-cultural until 1945. The more common designation of “Czech Lands” implies that the region has been historically dominated by Czech

speakers.<sup>1</sup> Bohemia, commonly used in English to describe the area known in Czech as *Čechy*, is derived from the Latin designation for an assumed Celtic tribe that occupied the area prior to the sixth and eighth centuries C.E., when Slavs began settling in the region. Judson uses Bohemian Lands to refer to the areas of Bohemia, Moravia, and Silesia (the lands represented on the present-day seal of the Czech Republic) that are often referred to as the Bohemian crown lands since they were all ruled from Prague at some point.

Czechs often conceptualize the history of their language as a struggle against German culture. A rich Czech literary tradition flourished from the late thirteenth century. Prague University (later renamed Charles University) was founded in 1348 by Charles IV, then designated Holy Roman Emperor and King of Bohemia. The Hussite Wars, spurred by the burning at the stake of Jan Hus (a Czech intellectual who preached and lectured in Czech) in 1415, dampened intellectual activity in the fifteenth century. Czech gradually lost stature as German became the language of government and commerce through the Counter Reformation and Thirty Years' War in the seventeenth century. By the nineteenth century, intellectuals spurred by nationalism felt the need to revive the language (Judson 2006). Around the same time, Slovak intellectuals began publishing separate grammar rules and dictionaries as they perceived their culture to be under siege from Hungarian language and culture (Švehlák 1992). Since the expulsion of Germans after the Second World War (Bryant 2002; King 2002, 189–208), Czech has been the primary language in Bohemia and Moravia.

The tension between Slavs and their neighbors often motivated ethnographic linguistic research on dialects in rural regions. In Moravia, this was most apparent in

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<sup>1</sup> Ladislav Holy points out that the designation of “the Czech lands” as “the historical lands” also enables a Czech outlook that views Slovaks as culture whose history is less significant (Holy 1996, 105).



border regions where the dialects often blended vocabulary and pronunciation from various languages. These “language frontiers” were often perceived as important in the struggle to define Czechness. Language practice today in these regions seems to be dictated pragmatically. Many people in *Slovácko* (south Moravia) on the Slovakian border converse easily with Slovak speakers; likewise, in the north Moravian regions of *lašsko*, *valašsko*, and *slezsko*, the dialects often edge toward Polish and many people can converse in both languages.

Czech is a Slavic language most closely related to Slovak and Polish. Common Slavic roots enable a certain degree of basic communication between Czechs and other Slavic speakers, although this is relatively limited with distant Slavic languages. Czech has some distant links to German, French, and Latin through vocabulary and grammar, and in the last decade many English words have become common in Czech business communication. Older Czech speakers have little difficulty understanding and speaking with Slovak speakers; however, Czechs and Slovaks who have gone to school since the political split of the Czech and Slovak Republics in 1993 have a more difficult time understanding both languages. Prior to 1993, during the Czechoslovak period, education and media broadcasts had portions in both Czech and Slovak.

Czech is a heavily inflected language with seven cases. These cases are shown by changing the endings of or adding suffixes to nouns and adjectives. When I have presented contextual passages of Czech in the text, these endings are preserved. However, all out-of-context references are given in the nominative singular or plural, such as when I have isolated individual words for clarity or reference.

Written Czech uses the Roman alphabet. (*Ch* is also considered a letter and appears in the alphabet after *h*; other letters modified by diacritics are grouped after the unmodified letter.) Spelling is standardized, and pronunciation is phonetic. Stress usually falls on the first syllable of each word. When words are preceded by a one-syllable prepositions, the preposition is stressed and elided with the following word. Thus, it is relatively straightforward to sound out written Czech.

Most consonants are pronounced similarly to those in English. The *haček* [ˇ] indicates a “softening” of consonants (e.g., *č* is pronounced like the /ch/ in **church**). The consonants *d*, *t*, and *n* are palatalized when followed by *ě* or *í* or modified as *d'*, *t'*, *ň* (pronunciation is as though the consonant were followed by /y/, as in **onion**). Many consonants exist in voiced / unvoiced pairs as follows:

b / p	<i>p</i> is unaspirated
d / t	<i>t</i> is unaspirated
d' / t'	
g / k	<i>g</i> is always hard (as in <b>go</b> ), <i>k</i> is unaspirated
h / ch	<i>h</i> is voiced, but much less aggressively than in English; <i>ch</i> as in Scottish <b>loch</b>
v / f	
z / s	

The remaining consonants are as follows:

c	<b>ts</b> as in <b>oats</b> , unvoiced
č	<b>ch</b> as in <b>church</b> , unvoiced
j	<b>y</b> as in <b>yellow</b> , voiced
l	as in <b>lit</b> , vocalic (voiced)
m	voiced
n	voiced
ň	as in <b>onion</b> , voiced
r	pronounced with a quick roll as in Spanish, voiced
ř	fricative form of <b>r</b> (basically a voiced, rolled, and aspirated <b>r</b> ; approximated by combining <b>rž</b> ; the source of confounding tongue twisters, and often singled out as a mark of a true Czech speaker by many Czechs, who stress the correct production of this sound)
š	<b>sh</b> as in <b>slush</b>

- w like **v**, found only in loan words
- x like **ks**, found only in loan words
- ž like **g** in **garage**; sometimes combined with **d** to form the English soft /j/ as in **jazz**, often transliterated as *džez*

Vowels are pronounced purely, close to Spanish pronunciation. Vowels can be either long or short, described as *kvantita*. This is a relative lengthening of the vowel sound (Czech teachers usually describe these vowels as “twice as long”) rather than a definite stress on the syllable. Length is indicated by the *čárka* [á, é, í, ó, ú] and *kroužek* [ů]; *y* and *i* (likewise *y* and *i*) are both considered vowels and designate the same sound. A complicated system of rules and consonant pairings determines when *y* or *i* is used in spelling. Most vowel pairs are pronounced separately as two syllables; exceptions are the diphthongs *ou*, *au*, and *eu*. In addition, *l* and *r* occasional form syllables on their own when they are preceded by ghost vowels; thus, *prst* [finger] is pronounced somewhat like the English /pursed/ but with a quickly rolled /r/ and very short /u/.

I have drawn deeply on my lessons with Zdenka Brodská (University of Michigan) and Ivana Rešková (in Brno) for this note, as well as on the guides in Rešková and Pintarová 1995, Naughton 1987, Hall 2003, and Tyrrell 2006. Remaining errors of translation, Czech spelling, and transcription are, of course, mine.

### NOTE ON PITCH REFERENCE

Throughout the text, the system of referencing pitch commonly used in Czech and Hungarian *cimbál* primers and songbooks is followed. According to this designation of pitches,  $c^1$  corresponds to “middle C” on the piano keyboard,  $c^2$  to the octave above middle C,  $c$  to the octave below middle C, and  $C$  to “great C” (two octaves below middle C on the piano keyboard). The letters correspond to pitch (with the case of the letter indicating a general sense of register), and the superscript numerals more precisely designate octave displacement. Thus, upper-case letters indicate lower octaves, and each subsequent octave is indicated by a subscript numeral; higher octaves are indicated by lower-case letters, and superscript numerals denote each successive octave.

In addition, most of the figures use German conventions of pitch reference, which corresponds to the system of pitch references used in Czech. In this system, B-natural is designated  $h$  and B-flat is designated  $B$ . Moreover, flats are noted with the term *es* and sharps as *is*. For example C-sharp appears as *Cis* and A-flat as *Aes*. E-flat is written *Es*.

This system of pitch reference appears to be consistent with Leoš Janáček’s transcriptions from the late-nineteenth century as well as with the notation and songbooks that I purchased in the Czech Republic between 2002 and 2006. I have therefore followed it in this study.

## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION: ENCOUNTERING AN INTERPRETIVE COMMUNITY

*Folk songs will disappear completely with this or the next generation.*

—František Bartoš (1837–1906), writing in 1881<sup>1</sup>

*Any meaningful activity is a conjunction of preexisting constraints (or rules, or structures, or laws, or myths) with the present, the unpredictable, particular now. In this way a text always—but to varying degrees contextualizes the present in the past.*

—A. L. Becker (1995 [1979], 26)

#### A Bouquet of National Songs

7 October 2006—Uherské Hradiště—7:30 P.M. On the final evening of the 16th Annual International Festival of Musical Instruments and Folk Ensembles [*XVI. Ročník mezinárodního festivalu hudebních nástrojů lidových muzik*], a few hundred people were gathered in a large hall awaiting the beginning of the evening's *galaprogram*. The hall was in the local *kulturní dům* [cultural house] in Uherské Hradiště, a town in southeast Moravia usually referred to as “Hradiště” in conversation. The cultural house—usually shortened to *kulturák* in speech—was a multipurpose performance and event facility that served the city.

Circumstances of the event echoed recent social events, particularly the fall of Communism in 1989 and the Czech Republic's accession to the European Union in 2004.

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<sup>1</sup> *Písňe národní s touto nebo nejdéle příští generací vymizejí na čisto*. The statement is from the foreword to *Nové národní písňe moravské s nápěvy do textu vřaděnými* [New Moravian Folk Songs with Tunes Fitted to the Text], Bartoš's 1882 collection of folksongs (Bartoš 1882).

The Hradiště *Klub kultury* [Club of Culture], a non-profit organization founded in the early 1990s, was sponsoring the Festival. The *kulturák* was a relic from the area's Communist past, an uncompromisingly functional and cube-like building clad in white-painted metal. Most of the other regional centers in the area—Uherský Brod, Kyjov, and Zlín—featured buildings in similar styles and with similar purposes. These buildings were usually located in the town center where they stood out among the dominant Baroque buildings of the towns. The Hradiště venue was fancier than most. It featured elaborate glass and wire chandeliers, dark wood paneling, and a two-story tile frieze of musicians rendered in abstract shapes adorning the main foyer. Outside, a series of three giant vent pipes painted green and blue stood to the right of the entrance. They appeared to be public art. In their shadow, a smaller bronze statue of a violinist in local folk costume represented local cultural traditions on a more human scale.

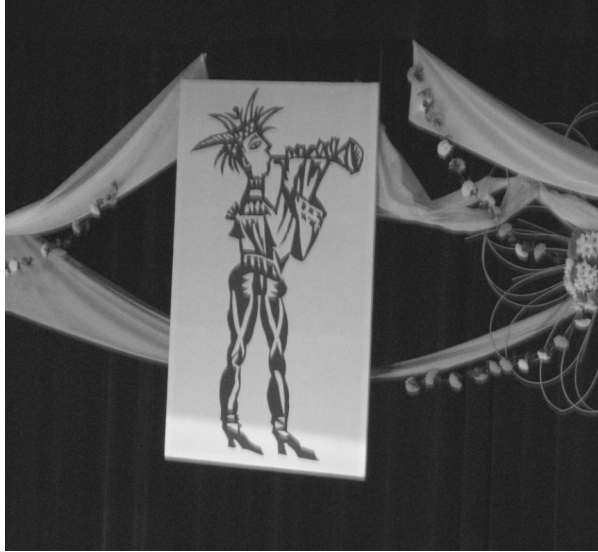
Earlier in the afternoon, I had arrived with two American friends to meet the director of *Kašava*, a local *cimbálova muzika* [cimbalom band] and dance group, in order to watch and record their dress rehearsal. Although I thought I had clearly arranged to meet in front of the building, locked doors and an empty foyer greeted us. We eventually gained the attention of a building superintendent and were grudgingly allowed into the auditorium even though we were obviously out-of-towners and not performers. The only sound echoing through the two-story lobby was the rusty ostinato of an unoiled fan at the back of a cooler advertising a major brand of chilled soft drinks. The empty auditorium echoed with the sounds of the dress rehearsal. As non-performers we had little role other than to observe the musicians who were rehearsing the planned sequence of the evening's

music, checking the levels of their microphones, and running through last-minute choreography changes.

By 7:00 p.m., half-an-hour before the performance was to begin, the lobby echoed with voices—happy audience members greeting friends and checking their coats at the coat check counter. As the performance time approached, the expectant concertgoers, mostly middle-aged or older audience members wearing business suits or evening wear, began to take their seats at tables in the hall. A few adorned their outfits with subtle regional accoutrements like a hat, vest, or belt, but for the most part, the audience wore clothing similar to what they would have worn to a theater, opera, or orchestra concert performance.

The atmosphere of the evening concert was permeated with the light formality characteristic of orchestra concerts or opera performances. Although people were friendly with each other, most greeted each other with a formal *dobrý den* [good day] rather than the more informal greetings *ahoj* or *čau* [both approximating “hi” or “hello”]. On the way into the auditorium, most purchased program booklets from two older women stationed at the doors of the auditorium who checked tickets and controlled entrance to the performance space.

A three-page note in the program booklet explained that this year’s Festival was held in honor of František Bartoš, a nineteenth-century ethnographer who had gained prominence as a dialectologist and folksong collector. The Festival theme had been chosen in homage to Bartoš and took the name *Kytice z národních písní* [A Bouquet of Folk Songs] from one of Bartoš’s major published collection of folksongs. Available for sale in the lobby was a recent reprint edition of Bartoš’s major song collections issued



**Figure 1.1. The Festival logo hung above the stage.**

with support from a local museum and institute for folklore in recognition of the centenary of Bartoš's death. The note was quick to point out that Bartoš had been born in a nearby village and was thus a *rodák* [local].

Behind the stage, a prominent banner displayed the Festival logo (Figure 1.1). The logo depicted a clarinetist holding his instrument parallel to the ground, suggesting he was playing music meant to get your attention. The figure was drawn in an impressionistic, modern style, but appeared to be dressed in *kroj* [regional folk costume]. Although the clarinet is typical in Moravian instrumental ensembles, it is rarely played as a solo instrument. Thus, the figure suggested a musician in a *cimbálová muzika*, the region's most well-known type of musical ensemble.

A few minutes after the advertised start time, a small group of performers dressed in *kroj* filed onstage. It was a *cimbálová muzika* [cimbalom band] of two clarinetists, three violinists, two violists, a cellist, bassist, and a cimbalom player. As the players walked out, they gathered around the large cimbalom already set up at the center of the



stage. The lights over the audience dimmed, and the sound of applause filled the hall. The performers exchanged glances and nodded to each other, a visual cue that the audience interpreted as a sign for attention and silence. A male violinist standing onstage between the ensemble and audience raised his bow, gave a cue, and the group burst into a bright and rhythmic fanfare. The players were obviously comfortable with this sort of public performance and played together with precision and confidence.

The music that opened the concert seemed to match what the musician in the logo might have been playing. Two violins began with a short and shrill figure in uneven rhythm, then the clarinetist joined in with a lick starting in the lower register and ending in a festive trill in the same register as the violins. After this frothy introductory gesture, the entire ensemble fell in with a pulsing, uneven dance rhythm. The introductory phrase, which seemed to mirror the complexity of the lace embroidery trimming the players' sleeves, gave way to a raucous men's chorus that continued the opening violin melody. The strident and virile timbre matched the singers' declamatory stance—feet planted on the ground, a slight sway from side to side, and an arm raised overhead often with one finger outstretched or an open hand—and paired posture and style in a way similar to what I had seen at other late-night musical gatherings around the *cimbál*. Only men adopted these poses, and only while singing similar songs at similar events. The stance matched that of the clarinetist in the Festival logo.

This opening was followed by a medley of tunes and lyrics played by the same ensemble. The close of the set was clearly marked by a rhythmic tag that ended a march-like tune, and the audience responded with hearty applause. A light came up on stage left to reveal a respectable elderly man sitting at a small table. He began speaking in formal

diction with a microphone, but his position at the table with a glass of wine identified him with the audience. Although his speech was formal, his demeanor lent the concert and the rest of the evening the easygoing atmosphere of a fireside (or perhaps vineyard-side) chat.

The words of the opening song discussed Zlín, a regional center in the foothills to the east of Uherské Hradiště.

<i>Ej, pověz, pověz, moja milá, (2x)</i> <i>kady je cesta ode Zlína? (2x)</i>	Hey, tell me, tell me, my dear, Whither is the road from Zlín?
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<i>Ej, ode Zlína cesty není, (2x)</i> <i>enom chodníček vydlážděný. (2x)</i>	Hey, there are no roads from Zlín Only a small paved path.
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The unidentified singer of the song lyrics—presumed to be male, and in this case sung by a man—was making an effort to get the attention of a “dear” female. More apropos to my friends and me, however, was the reference to travel.

The lyrics reminded me of my previous day’s trip from Brno to Uherské Hradiště. It had been a crisp fall afternoon. An American friend and I drove by car from Brno, the city that I regarded as my fieldwork base in the Czech Republic, to the town of Uherské Hradiště (Hradiště for short), where we would attend the annual festival of folk music. We had rented a car in Brno for the trip to Hradiště, a distance of just under 80 kilometers (about 50 miles).

It had been difficult to find the rental office, which was not located near any of Brno’s many tramlines. No tram or bus lines went through this area. Although the rental car office was in a shabby industrial building, this part of the city had seen rapid economic growth and foreign investment in the last decade. It was normally easy to get

anywhere in the city, but this office was located among a spate of new commercial developments in a previously bare industrial area that had little access to the mass transportation system. Nearby was a new corporate “business park” financed by a Dutch investment group that had released plans to build the tallest building in the city (a twenty-story office building). Already, four or five finished buildings, seemingly identical, sat among landscaped lawns and pools. The developers were marketing this as a posh address by giving it an English name with a British spelling—“Spielberk Office Centre”—that referred to one of the city’s landmarks, *Špilberk* castle. The real Castle commanded the view to the north of the office park from its hilltop. The Centre looked unglamorous to me and evoked the new mini-malls and fast food restaurants that had appeared in the small, rural Michigan town where my parents lived. The Spielberk Centre reminded me of a Czech friend’s description of similar recent developments as “entrepreneurial Baroque.” This seemed particularly ironic here where the new architecture was within view of an old Baroque castle. Despite the Centre developers’ claims that they were continuing Brno’s tradition of modernist architecture established in the 1920s, it appeared to be a generic office campus that could have just as easily been next to a North American big-box mall.

Negotiating the paperwork of renting a car had not been straightforward. In the end, our car rental adventure seemed a victory over the ever-present bureaucracy of Czech institutions that seemed as ubiquitous in car rental offices as at the “Foreign Police” [*cizinecká policie*], which handled visas for non-Czech citizens, and municipal bureaus. Fortunately, the car rental involved a negotiation over a desk and not with a grumpy clerk behind a small window. The face-to-face conversation seemed a sign of the

new society rather than the old model of speaking across a barrier through a tiny mouthpiece or low-quality microphone. The paperwork, however, was ever-present and consistent with the old order. I suspected this was a relic of the Communist system that had been built on the foundations of the Austro-Hungarian imperial administration. As with anything that involved official paperwork, the amount of identification and red tape seemed double for non-Czech citizens. Buying a train ticket would have been the work of a few minutes in line at the station, but we had decided to rent a car for the ease of transporting cameras and recording equipment.

After completing the paperwork, we walked to the parking lot to find a blue Škoda *Fabia*, a tiny car that was supposed to seat four. Škoda was the only active brand of Czech car manufacturer. Škoda cars, often endearingly referred to in Czech as *škodovkas*,<sup>2</sup> are everywhere on Czech roads. Škodas are regarded with some pride as a sign of Czech industrial success and are a significant player in the post-Communist market economy. The firm grew from the efforts of two Bohemian bicycle makers in 1895; in 1905, the workshop produced its first automobile, and by 1925 the workshop had joined with the Škoda factory in Plzeň to expand its options for automobile manufacturing. During the Communist period after 1948, the firm was collectivized and operated in tandem with the Tatra car company as one of two major Czech automobile brands. Following privatization in 1989, Škoda merged with the German Volkswagen Group in April 1991. Škoda continues operation and distributes globally under the auspices of Volkswagen, which claims to be the largest European car manufacturer.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> The noun is formed by adding the substantive ending *-ovka* to the name *Škoda*.

<sup>3</sup> Much of the information about Škoda was gathered from its Website, [www.skoda-auto.com](http://www.skoda-auto.com).

Tatra, located in north Moravia, continues manufacturing trucks but at minimal production under the control of a foreign venture capitalist investor.

The car, like the Hradiště Festival, represented twentieth-century changes: it was a product of capitalism, industrialization, and globalization. In renting the car we were not only enjoying the more open political system of the post-1989 Czech Republic. We were also supporting a changing economic system. The car rental company was modeled on car rental agreements that were found in Western Europe, and its cars were made by a multinational corporation. We were participating in a supra-national European economy that was supported by multinational companies and a global system of economic capitalism. Our *škodovka* was covered in giant, orange and white advertising slogans for the rental car company, and so as we left the parking lot we were a moving element of another part of this new economy—ubiquitous commercial advertising.

Our road eastward began as a four-lane expressway between Brno and the city of Olomouc. We soon exited onto a smaller highway that wound through the Chřiby Hills, a range of low mountains lying between Brno and Hradiště. After driving an hour, we crossed a pass in the hills and descended into the valley of the Morava River (namesake of Moravia). The valley slowly came into view as the forested hills gave way to fields and rolling dales in the valley. Scattered spires of village churches reflected the last sunlight of the day and shone bright orange. More dominant was the gray mist that obscured the valley floor and blurred the distant horizon. Judging by the occasionally acrid scent filtering from the car's ventilators, we suspected that the mist was largely coal smoke. Recent news stories had noted rising energy prices and increasing coal use, which

meant that many homes in smaller towns and villages were now being heated with brown coal during the cold fall nights.

In a wine region like south Moravia, fall is marked by the grape harvest. In September, streetside stands and vendors had appeared in Brno to sell *burčák*, a sweet and yeasty drink that is siphoned off in the early fermentation process. The grape juice has not yet finished fermenting and is described as still “living.”<sup>4</sup> Because the drink cannot be pasteurized and does not keep long, it is only available in early fall. Having heard that the *burčák* was better when drunk fresh in the countryside, we were hoping that the festival would be our first chance to taste this local specialty. Although we were pushing the end of the *burčák* season, we hoped the drink would still be available at the festival. Our curiosity was piqued by occasional cars at the side of the road with hand-lettered signs advertising “homemade *burčák*,” sold in reused one-liter plastic water bottles. Afraid that we would miss the opening night of the festival, however, we passed these stands, though the anticipation grew with each one that we saw.

A group of spires reached above the mist and marked the location of Hradiště a short distance from the base of the hills. Today a town of about 27,000, Hradiště had a long history as a regional center.<sup>5</sup> It was a walled city until the nineteenth century and, as its name “Hungarian fortress” implies, was a town in a border region between an older Hungarian presence and its northern neighbors. Such town centers are common in the area, and they often mark vague outlines in a border area that has been oft-contested over

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<sup>4</sup> The yeast, they say, continues fermenting after drinking to create an impression of “delayed inebriation.”

<sup>5</sup> Population as of 2001 census; sourced from the Czech Statistical Office, <http://www.czso.cz/sldb/sldb2001.nsf/obce/592005>, accessed 19 April 2008.

the last few centuries.<sup>6</sup> Nearby Uherský Brod, for example, marks an important river crossing. The names Uherské Hradiště and Uherský Brod are connected with the noun *Uhry*, an old dialect name for Hungary rather than the now standard *Maďarsko*. These names reference the nineteenth century when the Slovak and Czech languages were more closely intermingled and when Moravia was a province administratively answerable to Vienna within the Habsburg Empire.<sup>7</sup>

We drove into Hradiště on a wide boulevard lined by neo-classical buildings. The street and buildings marked the location of the city's mediaeval walls, which had probably been torn down in the early-nineteenth century. In their place, fashionable nineteenth-century buildings had been built during the Habsburg imperial period until city was suffused with ornate buildings, parks, and boulevards. These buildings and the orderly approach to city planning contrast with the labyrinthine streets and haphazard character of medieval construction. In idealized representations of the time, gas lamps lined the streets, parks were filled with winding paths, and buildings featured elaborate cornices supported by titans and other powerful figures. At present, these buildings were still visible although they were now interspersed with socialist architecture and other modern buildings.

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<sup>6</sup> Most of the towns in this region date from the Middle Ages, though there were population centers prior to this. Wandycz (2001, 31–33) discusses the growing importance of towns during the thirteenth century as important centers of trade and nodes in larger economic networks; moreover, he distinguishes between “royal” (property of the crown) and “private” (controlled by local lords) towns (ibid.).

<sup>7</sup> Thus, unlike today, it was more closely aligned with Vienna politically and culturally than it was with Prague. Slovak intellectuals and nationalists began publishing and designating specifically Slovak spellings in the 1830s and 1840s. This is often described as a response to the threat of “Magyarization,” that is, the fear that Hungarian cultural hegemony would erase “native” Slovak culture (Švehlák 1992, 18–20). This separation of Czech and Slovak languages is described as the “language schism,” and Ladislav Holy points out that the delineation of Slovak as a separate language and its standardization was equally a conscious distancing from Czech in order to strengthen Slovak identity (Holy 1996, 94).

It was immediately apparent when we arrived that the town was hosting a festival. A stage was set up in the main square where a small *dechovka* [brass band, more formally called *dechová muzika*] was playing to an excited crowd of parents and children. It seemed that most of the people in the town's historic center were there to hear or play music. The center was small, and despite our belief that we could find the hotel hosting the opening reception, the only hotel that seemed to be open was a Best Western with a deserted lobby. The lobby was a dusty space reminiscent of the 1970s with its dark wood paneling, chrome-trimmed tables, and blown-glass globe lights. The hotel restaurant served us rather dry helpings of pork and dumplings—a national specialty—but we did not find the festival until we returned for the Saturday concert in the *kulturák*.

Two American friends and I filmed and recorded *Kašava*'s concert performance from the balcony (Figure 1.2). The balcony was reserved for performers, but at my meeting with the director of the folklore group at the dress rehearsal I had requested permission to film the event. She referred me to the main concert organizer, who was also the building manager and stage manager, who promised that the balcony would be preferable to the main floor. Indeed, the floor was now filled with small tables. Looking down from the front of the balcony very near the stage, the tables appeared to form a black-and-white checkerboard pattern in the darkened seating area. Each table was assigned a number and topped with a white tablecloth. After the formal performance, many of these would be cleared to make way for dancing, but for now they remained in regimented rows stretching back from the stage. Highly anticipating this later event,





**Figure 1.2. Performers and moderator on the Festival stage. The *cimbál* is visible behind the four standing players. Above, the Festival logo is visible, and below the stage the banner showing the EU emblem is partially visible.**

advertised as a *burčáková beseda* [evening gathering with *burčák*], we sat back to enjoy the performance.

It was by now evident that the man sitting alone at the small onstage table was the evening's "moderator." Moderators were common figures at many concerts that I had been to, and they usually filled an informational role. They often held advanced degrees as ethnologists, were well-known authorities or media personalities, and so served to validate the concert with an authoritative stamp of approval.<sup>8</sup> As the program put it, the moderator would "guide the program" [*pořadem provází*]. Throughout the evening, he

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<sup>8</sup> I use "authorities" here for the Czech word *znalec*, which is better translated as a "knower." It implies deep knowledge and is a term of respect, but does not seem to carry elite connotations that words like intellectual, authority, or scholar do in English.

served as an living program note, introducing each new group, providing brief contextual information about the music, and offering historical and anecdotal information about folklore in and around Moravia.

The moderator also set the tone of the evening and offered a model for audience behavior. This evening's moderator was Jan Rokyta, a radio personality from the city of Ostrava in north Moravia. He wore a black collarless shirt under a dark gray suit, sat on a wooden chair behind his small, one-person table, and occasionally sipped red wine from a stemmed glass. Rokyta was also respected as a *cimbál* player, musician, bandleader, and specialist in Baroque music. Between musical performances, the onstage lights dimmed and a spotlight was focused on Mr. Rokyta. He established authority by speaking in formal Czech with the clear diction of a radio announcer. During musical performances, when the light on his table was dimmed, he sipped wine, occasionally refilled his glass from the bottle sitting on the table, or shuffled his speaking notes.

The moderator sharpened the boundary between performers and audience even as he bridged the gap between them. If, as it seemed, he served as a friendly guide to the music, his presence implied that most in the audience required someone to “translate.” Moderators were ubiquitous at similar performances and confirmed a distance between the audience and the local music they were to hear at the concert. It was almost as though the listeners lacked personal relationships with the music, including the region's prized local folklore. It seemed that all of the music in the concert, which in this case seemed an obvious metonym for a larger field of folk culture, could only be treated respectfully and appreciated correctly when “moderated”—that is, mediated—by an approved cultural authority. This seemed to contradict the idea that “people's culture” [*lidová kultura*] was

something that everyone shared equally. As a model social situation, the concert put listeners in a position from which they could take in the culture but never fully participate in it unless specifically instructed. The presence of an authoritative figure confirmed that the music held enough cultural value that it was to be protected from misinterpretation. At the same time, Rokyta's presentation suggested "the little Czech man" [*malý český člověk*], an oft-idealized Czech character type whose personality would never stand out from the crowd by possessing any special knowledge.<sup>9</sup> This plebeian ideal reinforces an egalitarian social structure in which no one should possess any specialized cultural knowledge.

Mediation of a more technological variety presented another contrast. The performers wore colorful *kroj*, men in white shirts and bright-red pants of felted wool, women in white blouses and dresses adorned with embroidered flowers and other patterns. All wore a hat or head scarf with sprigs of flowers or small reflective mirrors. Most costumes were ornamented with complex hand-stitched embroidered flowers, swirls of dark piping, white lace edging, and other embellishments. In contrast, the elements of the performance space were meant to blend in: matte-black stands, cords, speakers, microphones, and junction boxes matched the heavy velvet curtains marking the stage's borders. This equipment was nonetheless clearly visible to the audience, and the attempt to make it as unobtrusive as possible drew my attention to it. The equipment was everywhere: the moderator, though dressed like the audience, held a sleek cordless microphone; in the back of the hall, a large soundboard dominated the balcony where an

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<sup>9</sup> Holy (1996, 62) describes this idealized Czech character type. One celebrated example of this character is the Good Soldier Švejk, a literary creation of journalist Jaroslav Hašek (1883–1923). As Peter Sellers's Inspector Clouseau solves crimes without any apparent crimesolving ability, Švejk often "succeeds" in avoiding any responsibility through apparent stupidity.

engineer mixed and monitored the output of the electronic equipment; and three Americans with video cameras hovering at the sides of the balcony cannot be left out. The performance at hand, however, emulated a continuing tradition of folk music that was meant, at least according to the program's title, to be as natural and unaffected as a bouquet of wild flowers, presumably picked in a bygone and agrarian era. Yet this bouquet appeared within a thicket of media wires incongruous with the pastoral image they ostensibly represented. It was, however, impossible to imagine the performance without electric mediation.

In his opening remarks, Mr. Rokyta commented on the cultural singularity of music in the local area:

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|--|---|
| <p>1 <i>O níž, když jsem byl mladší, jsem si<br/>myslel, že toto co tu prožíváme je<br/>kultura jediná. Ona asi nebude jediná,<br/>ale rozhodně je jedinečná protože jí</i></p> <p>5 <i>může dělat každý kdo má trochu<br/>schopnosti a dobré srdce—a fůru<br/>píle—a může se dostat na takovou<br/>kumštýřskou uroveň jako tato<br/>cimbálovka ze Zlína, která splňuje ti</i></p> <p>10 <i>představi nás starých muzikantů, že<br/>jednou to po nás bude lepší.</i></p> | <p>As a young man I thought that what we are experiencing here was the only culture. It is probably not the only culture, but it is decidedly distinctive because it may be played by anyone who has a bit of ability and a good heart—and always a bit tipsy—and can attain an amateur's level like this <i>cimbálová muzika</i> from Zlín, which fulfills the imagination of us old musicians that someday after us it would be better.</p> |
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These observations were couched in light irony. He poked fun at the older generation of musicians and their idealism as well as the professionalism of the younger local musicians. He portrayed his own youthful naïveté with offhand humor, but made the observation sophisticated through wordplay: the adjective *jediný* (a singular item with no comparison, which I translate above as “the only [culture],” line 3) is contrasted with the similar *jedinečný* (a word with the same root that compares its object favorably yet individually with other items, which I translate here as “distinctive,” line 4). The

“distinctive” features that Rokyta singled out—ability and feeling (“heart”)—do not appear to be in any way related to musical content or, it seems, even particular to folk music in Moravia. Other musical traditions also encourage participation by everyone regardless of musical ability. Yet, if he was comparing Moravian traditional culture with high culture, of which the obvious musical analog in Moravia would be “art music,” then it suggests an atmosphere of collective democracy rather than an elite authoritarianism.

The importance of balancing local particularity and cultural diversity was underlined by representations of the Czech Republic’s membership in the European Union (EU). A small banner beneath the stage displayed the emblem of the EU: twelve gold stars in a circle on a blue field. The emblem symbolically represents “unity, solidarity, and harmony” among European people. Likewise, the idea of music is a powerful metaphor for the cultural connectedness of the continent: it encapsulates a metaphor of social consonance, though everyone sings with their own voice.<sup>10</sup> Regarded as a nonverbal language and an important symbol of Europe’s common heritage, music ostensibly avoids the babble of the EU’s twenty-three (as of 2007) official languages. The EU anthem explicitly eschews spoken language. According to the Council of Europe, a central EU governing body, the EU anthem is based on Ludwig van Beethoven’s “Ode to Joy” melody from the final movement of his Ninth Symphony. This anthem is traced to 1972, when a special arrangement “without words, in the universal language of music,” was commissioned from the German conductor Herbert von Karajan.<sup>11</sup> In spite of the purported universality of music and the symbolic emblem, though, some verbal

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<sup>10</sup> Thus, while a national anthem symbolizes cultural consonance, Bohlman (2002b, 94) points out in a discussion of folksong and nationalism that it does not necessarily lead to a “unisonance,” or unitary voice.

<sup>11</sup> This, at least, was the story recounted at the European Union Web Portal in July 2007 ([http://europa.eu/abc/symbols/anthem/index\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu/abc/symbols/anthem/index_en.htm)). A slightly more complicated explication of the cultural politics and ambiguity of the anthem is offered in Bohlman 2002b, 109.

clarification was provided by a slogan in Czech. Just below the emblem, bold letters proclaimed:

*Tento projekt je spolufinancován  
Evropskou unií.*

This project is co-financed by the  
European Union.

*K jeho realizaci bylo využito  
prostředků Fondu mikroprojektů  
spravovaného Regionem Bílé Karpaty.*

Support for its realization was  
provided by the Microprojects Fund  
managed by the White Carpathians  
Region.<sup>12</sup>

The banner confirmed that the event was not just of local importance, but that it had significance in a much broader field of cultural activity. It was clear that recent political events influenced the local musical culture. The banner was a reminder of the Czech Republic's accession to the EU in 2004. Despite skepticism about this political change, this banner indicated that EU membership was a boon to local culture, at least for monetary support. However, it also made me wonder what conditions had been satisfied to receive such funding.

EU cultural policy is purposely vague. It proclaims cultural values regarded as non-prescriptive. The longest standing and most specific language regarding cultural policy was set out by the European Community in the Treaty on European Union (TEU). The TEU declares that a "flowering of the cultures of the Member States" is the primary objective, which involves "respecting their national and regional diversity and at the same time bringing the common cultural heritage to the fore."<sup>13</sup> This, presumably, has not resulted in censorship of local culture, but it may exert pressures to conform to broader

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<sup>12</sup> No translations were provided at the performance.

<sup>13</sup> TEU, Title IX, Article 128. This portion of text in the TEU is based on Title XII of the earlier Treaty Establishing the European Community, which, as here, continues to be reflected in subsequent EU policy documents. Both treaties are reprinted in Church and Phinnemore 2002, though the excerpt above is copied from the European Union Web Portal at [http://www.europa.eu/abc/treaties/index\\_en.htm](http://www.europa.eu/abc/treaties/index_en.htm). Although explicit language about the stance toward cultural policy was not added to the Treaties until 1993, it was a concern prior to this (Church and Phinnemore 2002, 337).

EU values, particularly the emphasis of cultural diversity. The funding of “microprojects” would appear to forward these overarching EU policies.

As an EU-funded cultural “microproject,” it seemed that the festival wanted to manifest the values reflected in EU motto “United in Diversity” (in Czech, *jednotná v rozmanitosti*).<sup>14</sup> The tension that arises from this, between affirming the unity of local culture and celebrating broader diversity, was acknowledged in the Festival’s general description. On its Web site, the Festival claimed that the local musical culture around Hradiště was uniquely strong and characteristic, even when compared with other Czech regions. The “great range of folk ensembles [*lidové muziky*]” in the *slovácko* region was “qualitatively incomparable with other areas of the Czech Republic.”<sup>15</sup> Moreover, the “reality” of “strong local choral and instrumental individuality and outstanding creativity” made the Festival’s presentation of “musical folklore in its various historical and contemporary forms” a “necessity.” Obviously, local culture was held in high esteem. At the same time, the Festival’s “basic value” was described as “artistic presentation of the wide-ranging folk instrumentarium [*lidový instrumentář*] from various ethnographic areas of the Czech Republic and other nations [*národy*].”<sup>16</sup> The primary criteria for diversity seems to be physical location, perhaps even overriding cultural, ethnic, and traditional similarities. This was underscored by the theme of the *galakonzert*, which simultaneously celebrated “music of nations and nationalities [*národy a*

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<sup>14</sup> The motto was not used officially until 2004. See [http://europa.eu/abc/symbols/motto/index\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu/abc/symbols/motto/index_en.htm).

<sup>15</sup> This and subsequent statements were translated from the Club of Culture’s Web site ([www.kkuh.cz/slavnosti\\_festivaly/festival\\_hudebnich\\_nastroju.php](http://www.kkuh.cz/slavnosti_festivaly/festival_hudebnich_nastroju.php)), accessed June 2007.

<sup>16</sup> Hradiště is located near the Slovakian border, and Czech festivals regularly describe themselves as “international.” It is important to note, however, that given the relative proximity (physically and culturally) of many nations in central Europe, the “international” groups regularly invited may appear to be more similar than different, e.g., Slovakian groups performing in Hradiště. Slovakia and the Czech Republic were parts of a single country until 1993, and the languages are still mutually understood by residents in border regions like *slovácko*.

*národnosti*] living within the Czech Republic” and the ethnographic work of František Bartoš, who devoted himself to documenting and determining characteristics that distinguished the regions and cultures in the local area.

Cultural diversity is usually invisible in the Czech Republic. While accession to the EU has already expanded the influx of immigrants who stand out visibly, census statistics indicate that the population is 95% ethnically Czech.<sup>17</sup> Internal differences are more commonly regarded as regional variations. Judging by the moderator’s remarks, Czech discourse values cultural diversity while differentiating “minorities of nationality” [*národnosti menšina*]. While “minorities of nationality” such as Germans, Croatians, Greeks, and Poles were highlighted at the concert, they go largely unrecognized in everyday life. Roma, who are longtime residents in the region, are often subject to open discrimination, and Vietnamese immigrants were not even recognized at the concert.

Czechs, who generally regard their culture as relatively coherent and undifferentiated, rarely discuss the existence of minority groups or cultural diversity within their own country. Cultural diversity and its attendant debates in the EU are routinely regarded as problems that “do not exist” in the Czech Republic. Because the EU policy emphasizes “common cultural heritage” but also celebrates local difference and diversity, I wondered whether this prompted festival organizers to amplify local differences. Emphasizing unique cultural subgroups struck me as a reliable, yet contrived, way to receive such funding.

The Festival unquestionably celebrated musical diversity, however. Notably, this diversity was indicated through the presence of a variety of instruments rather than a

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<sup>17</sup> Population statistics from the 2001 census and more recently are reported in the *Statistical Yearbook of the Czech Republic 2006* (Fischer 2006).



focus on musical styles or other factors. “Each year has its thematic focus,” and this theme is musical difference as evidenced by instruments, observes the Festival Web site. The Festival “observes the basic idea of presenting folk-music instruments of various ethnicities [*etniky*], comparing mutual features and differences, capturing various phases in the development of instruments, and showing their validity in the culture of the nation.”<sup>18</sup>

Even as it highlighted minorities, though, the event was tailored to a Czech audience: most of the performers representing the “minorities” were Czech citizens and fluent in the Czech language. An EU citizen who did not speak Czech would have found it difficult, however, to understand much more than the general outlines of the concert. Similar concert events are familiar in European contexts, but no translations were provided: the moderator’s remarks, the program booklet, and all signs were only in Czech. While the official EU stance is that the Union’s linguistic diversity is an opportunity rather than a barrier, here it was obvious that those who did not understand Czech at a high level would have been left in the dark as to the particulars of the concert.

After the concert ended, my friends and I put away our cameras and joined the rest of the audience for the *burčáková beseda*. Some of the tables were removed from the wooden floor to convert the theater into a ballroom so that part of the audience could remain, listen to a local *cimbálová muzika*, drink wine and *burčák*, and sing late into the evening. The post-concert gathering was modeled after a *beseda u cimbálu* [gathering at the cimbalom], a slightly less formal evening event. The gatherings always featured wine

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<sup>18</sup> The quotes in this paragraph are translated from the Club of Culture Web Site ([www.kkuh.cz/slavnosti\\_festivaly/festival\\_hudebnich\\_nastroju.php](http://www.kkuh.cz/slavnosti_festivaly/festival_hudebnich_nastroju.php)), accessed June 2007.

drinking, the singing of well-known songs, and often dancing. Although this was a less formal part of the evening, the event was still highly organized.

Our tickets were for three seats at table thirty-seven. These must have been some of the last available places since they were tucked into a back corner and close to the wall. Though a few other tables near us were open, we were careful to sit at the assigned places. From past experience, we knew that it would be regarded as rude if we sat at the wrong table, as this often led to awkward interaction with other people in the audience. As we insisted on trying the *burčák* before leaving, we bought the smallest size available, a one-liter pitcher. The pitcher was accompanied with four complementary *skleničky* [small tumblers], and we settled down to enjoy the post-concert gathering.

*Harafica*, the advertised ensemble, eventually appeared. I suspected they had lingered for a while over the buffet supplied for the evening's performers in the green room, which was where I had earlier met the folklore group's director. As the *burčák* and wine continued to flow, many of the audience loosened up and began singing their favorite songs. Songs were only rarely requested directly; usually, the singer who wanted a particular song loudly sang the song's incipit, and it was the band's responsibility to join in with the proper melody. Other singers who knew the song would gradually join in or interject lines that they knew. After one song was finished, the lead violinist often launched the band into a new melody without stopping, or another singer would interpose his (it never seemed to be a woman) melody.

I knew Petr, the *cimbál* player in *Harafica*, as well as the group's lead violinist. Both were students at the *Konzervatoř Brno* [Brno Conservatory], where Petr and I

studied with the same professor. In fact, I had sat in on many of Petr's lessons.<sup>19</sup>

Although Petr had told me he was from Hradiště, I had not realized he would be playing that evening. This event was quite a different setting than the halls of the music conservatory. Petr played none of the Paganini etudes or Renaissance dances that I was more accustomed to hear during his lessons. His playing here was more visceral, spirited, and less precise. The *cimbál* often came to the fore in the ensemble with loud and sharply articulated chromatic runs in the low register, punctuated by staccato trills and ornaments on the upper strings. At other times, it provided rhythmic and harmonic support. It seemed likely that this was the sort of event that helped to pay his tuition at the conservatory. Opportunities to perform as a soloist in the art music world that dominated the conservatory were few and far between for players of such an eclectic instrument with small repertoires of "original" music.<sup>20</sup> Petr would certainly gain credentials at the conservatory, but his playing this evening showed that he was competent enough to entertain the audience.

The gathering was still going strong at 1 A.M. Our pitcher of *burčák* was almost empty, although I had drunk only sparingly as our group's dedicated driver (and ethnographer). Considering ourselves tired and ready for home, we decided to pack up our recording gear and get some sleep. New songs were still being sung as the three Americans left in the early morning hours.

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<sup>19</sup> Though I was not a student at the Conservatory, my lessons took place there.

<sup>20</sup> In other words, the *cimbál* had no repertory that allowed it to compete at a peer level with instruments like the piano and violin. Instead, if a *cimbál* player wanted to play music from the eighteenth and nineteenth century, he or she was largely restricted to play a "transcription," music written for one instrument but arranged for play on another. Playing transcriptions is looked down upon in the conservatory world.

### *Understanding a Moravian Performance*

The concert described above draws together many important themes of this dissertation. First was the simultaneous presence of change and continuity. The event was overtly organized around local historical traditions and specific cultural figures. Strong local traditions of folklore collecting and folksong, symbolized by the association of the concert with the historical work of a local ethnologist, were held up as important aspects of cultural heritage that continued to ground the region's cultural identity.

Although it was implied that the performance's musical content—that is, at least its melodies and lyrics—remained consistent with nineteenth-century documentation, it appeared that traditional music was domesticated and performed outside its “natural” setting at this Festival. Changing global political and economic systems had enabled the event and affected those in attendance. New institutions, including the non-profit corporation of the Festival itself, support and thrive under the recent free-market society, while supranational organizations, like the EU and UNESCO, support the world of folklore and its music.

Second, the concert illustrated culturally significant ideas about musical performance. The Festival was organized around a series of concerts—structured events that fall under the rubric of “cultural performance.” As a festival concert, the performance was one event in a long line of Moravian folkloric concert performances that stretched back to the nineteenth century. Although the status of folklore and “folk music” [*lidová hudba*] had been uncertain after the end of Communism in 1989, the concert's vibrancy indicated a lively interest in Moravian folklore by 2006. As I realized in my research, such public performances had a long history in Moravia.

Third, most of the musicians in *Kašava* and *Harafica* had received formal musical training at local schools, and some at conservatories or music academies. Concert events like those at the Festival elicited polished musical performances from performers who had intensively studied music. As I came to realize, such structured musical training for folk musicians was a product of the twentieth century; however, it drew on longer traditions of music education in the Bohemian Lands.

These themes enmesh the music played on the Moravian *cimbál* and infuse the community within which it is played. These ideas comprise a group of subthemes, which I describe in Chapter Two as Moravian “folk” worldviews, that the *cimbál* structures and brings into focus. Together, these “folk” worldviews include the perception of the instrument’s history in Moravian folk culture, the significance of the instrument as a “folk musical instrument,” and cultural performances. These themes reappear throughout the following chapters.

### **Scope of This Study**

The Festival just described was devoted to “folk music instruments” [*lidové hudební nástroje*]. At the *galakonzert*, different groups performed a variety of regional musical styles and presented local ethnic groups. The concert thus reinforced the idea that musical ensembles and musical instruments stand for particular groups. This study is devoted to more clearly explicating the particular significances of one instrument featured in the concert—the cimbalom, or *cimbál* as it is called in Czech—which is clearly understood as a folk music instrument.

This dissertation is best characterized as a study in cultural organology. Instruments can be seen as multivalent objects evocative of many ideas. Musical

instruments shape more-or-less well-defined communities of musicians, teachers, and listeners—to which I apply the term interpretive communities. I propose to view instruments as texts that both bring together and open up various cultural discourses.

In this study, I also use an organological study of the cimbalom as a way to specifically disclose Moravian identity and history. Because this instrument is at the center of traditional music culture in Moravia as well as at the center of a limited system of folk worldviews, it comprises a useful lens that allows this study to focus on specific aspects of Moravian music through time. It also suggests that communities are not only centered around localized platial structures (Feld and Basso 1996) but are also anchored by significant objects and shared interpretive strategies. My goal is to use these specialized case studies about the cimbalom in order to sketch an interpretation of Moravian identity and history.

Although the *cimbál* is often mentioned as a Moravian folk instrument, this study is, to my knowledge, the first in English to discuss Moravian *cimbál* in depth. I have therefore attempted to balance the presentation of information with theoretical concerns. The study aims to be theoretically interesting by laying out a cultural approach to the study of musical instruments, but to also provide information previously unavailable in English.

### *Relationship to Other Studies*

The project is unique even among Czech-language studies. Among Czech musicologists and folklorists, scholarly studies tend to focus on classification, analysis, or collection of folk songs. Instrumental music has received less focused attention. “Folk musical instruments” have received some attention (for example Stockmann 1961, Kunz

1974, Kurfürst 2002), but their musical aspects are rarely discussed. Articles about Moravian folk culture generally only mention the instrument in passing rather than in detail (Vranecký 1963, Macek 1968, Kunz 1974, Želinská and Connor 2000, Jančář 2000).

Notable Czech scholarship about the *cimbál* has often been undertaken by *cimbál* players turned scholars. For example, Ludvík Kunz (1993b) assembled a number of Czech studies focused on the history of the *cimbál* in Moravia, important players, and a discussion of manufacturers. Lucie Uhlíková, a researcher affiliated with the Ethnology Institute of the Czech Academy of Sciences, has published a survey of Moravian instrumental folk music (Uhlíková 2001) as well as a catalog of *cimbál* ensembles around the city of Zlín in east Moravia (Uhlíková 2004). Bronislava Schořiková, a student in musicology at Masaryk University in Brno, devoted a master's thesis to the *cimbál* in contemporary art music that also included sections about the history of the instrument in Moravia (Schořiková 2004).

This dissertation also aims to contribute to ethnomusicological studies focused on areas of Europe, an area that has generally received less attention from North American scholars of ethnomusicology. A general reference source for the study of European traditional music is *Europe*, edited by Timothy Rice, James Porter, and Chris Goertzen and published as volume 8 of the *Garland Encyclopedia of World Music* (New York and London: Garland, 2000). When ethnomusicological attention has focused on Europe it has tended toward Eastern Europe. In this dissertation, I draw on the many extant scholarly ethnomusicological studies of European musics (including Bohlman 1988; Goertzen 1988; Rice 1988; Noll 1991; Porter 1993; Rice 1994; Bohlman 1996; Slobin

1996; Goertzen 1997; Porter 1997; Sugarman 1997; Bohlman 2000, 2002a; Nettl 2002; Cooley 2005; Buchanan 2006).

### *Sources of This Study*

The bulk of research for this study was carried out between September 2005 and December 2006. During that time I was resident in the Moravian city of Brno. As a regional center, Brno fostered a rich life of concerts and gatherings devoted to the music I was studying, a number of important and useful academic institutions, and offered relatively easy access to villages and regional centers. I also undertook research and study in the Czech Republic on previous summer research trips in July 2002, July 2003, May–July 2004, and June and August 2005.<sup>21</sup>

The dissertation is based largely on ethnographic research data gathered in the Czech Republic. I used ethnomusicological fieldwork approaches including music lessons, musician interviews, and concert observations. Foremost were my music lessons on the *cimbál*, for which my primary teacher was Dalibor Štrunc (in May 2004 and again in 2005–2006). I also interviewed established professional cimbalomists, met with local folklorists, visited regional museums, and interviewed an instrument maker. I also attended many concerts and festivals involving the *cimbál* that ran a gamut of genres from folklore to jazz to classical to fusion.

I also drew on information available in local archives, libraries, and ethnographic institutes. I used a wealth of information from Czech scholarly journals about folklore, local newspapers, and the active local publishing tradition, which has thrived since the

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<sup>21</sup> This research was generously funded by a Fulbright grant, the Institute for International Education, the Center for World Performance Studies and Center for Russia and East European Studies at the University of Michigan, the Rackham School of Graduate Studies, and a Krohn Fellowship from Masaryk University in Brno.



nineteenth century. The investigation of local scholarly traditions is useful in all areas of the world. While I followed my own interests in this research, I agree with William Noll that “it is appropriate and necessary for contemporary fieldworkers to listen to the voices of living and deceased ethnographers along with the voices of local performers and other community members of the region being studied” (Noll 1997, 163). I found that it was especially helpful to contextualize my study within the established Eastern European fields of ethnology [*etnologie*], “homeland science” [*vlastivěda*], and “musical folkloristics” [*hudební folkloristiky*]. This study thus sits at a disciplinary intersection: between what is may be termed ethnographically-based and historical musicology.

Rapid changes in communications media were an important dimension of my field research. E-mail, cell phones, Skype, blogs, and YouTube, were all significant ways to keep in touch with many of my contacts while I was in the field and again when I returned. While in the field, in fact, I often got the impression that musicians were rather more media savvy than I. After I returned from the field, however, I typically found that answers to my queries rarely arrived as soon as I hoped if at all. While “virtual ethnography” has become an area of interest, this did not take a central place in my research beyond providing a means of connection and way for me to send quick questions. I would have not have predicted beforehand the ways in which these media have become distribution routes for Moravian musicians. Their reality, however, did prompt me to pay closer attention to the ways that local musicians used these media for distribution within local markets even in the face of expanding globalization in world music and the broadening of possibilities of the global imagination.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> A selected and annotated list of Web resources and recordings dedicated to Moravian folklore is included in Appendix 5.

The remainder of this introductory chapter sets out the theoretical framework of cultural organology and interpretive communities. Thinking about musical instruments as mere sound-producing objects does not encourage a deep understanding of their cultural significance. Thus, my broader interpretive approach, focused on interpretive communities, discloses the myriad connections that form a musically evocative object. The following section outlines an overarching theoretical framework for an understanding of musical instruments that is based on an understanding of texts, textual interpretation, and interpretive communities. To introduce a Moravian interpretive community, the chapter closes with a discussion of Moravian history and the region's relationship to the Bohemian Lands.

### **Towards an Understanding of Musical Instruments: Cultural Organology and Interpretive Communities**

During my research, I was intrigued that the cimbalom was recognized simultaneously as an instrument common to many parts of east Central Europe as well as an icon of traditional music presented locally as Moravian.<sup>23</sup> My basic question was, what allowed the instrument be perceived as Moravian? On one hand, *cimbál* performances validate and reify idealized notions about what are deemed to be the essential roots of Czechoslovak folk culture, primarily according nineteenth-century models. On the other hand, many performances, seemingly marked as “traditional” by the instrument's presence, combine genres such as world music and jazz and stake a Moravian claim in more globalized movements of popular music. In both views, the *cimbál* seems to bridge the gap between “us” and “them.” It is Moravian [*moravský*] and

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<sup>23</sup> Throughout the dissertation, I make this distinction by using the term cimbalom (the instrument generally) for the former idea and *cimbál* to the latter (the local understanding).

Czech [český] but also foreign [cizí] and “beyond the borders” [zahraniční]. It is both “ours” and “not ours.” It is local but at the same time global. It is somehow “Eastern” but can play in “Western” genres. In fact, the instrument might be seen as a larger metaphor—a “crossroads,” or site in which these discourses meet, are negotiated, and musically explored.<sup>24</sup> While this raises the question of the *cimbál*’s significance in Moravia, it also brings up broader questions about how the meanings of musical instruments are constructed within specific cultural contexts. Broadening from my basic question, then, I probe how understandings of the cimbalom are constructed so that the instrument could be perceived as both local and regional.

In exploring these questions, I decided that the best way to account for the musical instrument’s multivalence as an object was to explicate the ways it was understood through local and specific interpretive lenses. I thus propose that the *cimbál* may be understood as a text that provides a nexus of community around which groups of people and issues coalesce. My approach is based within existing organological studies, but it expands on the issue musical instruments and their meaning. As Regula Qureshi states, “*Instruments mean*. How they do so is cultural knowledge permeated with physicality and with affect: embodied knowledge” (Qureshi 1997, 2, emphasis added). Along with embodied knowledge, however, musical instruments draw together cultural, historical, kinesthetic, and musical knowledge.

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<sup>24</sup> The metaphor of the Czech lands as a crossroads of Europe was presented to non-Czech speakers at least as early as Karel Čapek’s book *The Crossroads of Europe* (1929). Early maps of Europe sometimes presented the continent as a woman with Bohemia at her heart (Agnew 2004, 1).

Organology has been simply described as the “science of sound instruments” (DeVale 1990, 4).<sup>25</sup> Dournon offers more detail, characterizing organology as “primarily the study of actual musical instruments (inventory, terminology, classification, description of construction, shapes, and technique of playing)” (Dournon 1992, 247). I have found DeVale’s three-faceted model useful. This model divides organology into three major areas of study: classificatory, analytic, and applied. The first area deals with categorization, the second with “specific questions concerning instruments or the discipline itself,” and the third attends to practical, educational, or artistic uses of instruments (DeVale 1990, 5). Ultimately, DeVale states that the “purpose of organology should be to help explain society and culture” (22). My approach, which explores the question of how musical instruments are culturally understood, fits basically within the analytic branch. I propose below, however, that a new branch aptly described as “cultural organology” has grown in prominence since DeVale’s model was proposed.

Despite these broad definitions, organology is often assumed to deal “only or primarily” with the classification of musical instruments (DeVale 1990, 1; see also Dawe 2003, 276–277). The most widely known system is the Hornbostel-Sachs classification, which groups instruments by the way they produce sound (Hornbostel and Sachs 1992; see also Jairazbhoy 1990). Developed in the 1910s and under revision since, however, the breadth and complexity of the Hornbostel-Sachs system makes it slightly unwieldy: it has been described as “empirical,” yet “neither theoretical nor purely logical, with each class

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<sup>25</sup> The formulation is significant since DeVale purposely avoids the term “musical instrument.” Ethnomusicologists often employ the terms “sound instrument” or “sound-producing instrument” since sound-producing objects are not necessarily classified as “musical” instruments in all contexts or within European ideas of music; DeVale clarifies that “organology is concerned with **all** sound instruments regardless of use, function, culture, or historical period” (DeVale 1990, 5, emphasis in original). In my study, I have preferred the term “musical instrument” as it is a clear translation of the Czech term *hudební nástroj*. Recently, organology has been defined in a slightly broader way as “the study and knowledge of musical instruments” (Pinch and Bijsterveld 2004, 651).

having its own generative and functional structure, and expanding in its own way to its own conclusions” (Jairazbhoy 1990, 89). The Hornbostel and Sachs approach is based on the ways that musical instruments produce sound, which has been a fundamental consideration in many classification systems: as Dournon (1993, 250) observes, “since we are dealing with sound-producing tools, the fundamental principle of classification must be related to the vibrating material itself.” Klaus Wachsmann’s later approach situates the musical instrument at the center of interrelated cultural, historical, and musical streams (Wachsmann 1984, 407). His system is split into two major parts: description and classification.<sup>26</sup> As I argue here, these approaches only tell part of the story about musical instruments.

In a study of the classification of musical instruments, Margaret Kartomi distinguishes between “classifications that are observed to emerge naturally from a culture over time and those that are imposed artificially or manipulated intellectually by the observer for a specific purpose” (Kartomi 1990, 16). The former are termed “culture-emergent” and the latter “scholar-imposed.” Kartomi argues against scholar-imposed systems, particularly the “assumption” among nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century anthropologists “that it was correct to use Western categories for the study of a non-Western instrumentarium” (Kartomi 1990, 9). Instead, she favors the elucidation of culture-emergent systems that “express their creators’ cultural assumptions” and reflect how “different cultures select different elements from their total concepts of instruments to serve as criteria for division” (9). These are important, Kartomi suggests, since they often are based on oral traditions and go against the literary bias of Western scholarship;

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<sup>26</sup> The descriptive approach is identified by some as organography and was championed as an important method by Mantle Hood (1971, 123).

moreover, classifications express “a culture’s or subculture’s concept of what instruments are and mean in their musical, social, or musical and social context” (13).<sup>27</sup> However, I have found that teasing out the ways in which the cimbalom is interpreted and understood in Moravia to be more fruitful than investigating the ways in which it has been classified.

I have refrained from classifying the *cimbál* beyond noting that it is a multi-octave trapezoidal board zither with an attached resonator sounded by hammers (Hornbostel-Sachs No. 314.122 + 4). A Czech classification of *cimbál* would, in my view, only mirror well-rehearsed European ideas about instrument classification that emphasize instrument morphology. Classification according to morphology—as in the Hornbostel-Sachs system—in fact obscures key information by making aspects of an instrument’s materiality the most important part of its identity. This approach to classification conceals information about who plays an instrument, where or when it is played, or why it is played. Most crucially, it does not address my central question about the cimbalom: how instruments of “the same” type—that is, other instruments that produce sounds in the same way—exist in different cultural contexts and play in many types of music. In particular, it does not explain how the cimbalom appears to be accepted simultaneously as a distinctive Moravian folk music instrument as well as a regional, global one.

Musical instruments have been studied from cultural perspectives as well, not only classificatory and descriptive ones (e.g., Linn 1991, Qureshi 1997, Waksman 1999, Bennett and Dawe 2001). The visual representation of musical instruments and their place in popular music has yielded some fruitful perspectives. One example is Karen

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<sup>27</sup> Kartomi’s major points are summarized in Diamond et al. 1994, 15 n. 10. Classification has been the focus of other recent studies, including Lysloff and Matson 1985 and Dournon 1992, 248–290.

Linn's 1991 study of the banjo in the United States through the twentieth century, *That Half-Barbaric Twang*. Linn takes musical instruments as her starting point in the following observation:

A musical instrument is more than wood, wires, and glue; the essence of the object lies in the meanings the culture has assigned to it. . . . I neither chart chronologies, nor search for musicological laws, nor see as my goal the presentation of collected data. Rather, I view the data of instrument construction, decoration, and performance practices here as signs whose interpretation depends upon an understanding of the changing life of these signs within American culture. (Linn 1991, xi)

Linn's approach is based on the analysis of texts—including published accounts of concerts, method books, and advertising—that represent ideas about the banjo in American life. Linn reads the changing significances of the banjo in American musical life by interpreting visual representations and descriptions of the instrument from period accounts. Similarly, Waksman's study of the electric guitar used the instrument as a focal point for a multi-dimensional analysis that elicited discourses of race, gender, and sexuality, without which "the instrument cannot be fully grasped" (Waksman 1999, 5). Waksman concludes that the electric guitar as an object accrues cultural meanings and that the instrument, shaping and being shaped within musical contexts, "has created new fields of knowledge within the history of popular music" (Waksman 1999, 10).

Another significant approach to organology has been the investigation of the interaction between musicians and musical instruments. In particular, ethnomusicologists have investigated the ways in which the physical constraints of musical instruments shape musical structure (Berliner 1978, Baily 1985, Rice 1994). Baily went as far as to define a musical instrument as "a type of transducer, converting patterns of body movement into patterns of sound" (Baily 1992, 149), a view that foregrounds human movement. Along these lines, instruments have also been characterized as a way for musicians to make

music's aural component tangible. As composer Tom Machover notes about his cello, "[I] use the cello to try out new ideas. . . . I like to let my [musical] ideas percolate in my imagination, but I also like to touch them, and the cello is my tool for that" (Machover 2007, 19).

DeVale (1990, 2) suggests that organology has been "sorely neglected" in ethnomusicology. Ethnomusicologists have by no means ignored the significance of musical instruments; however, they rarely identify their studies as specifically organological. Ethnomusicological studies that are interested in ways that instruments can reinforce or encode cultural systems, transmit knowledge, and gain meaning have made already implied the outlines of a cultural organology. For example, Judith Becker has pointed out metaphoric connections between gamelan instruments and Javanese worldviews. In an essay on the power accorded to Javanese gamelans, Judith Becker (1988) observes connections between the ensemble and instrument making, religious ritual, and court music. Elaborating on these observations, Becker observes that "musical instruments, throughout the world, come to have meanings associated with them that far surpass their pure physicality as sound producing objects made of wood, metal, or clay" (Becker 1988, 385).

Other ethnomusicological studies have noted the significance of musical instruments as objects of cultural memory and historical knowledge. A team of ethnomusicologists working with Beverly Diamond carried out a long-term ethnographic and archival study, similarly centered around the cultural significance of musical instruments, but specifically focused on eliciting the cultural heritage of First Nations in Canada; Diamond and colleagues unearthed the cultural memories elicited by many



sound-producing instruments held in Canadian museums and archives (Diamond et al. 1994). Further interpreting the meaning of musical instruments, Qureshi described instruments as physical sites for the construction of affect and embodiment of feeling in her study of the North Indian *sarangi* (an upright, bowed lute). Qureshi suggested that “the historicized relationship between an instrument’s affective, embodied, and social meanings, and the discursive representations of such meanings is what endows an instrument with a standard musical identity” (Qureshi 1997, 4). Qureshi’s study shows how musical instruments comprise central sites for the construction of cultural ideas about gender, emotion, and power. Likewise, in studies of the *gender* (a keyed metallophone with resonators) in central Java, Sarah Weiss (1993, 2006) elucidated Javanese ideas about gender, space, and performance history through written texts and ethnographic interviews focused on the *grimingan* genre accompanying *wayang* plays. Weiss’s findings suggested that ideas about “early” gamelan performance are construed as feminine and associated with a soft-style approach to playing the *gender*, while in recent playing virtuoso technique is valued and associated with masculinity (Weiss 2006).

The above studies are only a handful of recent scholarly work that has gained insight through the investigation of musical instruments from a cultural standpoint. As Kevin Dawe has pointed out, instruments are far more than mere physical objects: “They exist at an intersection of material, social, and cultural worlds where they are as much constructed and fashioned by the force of minds, cultures, societies, and histories as axes, saws, drills, chisels, machines, and the ecology of wood” (Dawe 2003, 275). Along these lines, other studies have used instruments as focal points in discussions of emotional

affect and gender (Qureshi 1997), national and regional traditions (Goertzen 1997, Smith 1997), ethnic history and identity (Hakala 1997), and the study of material cultural and the anthropology of things (Dawe 2003, Roda 2007). Taken together, these and similar studies move toward an approach that may be termed cultural organology.

This cultural approach to organology conceives instruments as special elements of material culture. Musical instruments represent an intersection of cultural, musical, and embodied knowledge. I group musical instruments under Sherry Turkle's concept of "evocative objects" (Turkle 1984, 11–25, 2007b). As Turkle describes them, evocative objects underscore "the inseparability of thought and feeling in our relationship to things. We think with objects we love; we love the objects we think with" (Turkle 2007a, 5). In other words, objects connect ideas and people. Musical instruments afford physical interaction; simultaneously, their power as artifacts comes from the ways they evoke personal, social, cultural, and kinesthetic memories. As DeVale puts it, musical instruments are "hard evidence of the musical nature of humanity" (DeVale 1990, 22).

While any object gains affectual attachment or sentimental value through personal associations, musical instruments have specific features that make them especially evocative. Most notably, musical instruments are constructed to produce or manipulate aural signals and environments. That is, musical instruments produce sound. A second significant feature of musical instruments is their relationship with people. In many cases, instrumental technique is gained through elaborate and systematized repetition or personal practice. This results in an intimate embodied knowledge that is shared only between the player and the instrument. Finally, many musical instruments require special care and attention. This often takes the shape of special cleaning or maintenance rituals

(such as tuning) that keep instruments in the desired condition and elicit special connections between people and instruments. These features combine to form special webs of attachment between musical instruments and their players.

Musical instruments, then, are both less and more than evidence of musical humanity. They encode specific cultural knowledge, memories, and values in addition to proving musicality. A musical instrument, like Penelope Papailias observes of personal archives, may be defined as a “textual, material, and theoretical construct” (Papailias 2005, 3). It is this position at a crossing of multiple forms of community, history, and memory that allows musical instruments to evoke deeply significant cultural formations.

To understand the multilayered and polysemic nature of instruments, DeVale proposes the possibility that

a sound instrument is a kind of hologram which can be rotated and viewed from many perspectives and which contains the essence of society and culture. But we cannot see this organological hologram until it is lighted by organological inquiry.

Organological inquiry is like the split laser light of holography, the first beam illuminates the physical aspects of the instrument itself, while the other beam, the reference beam, reflects directly from the mirrors of musical, social, and cultural contexts. (DeVale 1990, 22–23)

DeVale’s proposal and the preceding studies together suggest that musical instruments are like musical palimpsests. They contain many layers of meaning, some more apparent than others, which must be interpreted to be understood.

Like DeVale, I sought a metaphor to conceptualize musical instruments that incorporated cultural, historical, and discursive complexities. At the same time, I wanted to bridge the gap between the tangibility of instruments as physical objects and their emergent meanings from cultural interpretations. These interpretations and understandings arise from the interactions of people and artifacts. While holograms are fascinating visually, I propose instead to approach musical instruments as texts.

Holograms privilege the visual and carry the impression of being illusions. A more compelling metaphor is presented by viewing a musical instrument as an object understood through interpretation akin to a text.

Texts are understood and interpreted through the peeling away of accreted meanings. My understanding of text and textual interpretation is based on an understanding of textuality culled from philosophers, cultural anthropologists, linguists, and ethnomusicologists (Ricoeur 1973, Geertz 1973a and 1973b, Fish 1980, Geertz 1983, Becker 1995 [1979], Tilton 2003, Stillman 2005).<sup>28</sup> These sources suggest that the model of text offers a more flexible and fruitful way to account for the shared understandings and interpretations of musical instruments. My approach privileges social and cultural concerns over classification and morphology. In fact, I suggest that the understanding of musical instruments as objects and artifacts is only possible through active interpretation that produces emergent fields of cultural understanding.

In adopting the metaphor of text for musical instruments, I follow Jeff Todd Tilton's extension of "the meaning of *text* to cover any object of interpretation" (Tilton 2003, 79, see also 69). Paul Ricoeur (1973, 93–97) isolates four qualities of texts: 1) they can be fixed and are not ephemeral; 2) meaning and intent are dissociated, only to be restored through interpretation; 3) they are non-ostensive; and 4) they are not addressed to individuals, but open to everyone who knows how to "read" them. With this broad definition, Ricoeur argues that any action or sequence of events may be isolated as an object of textual interpretation.

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<sup>28</sup> I am familiar with the anthropological critique of writing as a medium for representing culture (e.g., Clifford and Marcus 1986, Clifford 1988, Rosaldo 1989, Behar 1996; see Barz and Cooley 1997 for ethnomusicological perspectives). My project, however, is less related to the way that ethnographers write culture than it is to the ways that culture is inscribed in and around artifacts. In essence, I focus on ways that cultural understandings are formed in ways akin to textual interpretation.

A. L. Becker suggests that “in a multicultural world, a world of multiple epistemologies, there is a need for a new philologist—a specialist in contextual relations—in all areas of knowledge in which text building (written or oral) is a central activity” (Becker 1995 [1979], 26). Although Becker is attending primarily to meaning in literary texts (both oral and written), the process of hearing meaning in Moravian *cimbál* performance is similar to Becker’s text-building. At one level, the relation of the parts of the instrument to itself and others in an ensemble comprises what might be considered the “coherence of the text” (Becker 1995 [1979], 29). On another level, the instrument is related to cultural texts both past and present (*ibid.*, 25), particularly collections of folk songs and patterns of folk performance. Finally, the *cimbál* is related to other events through various cultural references (*ibid.*).

The reality that readers “build” texts into coherent objects via extension through metaphors and association (Becker 1995 [1979]) is important since texts do not exist *a priori* in the world. The activity of delimiting and extracting texts from social life has also been described as “entextualization” (Bauman and Briggs 1990, Stillman 2005). Thus, the object of textual interpretation varies: in the case of a musical instrument, for example, the focus may be on the physical properties of the object (an interpretive approach that would stress morphology) or on elements of performance and performance practice (the “meaningful actions” that are at the center of my approach to cultural organology). Whatever the object of interpretation—whether a musical instrument, a specific performance, or a concert—it should be perceived as a coherent unit within a particular worldview.

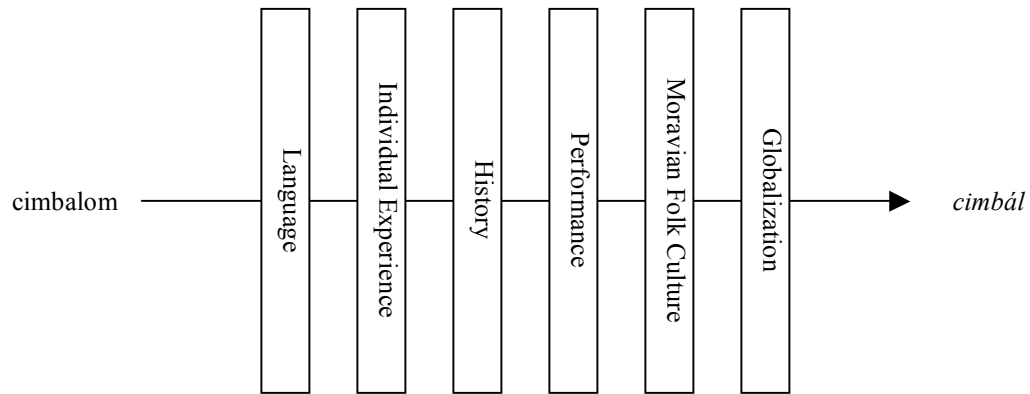
Texts, in Ricoeur's formulation, are powerful tools that disclose and "open up" the limits of how to explain and come to understand our being-in-the-world (Ricoeur 1973, 96). Ricoeur positions understanding as an effort to "grasp the world-propositions opened up by the reference of the text. To understand a text is to follow its movement from sense to reference, from what it says to what it talks about" (114). Thus, a text becomes a "way of looking at things," "an injunction to think in a certain manner. . . . The text speaks of a possible world and of a possible way of orientating oneself within it. The dimensions of this world are properly opened up by, disclosed by, the text" (114).

Texts are notably atemporal: they may be fixed, isolated, and pulled "out of time."<sup>29</sup> That is, while they may originate in a particular time, they are typically free to be interpreted in radically different and temporally distant situations. Likewise, musical instruments may be seen as objects that maintain a relative consistency over time. Even as new developments are designed for musical instruments, this is often portrayed as a "recasting of tradition so as to innovate and sustain tradition at the very same time" (Pinch and Bijsterveld 2004, 649). Certain moments take precedence in the imagination of the Moravian *cimbál*. Thus, even while design changes and technological developments aided changes in instrumental construction (as discussed in Chapter Two), the cimbalom can connect cultural communities since the nineteenth century. The exegesis of various cultural ideas surrounding the *cimbál*, which is undertaken in this dissertation, thus involves historical case studies that span the last hundred-and-fifty years.

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<sup>29</sup> Ricoeur's criteria of non-ostensivity allows texts to function as discrete units. Objects not typically conceived as texts are derived into units through a process described as entextualization (Bauman and Briggs 1990).

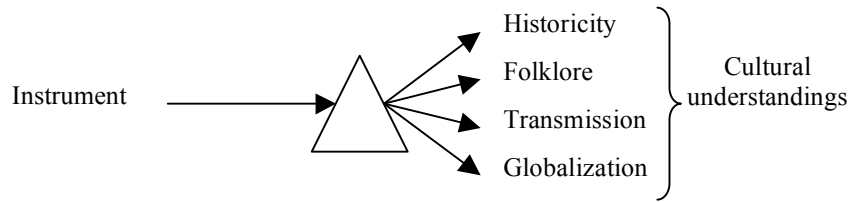
Textual interpretation receives similar importance in circumscribing what Stanley Fish (1980) calls “interpretive communities.” Fish contends that shared understandings of texts arise when a group shares a set of “interpretive strategies.” Interpretive strategies are the lens of understanding: “they are the shape of reading, and because they are the shape of reading, they give texts their shape, making them rather than, as is usually assumed, arising from them” (13). These strategies stabilize a worldview that privileges certain ways of reading over others. Worldviews are allowed and constrained by certain strategies of reading. Shared interpretive strategies predispose the formation of communities of likeminded readers. Through shared ideas of meaning, which arise from interpretive strategies, “members of the same community will necessarily agree because they will see (and by seeing, make) everything in relation to that community” (15). In Fish’s view, these strategies may constrain the viewpoints of a community so strongly that “members of different communities will disagree because from each of the respective positions the other ‘simply’ cannot see what is obviously and inescapably there” (15). While I am not proposing that it is impossible for Czechs to “think outside the box” and hear the cimbalom in any alternative ways, the existence of an interpretive community explains how a global instrument can be so crucially understood as an instrument of Moravian music. While these “outside” contexts are known, the understanding of the *cimbál* as local is so deeply ingrained that it is assumed and becomes second nature.



**Figure 1.3: Experiencing the cimbalom as Moravian. Understanding an instrument through a series of interpretive strategies.**

What I develop here, based on my research with the cimbalom in Moravia, is a model for examining the ways in which instruments shape and are shaped by salient cultural interpretations (Figure 1.3). The strategies through which instruments are interpreted, as for example in Figure 1.3, should not be conceived as a causal hierarchy; rather, they provide interchanging lenses of interpretation that shape understanding. Musical instruments comprise—at least in the case of the *cimbál*—a nexus that focuses certain forms of cultural understanding. If the cimbalom is a musical instrument found not only in Moravia, it is certainly understood by many Czechs within a Moravian context. Following the text metaphor, I hope to explicate Moravian “ways of reading”—that is, ways of interpreting and understanding—the instrument. Thus, I focus on the historical, cultural, cognitive, and performative ways that the instrument is constructed as Moravian.





**Figure 1.4: Refracting the instrument.**

Certain “ways of reading” the cimbalom are prevalent in Moravia. Following the models presented by Ricoeur and Fish, I suggest that the cimbalom discloses a *way of knowing* Moravian music. This way of knowing is situated in ontologies of Moravian traditional music that I outline later in this chapter. Each subsequent chapter may thus be regarded as an explication of one or another cultural text read through the *cimbál*, as well as the accrual of a particular meaning via a specific interpretive community.<sup>30</sup> A Moravian understanding of the *cimbál* emerges as the instrument is read according to interpretive strategies similar to those assumed by Moravian audiences and musicians at large. The dissertation, then, acts as a prism that refracts the idea of the instrument into various constituent fields of understanding (Figure 1.4).

Another obvious delimiter of community is language. As a “small” language—Czechs are continually surprised that any outsider would even consider learning the language since, after all, “only 10 million of us speak it”—the Czech interpretive community is relatively insulated from larger communities of more globalized languages. Three other cultural ideologies operate as important shared interpretive strategies: first, the concept of folk culture [*lidová kultura*]; second, culturally valued ideas about

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<sup>30</sup> Likewise, musical instruments may be viewed as “technological artifacts” with “unique user communities” (Pinch and Bijsterveld 2004, 638). Akrich has suggested that the use of objects is not wholly determined through design; rather, users write their own “scripts” for technology. Thus technological artifacts are ripe for “de-description” in order to understand how instruments are used in culturally specific ways (Akrich 1992).

folksong as a naturally constituted category and a “living” entity; and third, appropriate contexts of public performance, namely what I have identified as “cultural performance.” These are discussed in further detail in Chapter Two as foundational worldviews that constrain ideas about Moravian folk music. In order to more fully contextualize these “folk worldviews,” however, it will be helpful first to draw a general outline of cultural communities in the area where I conducted my research: the Bohemian Lands.

### **Moravia and the Bohemian Lands**

Moravia lies along the river *Morava* in the eastern third of the present-day Czech Republic. The region is largely agricultural. The foothills of the Western Carpathians—the *Beskydy* and *Bilé Karpaty* [White Carpathians] ranges—rise to the north and east. In the south, the clay soil in the valley’s rolling hills supports viticulture, which has kept the area relatively prosperous. The region is separated from Bohemia by the low ridge of the Bohemian-Moravian Highlands. Major cities in the area include Brno, Olomouc, and Ostrava. Brno is the largest of the three and is often regarded as the “Moravian capital.”

Moravia is typically grouped with the Bohemian Lands since the major language of the area is Czech, and the region is part of the Czech Republic. Along with Moravia and Bohemia, part of Silesia (a cultural group linked to Poles, Czechs, and Slovaks) is located in the northeastern part of the Czech Republic.<sup>31</sup> The provinces of Bohemia and Moravia have held relatively consistent political borders that have not significantly changed since the Middle Ages (Magocsi 2002, 141).

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<sup>31</sup> The three lands are represented by heraldic emblems on the present coat of arms of the Czech Republic: the double-tailed lion of Bohemia, the black Eagle of Moravia, and the red-and-silver checkered Eagle of Silesia.

While these lands are often referred to as separate geographic and political entities, contemporary Czech identity is based on strong feelings of historical, cultural, and national solidarity. This is in large part based on the prevalence of the Czech language, which is spoken nowhere else in the world, as well as the overwhelming ethnic homogeneity of the population. This, however, is a product of the twentieth century. In 1910, only 75% of Moravians were considered Czech while the remaining 25% were of Jewish, German, or other origins (Monroe 1910). In 1930, the Czech and Slovak population of Czechoslovakia comprised 66.9% of the population and Germans about 22%; in contrast, by 1991 only 0.2% of the Czechoslovak population was described as German while 94% were identified as Czech, Moravian, Slovak, and Silesian (Magocsi 2002, 141).<sup>32</sup> At the time the Czech Republic declared its independence from Slovakia in 1993, 94.5% of the population was described as Czech speaking, and the largest minority were the closely related Slovaks (Engelberg 1993).<sup>33</sup>

While Moravia is considered together with Bohemia today, its history is slightly divergent. Moravia was the earliest settlement site for Slavic tribes in the Central European plateau. The Moravian valley boasts some of the oldest archeological remains of Slavic settlement. It is also thought to be the center of the Great Moravian Empire, the first Slavic state in the area, which existed in the ninth and tenth centuries. This is also thought to be where the Byzantine monks Cyril and Methodius arrived around 863 C.E., responding to a plea from prince Rostislav who hoped to shore up his political power by converting the Slavs to Catholicism. Along with religion, Cyril and Methodius brought

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<sup>32</sup> The only significant non-Slavic group was a Hungarian minority of 587,000, which comprised 3.8% of the population.

<sup>33</sup> I have added together the Czech and Moravian ethnic groups (81.3% and 13.2%, respectively) to arrive at this figure. In the 1930 Czechoslovak census, Czechs, Slovaks, and Silesians were all described as “Czechoslovak” (Magocsi 2002, 143).

writing (the Cyrillic script used in some Slavic languages still bears their name). Moravia thus retains the reputation, at least in the Czech popular imagination, as the birthplace of Czech civilization, even though Prague has been the dominant Czech metropolis since the fall of Great Moravia (see Měřinský and Mezník 1998).

The Bohemian Lands were effectively under Habsburg power from 1524, when Ferdinand I was elected King of Bohemia (see Evans 2006b). The political fortunes of Moravia were basically tied to the Habsburg empire from this point until the disintegration of Austro-Hungary after the First World War. Under Habsburg control, Moravia and Bohemia were separately administered areas, and the Moravian margravate had its own separate diet in Brno, which was the regional center and hub of power throughout the Habsburg times (Magocsi 2002, 22). Brno was closer to Vienna culturally and politically than Prague. Brno is almost equidistant from Prague and Vienna, but it is separated from Prague by the Bohemian-Moravian Highlands. Thus, Brno's first railway connection was to Vienna in 1839 rather than Prague. The local Brno diet answered directly to the imperial government in Vienna, and after the split of the Habsburg empire into the "dual" Austro-Hungarian monarchy in 1867 it maintained the connection to Vienna.<sup>34</sup> This created a certain cultural distance between the Moravian and Bohemian capitals, Brno and Prague. For example, many of Brno's late-nineteenth-century buildings are built in the ostentatious neo-Classical style of Vienna's *Ringstrasse*, some even designed by the same architects.

The nineteenth century saw a rise in nationalist consciousness throughout the Bohemian Lands. Nationalist fervor blossomed somewhat later in Moravia than Bohemia,

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<sup>34</sup> Brno was a cultural center in the area: although it was not an early university center, printshops were recorded in Brno before 1500, less than 50 years after Gutenberg's development of the moveable-type press in 1454 (Magocsi 2002, 54).

but today the differences are glossed over in favor of portraying a nation with a common history. Some of the strongest nationalist rhetoric came from František Palacký (1798–1876), a revered Czech nationalist historian who (re)wrote the history of the Czech nation in his five-volume *History of the Czech Nation in Bohemia and Moravia* [*Dějiny národu českého w Čechách a w Moravě*], published between 1836 and 1867.<sup>35</sup> The publication of this epic work earned him the title “Father of the Nation” [*otec národa*] and effectively laid the ground for the conception of a sovereign Czech nation.<sup>36</sup> Palacký’s viewpoint was a nationalistic reaction to the control of the Bohemian province by Vienna, and the subsequent association of German speakers with a colonializing power. His antagonism was clearly expressed in the aphorism, “We [Czechs] were here before Austria, and we will also be here after it!” (quoted in Sayer 1998, 129; Holy 1996, 38). This “deceptively simple statement” effected a “profound dislocation of nineteenth-century temporal geographies” (Sayer 1998, 129), effectively claiming centuries of longevity and political entitlement for an autochthonous Czech nation. Palacký’s history, in which the Czechs were the only significant actors, laid claim to a long and fabled past for the Czech nation.

Through this [Palacký’s] identification of present and past *národ* [nation] and *lid* [people] were indissolubly wedded to *vlast*, the homeland whose gentle landscape was abundantly sentimentalized in poetry, painting, and song in these years, and that Bohemian and Moravian *země* [land, earth, soil] became eternally and exclusively Czech, no matter how long others had lived there too. (Sayer 1998, 135)

Writing in the 1990s, Czech historian Petr Pithart points out how Palacký’s conception, which remained a basis for most modern Czech political endeavors, effectively erased any claim of non-Czech speakers on Czech territory: “The *vlast*

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<sup>35</sup> The Czech text has been digitized by the University of Michigan MBooks project and is available online at <http://hdl.handle.net/2027/mdp.39015028183948> (Permanent URL, accessed June 2007).

<sup>36</sup> The work was first published in German, and a Czech translation did not appear until 1848 (Holy 1996, 38; see also Sayer 1998).

[homeland] also included the Germans in Bohemia, whereas the *národ* [nation] comprised only ‘Czech speakers’” (quoted in Sayer 1998, 129).

A sharp rise in urbanization occurred in both Bohemia and Moravia during the nineteenth century. In both areas, rural populations flocked to the regional urban hubs for jobs in factory industries. Brno was particularly renowned as a center for textile manufacturing, the tallest Czech building (purportedly the first Central European skyscraper) was built in 1938 as the headquarters of the Baťa shoe company in Zlín (Moravia), and in the 1920s Czechoslovakia was reputed to comprise three-fifths of the industrial capacity of the prewar Austro-Hungarian empire (Sayer 1998, 163). Cities expanded rapidly: between 1870 and 1910, Prague’s population expanded by 154% to reach 640,000, and Brno expanded 73% to 126,000 (Magocsi 2002, 96). These changing social conditions fundamentally altered the way that folk culture was experienced in everyday life and changed the relationship to rural lifestyles for many residents in the Bohemian Lands.

The twentieth century brought more political turmoil. The disintegration of Austro-Hungary in 1914 and the outbreak of World War I ultimately enabled the establishment of Czechoslovakia (comprising the former provinces of Bohemia, Moravia, and Slovakia) in 1919. This state, often referred to as the “First Republic,” was seen as the first independent Czech state in the modern period. Tomáš Garrigue Masaryk (1850–1937), a native of Moravia and one of the most vocal advocates of the fledgling state prior to its founding, was elected the first President of Czechoslovakia. (With his death so close to the demise of the First Republic, he is often seen as the living incarnation of this short-lived state.) Czechoslovakia was made a Protectorate of the German Reich between

1939 and 1945. The democratic state flourished shortly again after the war until the government was taken over by the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia in a government coup in February 1948. The Communist government stayed in power until 1989. Although a significant loosening of state control came about in the early 1960s, the state was invaded by Soviet forces in August 1968. This ushered in “Normalization,” a period of close government control during which state policies were brought in line with those of the Soviet Union.

Communist control lasted until the late 1980s. The communists were ultimately ousted in late 1988 during non-violent public protests that have since been described as the “Velvet Revolution.” The Revolution resulted in public elections in which dissident playwright Václav Havel was elected President. Although initially the former Czechoslovak state was restored, Slovakia and the Czech Republic split into separate states in a government-orchestrated agreement to become independent states in 1993. Both countries became members of the European Union on 1 May 2004.

The ethnic unity of the Czech Republic, a newfound reality of the twentieth century, is largely the result of the forced and legally mandated expulsion of over three million “ethnic Germans” following the Second World War between 1945 and 1947 (see Bryant 2002). This “ethnic cleansing” (King 2002, 208) has largely been glossed over today. For example, in 2006 an informational kiosk in a small village that formerly had a large German population suggested that the village residents of German origin had “moved on” following the war.<sup>37</sup> While Czech national identity crystallized in nineteenth-

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<sup>37</sup> The euphemism refers to people who were forced to leave their homes with only one or two suitcases, often with little notice, and often on trains in the same fashion as Jews had been moved in transports to concentration camps. In 1945, the expulsion was “termed euphemistically a ‘transfer’ [*odsun*]” (King 2002, 191).

century nationalistic fervor and was later solidified during the twentieth century, at the present time “Czechs conceptualise this community as a natural entity which has existed virtually from the dawn of historical time” (Holy 1996, 116).

This general sense of cultural unity is suggested by the Czech expression *u nás*. The expression roughly means “at our place” or “with us” and occurs often in daily Czech. It suggests a sense of “we-ness.” The expression is assumed to refer either to one’s own home or place of residence when planning meetings, but in general statements it suggests in “our culture.” British cultural anthropologist Ladislav Holy describes the Czech “we” as “polysemic” (Holy 1996, 38, see also 116). In my conversations, observations were often generalized to *u nás na Moravě* [the way we do things in Moravia], which were directly (or assumed to be) opposed to *u Vás v Americe* [with you in America]. While the specific content of this “we-ness” is often left open-ended, it nonetheless suggests a generally agreed upon sense of what William H. Sewell has called a “distinct world of meaning” (Sewell 2005, 168). This idealized concept of Czechness consists of symbols that comprise a conception of a Czech sense of self. Many such symbols were assembled and joined together by nineteenth-century nationalists who, as Michael Beckerman has described, thought that “the shape of the Moravian hills, the sound of the Czech language in its many dialects, the burning of Jan Hus, the view of Prague from Hradčany, and all the folk songs and ancient chorales were not to be considered separate, unrelated entities, but as treasures belonging together” (Beckerman 1986, 66).

Czechs often characterize their country as a small nation and a frequent bystander in the events of Europe as a whole. While this is occasionally seen as a provincial



outlook, the mindset has been generally seen positively by Czechs. Masaryk told the writer Karel Čapek, “We shall always be a tiny minority in the world, but when a small nation achieves something with its limited means, what it achieves has an immense, exceptional value. . . . It is a great thing when a small nation among great ones does not lag behind but plays its part in the betterment of humanity” (Čapek 1995, 77–78).

Although Moravians are occasionally singled out as a separate regional group, this distinction is typically subjugated within a Czech national identity. This situation is perhaps enabled by the idea that a Czech nation based on a single ethnic group exists, but that Bohemians and Moravians comprise two distinct “tribes” [*kmeny*] within the larger group (see, for example, Kuras 1998, 22–25, 43–49). The Czech writer and historian Benjamin Kuras notes that about one third of the population is Moravian because Moravia covers about one third of the country’s area. He humorously notes that only “a few thousand jokers” register “their *nationality* as Moravian” (Kuras 1998, 47, emphasis added).<sup>38</sup> The Czech nation, then, is based on a nineteenth-century idealization of congruence between national culture and ethnic group. Anthony Smith (1992, 56) describes similar views of the “nation as a seamless, organic cultural unit” as “Romantic doctrine,” which appear somewhat at odds with recent calls for European supra-national political unity. The idea is congruent, however, with a conception of nationalism based on the ideas of Herder and Rousseau in which the nation is “conceptualised . . . as a linguistic and cultural rather than political entity” (Holy 1996, 49). The Czech state has

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<sup>38</sup> Moravians and Silesians were not recognized in the census until 1991. Austro-Hungarian censuses prior to 1914 typically sorted nationality by language and thus grouped Czechs, Moravians, Slovaks, and Silesians together (see Judson 2006 for information about nineteenth-century census policies).

thus been constructed as a “state-forming nation” [*státotvorný národ*] rather than a multiethnic state (ibid., 97).<sup>39</sup>

Moravia has often been described as a crossroads of culture. The idea was popular in the early twentieth century when Čapek described the fledgling Czechoslovakia as the “crossroads of Europe” (Čapek 1938). Čapek was discussing the democratic state that existed between 1918 and 1939, which is still referred to by many Czechs as the “First Republic.” Jiří Plocek, a Moravian musician, publisher, and radio producer, headed his recent contribution to the *Rough Guide for World Music* “East Meets West” (Plocek 1999). This is in a sense a literal allusion to the crisscrossing of armies over the Bohemian Lands. Brno, for example, was laid siege by the Swedes in the seventeenth century, and Napoleon defeated the Austrian and Russian armies outside the city at the Battle of Austerlitz in 1805.

The metaphor of a crossroads also suggests a meeting of cultures. Czechs often characterize themselves as a cultural bridge between East and West, a metaphor that has been in use since the nineteenth-century revival of Czech national culture. Palacký wrote in his nineteenth-century history, for example, that it is the task of the nation to “serve as a bridge between German and Slav, between the East and West in Europe” (quoted in Holy 1996, 182). This is another reason that the designations of Eastern or Western Europe are discarded in favor of Central Europe. The metaphor, suggests Holy, expresses the “positive value ascribed to centrality” by Czechs (Holy 1996, 182).

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<sup>39</sup> Holy relates two conceptualizations of nationalism: one, which he traces to the French Revolution, relies on the solidarity of a disparate collective that takes precedence over previous differences; a second, which he traces to German philosophers, is based on cultural and linguistic unity (see Holy 1996, 49–51). Holy describes Czech nationalism as akin to Smith’s “Eastern” ethnic-genealogical model of the nation as opposed to the “Western” civic-territorial conception (ibid., 50). The interest of the nation thus trumps the interest of the state in Czech culture, which Holy takes to be one cause of the fall of Communism in Bohemia (ibid., 51).

The cultural mix of Moravia is occasionally seen as a detriment to “Czech” culture. Miloš Štědroň, a musicologist and authority on the music of Janáček, has described the “curse of Brno” as a major reason for the late awakening of Czech consciousness in the area. He points out that the disconnection between Prague and Brno caused national sentiment to peak much later in Moravia than in Bohemia. Instead of becoming a powerful force in the late nineteenth century, Czech identity did not become strongly felt in Brno until the turn of the century. Štědroň suggests that this situation resulted in a “kind of embarrassment about the fact that actually there is a double or triple culture here” in Brno (Štědroň 2005).

Others have described similar feelings as a neo-colonialist attitude of self-effacement that manifests itself in certain Czech responses to cultural imperialism (Bunzl 2000). For example, German goods are often thought to be superior, usually because they are more expensive and purported to be made of higher quality materials; similarly, Czechs are made out to be immoral, uneducated, or economically backward in comparison to people who have grown up in countries with long democratic traditions. As the nearest provincial capital to the imperial metropolis, Brno shared many cultural elements with Vienna—German speakers outnumbered Czech speakers for most of the nineteenth century and, as the provincial capital, Brno’s architecture tended to be more “Austrian” than Czech. In rural Moravia, ethnographers have pointed to the influence of the *Lachs*, who are thought to have traveled through the Carpathians as shepherds, ultimately influencing (and providing an ethnonym for) the areas of *lašsko* and *valašsko* in north Moravia. Connection to the Slovaks and Poles is also felt.

The influence of cultural mixing is thought to be present in folk music as well. In particular, these “Eastern” influences—from Slovakia, Hungary, and other areas described as “distant,” vaguely ethnicized, or less European—are thought to be musically present in various modal scales and harmonies, as well as irregular rhythmic patterns and vocal lines. Scholars even propose that the resulting division can be closely mapped according to collected folk songs:

The dividing line runs roughly along the River March [i.e., the Morava River], which divides the country almost in half. West of the March the songs have strong Western European characteristics, namely regular construction of melody, definite tonality, well defined rhythmical periods and symmetrical form. On the other hand, the folk songs east of the March show a freer construction, melodically and harmonically, as well as rhythmically. One finds in them a very close connection between words and tune, and one finds melismas, free modulation, short melodic phrases and motives derived from prosody. Consequently, the folk song approaches the Oriental musical culture, by way of the curve of the Carpathian mountains to the Balkans and the domain of the old Byzantine music. (Vetterl 1949, 36)

Following the scholarship of other Czech folklorists, Vetterl concludes that the “Eastern type of folk songs,” which he says do not conform to the ideals of Western scales and harmony, are evidence of Czech connections to ancient Slavic roots: the songs “go back to the melodic-harmonic basis of the original Slav music which still survives in remote corners of Moravia and Slovakia” (ibid.). The idea of the “Carpathian crescent,” to which Vetterl alludes, remains current in Czech conceptions of folk culture (e.g., Plocek 2003), and it appears to function as a link proving the connection of the Czechs with other Eastern European cultures. William Noll suggests that such regional variety “reflect[s] a long-standing diversity of regional culture” in Central and Eastern Europe (Noll 1991, 140). Likewise, Zelinská-Ferl confirms that “Czech and Slovak folklore today continues to be conceptualized regionally” (Zelinska-Ferl 1997, 81).

Since at least the nineteenth century, Moravia has been seen as a treasure trove of folkloric culture. Central European folklorists suggest that eastern Europe is home to “more lively” [životnější] folk traditions because through the last two centuries it has seen less intense industrialization (Bausinger 1970, 219) Folk song in particular has been seen as a marker of the vitality of local culture, which has often been shown by tallying the number of songs collected in specific places. An 1895 map showing the “topography of Moravian folk song” shows that collectors had found the most songs in Slovácko (Figure 1.5). Published song books also contributed to the picture of *Slovácko* as a center of folk music. The region’s imagined folk musical culture was reinforced with the appearance of Trn’s band from Velká at the 1891 Jubilee Exhibition and the 1895 Czechoslovak Ethnographic Exhibition in Prague. Folk song tallies continue to appear. For example, detailed tables with the total number of songs collected in each village are published in the results of a 1950s study of folk song around the *Valašské klobouky* area of north Moravia (Vetterl 1955). The editor is careful to point out that “numerical evidence in individual communities cannot be regarded as a measure of the ‘singingness’ in a village. . . . Another community is not said to sing less even if fewer songs were collected there” (Vetterl 1955, 18).<sup>40</sup> The impression remains, however, that greater numbers of collected songs imply a greater store of musicality.

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<sup>40</sup> It seems likely that the possibility of unevenly distributed human creativity [*lidová tvořivost*] was incompatible with communist ideals of collectivity. This issue is later discussed in Chapter Four.



**Figure 1.5. “Topography of Moravian folk songs,” 1895.** The darker colors show the highest density of folk songs (over 500) by region, as determined by counting songs in collections by Bartoš, Peck, and Koželuha. Map printed in *Národopisná výstava československá v Praze 1895* (Prague: J. Otto, 1895), p. 235.

Local ethnographers have long scoured Moravia to uncover detailed divisions between local cultural regions. Hornácko, for example, is a highland region in the southeast thought to comprise only seven to ten villages (Holý 1963, 65). While these regions are often visibly different through variations in local *kroj* [regional folk costume], their differences have been amplified and are now over-determined by local ethnographic efforts. The drawing of such close boundaries also denies the reality that travelers moved between villages and, whether poor or not, peasant villagers had the ability to leave their communities, view the culture of “outsiders,” and trade in urban centers. Noll observes that while the diversity of regional cultures in Central Europe has left a “heritage of dozens, even hundreds, of distinct rural mini-cultures,” “the boundaries of nearly all have shifted through time” (Noll 1991, 140). Thus, the implication of detailed ethnographic mapping—that folk culture is a static and reified local object present in specific locales—

should be seen as a common local representation practice; it is thought to represent a historically-based, lived reality. Other ethnographers have suggested that “folk” characteristics of local groups are amplified in a process described as “folklorism” in response to increasing international contact (Bausinger 1970, 220; Pavlicová 2006).

### *At the Center of Europe*

Linked to the metaphor of being a crossroads is the idea that the Czech Republic lies at the center of Europe. The shared idea that the Czech Republic is at the center of Europe is another example of a key cultural metaphor. It is an idea shared by many Czech speakers, is enshrined in cultural values, and even affects the way that many Czechs think about history.

Scholars and cultural authorities have debated this as an issue of terminology: is the Czech Republic Eastern European, Central European, or East Central European? Each term implies various political histories or geographic divisions. For example, describing the Czech Republic as “Eastern European” suggests an affiliation of the Czech lands with the Communist East bloc, a largely political entity. When considered geographically, the moniker makes less sense as it is clear that most of the Czech Republic lies to the west of Vienna and directly north of Austria. Some energy has been put into standardizing “East-Central Europe” as the region’s name. Some describe the region as an approximation of the former lands of the Habsburg empire (Hodos 1999, 29–31). Alternatively, it could stretch geographically from the Elbe River in the west to somewhere short of Muscovy in the east (Burke 1985, 1). Wandycz (2001, 1) describes the term “East Central Europe” as “arbitrary.” “Central Europe” (*středná Evropa*) seems to be favored now in the Czech Republic (cf. Holy 1996, 182). This places the Czech lands in the middle of Europe

physically as well as metaphorically, which recalls the emotionally powerful term “heartlands” used by Timothy Garton Ash (Wandycz 2001, 1).

There are also conceptual concerns in this debate. As Burke (Burke 1985, 2) notes, the concept of Central Europe allows us to escape the binary East-West division of Europe and draws attention to local variations in experience, thus making way for greater nuance in interpretation (see also Kennedy 1994, Slobin 1996). Moreover, the idea of East-Central Europe may better reflect local and historical perspectives. East-Central Europe “expresses an indigenous point of view, with which anyone who has traveled in Czechoslovakia, Hungary, or Poland will be familiar: the sense of living between East and West, or between Russia and Germany, or, in early modern times, between Turks and Habsburgs” (Burke 1985, 2).<sup>41</sup>

The metaphor of centrality is more than just a semantic or political debate. “Centrality” and “center” are basic ideals and reference points in Czech culture. Widely held beliefs in the importance of moderation, balance, and conformity support the idea that centrality constitutes the basis of a Czech cosmology. A prized Czech character archetype, the “little Czech man,” is the “embodiment of ordinariness and healthy common sense” (Holy 1996, 72). Holy (1996, 181) suggests that centrality is “the root metaphor of Czech culture.” This may be metaphorically extended from centrality, to include characteristics ranging from positive values such as moderation, balance, and conformity, to more negative evaluations such as mediocre, middle-of-the-road, bland, and vapid. The value placed on centeredness, cultivation, and moderation suggest that “balance is recognized as the ideal” in Czech culture (Holy 1996, 183).

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<sup>41</sup> For a discussion of rhetorical implications of “the idea of Central Europe” in the late twentieth century, see Johnson 2002, 263–269; Evans 2006a. Wandycz (2001, 1–4) more fully recounts these issues of terminology.



The *malý český člověk* [little Czech man, often abbreviated as MČČ]—an idealized “middling” character archetype—is the epitome of this ideal. The MČČ does not aspire to larger-than-life ideals but rather focuses on what is closest at hand. The Czech noun is grammatically masculine, although *člověk* is generally taken to connote human beings generally rather than being necessarily gender specific (Holy 1996, 209 n. 1). The MČČ is described by Holy as a character existing in a “lifeworld delineated by his family, work, and close friends, and he approaches anything that lies outside it with caution and mistrust. His attitude is down-to-earth, and he is certainly no hero” (Holy 1996, 62). The archetype has been taken to be an ideal for Czech musical personalities including Antonín Dvořák and Leoš Janáček. As an “idealization of simplicity and directness,” it has often translated into musically transparent textures and “folky” melodies. In the art music tradition, Beckerman suggests that “the line between the village Musikant [i.e., the MČČ] and the professional composer is drawn as thinly as possible” (Beckerman 1986, 71). Beckerman suggests that Czech composers have often trained in musical collectives—philharmonic societies, theater orchestras—rather than beginning as virtuoso performers (ibid.). Thus, while not standing out, being humble rather than distinguished, and staying at the “middle-of-the-road” rather than at extremes are all widely valued in the culture generally, they are also positively regarded in musical interactions and playing styles.

With the characterization of Central Europe as a cultural crossroads, it might be tempting to see Moravia as a model site for a study of cultural fusion and intersection. It seems akin to Renato Rosaldo’s suggestion that culture be conceived as “a more porous array of intersections where distinct processes crisscross from within and beyond its

borders” rather than the “classic view” of anthropology, which “posits culture as a self-contained whole made up of coherent patterns” (Rosaldo 1989, 20).<sup>42</sup> Yet even with the proliferation of supranational European agreements and government since 1989, Czech culture is viewed by Czechs as strong, uniquely individual, and unimpeachable. Cultural theorists have suggested that the nation state is losing significance in the face of increasing globalization (Appadurai 1996), but the idea of a “Czech nation” is “alive” [živý] and well (Holy 1996, Lass 1989). This is not always manifested as neo-nationalism, but rather as an idea that the Czechs, including Moravians as a subset, comprise a distinct group of Slavic Europeans.

Seen against the background of Czechness, the Moravian details evinced in the musical stories of the cimbalom are part of the cultural infrastructure that enables the “thin coherence” (Sewell 2005) of Moravian worldviews. This infrastructure is constitutive of a “distinct world of meaning” (ibid.) that enables a Moravian worldview of the local as relatively stable, geographically bounded, and culturally coherent. Moravia is typically overlooked or ignored in studies of political history and largescale cultural change. The cimbalom may be seen as an object that evokes ideas about Moravia’s connections to Europe and global culture and, as a relatively consistent object over time, it effects a prism that allows for comparison of Moravian ideas about place, region, and music with a certain historical depth. The significance of cultural organology, in this case, is not only to theorize musical instruments, but also to disclose significant musical knowledge that can in turn suggest the importance of Moravian musicking within larger discourses.

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<sup>42</sup> Rosaldo even suggests that intersections and cross-cuttings may be the most fruitful metaphors for the disparate nature of culture as it is individually experienced (Rosaldo 1989, 26–30).

## Organization of the Chapters

This dissertation grew out of understandings that I arrived at through attending, researching, and writing about events like the one described at the beginning of this chapter. Drawing on many similar experiences from my research, my overarching goal in this study is to illustrate an approach to studying a musical instrument from a cultural perspective that not only takes into account the instrument as a material object, but also the social and cultural connections that make it evocative. The cimbalom is only “understood” as a Moravian *cimbál* when it is seen within an intricate web of references between Czech history, stories of individual musicians, musical performances, and often political and economic events. The project in the following chapters is to parse a few strands of this web and interpret their implications for a broader understanding of musical instruments. Each subsequent chapter takes up specific issues that are of importance in understanding the *cimbál* as a Moravian folk music instrument.

Chapter Two provides basic history and musical information about the *cimbál* in Moravia. The chapter begins with an overview of the cimbalom’s history in the Bohemian Lands. The chapter also introduces the *cimbál*’s position in Moravian traditional music. The chapter concludes with a discussion of three basic worldviews that are key to Czech understandings of “folk music instrument”: the discourse of folk culture, the idea of “living songs” and their description as natural elements, and finally the paradigm of cultural performance.

The nineteenth-century position of the *cimbál* in Moravia is the subject of Chapter Three. The heart of this chapter is a discussion of the ethnographic work Leoš Janáček, who was the first to transcribe the *cimbál* between 1888 and the first decade of the twentieth century. I interpret this sense of historical continuity as “historicity.” I suggest

that this feeling, which seems to have grown since the twentieth century into the present, is based on Janáček's transcriptions as well as other documents discussed in this chapter. Janáček's efforts also played into the establishment of structured concert performance as the primary site in which folklore and traditional culture have been presented throughout the twentieth century. The conclusion of the chapter briefly traces the current perception of Janáček's efforts.

Chapter Four discusses the *cimbál* at the intersection of folklore, folklorism, and Communism. After surveying ideas about "folk culture," I trace the changing implications of "folk" [*lid*] from a nineteenth-century, Herderian concept of national essence toward an idea of "people" [*lid*] and the importance of "people's creativity" [*lidová tvořivost*] as exhibited by the action of creative individuals. I contend that changes attributed to the Communist regime—particularly the growth of large folklore ensembles—were part of broader social changes of the twentieth century and did not necessarily comprise a sudden break in traditional music. I explore how the experience of folklore was shaped through urban folklore groups and came to establish the primacy of the *cimbálová muzika*. As the broadcast capabilities of radio expanded through technical advances and institutional government support, radio became a primary media for the dissemination of folk culture.

Chapter Five is a contribution to what Timothy Rice describes as a growing literature on the "ethnomusicology of music learning and teaching" (Rice 2003a). The chapter grew from my initial fascination with the kinesthetic aspect of the *cimbál*. The chapter analyzes the ways in which learning habits construct interpretive communities of players with relatively consistent approaches to modes of performance and approaches in

movement to the instrument. To conceptualize this community, I adapt Lave and Wenger's concept of "communities of practice" (Lave and Wenger 1991; Wenger 1998). My discussion begins with an overview of teaching approaches and systems—from the transmission of knowledge between village musicians to the beginnings of structured conservatory teaching that took hold by the end of the twentieth century. The centerpiece of the chapter is the analysis of spatio-motor skills that I began while learning to play the *cimbál*. Taken as a whole, this core chapter elucidates an important link between the intimate personal knowledge and experience of *cimbál* players and the broader forms of community that I discuss throughout.

Chapter Six takes up activity by individual *cimbál* artists in the ethnographic present of my research (2005–2006). I situate their music making in the social milieu of the early twenty-first century with special emphasis on the status of regional folk music in the expanding EU and the position of creative artists in the aftermath of the fall of Communism in 1989. In the last decade, musicians have had increased opportunity to travel abroad, make a living from selling recordings, and combine folk music with other genres. To analyze this activity, I draw upon scholarly approaches to globalization and world music in a close analysis of two performances by Moravian *cimbál* players, Zuzana Lapčíková and Dalibor Štrunc. My approach is akin to a textual "reading" of the concerts, and I aim to draw out significant themes and meanings by interpreting music and dialogues at the concert.

A view of the cimbalom as a mere sound-producing object does not delve deeply into aspects of the instrument's Moravian significance. If the instrument is at the meeting point of many strands of musical and cultural discourse, as I suggest, then the broader

interpretive approach that I have adopted in this study is necessary. Such an approach must account for the instrument as a material artifact as well as the object's ability to connect with important local discourses about history, traditional culture, and identity. The cimbalom draws into focus the themes that center each chapter, and each theme illustrates this more complete understanding of a locally contextualized musical instrument.

## CHAPTER 2

### CENTERING AN INTERPRETIVE COMMUNITY: THE CIMBALOM IN MORAVIA

*Soon we were in the small towns of the picture region of Moravian Slovakia, Honza's "one whole piece of folklore," where they are not content with colour-washing their cottages in delicate blues, pastel pinks and yellows, but make garlands of the windows by framing them in painted flowers, and decorate the sides of the doorway in the same gay fashion. . . . Every village has its duck-pond, the natural centre from which everything else radiates.*

—Edith Pargeter, *The Coast of Bohemia* (1950)<sup>1</sup>

*Many hundreds, and perhaps thousands, of folk songs still await the collector: a proof that the living folk song of Czechoslovakia is not in danger of extinction.*

—Karel Vetterl, 1949<sup>2</sup>

Like the duck ponds that Pargeter observed at the center of many Moravian villages, the *cimbál* sits at the center of instrumental groups called *cimbálová muzika* [cimbalom band]. A connection may also be drawn between Czech values of centrality and the central position of the cimbalom in traditional ensembles. Because it is the largest physical instrument in most ensembles and is not easily portable, the *cimbál* presents an object around which the other musicians congregate. Its musical role is also central: it occupies the middle register of the ensemble, and it plays accompaniment material that at

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<sup>1</sup> Pargeter's observations, taken from a travelogue account of a year spent in Bohemia, come from her description of a trip to Brno; the quotation comes from her Bohemian friend Honza who made the remark while watching a parade of Moravian workers in Prague (Pargeter 1950, 110, cf. 23).

<sup>2</sup> The comment comes from Vetterl's presentation to the International Folk Music Council (Vetterl 1949, 36).

its most effective is not meant to stand out but to provide an underlying harmonic and rhythmic layer that grounds the entire ensemble.

This chapter presents a detailed discussion of the instrument at the center of this study, the Moravian *cimbál*. I examine the instrument from a variety of perspectives: organographical, historical, musical, and cultural. The discussion begins with a detailed description of a standard Moravian cimbalom. A discussion of the *cimbál*'s musical role follows. Next is an overview of the instrument's historical presence in Moravia. Finally, I conclude the chapter with an explication of three cultural ideas that shape understandings of the Moravian *cimbál* as a folk musical instrument: folk culture, folksong collection, and cultural performance.

### **The Moravian Cimbalom**

The cimbalom is basically described as a board zither with an attached resonator. It is a chordophone with multiple courses of strings stretched parallel to the attached resonator, typically sounded by hammers. Trapezoidal board zithers of this type are typically grouped in the dulcimer family by English-speaking organologists (Kettlewell 2001).

Multi-stringed box zithers struck with hammers are found in many places throughout the world. Curt Sachs (1940, 258) suggested in his *History of Musical Instruments* that the instrument type originated from the Persian *santur*. His observations about the instrument—that “the migration of the dulcimer was strange enough” (Sachs 1940, 258)—were based on diffusionist thinking. Sachs wrote that the instrument eventually spread throughout the Middle East and was distributed by musicians and traders along the Silk Road to East Asia, and via North Africa and Spain into Europe.



This model has been preserved in complex maps that suggest lines of diffusion throughout the world based on the current dispersion of the instrument type (Kettlewell 2001, 684). Ivan Mačák proposed the concept of “human geography” as a rubric to map the presence of the instrument throughout Central Europe; the theory posits material objects such as instruments as trace indicators for the movement of groups of people throughout Central Europe (Mačák 1990). More recent research into instrument construction suggests that hammered dulcimers may have developed independently in Europe (Heyde 1978, Gifford 2001).

*Naming the Instrument: Cimbalom / Cimbál*

Cimbaloms are found in various parts of Central Europe, particularly in Romania, Hungary, Slovakia, and the Czech Republic. My focus is on the instrument in Moravia. In his liner notes to Dalibor Štrunc’s 2000 album *Prameny / Sources*, Plocek is adamant that the term cimbalom be used in English rather than dulcimer, which has English and Appalachian connotations. “In our English translation, we use the unique term cimbalom. . . . The term is a current component of the English vocabulary, as defined in [standard dictionaries] . . . —‘a complex zither of Hungary.’ . . . We use the term cimbalom band for *cimbálová muzika*, and never dulcimer band” (Štrunc 2000).<sup>3</sup> I follow this usage, but in quotations I have used the spelling and terminology of the source. Although the name cimbalom is most widely accepted in English, I opt to use the term *cimbál* at points in the text when I am referring to the instrument in specifically Moravian contexts.

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<sup>3</sup> Somewhat cryptically, this note appears only in the Czech version of the liner notes. Since the comment also adopts a didactic tone, I suspect that it is aimed toward Czech-speaking *cimbál* players who may call the instrument as dulcimer in English. It shows, nonetheless, that terminology regarding instruments is contentious and an issue to which musicians are attuned.



Figure 2.1. Nineteenth-century Moravian *cimbálek* displayed at NÚLK.

### *Moravian Cimbaloms in the Present: Small and Large Instruments*

Two basic types of cimbalom were common in Moravia during my research. The most typical was the large cimbalom—commonly referred to in Czech as *cimbál*, though occasionally described as *velký cimbál* [large cimbalom]. This instrument is based on a nineteenth-century design that became common in Budapest. The instrument stands on legs of its own, is about one-and-a-half meters wide, and a meter deep. A smaller instrument, distinguished as the *malý cimbál* or *cimbálek* [small cimbalom], was also used. This instrument measures about one meter wide and half a meter deep. Both instruments are used in similar ways and in similar ensembles. The larger instrument, however, produces a louder sound and given its wider chromatic range, it is deemed more suitable for arrangements calling for complex harmonies.

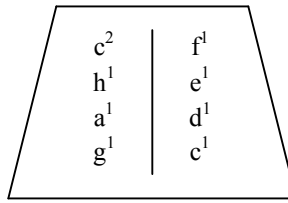
The *cimbálek* (Figure 2.1) is the older instrument. It is a medium-sized trapezoid that represents a section of an equilateral triangle (Kunz 1974, 61). The bottom (long) edge typically measured between 100 and 120 centimeters, the top between 57 and 70 centimeters, and each side short side (at the right and left) measured from 45 to 60 centimeters (Kunz 1974, 60; Nehýbl 1949, 50). The instrument is often described as “portable” [*portativní*], players could support by supporting it with a leather strap slung

around the neck and bracing it against the abdomen. Traveling musicians are often depicted in groups of violin, bass, and *cimbál* (see Kurfürst 2002). Kunz (1974, 64) suggests that by the nineteenth century, however, the *cimbálek* was most often supported on a chair or on the player's lap; alternatively, it was placed on a table top. It played in ensembles for entertainment at dances and public celebrations.

The design of the nineteenth-century *malý cimbál* appears to have been relatively consistent throughout Bohemia and Moravia. Ludvík Kunz surveyed a group of Moravian instruments held in Czech museums and concluded that the nineteenth-century instruments presented a “relatively uniform picture in form, size, and construction” (Kunz 1974, 59). From a group of instruments—six nineteenth-century “museum exemplars” of *malé cimbály* from Moravia and western Bohemia thought to date between the years 1827 and 1888—Kunz reported accounts of similar playing style, size, and range (Kunz 1974, 63–64). The range of the instruments varied, but typically averaged between two and three octaves (Kurfürst 2002, 450); instruments listed with smaller ranges were often missing strings (Kunz 1974, 64). These instruments are generally not fully chromatic and could often play in only a few keys. Examples held in museums and archives at the time of my research supported these observations. I noted the instrument featured in various museum displays, including the “Valachian Museum in Nature” in Rožnov pod Radhoštěm, the Zither Museum in Ostrava, and the musical instrument exhibit at the National Institute of Folk Culture (NÚLK) in Strážnice.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> The Rožnov museum is an outdoor museum, and the NÚLK exhibit is discussed in Kunz 1993c.



**Figure 2.2. Central strings divided at 3:2 ratios produce a C-major scale.**

The central strings of these instruments are laid out around a C-major scale (Figure 2.2). This design may be due to physical convenience. This diatonic scale is easily produced by four courses of strings divided in 3:2 ratios, which produce perfect fifths.<sup>5</sup> The arrangement of these pitches seems to comprise a core layout that has remained constant on Moravian instruments at least since the nineteenth century.

An expanded version of the instrument became common in the nineteenth century (Figure 2.3). This is usually described as *cimbál* in modern Czech, although it is occasionally also referred to as the *velký cimbál* [large cimbalom]. The central strings of the instrument follow the same schemata outlined above. Thus, Kettlewell notes that the large cimbalom, despite its “plethora of notes” is still “essentially based on a C major scale” (Kettlewell 2001, 682; see also, Gifford 2001, 29). This shared layout means that the switch between the two sizes of instruments does not present a great challenge to the player since the strings are arranged in a similar layout.

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<sup>5</sup> One defining feature of the modern *cimbál* is the complex series of bridges that divide strings, sometimes into three sections. Pitches on either side of the bridge are typically separated by five, six, or seven half tones; that is, perfect fourths, augmented fourths, and perfect fifths.



**Figure 2.3. Schunda cimbalom displayed with the instruments of a *cimbálová muzika* at NÚLK.**

The modernized design was developed from the smaller instrument by Josef Václav Schunda, an instrument-maker of Czech origin, in Budapest, Hungary around 1874. Schunda’s changes to the instrument—often described in Czech as “improvements” [*zlepšení*]—included an expanded range of four-and-a-half octaves, the addition of dampers and a pedal, and four legs, allowing the instrument to stand on its own. The expanded range was allowed by the addition of an inner metal frame that allowed much greater tension to be applied to the strings, which allowed for the addition of high- and low-register pitches. The greater tension allowed the instrument to be much louder, but it sacrificed portability. Richard Spottswood suggests that Schunda’s design was perhaps inspired by the piano, which it “rivalled in size and importance in nineteenth-century Hungary and Romania” (Spottswood 1996). Czech players recognize that Schunda was working in Budapest; however, they are quick to emphasize his Czech roots. Plocek writes that “Throughout the first half of the 20th century, some larger instruments arrived in Moravia from Hungary. Their maker was J. V. Schunda, from

Budapest, but of Czech origin” (Štrunc 2000). Instrument historian Pavel Kurfürst (2002, 453) specifies that Schunda was from Říčany u Prahy, suggesting that Schunda was familiar with Czech *cimbálek* designs since he grew up near Prague.

In the 1920s, the Bohak company in Budapest, a successor to Schunda’s workshop, developed a lighter metal frame (Gifford 2001). At the same time, the sound holes in the upper surface of the resonator were eliminated in favor of openings to the side of the string area. The pitch register was also expanded due to the stronger frame, which enabled more pitches in high register and a completion of the chromatic series in the low register. Since then, makers have been striving to improve instrumental timbre and articulation throughout the register. Schunda’s Budapest workshop still produces instruments under the name Bohak (the brand was “Kozmosz” during the Communist period in Hungary).<sup>6</sup>

Although the *velký cimbál* [large cimbalom] was developed by Schunda in the 1870s, it did not become common in Moravia until after 1945 (Kurfürst 2002, 453).<sup>7</sup> It seems, however, that the *cimbál* largely supplanted the *cimbálek* in ensembles that played for urban folklore groups as early as 1914 (discussed in Chapter Four). Both instruments played in similar ensembles and musical settings: for dances and of accompanied vocal songs.

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<sup>6</sup> My understanding of the twentieth-century developments come from my interviews with the instrument maker Vladimír Holiš in Kozlovice (8 June and 5 November 2006) and my visit to the Budapest workshop in December 2006.

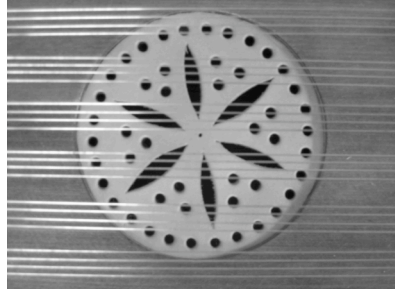
<sup>7</sup> Large instruments of this type were, however, recorded in the region prior to 1945.



**Figure 2.4. A Bohak cimbalom. This is the instrument design seen most often in Moravia. Leaf and floral carvings are visible on the front and side panels.**

### *Organography of a Standard Moravian Cimbalom*

The most sought after instruments played in Moravia during my fieldwork were from the Holak workshop in Kozlovice, north Moravia. These instruments were modeled after the large concert cimbaloms manufactured by Bohak, but with special modifications and improvements by the instrument maker Vladimír Holiš (Uhlíková 2000, Navrátil 1997). Holiš's instruments are modeled after cimbaloms that have been manufactured by the Bohak workshop since the 1930s. Bohak instruments (Figure 2.4) were the most typical cimbaloms found in Moravia during my fieldwork. Other common brands included Primas and Všianský. Many Bohak instruments, however, have been refurbished by Moravian instrument repairers. When I visited Holiš in June 2006, he



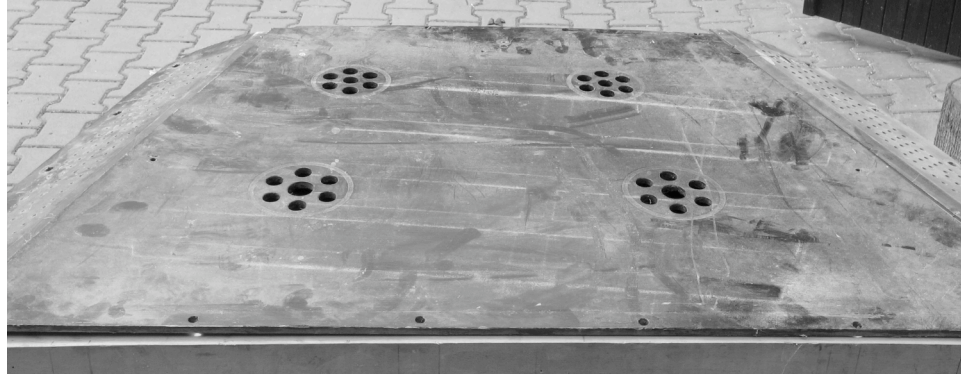
**Figure 2.5. Nineteenth-century six-petal rosette covering soundhole. Leather, about 6 centimeters in diameter.**

suggested that while refurbishing old or damaged instruments brought in less money, it was a good way to learn about how the instruments were made.

The Bohak cimbalom is a Hungarian concert instrument (Pap 1998). The instruments are recognizable for their natural wood finish (usually stained honey, light brown, or dark brown), decorative leaf and floral sidepanel carvings, and wooden legs with elaborate wood carving that bulges outward toward the top (see Figure 2.4). The carvings seem to be most typical of the large Hungarian cimbalom since smaller nineteenth-century *cimbáleks* from Moravia lack similar decorative elements. These older instruments do, however, feature six-petal rosettes covering two soundholes in the cover of the resonating chamber (Figure 2.5). Schunda's instruments simplified this design into six small round holes surrounding a larger hole (Figure 2.6). However, the soundholes were eliminated in the 1920s in favor of narrow sideslits (space between the top resonator board and tuning blocks at the the right and left edges of the frame) in an attempt to make the instrument louder (Pap 1998, 190) (see Figure 5.2).

The interior of the instrument is comprised of a hollow resonating chamber (Figure 2.7) that amplifies the vibrations of metal strings strung parallel to the soundboard. The metal strings necessitate the use of a supporting frame [*pancír*] that prevents the instrument from collapsing or bending inward over time due to the high





**Figure 2.6. Soundholes on the resonating board of a Schunda cimbalom.**

tension of the strings. For this frame, Holiš uses two aluminum braces anchored against the tuning blocks by two steel plates at either side. Twelve to twenty cylindrical wooden soundposts [*duše*] support an upper resonating surface [*rezonanční dřevo*]. This resonating surface, formerly the location of the soundholes, is smooth on the top but reinforced on the underside by thin maple strips. According to Holiš, the location of the soundposts was a matter of great secrecy among nineteenth- and twentieth century manufacturers in Budapest.

The instruments are about one-and-a-half meters wide and one meter deep. The strings are stretched parallel to the soundboard at slightly inclined planes approximately two to four centimeters above the resonating surface. As the strings are stretched over saddles at each side of the instrument and strung over raised bridges at the center or opposite side, the strings are raised at one end. The effect is to create two different planes for the strings, which aids the player in differentiating between strings when striking them with the hammers. The lowest pitch is C and the range extends chromatically upward in half-steps to  $a^3$ . The low C is a single string, pitches Cis–D are courses of two strings, Dis–fis is trichord, and all pitches from  $g-a^3$  are courses with four strings.



**Figure 2.7. Interior of the cimbalom: oak soundboard and tuning-peg blocks, metal supporting frame, and soundposts.**

The bridges are chessmen-type posts glued atop thin wooden baseboard strips (Figure 2.8). Brass rods (4 mm. diameter) line the top of each row of chessmen bridges and provide the saddle point where the strings cross the bridges. The strings are anchored at the left side of the instrument and adjusted with tuning pegs at the right side. The strings from C–fis are not divided; however, each string from g and upward are divided at least once by a bridge, which means that each course of strings produces two pitches (or three in the extreme upper register). A central row of chessmen bridges divides the strings in the mid-range of the instrument. In the upper register, short rows of chessmen bridges divide the strings into three sections. The highest course of strings is held down by inverted metal saddles in the center of the resonating board that create the shortest string sections and highest pitches.

Another distinctive feature is the damping mechanism. The system is based on two bars of felt dampers that stop the strings from vibrating. The dampers are held against the strings by metal springs. When the foot pedal is depressed, the damper bars



**Figure 2.8. Chessmen bridges in the upper register. The detail is of the upper right-hand corner of the instrument. At the top, metal tuning posts are visible, the horizontal wooden bar in the middle is the damper bar, immediately below this is a row of chessmen bridges topped by a brass rod, and below this is the reverse damper for  $d^3$ .**

lift to allow the strings to resonate. Some pitches in the high register are not damped since they are played on a middle portion of the string that is not reached by the side dampers. In the case of  $d^3$ , however, a reverse damper mechanism is used.

Holiš suggested that the basis of a good instrument was starting with good materials. For one of Holiš's instruments, this entailed years of preparation. The wood he uses comes from north Moravia in the Beskydy Mountains, grows mostly in shaded groves, and comes from trees that are ideally 90 to 110 years old. After being harvested and sawn into planks, the spruce wood is aged outdoors for at least four-and-a-half years but not more than seven. Red oak is the optimal wood for the blocks that anchor the strings and the soundboard. The resonating board on the top side of the resonating chamber is a laminate of spruce wood (about 6.5 mm. thick) that is strengthened by strips of maple. The cylindrical soundposts are typically spruce. The chessmen gbridges and



**Figure 2.9. Typical Moravian hammer design and handhold.**

bridge baseboards are maple. The instrument contains nearly 30 kilograms of metal hardware (strings, tuning pegs, frame, and screws), about 20 kilograms of which is the metal support frame.<sup>8</sup>

All the Moravian players I met during my research used Hungarian-style hammers [*paličky*] with fitted handgrips (Figure 2.9).<sup>9</sup> These are not interchangeable between hands (cf. Kaptain 1990), and thus hammers are kept in pairs. Many professional Moravian players order custom-fitted handgrips from woodworkers who carve hammer shafts to individual specifications. Hammers are made of wood, and they typically range from 25 to 33 centimeters in length and are about 4 millimeters in diameter. (The hammers I used, which were custom made for my teacher, were 33 centimeters long.) This design, in comparison with many dulcimer hammers, is very slender and long; this offers a high amount of bounce when the hammers strike the string. The wood of the hammers is usually stained a dark red, grey, or dark brown. The tip of each hammer's wooden shaft

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<sup>8</sup> This paragraph is based on my interview with Vladimír Holiš, 8 June 2006, Kozlovice.

<sup>9</sup> A more diverse array of hammer designs was common up until the 1950s (Kunz 1974, 63).

is curved in a hook, which is usually wrapped with cotton. The cotton is secured by wrapping it with thin cotton thread. Players wrap each hammer individually and usually carry multiple sets. The hardness of the cotton can be manipulated during wrapping, and since hammers of varying hardness and weight produce different timbres, they are often tied with different colors of thread to differentiate between the types. Hammers with unwrapped tips, or tips covered with thin sponge or thread, are sometimes used to produce a more brittle, metallic timbre.

### **Musical Considerations**

The primary ensemble for the Moravian *cimbál* is the *cimbálová muzika* [cimbalom band]. The compound term is occasionally simplified to *cimbálovka* or even *cimbálka* for short. These are small ensembles of cimbalom, violin, and bass. The ensemble is often augmented by clarinet and viola as well. Typically, each part is covered by only one player although in some settings this may expand to two or three players per instrument. The violin usually carries the melody, while the cimbalom, second violin, and bass typically provide rhythmic accompaniment and harmonic underpinnings for the melody. The ensemble often accompanies solo singers as well.

### *Instrumentation and History of the Cimbalom Band*

The *cimbálová muzika* ensemble (Figure 2.10) is considered to have come to Moravia via cultures from farther East in Europe, particularly Hungarian and Romanian (Holý 1969, 82).<sup>10</sup> String band ensembles are thought to have traveled through the

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<sup>10</sup> The American scholar Paul Gifford, however, suggests that small string bands featuring the small cimbalom probably originated from Italian Renaissance chamber music groups. These became popular in the seventeenth century among urban Jewish populations in Prague and elsewhere in Bohemia, and eventually became popular among populations farther east, including Budapest (Gifford 2001, 104–115).



**Figure 2.10. Cimbalom Band with Jura Petrů (*cimbalista*). Performing in Osvětimany, December 2006.**

Carpathian mountains from Romania northward and eastward toward Moravia, the western tip of the Carpathian arc. This is often described as the “shepherd’s migration” into Valachia because it is thought to have been slowly brought by mountain sheep herders over a period from the sixteenth to the eighteenth centuries (Jančář 2000, 24).

The *cimbálová muzika* is comprised of violin, bass, *cimbál*, and clarinet. The lead violinist, usually the leader of the ensemble, is described as *primáš*. The viola (sometimes played by a second violin) is called *kontráš*. This second part often interlocks with the bass to form an “oom-pah” texture where the bass plays on downbeats and the *kontráš* plays on upbeats (Holý 1969, 83). The *cimbál* player is identified as a *cimbalista*. The *cimbál*’s musical role in the ensemble alternates between supporting the rhythm established by the bass and *kontráš* or improvising patterns that elaborate the harmony.

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Later, after Schunda’s developments of the instrument, the ensemble was found again in increasing numbers in Moravia.

Leoš Janáček poetically described a *cimbálovka* in 1901, writing in his forward to the song collection *Národní písně moravské v nově nasbírané* (1901): “The fiddler *primáš* packages the blossoming melody; the *kontráš*, or second violin, fills out the harmony, and the *cimbál* enshrouds the melodies with unconstricted ringing, like an evening mist, gleaming with the gold of the setting sun, blankets the hills” (Bartoš and Janáček 1901, LXXVI).

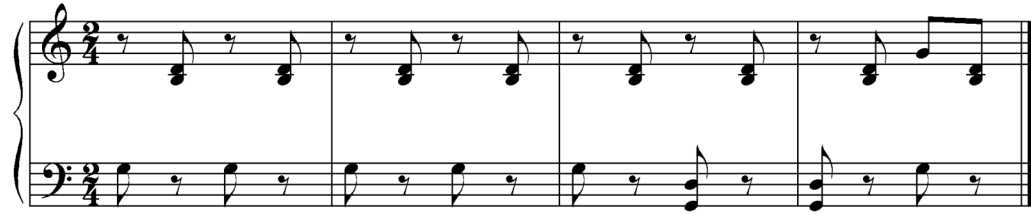
*Cimbálové muziky* (plural) are characterized by polyphony and heterophony. The distinctive timbres of clarinet, cimbalom, and voice contrast with the homogeneous texture of the string group, creating a stratified sound. While the violin, viola, and bass provide the core of the ensemble’s sound, varying combinations with the other instruments create the signature *cimbálovka* sound.<sup>11</sup> The repertory of cimbalom bands consists mainly of vocal folk songs and energetic dance songs, most of which are taken from the “New Hungarian” repertory played by Slovakian and Hungarian Roma groups (see Macek 1997, 633).

These ensembles are associated with local folklore and commonly presented as exemplars of traditional Moravian music. The *cimbál* has acquired iconic status for local Moravian musics, especially in the regions of Valachia [*Valašsko*], near towns of Kyjov and Strážnice in Moravian Slovakia [*Slovácko*], and around the town of Velká nad Veličkou in the upland region now identified as *Horňácko*. As discussed in Chapter Four, urban folk groups called *krúžky* have been a primary venue for the dissemination of the *cimbálová muzika* throughout southern Moravia.

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<sup>11</sup> The former ensemble of violin, viola, and bass is usually described as *hudecká muzika* [fiddle band, or string band].





**Music Example 2.1.** Sample *cimbal* accompaniment for a polka-type song (duple meter).

### *Musical Role of the Cimbalom*

Czech scholars often classify songs by the subject matter of the texts, a classification system that dates at least to the nineteenth century. Sušil, for example, divided songs into historical songs, wedding songs, love songs, and drinking songs, among others (Sušil 1999 [1835/1859–1860]). A further subdivision of classification is by region. In my observation, however, *cimbal* players—whether playing in folklore groups or classical music ensembles—tend to group songs according to the musical role of the instrument. There are two major roles [*funkce*] for *cimbal* in this view: as an accompanying instrument [*doprovodný nástroj*] or as a solo voice [*sólový nástroj*]. Accompaniment roles are typically limited to traditional music and can be further subdivided into the rhythmic patterns called for in folk dances or the more lyrical realization of a harmonic background for a singer. The latter lyrical subdivision is distinguished by the *cimbalista* Jaromír Nečas as “melodic” [*melodická funkce*], and the former is described as “harmonic and rhythmic” [*harmonická a metroritmická funkce*].<sup>12</sup>

<sup>12</sup> From Jaromír Nečas, a reading script for “*Cimbal a jeho příbuzní*,” a lecture broadcast on Czechoslovak Radio Brno, 25 March 1969, pp. 7–8.

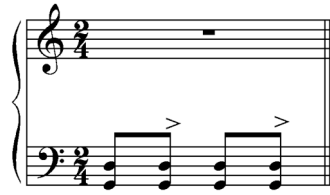




**Music Example 2.2.** Sample *cimbal* accompaniment for a waltz-type song (triple meter).

The rhythmic role of the instrument is usually heard in dances. Foremost among these are well-known European forms such as the waltz and the polka (Music Example 2.1, Music Example 2.2). Other local Moravian forms, which the *cimbalista* Horymír Sušil describes as “turning dances” [*točivé tance*], include a group of duple-meter figure dances for male–female couples that often are associated with specific regions, including the *ověňžok*, *točená*, *gúlaná*, *vrtěná*, and *sedlácká* (Sušil 1987, 10–11). These figure dances often feature an uneven rhythm described as *dúvaj*; this rhythm is usually accompanied on the *cimbal* by accenting the second note in each pair of duple subdivisions, which gives the impression of an uneven rhythmic stress (Music Example 2.3).<sup>13</sup> A final Moravian dance form is the triple-meter *starodávny*, also called the “folk polonaise” [*lidová polonéza*]. The dance is characterized by a lilting rhythm (an eighth

<sup>13</sup> The rhythm has been analyzed in detail by Dušan Holý in an examination of the playing of fiddlers in South Moravia. Holý concluded that the rhythm is essentially based on a triple rather than quadruple subdivision of each beat in a duple meter: “the conclusion was reached that the length of the second half of the bar—the second crotchet beat—is variable” and that the agogic stress varied according to various regions throughout Czechoslovakia (Holý 1963, 67). The Romanian ethnomusicologist Constantin Brailoiu has analyzed similar rhythms across areas of Eastern Europe that have been influenced by Turkish culture, which he describes under the rubric of *aksak* [“limping”] rhythm (Brailoiu 1984 [1951]).



Music Example 2.3. *Důvaj* rhythm.

note followed by two sixteenths) on the first beat that echoes the dancers' steps (Music Example 2.4).<sup>14</sup> Other regional dances in this category that are often heard in Moravia include the virtuosic Hungarian-derived forms of the *verbuňk* [male solo display dance, derivative of nineteenth-century army recruitment practices] and *čardáš* [named after dances at Hungarian roadside inns, and which developed into a nineteenth-century virtuoso display genre for the *cimbál*].<sup>15</sup>

The melodic role of the instrument is usually featured in *táhlá píseň*, a slow and free-flowing arrangement of a song melody. The style may be generically referred to as *táhlá*, a name derived from an adjective meaning a “drawn out” song in rubato tempo. These arrangements feature dramatic rubato and often give the impression of an unmeasured song. These songs are said to convey feeling or introspection [*cit, pocit*], an emotion to which the depth of Moravian folk song is attributed. As Moravian music critic, folklorist, and record producer Jiří Plocek describes it, “Moravian folk song is calm, deeply felt” (Plocek 2003, 40).<sup>16</sup> In these songs, the melody is usually carried by a singer or violinist, and the flow of the melody seems to be determined by the flow of the song's text. The *cimbál* is responsible for providing underlying harmonies and filling out

<sup>14</sup> The dance is attributed to north Moravia, where it may be related to the triple-meter Polish *mazurka*. The *mazurka*, however, places the characteristic rhythm on the second beat.

<sup>15</sup> Sárosi presents more information on the development of the *verbuňk* and *čardáš* as Hungarian “Gypsy” genres (Sárosi 1978, 85).

<sup>16</sup> *Moravská lidová píseň je klidná, hluboce pocitová.*



the melodic spaces that are left in the soloist's delivery. These spaces are described as "little answers" [*odpovídky*] during which the *cimbál* fills in the sung or played melody via short, improvised scale patterns or harmonic arpeggios (Sušil 1987, 48). The use of the *cimbál* as an accompanying instrument for these songs is thought to have become more common throughout the twentieth century as instrument ranges expanded, instruments were able to play more loudly, and more complicated harmonies were possible.<sup>17</sup>

During the 1940s, the *cimbál* appeared more and more frequently as a solo instrument. The first Moravian player to gain recognition as a soloist was Antoš Frolka (1910–1986), who is credited as one of the founding personalities of interest in folklore around Brno and south Moravia.<sup>18</sup> Since Frolka's time, the instrument has been played as a solo instrument more often. Like the piano, it is able to harmonize with itself and so create the impression of a full musical texture. However, as Jaromír Nečas noted, the *cimbál* suffers a "certain handicap" in solo situations since the player must approximate a complex musical texture with only two hands rather than ten fingers and the mechanical apparatus of the piano. This "handicap" is particularly felt in quick sections that require the instrument to imitate the instrumental bass–*kontráš* combination while also playing an elaborate melody—a texture normally covered by three or more instrumentalists must in this case be approximated by one player.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> Interview with Jan Rokyta, 18 November 2006, Zlín.

<sup>18</sup> Interview with Jaromír Nečas, 15 October 2006, Vřešovice.

<sup>19</sup> Nečas, "*Cimbál a jeho příbuzní*" (op. cit.), p. 9.

## Historical Representations of Dulcimers in the Bohemian Lands

Paintings, icons, and book illustrations are the primary sources of knowledge about the cimbalom prior to about 1900.<sup>20</sup> They indicate that the cimbalom was most likely used in church music and for entertainment among educated nobility and landowners. Precursors of the cimbalom have probably been played in Central Europe, including Moravia, since the sixteenth century. Until 1700, scant evidence suggests that the instrument was played outside the social circles of landed nobility. Czech organologist Pavel Kurfürst points to the psaltery as the most obvious precursor in the region:

The first depiction of a psaltery from Bohemia is dated in the year 1320. We meet with a highly perfected construction of the instrument in the Czech lands through an iconogram from the year 1359. The construction of the European psaltery hardly changed until the last third of the seventeenth century (Kurfürst 2002, 448)

A “three cornered musical instrument” [*nástrog hudebný tréhranný*], suspected to be another psaltery, was noted by a writer from Veleslavín in 1598 (Kunz 1974, 64).

Psalteries are similar in construction to the *cimbál*—both are box zithers with multiple courses of strings often in square or trapezoidal shapes. By 1650, some European psalteries reached a range of three-octaves (de Pascual 2001, 523). There is, however, a key difference in playing style. The term “psaltery,” at least in scholarly usage, typically connotes that the instrument is plucked with fingers or plectrum; in contrast, “dulcimer” is used to indicate box zithers sounded with hammers (Kettlewell 2001, 678).

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<sup>20</sup> My understanding of these pictorial documents comes from a 1977 publication titled *History of Czech Music in Pictures* (Volek and Jareš 1977). This book, which I bought in 2006 at a second-hand music shop in Brno, reproduces copies of illustrations that are only available in the National Library and National Museum in Prague. The images in this book do not include that reproduced by Gifford, which suggest that the *cimbál* was played in Bohemian Jewish communities before the 1800s (Gifford 2001, 105–110). An explanation may be that the images available to Gifford were not available to Czech scholars in the 1970s; alternatively, it may be an attempt to downplay Jewish presence in the Bohemian Lands.

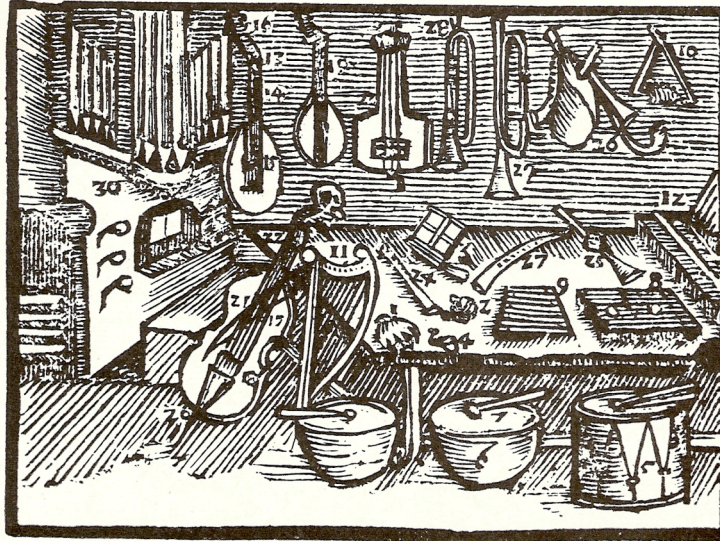


Figure 2.11. Woodcut with trapezoidal zither from 1658. The instrument is on the table.

Even with this pictorial evidence, information about the instrument's existence in the Bohemian Lands prior to the nineteenth century is scant. References to “*cymbal*,” an alternate spelling found through the twentieth century, date at least to 1680. One example is a woodcut illustration from the philosopher, linguist, and educator Jan Amos Komenský's language textbook *Orbis sensualium pictus* (Nuremburg, 1658).<sup>21</sup> The first Czech edition was published in northern Bohemia in 1658 with woodcuts by the artist Jonáš Bubenka (Figure 2.11).<sup>22</sup> The illustration shows a trapezoidal instrument on a table, alongside flutes, viols, trumpets, drums, bagpipes, and organ. The illustration offers little information about the setting in which the instrument was played, although it does suggest that the instrument might be supported on a table and was probably similar in size to the nineteenth-century small *cimbáls* recorded in Moravia. The accompanying

<sup>21</sup> Komenský (1592–1670), better known in English as Comenius, is recognized as a major figure in Czech intellectual history despite having lived much of his life in political exile. He is recognized as a Moravian, and a museum in Uherský Brod commemorates his birthplace.

<sup>22</sup> I first saw this picture at the Ostrava Museum of Zithers in November 2006, and it is reproduced in Volek and Jareš 1977, no. 140. More seventeenth-century illustrations are reproduced in Kunz 1993b, but their provenance is not given.



Figure 2.12. Three-man *cimbal* ensemble from Haná, c. 1780. Painted on a wooden shooting target with oil paints, 88 cm. in diameter. The man in the center appears to be singing. The text at the top reads “Na rozlauenú” [Farewell]. Original held at Vyškov Provincial Museum (Kunz 1964).

text, however, groups the instrument among those that “make a sound when beaten upon.”<sup>23</sup>

The instrument was a “fashionable favorite” in Central European “high” music in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries (Kurfürst 2002, 448).<sup>24</sup> A pen-and-ink drawing of a band from 1745 shows the instrument in a seven-person band including strings, trumpet, clarinet, and drums. The band is playing for couples dancing a quadrille at a landowner’s manor house, indicating the typical position of the instrument as a courtly instrument up until the eighteenth century (Volek and Jareš 1977, no. 187).

<sup>23</sup> A facsimile copy of an English translation of the book from 1659 is available through Early English Books Online (durable URL: [http://gateway.proquest.com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/openurl?ctx\\_ver=Z39.88-2003&res\\_id=xri:eebo&rft\\_id=xri:eebo:image:54347:114](http://gateway.proquest.com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/openurl?ctx_ver=Z39.88-2003&res_id=xri:eebo&rft_id=xri:eebo:image:54347:114)).

<sup>24</sup> “High” music [*vysoká hudba*] suggests music among the elite: royal courts, the estates of landowners, and perhaps monasteries. The division, moreover, suggests a status gap between the literate and illiterate during this period (see Lass 1989, 7–8; Burke 1978).

Czech scholars have suggested that the instrument was exclusively played among the educated nobility prior to 1700 (Kurfürst 2002, 448) since there is no known evidence to suggest that the *cimbál* was played in the popular sphere. It seems likely, however, that the instrument would have been known by many people in various classes of society since it was played for entertainment (see Burke 1978). By 1700, images suggest that the *cimbál* was probably played during this time in towns and villages around the Bohemian Lands by traveling musicians, outside the sphere of court music. One depiction comes from a decorative dartboard (Figure 2.12) that shows a singing man holding aloft a beer stein, presumably in an inn or public house. Behind him sits a three-man musical ensemble of violin, *cimbál*, and three-string bass. The example has been dated to around 1780 (Kunz 1964).

Another depiction of the instrument comes from an early collection of Czech songs (Figure 2.13), the 1825 *České národní písně* [Czech folk songs] edited by Jan Ritter von Rittersberg.<sup>25</sup> The first volume presented song texts—300 in Czech and 50 in German—and the second volume offers melodies for the texts plus an additional 50 tunes for folk dances. A color lithograph featuring a small *cimbál* appears as the frontispiece to the Collection's second volume; the lithograph was realized by Antonín Machek from a drawing by Josef Bergler (Markl 1987, 90 n. 9). The text describes the *cimbál* as an “old favorite national instrument” (quoted in Kunz 1974, 65). The picture shows a four-man band comprised of a trapezoidal zither accompanied by what appear to be a reed instrument, a horn, and a bagpipe. The musicians appear to be accompanying a lively

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<sup>25</sup> The illustration appears as number 198 in Volek and Jareš's 1977 collection. Rittersberg's collection is part of the earliest recorded song collection activities in the Bohemian Lands (Pilková 1995, 159, see also the critical edition Markl 1987).





Figure 2.13. *České národní písně / Böhmisches Volkslieder* (1825). The banner is in both Czech and German. Lithograph by Antonín Machek. At right a small instrumental ensemble features the *cimbál*.

couple dance in a pub (Markl 1987, 198). The *cimbál* is supported on the table and played with two hammers held between the thumb and index finger.

The image has been critiqued as an unrealistic depiction of folk music, and this has caused it to be dismissed by Czech scholars. Discussing the Rittersberg collection, Jaroslav Markl notes that the “all but grotesque instrumentation of the band simply does not answer to reality and in the illustration of individual instruments there are mistakes” (Markl 1987, 198). The *cimbál* appears to lack any bridges and may be “upside down” since the player typically sits at the longest side (the lowest pitches are usually closest to the player); yet, the manner of playing appears correct: the instrument is being sounded by hammers and it is supported on a table. The image is apparently objectionable since it does not accord to what scholars assume to be the nineteenth-century reality of folk music. The instruments are not faithful representations and do not provide concrete





**Figure 2.14. Mikoláš Aleš's drawing of a *cimbál* player. Printed as a frontispiece in the journal *Květy* (1898, no. II).**

evidence of a real event. However, the image seems important as an indicator of a general sense about folk music. It is possible that the image is meant to represent a composite of various “folk” images—dancers merrymaking, bagpipes, the *cimbál*—that were meant to evoke particular elements of folk traditions. Presumably the artist was not a *cimbalista*, or based the illustration on second-hand observations; nevertheless, although the general appearance is convincing. Whatever the artist’s knowledge of contemporary folk music was, the instrument’s inclusion is an important indication that an instrument approximating the *cimbálek* was intended.

A later nineteenth-century illustration by the artist Mikoláš Aleš (1852–1913) suggests nationalist connotations through folklike imagery (Figure 2.14). The drawing appeared in the literary journal *Květy* [Flowers], edited by poet Svatopluk Čech (see

Sayer 1998, 119). The *cimbál* is played here by two hand-held hammers. Instead of being supported on a table, however, the player carries the instrument by bracing the long edge against the abdomen and supporting the instrument with a band slung around the neck.

The instrument's presence in the drawing indexes the late nineteenth century consciousness of folk traditions as a national heritage. This is largely due to associations between Aleš, Czech nationalism, and "folk" subjects. A major dictionary of Czech artists published in 1927 describes Aleš as "the founder of the national tradition in painting, our most Czech [*nejčeštější*] artist" (quoted in Sayer 1998, 103). A major biography of 1912 published by Mánes, a Prague artistic association, establishes Aleš's importance by associating him with the "pure" Czech countryside:

Aleš comes from the people, that is from the countryside, from the region which we call South Bohemian not merely in the geographical but in the ethnic and ethical sense. The country is here as it were an opposite pole to the big city. . . . Aleš's birthplace Mirovice is . . . a South Bohemian small town in that it is entirely Czech in its surroundings, undisturbed by any foreign elements. . . . Everything disquieting and dangerous [in Mirovice], which was usually short-lived, arrived from outside and abroad. (quoted in Sayer 1998, 104)

"Foreign" elements might have included "Gypsies" and German speakers, both possible threats to the purity of Czechness. In Aleš's illustration of the *cimbál*, it appears to likewise be associated with the countryside, as is indicated by the rustic frame surrounding the verse and the flowering vines sprouting upward, another typical motif of folk design. Although apparently reclining demurely in a nightgown, the maiden at the top of the illustration appears to be under an open sky of moon and stars.

The accompanying short verse also indicates a folk ethos. It appears at the center of the illustration and is a simple prayer uttered by the maiden in the upper half of the drawing:

*Dej mi pán Bůh synka,  
co na cimbál cinká:  
on mně bude cinkávati  
v noci u vokýnka.*

Lord God, give me a lad  
That plays on the *cimbál*:  
He will play for me  
At night by the window.

The language of the prayer suggests a “common” culture rather than an elite or educated one. The verse is suggestive of a nursery rhyme or children’s poem. The language is unpretentious, not in proper Czech but rather in a rural dialect. *Okno*, the standard Czech word for window, becomes *vokýnka*, a poetic index of rurality: a diminutive form is created with the addition of “nko,” while the added “v” at the beginning and use of the vowel “ý” rather than “é” indicate a dialect. (The standard spelling would be *okénko*.) The verb *cinkat* is onomatopoeic and would suggest a more evocative verb in English like “tinkle” or “jingle.” Finally, the print was anthologized in Aleš’s popular *Špalíček* (two volumes, 1907, 1912), a collection of “national songs and rhymes,” which has been likened to a Czech version of *Mother Goose* rhymes for American children (Sayer 1998, 113–114).

Written documents offer another source of historical information about the instrument’s existence prior to the twentieth century. For example, in 1729 rumors of a group with bagpipes, violin, and *cimbál* were recorded in a description of a market in Valchia (Vetterl 1960, 418 n. 86). Further written accounts witness *cimbálové muziky* in areas of north and south Moravia between 1800 and 1910 (Vetterl 1960, 418–419; Kunz 1974, 64–65; Petržela 1991). A 1954 book by František Svoboda suggests that the instrument was quite common in villages around Brno during the 1870s. Describing a dance in Líšeň, a village just outside of Brno, he recalls:

In Líšeň they played on both the large and small *cimbál*. The Střelec family sold its last *cimbál* to some unknown place. Older people told me that Líšeň employed more capable musicians and writers, excellent violinists, *cimbalistas*, and

bagpipers. I myself heard the *cimbalista* and *primas* of grandfather Střelec from Klajdovská street. They richly improvised during singing and dancing then. My mother danced before the *cimbál* eighty years ago, and in the pub “U Křížů” next to the Vybral family’s place they played on *cimbál* sixty years ago. (quoted in Kurfürst 2002, 447)

Likewise, the folk revivalist Joža Ország Vranecký (Jr.) suggests that musicians were playing the *cimbál* in north Moravia throughout the early twentieth century (Vranecký 1963). Vranecký’s father, in fact, built *malý cimbáls* for local musicians and continued to play them until 1951 (Schoříková 2004, 7 n. 1).

According to popular conceptions of the history of Moravian traditional music, the *cimbálek* had all but disappeared in Moravia by the end of the First World War. For example, the photographer and folk enthusiast Karel Plicka noted in 1949 that “musicians are dying, and the *cimbáls* going quiet” (quoted in Uhlíková 2004, 5).<sup>26</sup> Yet the large instrument seems to have been readily integrated into Moravian ensembles after it became more common in the later twentieth century. The storied demise of the *cimbál* in the late nineteenth century, then, may be exaggerated.

The first Schunda instrument in Moravia is thought to be one bought by Joža Ország Vranecký, Sr. (1866–1939). Vranecký took a lifelong interest in folk customs and musical culture around his home in Nový Hrozenkov. Vranecký bought a *cimbálek* from a musician identified as Smetaník in the late nineteenth century; he also remembered learning to play the instrument from Smetaník (Schoříková 2004, 7). Upon finding the small instrument unable to live up to the musical standards he desired, he decided to purchase an instrument from Schunda’s Budapest workshop in 1910 (Uhlíková 2002, 29). Vranecký recalled, “I wrote to Mr. Schunda’s factory in Budapest (in German) and conveyed my purpose: to maintain the old time music of Valachia. An answer arrived in

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<sup>26</sup> *Vymírají hudci, utichají cimbály.*

perfect Czech, handwritten by Mr. Schunda, with his personal wishes of success and with greetings for Bohemia” (quoted in Schořiková 2004, 7).

Further interest in the large instrument was fueled after the First World War when the painter Antoš Frolka bought a Schunda instrument and played it in folkloric bands in Brno; he claimed to have purchased his instrument from the Slovakian bandmaster Samko Dudík, who had been much admired by the composer Leoš Janáček (Schořiková 2004, 8; see also Frolka 2000). In Horňácko, the violinist Joža Kubík incorporated the *cimbál* into his band in the town of Hrubá Vrbka after hearing the instrument in “gypsy bands” while serving in the army (Holý 1984). Much later, there was a short-lived attempt to manufacture large cimbaloms in Moravia. This was undertaken between 1956 and 1960 at the workshops of Josef Lídľ, a Brno-based instrument manufacturer. This transition to a different instrument is often mentioned, but the instrument retains its power to index a historical tradition of Moravian folk music in the present. Czech musicologists have suggested that a uniquely Czech strategy of composers and musicians has been the positioning of the *cimbál* in the present according to historical sources, particularly Janáček’s compositions (Schořiková 2004, 55).

### **The Cultural Formation of a Folk Music Instrument: Moravian “Folk” Worldviews**

On 2 June 2004, I attended a “chamber concert” of students from the Brno Conservatory at the *Besední dům* concert hall in Brno. The concert featured a performance of a three-movement concert piece for *cimbál* and string orchestra. The concert was clearly a showpiece of the year’s performance study for the Conservatory, as it was given at the culmination of the year and in the most prestigious hall for classical music in Brno. The *Besední dům* was also the seat of the Brno Philharmonic, the city’s

orchestra. I noted with interest that a followup review in Brno's *Rovnost* newspaper noted that "the sound of the *cimbál* always evokes folklore a bit" (Lejsková 2004). It was clear that the association of the instrument with the world of "folklore" and "folk music" was deep, even at a concert unequivocally framed as an art music performance.

The reviewer's observation confirmed the longstanding association of the *cimbál* in Moravia with "folk music." I discuss the roots of this relationship in Chapters Three and Four; however, the term "folk music instrument" is a product of post-1945 European ethnologists. The term comes from the Study Group on Folk Music Instruments, a group organized in 1962 and spearheaded by Erich Stockmann and Ernst Emsheimer (Kartomi 1990, 198). Stockmann suggests that folk music instruments are basically distinguished by their "social function" (as opposed to the aesthetic function of art music instruments) (Stockmann 1961); moreover, their study was broadly neglected prior to the 1940s because of the prevailing attitude that instrumental music was only supplementary to vocal folk song (see Kartomi 1990, 198–209). Much of the group's work has been published in German, and it has been widely influential among Czech ethnologists. It has even reached general usage in Czech, as was demonstrated by the narrative of the Festival concert that began Chapter One.

Traditional music in Moravia, whether described as folklore or folk music, is understood within particular frames. These frames form a worldview that shapes the ways in which traditional culture is understood. Ideas about traditional culture—and by extension about the *cimbál* as a folk musical instrument—exist within various Moravian worldviews of traditional culture. These primary ideas, which recur throughout this study, are 1) the concept of folk culture, which enables the concept of folk music instruments, 2)

the collection of folk songs [*lidová píseň*], which are thought to represent songs “living” [*živý*] among “the folk” [*lid*]; and 3) the presentation of folk music within bounded performance events that I describe under the rubric of “cultural performance.”

### *Folk Culture*

Folk culture is a conception that is shaped by nineteenth century romanticism and nationalism (see Lass 1989). It is often based on an idealization of village life. The village as a center of authentic folklore has been a trope at least since nineteenth-century collectors visited villages to collect folksong. Vladimír Úlehla’s 1949 book *Živá píseň* (Living Song) begins by inviting the “big city” reader to come with him to visit the countryside, specifically to Strážnice: “Come with me! . . . I will lead you to a place where true folk song still lives, living just as it has been living, dying, and being born since . . . well let’s get going!” (Úlehla 1949, 11). A more recent book on Moravian history observes that even today “folk culture is different in the Moravian village than in the city” (Čapka 2003, 144).

What I describe as traditional music—typically described as folk music [*lidová hudba*] in Czech—is a subcategory of folklore. Folk music is typically thought to share the same roots as folk song.<sup>27</sup> The Dictionary of Czech Musical Culture [*Slovník české hudební kultury*] defines “folk song” [*lidová píseň*] as a song with “its genesis and primary function bound to the people’s surroundings, that is, to life in so-called base levels of pre-industrial, and to some extent also industrial, society” (quoted in

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<sup>27</sup> In most Slavic culture, folk song is regarded as the most basic and oldest form of music (see Holý 1977). Elschek notes that “attempts to reconstruct the evolution of music in general” has been an important subject among Eastern European ethnomusicologists (Elschek 1991, 93).

Procházková 2006, 15).<sup>28</sup> Czech scholar Jarmila Procházková describes this as an “ordinary” [*obecný*] definition (ibid.).

Folklore suggests a broad category comprising all forms of performed expressive culture as well as spoken word performance and physical artifacts. The term folklore [*folklor*] is easily understood in everyday Czech. The word entered Czech usage at least as early as 1900, when it was applied to “everything known by the people” (Holý and Sirovátka 1985, 73). The word now refers to traditional music and a generally more conservative lifestyle that conforms more to rural ideals than urban realities; however, folklorists and ethnologists carry on extensive discussions of the term and the nuances of its meaning. Although folklore and folk culture today are often described as living and spontaneous, the idea is shaped by its long intellectual history in the Bohemian Lands.

Folklorism [*folklorismus*] in Czech and German ethnology, is described as the self-conscious performance of material based on folk culture.<sup>29</sup> It is, moreover, often described in Czech as the “second hand” use or presentation of folklore. The Czech term was borrowed from the work of German ethnographer Hans Moser (Bausinger 1970, 217). Plocek (2003, 23) defines folklorism as the “conscious and ethnographically informed cultivation of folklore” [*uvědomělé a národopisem poučené pěstování folkloru*]. The concept is rooted in the Central European idea that has long considered folklore to have once been “original,” an expression of communal values and national essences. In this sense, folklore connotes an ontology of traditional knowledge—if the nation [*národ*]

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<sup>28</sup> The *Czech Dictionary of Musical Culture* (Macek 1997) is the most recent publication of its type in the Czech Republic and contains specialized articles by Czech musicologists; as such, it is similar to the English-language *New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians* and the seeming mouthpiece of orthodoxy for current Czech musical thought. I have translated this definition from the entry on “folk song” as quoted in Procházková 2006, 15: “[*lidová píseň je*] svou genezí i primární funkci vázána na lidové prostředí, tj. na život tzv. základních vrstev společnosti předindustriální a zčásti též industriální.”

<sup>29</sup> The term “folklorism” is also applied by musicologists to art music composers who compose music “in folk style” or using folk elements (see Porter 2001, 439), including Béla Bartók and Vítězslav Novák.



is defined by the people [*lid*], then what the people do not know is outside the knowledge of the nation—that is maintained by individuals with appropriate qualifications, either university degrees recognizing them as ethnologists or as published critics whose work has been approved and published by a broad audience.

Folklore and folklorism have contentious and convoluted meanings in Central Europe. Folklore in Czech typically encompasses what I discuss as “traditional music.” However, it is a broader category suggesting all forms of performed expressive culture. The term’s original meaning in Czech, where it was in usage by 1900, was to “everything known by the people” (Holý and Sirovátka 1985, 73). By 1950, Czech musicologist Jaromír Jech considered folklore a scientific field *hudební folkloristika* [musical folkloristics], which followed a lineage from an earlier generation of Czech musicologists, including Otakar Hostinský, Vladimír Helfert, and Zdeněk Nejedlý (ibid., 75–76).

While folklore has a relatively “neutral” meaning in Czech, folklorism carries a negative connotation and suggests “‘untrue’ imitation” (ibid.). Josef Jančář, director of the National Institute of Folk Culture (NÚLK) in the 1990s, defines folklorism as more than just the imitation of folklore in structured performance events. “Contemporary ethnology” in the Czech lands, he says, understands folklorism as “on one hand a conscious cultivation of regional cultural traditions, and on the other hand a part of contemporary mass culture” (Jančář 2000, 8). Jančář notes that the term was probably first used in Czech by writer Karel Čapek in 1910, though it was not taken up among Czech academic circles until the 1960s (Jančář 1995, 19). There is, thus, no clear consensus on the specific meaning of folk culture. However, the level of thought about

the subject confirms that folklore is thought to be an important (albeit murky) expression, and moreover, it is assumed to be somehow a true and authentic manifestation of national sentiment.

Folklorism is not thought to be an original performance, but rather one that is based on the “second existence” of folklore [*druhá existence folkloru*] that is structured, rehearsed, and performed under the supervision and approval of “informed individuals” [*poučené osoby*] (Procházková 2006, 17).<sup>30</sup> This term seems to suggest that these performances are slightly less “alive,” somehow resuscitated from printed documents or “second hand” information. The term seems to distinguish performances as somewhat less than authentic, and thus indicates a value judgment.

The idea of traditional music is also linked with certain spaces. If folk music [*lidová hudba*] exists in “folk space” [*lidové prostředí*] (Plocek 2003, 46), then music outside this space is not “folk.” Folklorism describes expressions coming from more urban space in which acceptable performances are dictated by documents, ethnographers, and strict arrangements (*ibid.*, 24).

### *Collecting Culture: Living Songs and the Metaphor of Nature*

Folklore is reified and legitimized through concerted collection and preservation efforts. From early efforts by landowners and noblemen, and later by educated urban elites searching for national roots, collection has a long history in Moravia that dates back to the eighteenth century (see Markl 1987). Procházková defines collection [*sběr*] as a “unique situation when a collector (occasionally multiple collectors) records folkloric

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<sup>30</sup> Procházková isolates folklorism as a “specific problem” and defines it as “rehearsed folkloric expression performed on the stage according to the guidelines of informed persons” [*zachycení folklorních projevů nacvičených podle pokynů poučených osob a předváděných na pódiu*] (Procházková 2006, 17).

expressions from an individual interpreter or group of interpreters” (Procházková 2006, 16).<sup>31</sup> Results are published in books and often serve as a basis for claims about the historical authenticity of folk culture. Lass suggests that folklore, which he characterizes as a “second culture,” has always been an ideal—enshrined, partly imagined, and written down in the collections of nineteenth century collectors (Lass 1989). James Clifford (1998, 232) observes that the “collection of culture” is aimed “gathering, owning, classifying, and valuing” cultural objects. While he observes that the project of collection is not limited to Europe, he observes that the “Western practice of culture collecting has its own local genealogy, enmeshed in distinct European notions of temporality and order” (Clifford 1988, 232). If all folklore is based on inscriptions and in essence “second-hand” information, then all fascination with folklore may fall into the category of “folklorism.” However, the existence of collections and objects nonetheless support deep-seated ideas about folk culture.

Burgeoning nationalist intellectual movements raised the prominence of Czech-language print sources in the nineteenth century. These offer information about the music of the time, but they are also significant artifacts in the intellectual movement that wrote down what formed the basis for an inscribed folk culture (see Lass 1989). They often contain ideas and thought that informed how folklore and “the folk” are thought about and presented in the present as well as providing a basis for the conception of folklorism. Large emphasis is placed on the authority of the printed word in Czech culture, and it is this body of work that subsequently gives authority to the “informed persons” allowed to

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<sup>31</sup> *Jedinečná situace, kdy sběratel (popř. více sběratelů) zaznamenává u jednoho interpreta či skupiny interpret folklorní projevy.*

rehearse and stage folk culture. It is, therefore, worth briefly exploring nineteenth-century documents that informed this thinking.

Although often characterized in language as “living,” most Czech folk culture is preserved in texts. Anthropologist Andrew Lass focused on this fixing of cultural practices in text and asked in a 1989 article, “What keeps the Czech folk ‘Alive’?” The reference is to the characterization of Czech traditional culture as *živý*, or “alive, living, lively.” Lass focuses on the expression *dosud živý* [still alive]. Lass contends that by “writing down” folk culture, nineteenth-century folklorists textualized customs into uncontested objects: folksong collections, paintings, books of legends, cookbooks, dictionaries, and encyclopedias (Lass 1989, 7–8; cf. Sayer 1998, 81). Moreover, he suggests that nineteenth-century folklorists often idealized their object and in essence created a culture that had never completely existed in any place or time before it was written down. “The people” [*lid*], to whom these works were generally attributed, seemed to gain little credit for any agency in the process, and select performance events were frequently organized to recreate or revive the “living” folklore.

The situation is evocatively captured by a drawing from the 1895 Ethnographic Exhibition in Prague (Figure 2.15). The drawing shows a fashionable lady observing three figures in folk dress. She regards the figures over the top of a small pocket guide from which she presumably “reads” their significance rather than allowing the figures to speak for themselves. The figures, in fact, resemble the mannequins that often represented the “living” folk in museum displays. In the background are signs of the town of Štramberk, a picturesque town in the Beskydy Hills of north Moravia that remains today associated with its iconic *Trubka* [“pipe”-shaped tower] and wooden houses with



**Figure 2.15.** *Pohled na výstavu* [A View of the Exhibition]. Drawing by Viktor Oliva, printed in *Národopisná výstava československá v Praze 1895* (Prague: J. Otto, 1895), p. 51.

ornate wood trimming, rare in Czech architecture. In addition, the shade of a windmill occupying the background suggests the agricultural past of the Moravian countryside.

Performance of folklore accomplishes what Lass calls “revivalism”:

“transforming the ideal objects of the folk as *concept* back into living ethnographic objects that fulfill the meaning of the folk (as concept) in real, spatio-temporal terms” (Lass 1989, 7). Czech scholar Jaroslav Markl, in a critical edition of the “oldest” Czech folk songs (from the eighteenth century), observed in the 1980s that “*transcriptions*, represented by the so-called classic collections [e.g., Sušil, Čelakovský], have for more than half a century been a greater source of knowledge about the musical folklore of Bohemia than its living expression” (Markl 1987, 11). Czech scholars, however, rarely

share Lass's observation that written-down folk culture effectively invented a second culture that truly existed only in the imagination of "cultivated" [vzdělaný] elites.<sup>32</sup>

The song [píseň] is the basic unit of Moravian traditional music. This has been true since the nineteenth century. Publications of collected folk songs in songbooks were the primary way to preserve folk music in the nineteenth century.<sup>33</sup> Published songbooks are major documents of traditional culture from this time. The conscious collection of folk songs has been traced to the second half of the eighteenth century (Markl 1987, 15), but publication of folk songs for a large audience does not seem to have been considered until the nineteenth century.<sup>34</sup> One early example is the "Gubernatorial" Collection, a collection project undertaken in 1819 with support from the Vienna *Gesellschaft für Musikfreunde* [Society of the Friends of Music] and the Austrian government (Vetterl 1994, 9; Markl 1967).<sup>35</sup> Such collection activities often involved a host of educated specialists (particularly priests and teachers) in the countryside who notated songs and sent them to central urban compilers. These compilers were unpaid teachers and priests who belonged to the educated elite. Nonetheless, while the educated may have held a

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<sup>32</sup> This is not to say that Czech scholars do not recognize the roots of ideologies about the "folk" in European Romanticism. However, while these may be acknowledged as abstract intellectual constructions, they are often suggested as reflections of truly existing social conditions (Pilková 1995). Recently, Czech scholars have suggested that seventeenth-century cultivated society effectively exoticized the "lower layers of society" in order to find the "Other" at home (Pavlicová 2006; on the organization of European society prior to the nineteenth century, see Burke 1978).

<sup>33</sup> Very few sound recordings of Moravian music were made before the establishment of radio studios in Moravia during the 1940s. Leoš Janáček had hoped to purchase a phonograph as early as 1891, but the delivery was never made. A few recordings were carried out under the Folksong in Austria project, which allowed Janáček and his Brno team of researchers to purchase a phonograph in October 1909. The device was used to record singing at five sessions of field recordings, the last in May 1912. Some of these recordings have been issued in a critical edition (Plocek and Nečas 1998). The phonograph was purportedly discontinued for the lack of detail in the recordings, and subsequent scholars have also suggested that the device was too heavy and inconvenient for field recording as no vehicles were made available for transport (Procházková 2006, 60). Similar inconveniences, however, did not prevent recordings in many other parts of the world; thus, the discontinuation of early sound recording in Moravia still presents a riddle.

<sup>34</sup> Extensive bibliographies of published song collections and arrangements are compiled in Vycpálek 1940 and Vycpálek 1953.

<sup>35</sup> The Gubernatorial Collection was never published in full at the time of its collection, but it has recently been made available in a critical edition (Vetterl and Hrabalová 1994).

high social status, it is likely that their economic status was low. As Vetterl notes, “in that period teachers belonged to the poorest levels of professional employees” (Vetterl 1994, 10). This suggests that the collection of folk songs was taken to be an almost holy duty, not only because it was carried out by priests but also because it was undertaken for a higher purpose than monetary gain. Only a portion of the Gubernatorial Collection was published in Bohemia, and major publications of Moravian songbooks did not take place until later in the 1800s.

Song collection activities throughout Central and Eastern Europe were largely driven by nationalistic impulses. Most of the Czech figures involved in collection endeavors were influenced by the thought of the eighteenth-century German philosopher Johann Gottfried Herder (1744–1803). Herder is often acknowledged as the coiner of the term “folk” and “folksong.” He has also been credited with identifying Eastern Europe with its “modern identity as the domain of the Slavs” (Wolff 1994, 11). Many nineteenth-century Czech and other Slavic intellectuals, who were actively building and supporting “national” identities, found Herder’s ideas particularly influential.

Jaroslav Markl points toward Herder’s essay *Toward a Philosophy of the History of Mankind* as the likely source of inspiration for most Czech-speaking song collectors since it praised the greatness of the Slavs and predicted their future glory (Markl 1987, 20). This recognition provided the cultural affirmation and the inspiration of a recognized “authority” necessary to legitimate the enterprise of collecting “Slavic culture.” František Ladislav Čelakovský’s *Slovanské národní písně* [Slavic Folk Songs] (1822–1827) is probably the earliest exemplar of this activity. František Sušil (1804–1868), a highly

lauded Moravian collector and Brno priest, directly acknowledges Čelakovský's work in the Forewords to both of his collections.

Some clues from Sušil's writing support the observation that it was not Herder's philosophy of folk song, but his affirmation of the Slavs that provided inspiration. (Complete translations of the introductions to Sušil's collections are in Appendixes 1 and 2.) Most explicitly, there is no mention of or use of cognate words for "folk." The Czech title is *Moravské národní písně*. *Národní* would normally be translated as national, and it is based on the root word of *rod* which connotes family in terms of bloodline (in grammar, it designates the "gender" of nouns). In modern Czech, the adjective *folkový* corresponds to the German *Volk*, but it connotes American-derived music in the tradition of folk singers like Arlo Guthrie (see Pavlíčková 2000). Thus, the adjective *lidový* [people's or popular] is usually paired with the Herderian sense of the English "folk." Sušil noted that he transcribed song melodies carefully; at the same time, he pays particular attention to the texts of each song not necessarily because of their redemptive spiritual "affect" but because they demonstrate the range of Czech dialects in Moravia. In addition, Sušil often made "repairs" [*opravy*] to the song texts to censor secular references that disagreed with his religious outlook (see Vysloužil 2001) or suggested harmonies to fit piano arrangements (Trojan 1968).

In the twentieth century, it has been Herder's ideas about the "folk" and "folksong" that have captured the imagination of scholars and musicians in Eastern Europe. Examples are the ethnographic work of composers like Leoš Janáček or Béla Bartók, both of whom claimed inspiration from folk music in their art music oeuvre. The Moravian record producer and folklorist Jiří Plocek reinforces the importance of Herder



in the delineation of Slavic musical discourse among Czech intellectuals. In a book about Central European folk music, Plocek suspects that “village musical culture (musical folklore)” was “long neglected” until, thanks to Herder,

it became an important theme. Herder coined the term “folk song” [*Volkslied*] for the musical creations of peasants that—thanks to folk spontaneity and purity—most truly express the spirit of the nation. He thus formulated what many educated people and national awakeners of the time felt and initiated a zealous wave of collection, which led to the immense capture of the richness of “spirit” in European nations (particularly the Slavs). (Plocek 2003, 13)<sup>36</sup>

Herder’s basic ideas about folk song are laid out in two books: *Volkslied* (published in 1774 and 1778–9) and its later expanded publication as *Stimmen des Völker in Lieder* (see Gillies 1945, Clark 1969, Branscombe 2001). Herder described folk *poesie* as the true expression of the spirit of a nation, and held that the collection and publication of true folk songs could both explicate and memorialize this spirit. However, though the first publication argued for a collective body of songs anonymously composed, the second expanded publication attributes song texts to many known authors including Shakespeare and Ovid. Since musical notation was not included, the “songs” were presented more as literature and poetry than music. Thus, Herder’s folk songs are not always of “anonymous” origin nor are they strictly popular. Herder meant for the songs to communicate an appropriate *Wirkung* or “affect” that would express the essence of a nation or cultural whole (Clark 1969). Herder’s work is surprisingly international in orientation, containing examples from many non-European “folk” (see Bohlman 1988, 2000, 2002a, 2002b).

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<sup>36</sup> *Vesnická hudební kultura (hudební folklor) žije svým životem nejméně několik staletí—předávána (tradována) ponejvíce ústně. Dlouho byla uměnovědou opomijena. . . . [až díky Herderovi] stala důležitým tématem. Herder razil pojem „lidová píseň“ (Volkslied) pro hudební výtvar selského lidu, v němž se—díky lidové spontaneitě a ryzosti—nejpravdivěji odráží duše národa. Tím zformuloval to, co cítili mnozí tehdejší vzdělanci a národní buditelé, a inicioval vlnu sběratelského úsilí, jež vedlo k zachycení ohromného bohatství „duší“ evropských národů (zvláště slovanských).*

The first major Moravian songbook publication was Sušil's *Moravské národní písně* [Moravian Folk/National Songs], first published in 1835 and in a significantly expanded 1859 edition. The latter was a massive effort that contained 2,091 melodies and 2,361 texts, many with multiple variants (Vysloužil 2001). Czech poet Jan Neruda (1834–1891) is reputed to have described Sušil's undertaking as “more important than the Czech translation of the New Testament.”<sup>37</sup>

The seeds of a naturalizing ideology are apparent in Sušil's introduction. His conception of folk song as a pure, unsullied, and revealing avenue of national spirit seems akin to Herder's ideas, though they also bear a resemblance to Rousseau's ideas about song and expression (see Kintzler 2001). Sušil makes clear that the songs are not only indigenous, but a product of the land and a window on the “spirit” of the Czech people. This is clear from the 1835 epigraph, a quotation from Milton's *Paradise Lost* printed in English, which suggests that the songs are not cultivated but naturally occurring in nature:

Flow'rs . . . , which not nice art  
In beds and curious knots, but nature boon  
Pour'd forth profuse on hill, and dale, and plain.

In the introduction that follows, Sušil compares Moravian folk songs to a “posy of of field flowers” and contrasts them with the exotic plants one might find in a conservatory, cared for by experts and brought from the far ends of the earth. Indigenous songs, on the other hand, need no cultivation and sprout spontaneously from the spirit of the people and the realm of Nature. In 1859, Sušil compared folk songs to “clear crystals” through which one was able to see the everyday life and customs of the nation as they

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<sup>37</sup> I have not been able to verify the original quote, though Neruda was known for his satirical humor. Subsequent nineteenth-century collectors included the linguist František Bartoš, composer Leoš Janáček, and the teacher from Velká nad Veličkou Martin Zeman.

were truly meant to be. Working with them, he suggested, one breathes in the spirit of nation while “the air that hovers around them graciously refreshes the spirit.”<sup>38</sup> In his collection of folksong, Sušil laid the foundations for the imagination of a nation in which folk song was something that grew naturally among Moravians.<sup>39</sup> Janáček also compared folk songs and dances to an innocent flower: “I knew where I had recognized that yet hidden flower, of wee and sweet form and innocent colors—our dances” (Janáček 1955 [1891], 597). The association of folk song with Nature, as illustrated by Sušil’s collections, effected a claim of the Czech people on the land in the view of nationalist intellectuals.

As a cultural treasure, folk song was seen to have value. Otakar Hostinský (1847–1910), described as the “founder of modern Czech musicology and musical folkloristics” (Holý 1979, 126), declared that “We look to propagate in the widest society that of value imparted through folk song, whose poetic and musical capital should never be laid to waste” (quoted in *ibid.*, 126).<sup>40</sup> Moreover, while folk song has a value, as a part of the landscape it should be equally shared among the people at large. At the head of a Moravian collection effort funded by the Austrian government in the early twentieth century, Janáček lamented the fact that he was never able to publish the group’s research in an easily affordable edition for the general public. In a letter to his collaborator Hynek Bím on 14 June 1906, Janáček complained about the lack of material financial recognition of folk song’s value: “It will be necessary to take the work to a cheaper

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<sup>38</sup> The cognates may be closer in Czech, as in Latin, where the words for “spirit” also connote breath and wind; thus “inspiration” can literally mean breathing in as well as finding energy or momentum.

<sup>39</sup> The Gubernatorial Collection of 1819 was based “geographical” or geo-political boundaries within the Austro-Hungarian Empire. It did not discriminate by language or eliminate instrumental music. Sušil, on the other hand, includes only Czech-language texts and pays little attention to instrumental music.

<sup>40</sup> *Hledíme v nejšířším obecnstvu propagovati i to, co nám cenného poskytuje píseň lidová, jejíž básnický a hudební kapitál nikdy neměl by ležeti ladem.*

outlet. To listen to the song as to the song of the birds. The bird entertains for free” (quoted in Vysloužil 1955, 65; Holý 1978, 109 n. 19).

### *Cultural Performance*

When I told Czech friends and musicians that I was researching the *cimbál*, I was often directed to a museum, concert, or “*Slovácko* circle.”<sup>41</sup> When I began analyzing my research data, it was obvious that such events fit under the rubric of “cultural performances” explored by Milton Singer (1955, 1972). Like Singer, I got the impression at many points during my research that my Czech friends “thought of their culture as encapsulated in . . . discrete performances, which they could exhibit to visitors and to themselves” (Singer 1972, 71). Cultural performances, as described by Singer, comprise “what we in the West usually call by that name—for example, plays, concerts, and lectures. But they include also prayers, ritual readings and recitations, rites and ceremonies, festivals, and all those things we usually classify under religion and ritual rather than with the cultural and artistic” (Singer 1972, 71).<sup>42</sup> The concept of “cultural performance,” developed in congruence with Western conceptions of performance, readily fits the generally European situation in Moravia.<sup>43</sup>

Cultural performances are defined by a series of general parameters. They occur within limited time spans, usually an hour or two though sometimes longer; they have marked start and endpoints; the performances follow established programs of activity,

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<sup>41</sup> *Slovácké krúžky* (named after the Slovácko region in southern Moravia) are social groups that usually meet once a month to celebrate the culture of Slovácko. They are discussed in further detail in Chapter 4.

<sup>42</sup> I came to Singer’s idea of “cultural performances” through an essay by Victor Turner (1987, 21–32). Ethnomusicologists have also used the idea: Herndon 1971, McLeod 1975, Béhague 1984.

<sup>43</sup> The application of “cultural performance” in ethnomusicology has been largely through the work of Norma McLeod and Marcia Herndon (for example, McLeod and Herndon 1980). Herndon has been credited with introducing the concept to ethnomusicologists (Herndon 1971) and has also used it more recently in an analysis of North American community orchestras (Herndon 1988). The idea was also influential in ethnomusicological perspectives on performance practice (Béhague 1984).

which are often prepared and practiced in advance; they include a specified cast of performers; and finally, they are performed for an audience (1972, 71).

While McLeod cautions ethnomusicologists against the facile separation of musical sound from cultural context (1975, 17), it is safe to say that Czechs see these performances as natural units that are completely coherent with European customs of musical performance as a bounded and liminal event. Less formalized varieties of musical activity seemed to carry less cultural weight than established and officially condoned forms. Thus, I found such events, as illustrated in the Prelude, to be significant analytical units that recurred again and again.

The concept of “regions” clarifies the ways in which cultural performances are easily identifiable as distinct units. The idea comes from Erving Goffman, who describes a region as “any place that is bounded to some degree by barriers to perception” (Goffman 1959, 106, see also 107, 112). Timothy Cooley has adapted Goffman’s terms “front region” and “back region” as a less ideological way to distinguish, respectively, folklorism and folklore. Front region performances (corresponding to “onstage”) are done “for an audience, suppressing some aspects of the activity and accenting others”; back region (back stage) performances are thought to provide the basic material for the front region, and in this case “front region performances involve the presentation of cultural practices considered to be representative of the ethnicity of the very individuals doing the presentation” (Cooley 2005, 125–126).

Following this model, performances separated from everyday in special performance halls or other spaces may be described as folklorism. Such spaces are separated by myriad perceptual barriers. To enter the performance region, audiences

usually need tickets and are required to gain entrance permission from a sanctioned gatekeeper. Moreover, audiences typically abide by certain social conventions that dictate attire, interpersonal interaction, sitting in silence while the performance is progressing, and expressing approval with applause or cheers. In addition, a key perceptual barrier is created by the moderator who “hosts” many concerts and festival performances. This figure, often manifested by a person onstage, or in the case of the radio, the disembodied voice of the announcer, creates another perceptual point of “interpretation” or mediation that negotiates understanding of the performance for the audience. These considerations are important elements in setting aside the region of cultural performance from everyday space and time.

Cultural performances often support deep epistemological perceptions. By associating performance and ritual, the idea of cultural performances draws attention to European conceptions of concert performance that are inherent in Czech musical culture, while it also brings out the culturally significant undertones of such performances. Concert performances, as Christopher Small (1987, 1998) notes, may also be read as ritual iterations of Western epistemologies that reinforce narrative structures and linear worldviews.

An early example of cultural performance is taken up in the next chapter’s discussion of the historicity of the *cimbál*. The folk concerts that Leoš Janáček organized in the 1890s appear as founding examples of the conscious cultivation of folk performance for urban audiences. The *cimbál*, however, would not have remained such an important element of later concerts had it not been connected with cultural performances sponsored by Janáček and his nineteenth-century contemporaries.

### CHAPTER 3

#### THE REMNANTS OF MORAVIAN FOLK MUSIC: THE HISTORICITY OF THE *CIMBÁL*

*I thought that the last remnants of [Moravian] folk  
harmony were preserved in Valachian cimbál playing.*  
—Leoš Janáček, 1892<sup>1</sup>

The *cimbál* is thought to have a historical continuity in Moravia. My approach in this chapter is to elucidate the *cimbál* transcriptions made by folklorist and ethnographer Leoš Janáček (1854–1927), documents that have inspired musicians in the twentieth century. Czech scholars suggest, in fact, that these transcriptions comprise a unique source that has enabled musicians to perform and compose music that is inspired by Janáček’s documents (Schoříková 2004).

Although the instrument and social milieux have dramatically changed since Janáček’s time, his ideas and observations shaped the perception of the *cimbál* in the twentieth century up to the present. Janáček’s ethnographic efforts did not just inscribe transcriptions of folk songs. Performances that Janáček helped to organize were involved with the formation of ideas about concert performance as the major setting for folkloric performance. Documentation of these performances also helped to ensure that the *cimbál* remained in popular memory. Janáček set a model for traditional music performance and presentation that continues to the present. John Tyrrell divides Janáček’s “ethnographic” activities into the following areas: collecting folk materials (ibid., 343–347), publishing

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<sup>1</sup> *Myslel jsem, že poslední zbytky harmonie lidové hudby jsou v cimbálové hře na Valašsku uchovány.* The remark comes from Janáček’s article titled “Musical Outlines of Folk Dances in Moravia,” an ethnographic study of Moravian folk music published in the journal *Český lid* (Janáček 1955 [1893], 188).

editions (ibid., 347–348), writing about folk music (ibid., 348–351), and classifying folk songs (351–353). To this could be added the organization of “folk concerts,” structured performances of Moravian village musicians in urban and international settings.

This chapter is largely based on Janáček’s impressions, experiences, and transcriptions. He published information in articles and feuilletons in local and national newspapers, published in songbooks (the essay in Bartoš and Janáček 1901 is particularly detailed), and many of his field notes are preserved at the *Etnologický ústav České akademie věd, pracoviště Brno* [Ethnographic Institute of the Czech Academy of Sciences in Brno, or EÚB]. This research has been facilitated by the reprinting and collection of Janáček’s writings on folk music and folk song (Vysloužil 1955), as well as an invaluable critical edition that has made available many details about the people and places that Janáček visited (Procházková 2006).

My thinking about Czech history is influenced by two historical-anthropology articles by Andrew Lass (1988, 1989). Lass is concerned with the broad cultural meanings of and power inherent in fixed objects that reify cultural values. These texts are primarily published documents, but musical instruments are also important in this regard. Lass focuses on nineteenth-century manuscript forgeries, monuments, architecture, ethnographic monographs, and ethnographic exhibitions. He shows how nineteenth-century academic discourses brought into being a sense of temporal continuity for a previously incoherent Czech nation (Lass 1988). He also provides an insightful exegesis of Czech-language descriptions about traditional culture being “alive,” specifically the role such phrases play in formulating, reifying, and ultimately inscribing the existence



and authenticity of a Czech folk culture largely idealized by nineteenth-century intellectuals (Lass 1989).

Through these studies, Lass offers important frames of reference within which to read key historical documents, discourses, and events. In particular, Lass's views help to conceptualize the importance of nationalistic ideology and a sense of history in the context of Czech traditional culture. The nineteenth century included an intense ideological "revival" of "Czech" culture known as the *národní obrození* [national rebirth]. This movement was spearheaded by nationalist intellectuals often called *buditelé* [awakeners], who were credited with "awakening" the slumbering nation.<sup>2</sup> Much of this movement was fueled by Palacký's attention to Czech history, but many also drew on the perceived resource of traditional village folk culture. Folk customs were viewed as an expression of nature that was connected to the land on which the *lid* [people] lived and gave Czech speakers the birthright to the *národ* [nation]. Lass suggests that a "sense of tradition" derives from received historical knowledge, but is made specifically meaningful in the present through lived experience. He theorizes that "any *sense* of tradition is constituted as having temporal depth (the sense of continuity)" (Lass 1988, 457). These traditions are both constituted and underpinned by fixed nineteenth-century objects, and that this involves an "experience of historicity." For Lass, it is important to understand the historical documents and discourses that contribute to feelings of temporal continuity in the present.

The point is to show that insofar as we are interested in culture, or in this case 'tradition', the Husserlian emphasis on *describing* the manner in which the world is given to us as meaningful in experience is both a description of the constitutive

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<sup>2</sup> Intellectuals have played a large role in defining the nation, particularly in the nineteenth century. Intellectuals have continued to be active during and after the Communist period (Šiklová 1990, Kennedy and Suny 1999).

process and of the meaning ‘as lived’. . . . Meaning-fulfillment is taken to be a practice that accounts for the importance of self-evidence in the constitution of the sense of history. (Lass 1988, 456)

This suggests that a sense of historical continuity is constructed out of materials available in the present. For example, a definite “sense of continuity” was enacted through the performance of traditional music described in Chapter One that specifically drew connections with Bartoš’s song collecting. Most of the discussion in this chapter refers to the *malý cimbál*, which is thought to be the oldest surviving exemplar of cimbalom in Moravia. The “historical” forays that I outline in this chapter shaped my interpretation of the *cimbál* as an instrument with a Moravian history. However, they were also based on the nineteenth-century assumption that folk culture was dying out due to the decline of village culture.

Nineteenth-century folklorists often voiced the impression that folk culture would disappear. I suspect this was largely due to the change in instruments from the small to large *cimbál*. The Moravian song collector and linguist František Bartoš, for example, suggested in 1881 that “folk songs [*národní písně*] will disappear completely with this or the next generation” (Bartoš 1882, “Předmluva”; quoted in Uhlíková 2004, 5).<sup>3</sup> For example, the *Ottův slovník naučný* [Otto’s Encyclopedia], a massive 28-volume nationalist publication published between 1888 and 1909, says of the *cimbál*: “The *cimbál* was a great favorite in Moravia, particularly in Valachia and Slovakia; it is already rarely seen nowadays” (Stecker 1892). For a 1925 program entitled “Valachian Year” in Rožnov pod Radhoštěm, the programming committee rejected an artist’s rendering of a placard that depicted a *cimbál* on the grounds that “people would not

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<sup>3</sup> *Písně národní s touto nebo nejdéle příští generací vymizejí na čisto.*

understand it anymore” (quoted in Schořiková 2004, 7; Kunz 1993a, 17).<sup>4</sup> Photographs from the “Valachian Year,” however, confirm that the *cimbálek* was played at the event (Procházková 2006, 174). Writing in the 1990s, Kunz suspected that the *cimbálek* had become an “ethnographic curiosity” [*národopisná kuriozita*] that was used only rarely by the mid-twentieth century (Kunz 1993a, 17). Popular historical narrative continues to reproduce the idea that the small *cibmál* “practically disappeared” in Moravia (Plocek 2003, 46). The sense of a decline in *cimbál* playing may have been amplified by the uneven distribution of the instrument throughout Moravia: aside from Valachia and Lachia in northern Moravia, Kyjov and Brno seemed to be centers for the instrument in Slovácko (c.f., Macek 1968, 363; Plocek 2003, 46). It is thought that the small instrument was never especially common in Hornácko.

### **Janáček and the *Cimbál***

The most substantial account of nineteenth-century *cimbál* playing in Moravia comes from the essays, field notes, and transcriptions of Leoš Janáček. These documents about the instrument were collected between 1888 and 1906. Though most famous as a composer in his later years, Janáček undertook extensive research in traditional music and dance. Janáček’s most intensive years of field collection were between 1888 and 1912, a period when he frequently visited towns and villages in the Moravian countryside.

My aim is to explicate some of Janáček’s thinking about the *cimbál* by combining these sources with organological research and pictorial evidence. Janáček’s writings reveal significant information about the role of the *cimbál* in late-nineteenth century

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<sup>4</sup> *Lidé by ho už nepochopili.*

Moravia. Janáček's searches for the *cimbál* were frequently motivated by other concerns: his initial trips seem to be excursions undertaken during summer holidays (1888, 1889, 1890); in subsequent trips he sought performers for the national ethnographic exhibition in Prague in 1895 (1892, 1893); a trip in 1900 secured final publication details for a folksong collection; and his trips in 1906 appear to be sponsored by the *Pracovní výbor pro čeksou národní píseň na Moravě a ve Slezsku* [Working Committee for Czech Folk Song in Moravia and Silesia, or PVms] a committee charged with documenting folk music in the Moravian province of the Austrian monarchy under the project *Das Volkslied in Österreich* [Folksong in Austria].<sup>5</sup>

Janáček was trained as a music teacher.<sup>6</sup> He held distinguished qualifications, having studied organ in Prague, and at pedagogical faculties in Leipzig and Vienna. In the 1880s and 1890s he held various teaching posts in Brno: he taught organ lessons at the Brno Organ School (1881–1919), musical pedagogy at the Men's Teaching Institute (1873–1904), and at a Czech secondary school [*gymnazium*] (1886–1902).

Janáček gradually became a respected figure in the study of folk culture. In the 1870s and 1880s, Janáček began to take a closer interest in music that he heard in villages during his summer vacations.<sup>7</sup> The pedagogy of folk music, folk song, and musical folklore were frequent subjects in his lectures. He frequently traveled around the Moravian countryside in the summer and transcribed instrumental folk music and folk

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<sup>5</sup> This was the "Working committee on Bohemian folk song for Moravia and Silesia," the local branch of *Volkslied in Österreich* [Folk Song in Austria], an initiative headquartered in Vienna.

<sup>6</sup> The biographical information in this paragraph is drawn from Procházková 2006, 28; see Tyrrell 2006 for further details of Janáček's life up to 1914.

<sup>7</sup> The precise time and place that Janáček made his first collecting trips has not been definitively verified. The issue is taken up by Vysloužil (1955, 38–40), and Procházková recently made new conclusions based on Janáček's field notes (2006, 17–18). Vysloužil suggests that Janáček's "living relationship to musical folkloristic problems" predates a visit to Valašsko and Lašsko in July or August 1888 (1955, 39); however, Procházková notes that the 1888 trip is the first objectively verifiable occasion and that Janáček's field notes only survive for excursions from 1891 onward (2006, 18).

songs. As Czech scholar Jarmila Procházková observes, “Alongside [Janáček’s fame as a composer] remains the redoubtable historic fact that from the 1890s until his death, the composer stood at the head of the main stream of folkloric activities in Moravia and later in Silesia; in addition, activities were carried out under his leadership that today astound with their breadth and results” (Procházková 2006, 13).

It is difficult to pinpoint a single moment when Janáček began to take more than a passing note of the musical activity he heard in villages. Janáček suggested that he had begun his relationship with folk materials in 1885, when he described his folk projects in 1917: “I am not definitely finished with this part of life’s work, which I have served since the year 1885” (Letter from PVms to *Das Volkslied in Österreich*, quoted in Procházková 2006, 49). Janáček made his first transcriptions of musical material on summer trips from Brno in the 1880s, but the precise time and place of Janáček’s first collections has been debated. The issue was taken up by Jiří Vysloužil (1955, 38–40), and more recently Jarmila Procházková made new conclusions based on Janáček’s field notes (2006, 17–18). Vysloužil suggests that Janáček’s “living relationship to musical folkloristic problems” predates a trip to Valašsko and Lašsko in July or August 1888 (1955, 39); however, Procházková notes that the 1888 trip is the first occasion possible to verify according to surviving sources and that Janáček’s field notes only survive for excursions from 1891 onward (2006, 18).<sup>8</sup>

A few principal activities were at the heart of Janáček’s efforts in the realm of folk music. Janáček scholar John Tyrrell divides Janáček’s “ethnographic” activities into the following areas: collecting folk materials (Tyrrell 2006, 343–347), publishing editions (347–348), writing about folk music (348–351), and classifying folk songs (351–353). To

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<sup>8</sup> Procházková credits this observation to Karel Vetterl as well.

**Table 3.1.** Janáček’s trips on which he encountered the *cimbálek*. Compiled from Procházková 2006 and Vysloužil 1955, 94–117.

<i>Date</i>	<i>Place</i>	<i>Player</i>
1888, July/August	Petřvald	Jan Myška (1830–1912)*
1888, July/August	Kozlovice**	[František Klepáč]
1889, 5 August	Kunčice pod Ondřejníkem***	František Klepáč (1835–1898)*
1890, July/August	Horní Sklenov (Hukvaldy)	Manek Peterek
1891, July/August	Košatka nad Odrou	Jiří Mikeska (1828–1903)*
1892, 8 September	Březůvky	Tomáš Kaláč (1842–1903)*
1893, c. 30–31 August	Valašská Polanka	Jan Míček (1844–1919)*
1893, early September	Janová	Jan Mikuš
1900, 6 September	Kunčice pod Ondřejníkem	František Klepáč*
1906, 23 July	Ostravice	Jan Lhořan (1849–1915)
1906, 30 July	Lubno	Ignác Kotek (1839–1924)*
1906, 3 August	Trojanovice	Jan Jurek (table maker)

Notes: Information in brackets is assumed but unconfirmed;

\* denotes that Janáček transcribed some solo playing or accompaniment rather than just ensemble playing;

\*\* this trip was primarily to collect dances, but the “U Harabiša” pub was a frequent destination for merrymakers from Hukvaldy; less than 3 kilometers from Janáček’s summer home in Hukvaldy, Janáček frequented the pub while visiting Hukvaldy; the atmosphere is evoked in his feuilleton “U Harabiša” (*Lidové noviny*, 30 November 1924; reprinted in Vysloužil 1955, 181; JAWO XV/257);

\*\*\* surviving field notes from this trip are the oldest-known dated notes to have survived that Janáček wrote in the field (Procházková 2006, 135).

this could be added the organization of concerts and performances, another important aspect of Janáček’s engagement with traditional music.<sup>9</sup>

While it is impossible to gauge exactly what Janáček thought about the *cimbál*, it is obvious that he considered it a key instrument during his most intensive periods of field study and folk music collection. During a trip to Ostravice in Lachia, he wrote to his wife Zdeňka on 25 July 1906 that he had “discovered treasures of *cimbál* playing.”<sup>10</sup> It is also apparent that his thinking over time changed. His view of the *cimbál*, and his conviction about its importance to Moravian traditional music may have wavered as well.

<sup>9</sup> Tyrrell lumps the latter with collecting: “In tandem with his own collecting was the large-scale organization of activity promoting Moravian folk music” (Tyrrell 2006, 343).

<sup>10</sup> “Nalezl jsem poklady hry cymbalové.” Letter at JA, sign. A 3 778; also quoted in Procházková 2006, 149 and 151).

Nonetheless, he recorded and preserved the earliest known transcriptions of *cimbál* playing, identified key tradition bearers in the 1890s, and saw the instrument as a nexus of traditional music in Moravia.

Janáček recorded a range of *cimbál* players in Valachia [*Valašsko*] and Silesia [*Slezsko*], and most particularly in Lachia [*Lašsko*], a small region near the village Hukvaldy where he lived as a child. (Table 3.1 summarizes Janáček's trips and *cimbál* players that Janáček's visited.) Janáček's ethnographic work, however, reinforced the impression that a tradition was dying out. He mentioned that most of the players he met were in their 50s or older: "how difficult it already is for them to remember the old tunes! And this should be the highest reason for concern: the death of these individual tradition bearers would destroy forever much of the important proof of our culture" (Vysloužil 1955, 516). He also had a more general concern about a decline in musical activity in north Moravian villages. He noted, for example, that some musicians in Kunčice had sold their instruments (Janáček 1955 [1891], 597).

In a January 1891 lecture to the Brno women's society "Vesna," Janáček related his summer experiences in north Moravia.<sup>11</sup> The lecture, which was also published in the Brno newspaper (*Moravské listy*, 3 January 1891), contained an extended description of his meetings with *cimbál* players. The article was not accompanied by transcribed examples, but it provides an interesting view of the musical life Janáček found so important. The lecture presents a vibrant picture of music-making in a relatively small region, including the number of active ensembles, specific individuals, and transcribed

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<sup>11</sup> "Vesna" is short for *Ženská vzdělávací jednota Vesna* (Women's Educational Society "Vesna"). Founded in 1870, it became an important group among Brno's Czech-speaking society; the group's aim was to cultivate Czech-speaking society in Brno by founding schools, organizing concerts, lectures, and other cultural events (Tyrrell 2006, 41).

songs.<sup>12</sup> The description makes clear that the primary musical role of the *cimbál* was in ensembles for dance-music and for accompanying song. Moreover, the instrumentation of the ensembles described is similar to the general concept of *cimbálovky* through the twentieth century and into the present. I quote the lecture at length for its detailed picture of *cimbál* music at the time and its relatively colorful ethnographic portrait. Janáček's language is occasionally unconventional even in Czech, and I attempted to preserve this flavor and expressiveness in the translation while also clarifying the meaning where necessary.

I cannot express to you the joy I had upon encountering, by mere chance in a Valachian village yet little touched by the modern spirit, dances that I had never before seen—at once noble and graceful as well as eccentric!

The old *cimbál* player Jan Myška from Petřvald played me a few significant Lachian *starodávny* dances on his small instrument (23 five-string courses covering a range from G chromatically up to F-sharp<sup>2</sup>).

It was difficult for him to remember them — after all, they said it had been a long time since anyone had requested them at weddings — and then only the poorer. At the richer [weddings] there is a “complete” band (meaning brass instruments); these play “waltzes” [*valcry*] and sometimes the “Russian polka.”

However, the old earthy melodies were pulled with an unresisting force from the memories of the old when the genial Ms. Junková<sup>13</sup> prompted them. By the blazing fire dance after dance rushed by, song after song. That they are our dances and that they are old dances I judge according to the tunes. The tonal and modal modulations bear witness to whether they are songs for the *cimbál*. Let us hear some of the “*starodávny*.” — It is thoughtful throughout; only here and there does it unexpectedly clear up.

Town leaders from the area surrounding Kozlovice, Mniší, Kopřivnice, Drholec, and Sklenov were meeting at the town hall in Větrkovice. This was the time when Matula Větrkovský signaled the rector and began [singing]: “*Jede forman dolinú, zbujník za nim březinu*” and others! They barely managed to play it all. Nevertheless, they played: Hrček with his brother, on violin and clarinet; Zušcak on the bass, celebrated in the area; and Manek “thickened” things on the *cimbál*!

They threw in a silver twenty-piece for a song—when the village youth danced in the courtyard.

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<sup>12</sup> Also notable is the increasing importance of brass instruments, which Janáček saw pushing out older instruments like the *cimbál* and bagpipes.

<sup>13</sup> Marie Jungová (spelled above as Junková), a friend from his native village Hukvaldy, introduced Janáček to the *cimbál* player from Petřvald, Jan Myška.



Oftentimes Peterek also stood at the cimbál and Vyvjal started up on bass.

The Křístek family was also celebrated even at that time. They were untiring singers. Josef Křístek of that family still lives [*pacholčí*] in the Mniší township. He's already reached an age — over fifty. . . . I remember Křístek's high tenor voice, which rose to b-flat<sup>1</sup> at his age (63 years), surely beautiful. Go and learn to sing with these knowledge-bearers [*dědice*] of our old school; they are poor, yet many hid from me that they had not even a patched-together coat [*látaný oděv*]: but even so, hurry before such important "oral tradition" [ústní podání] dies out — you will search in vain at operatic singing schools! —

Fr. Klepáč in Kunčice knocks and "shifts" (modulates) tones on the *cimbál* in the whole area.<sup>14</sup> He has not yet taught his son. That's rather significant. However, he promised me that he is taking action on this. He does not even need notation for playing. What would a player be if he did not already have the song inside him? Afterward he lightly tapped them [the songs] out himself, just as a quick little stream rushes along its path by itself.

Four play. The clarinet and violin regularly carry the tune (in unison). The cimbál playing is based on this melody but "thickens" it either with tremolos in thirds, sixths, and octaves, or with arpeggios. The bass emphasizes the basic notes with rhythmic emphasis on the rhythmically important beats. They played these dances for me: "The Goose," "*kalamajka*," "Clapping," and the *starodávný* "The Little Girl Cowherd Was Lost in the Forest." It is interesting to compare these songs with the same ones from Petřvald and Mniší. Valachian tunes from Kunčice have the most varied and richest tunes in tone as well as in mode.

I also saw the "*čeladenský*" and "mosquito" dances.

The terrain around Kunčice is guarded on one side by the Ondřejníky [mountain range], and from the other side by the great range of mountains from [the mountain peaks] Kněhyně to Radhošť. Yet even these peaks are not sufficient to save what is most unique here, what is most purely ours [*čistě náš*]. The Exhibition in Vienna spurred some of the local musicians to set off for Vienna in *kroj*. Since that time, their original membership has been more quickly declining. I don't know if my entreaty helped — he clearly wanted to sell the foundation of the band — the bass.<sup>15</sup> (Janáček 1955 [1891], 596–597)

The experiences that the lecture is based on come from a series of summer trips in north Moravia that Janáček had made on his summer holidays in 1888, 1889, and 1890.

One of Janáček's first productive summer field collecting trips, described in the above

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<sup>14</sup> The use of the verb *klepat* [to knock] seems to be humorous or poetic here. Typically the verb *hrát* [to play] is used. However, Klepáč's name appears to be based on the verb *klepat*, thus roughly meaning something like "Mr. Knocker," although the verb also means "to gossip." The action of striking a string with a mallet may visually be compared with knocking.

<sup>15</sup> The reference is to the Vienna World Exhibition of 1873 and to the bassist Kašpar Válek (Procházková 2006, 135). Janáček's phrasing indicates that this sentence is a play on the Czech saying *basa tvrdí muziku* [the bass holds together the band]; the saying confirms that the bass is an important instrument in the ensemble. In this comment, Janáček suggests that the bassist was the musician who wanted to sell his instrument as well as the actual threat to the local band's stability.

passage, was to the village of Petřvald in North Moravia, a village that was the birthplace of Janáček's great-grandfather and grandfather (Procházková 2006, 153). A few years later, Janáček described this trip with an air of nostalgia: "I am looking at my transcriptions: the paper already yellowed, faded, but still taunting from the quickly scrawled notes the ardor and spirit with which they were played" (Janáček 1955 [1893], 186).

The visits with Myška and Klepáč appear to have motivated a deeper interest. Janáček had enough material to justify a grant application to support his research on Moravian instrumental folk music based on the summer collecting trips of 1888, 1889, 1890, and 1891. In November 1891, Janáček applied to the Royal Academy of Emperor Franz Josef in Prague for a research stipend to undertake further research trips.<sup>16</sup> The Academy denied the request because Janáček's November application had arrived after the deadline for consideration.<sup>17</sup>

Janáček further developed his ideas about the importance of the *cimbál* later, despite not receiving support from the Academy. An 1892 article titled "Musical Outlines of Folk Dances in Moravia" lays out his theoretical and ethnographic ideas in more detailed form. The study, which documents various dance music and songs that Janáček had transcribed during trips to north and south Moravia, appeared in the second volume of the ethnographic journal *Český lid* (The Czech People). The journal was then in its infancy and under the editorship of ethnographer Čeněk Zíbrt.<sup>18</sup> The article reassesses the

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<sup>16</sup> The submitted copy of the application is held at JA, record no. C3. A more easily accessible version of the document is the partial reprint in Vysloužil 1955, 515–516; my translation of the full text appears in Appendix 1.

<sup>17</sup> JA, record no. C4.

<sup>18</sup> Zíbrt has been described as an antiquarian, ethnographer, and folklorist. He co-founded and edited the journal *Český lid* in 1891. Among his many writings is a three-volume work titled *Veselé chvíle v životě*

experiences he related to Vesna. Janáček wrote in 1892, “I thought that the last remnants of [Moravian] folk harmony [*harmonie lidové hudby*] were preserved in Valachian *cimbál* playing” (Janáček 1955 [1893], 188).<sup>19</sup> It seems that Janáček’s gave up some of his attention to *cimbál* playing because he only drew vague and inconclusive impressions from the playing. In the same article he writes:

The true motivation that spurred me to wander further was the harmonic aspect of folk music. Its sound was dying away for me in the outlines only lightly sketched out from the playing of the *cimbál*. . . . How it cheered my heart when I suddenly heard here [in Velká] not only dance music influenced in its harmonic aspect, but also arrangements, unique arrangements, of non-metrical songs [*táhlá píseň*] not meant for dance. (Janáček 1955 [1893], 188)<sup>20</sup>

The meaning of the passage is ambiguous—did Janáček suspect that in Velká he had heard something more authentic and that the arrangements were not accompanied by the *cimbál*? Did he decide that the “harmonic aspect” of the music he was hearing had not been due to *cimbál* playing? He apparently considered the *cimbál* an important local instrument and, at least at some point, considered it key to the preservation of tonal practices in traditional music. As the only instrument with the possibility of filling out complicated harmonies in solo situations (beyond double-stops on the violins), it would make sense that Janáček initially hoped to find the key to older harmonic practices in *cimbál* playing. However, as he makes clear later in *Osnovy*, he regarded the fiddle music he found in Velká as the most “pure” [*cistý*], and seemingly the most significant and authentic.

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*lidu českého* [Happy moments in the Lives of the Czech People] (Prague: by F. Šimáček, 1910) (see Lass 1989).

<sup>19</sup> John Tyrrell, in fact, hints that Janáček’s early attention to the *cimbál* was because it was a “quirky” instrument rather than a faithful representation of folk music (Tyrrell 2006, 343).

<sup>20</sup> *Zde končí moje potulky po Lašsku a Valašsku. Pravá pohnutky, která mě pobízela i nadále putovati, byla harmonická stránka lidové hudby. Vyznívala mi v obrysech jen lehce načrtnutých ze hry na cimbálu. . . . Myslel jsem, že poslední zbytky harmonie lidové hudby jsou v cimbálové hře na Valašsku uchovány; jak zaplesalo mi srdce, když tu najoednou nejen taneční hudbu, vyvinutou po harmonické stránce, ale i průvody písní táhlých, písní ne k tanci určených, průvody svérázné jsem vyslechl!*

Although the *cimbál* did not present the key to understanding all of Moravian harmonic practice, Janáček suspected that it would offer insights. In a short essay for the foreword to František Bartoš's collection *Národní písně moravské v nově nasbírané* (1889), Janáček wrote, "I am convinced that the angularity of diatonic harmony is completely foreign to Czech national music. Given the [musicians'] acclaimed musical gift, rich harmonic modulation was a natural musical result of the instruments used. How superbly those players have been modulating away up in Valachia, accompanying songs on the violin, bass, and *cimbál*!" (Janáček 1955 [1889], 143).<sup>21</sup> It seems then that the diatonically-tuned *cimbál* might strengthen foreign influences in Moravian music.

Brass bands, for example, appeared to Janáček as non-indigenous incursions. Seemingly because the *cimbál* pre-dated brass instruments, it received a place in the older layers of Moravian music. "As soon as they exchange the bass for the 'bombardon,' the *cimbál* for 'flugelhorns' or 'trumpets,' the playing has had it. On these inflexible instruments, it is not at all possible to accompany most chromatic songs" (Janáček 1955 [1889], 143).<sup>22</sup> Such brass ensembles—identified in Czech as *dechovka* or *štrajch* (from German *Streich*)—were seen to be of German origin. As ethnomusicologist Marta Toncrová writes, "wind bands flourished in [Moravia during] the mid-19th century when musicians returned from military service where they had played in military bands" (Tyllner and Toncrová 2001). This "military service" was in the armies of the Austro-Hungarian Empire controlled by the German-speaking Habsburg monarchy.

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<sup>21</sup> *Mám za to, že hranatost harmonie diatonické jest národní české hudbě vůbec cizí. Bohatá modulace harmonická byla při uznaném nadání hudebním přirozeným následkem užívaných hudebních nástrojů. Jak znamenitě harmonicky i melodicky moduluji dosud na Valašsku, doprovázejíce písně na houslích, base a cimbále!*

<sup>22</sup> *Jakmile zamění basu za „bombardon“, cimbál za „křídlovky“, „trompety“, jest po hře. Na těchto melodický neohebných nástrojích nemožno většinu chromatických písní vůbec doprovázeti.*

Moderato ♩ = 84

The image shows a musical score for a piece titled "Bystra voda vylela." The tempo is marked "Moderato" with a quarter note equal to 84 beats per minute. The score is written for a Cimbal, a traditional Czech instrument, and is presented in a grand staff format with a treble and bass clef. The music is in 3/4 time and features a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The score is divided into three systems. The first system (measures 1-5) includes a treble staff with a melodic line and a bass staff with a rhythmic accompaniment. The second system (measures 6-9) continues the melody and accompaniment. The third system (measures 10-13) concludes the piece with a repeat sign. Dynamics such as *sf* (sforzando) and accents (>) are used throughout the score.

**Music Example 3.1.** Janáček’s transcription of “Bystra voda vylela.” This *starodávny* was played by *cimbalista* Jan Myška in the village Petřvald in 1888.

Characterizing these brass-instrument ensembles as German imports attacks their authentic Czechness.<sup>23</sup> Village brass ensembles, nonetheless, continue to be prominent up to the present.

Notes and transcriptions from Janáček’s trips contain more information about the music he heard.<sup>24</sup> A faded sketch of the instrument he saw in Petřvald offers a rough

<sup>23</sup> This particular diatribe continued in scholarly discourse throughout the twentieth century, as brass instruments continue to be characterized as a foreign element that in many senses “destroyed” local music. Jaroslav Markl and Vladimír Karbusický wrote in 1963, for example, that “despite the fact that folk-brass music has existed in Bohemia for 150 years, it did not succeed in fusing creatively with the older folk-music tradition and failed to generate a new type of folk music” (Markl and Karbusický 1963, 27; see also Želinská and Connor 2000).

<sup>24</sup> Held at the archive of the Ethnology Institute of the Czech Academy of Sciences in Brno (EÚB, call no. A 1 473, f. 1r.)

schematic of the instrument (see Procházková 2006, 155). Three lines presumably show bridges, which divided the strings into two groups: five courses of strings at the lowest pitches extending the width of the instrument, and seventeen courses of strings at the upper pitches divided in half by a bridge. On an accompanying sheet, Janáček calculated that the instrument could play 39 pitches spanning a range from G to f-sharp<sup>2</sup>. According to a later account, the instrument measured 102 centimeters along the bottom edge, 57 across the top, both sides were 47 centimeters, the height was 7.8 centimeters, and it featured two tone-holes each 8.5 centimeters in diameter covered by “six-leaved ornaments” (Nehýbl 1949, 50).

The instrument was played and owned by Jan Myška (1830–1912), a local cottager who listed his secondary occupation as “musician” [*hudebník*] in the 1890 census (Procházková 2006, 155). Janáček published three transcriptions of Myška’s *cimbál* playing from this trip in his first major article on Moravian folk dances, “Musical Outlines of Folk Dances in Moravia” (Janáček 1955 [1893]). The transcriptions were dances: *starodávny* [old-fashioned]; *dvoják, troják* [double, triple]; and *srňátko* [piglet]. The *cimbál* was used to accompany vocal songs and, with other instruments, to accompany dances. Of the twenty-one songs recorded, twelve appear to be vocal songs, and nine are dances (Procházková 2006, 153–154). Some of the material was later published in *Národní písně moravské, v nově nasbírané*, which Bartoš completed in collaboration with Janáček (Nehýbl 1949, 51).<sup>25</sup> A twentieth-century local history of the town later declared that the *cimbál* was a “favorite” instrument in the area, but the poor condition of Myška’s instrument (then owned by a local innkeeper) and its broken strings

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<sup>25</sup> Bartoš and Janáček 1901, nos. 1820–1825 and 1849. Complete transcriptions from this visit to Myška were published in Vysloužil’s re-edition of Janáček’s folkloric writings (Vysloužil 1955, 556–558).

symbolized the decline of “beautiful folk songs” [*krásné písně lidové*] (quoted in Procházková 2006, 155).

The most detailed transcription from Myška is music for a *starodávny* [old-fashioned], a sedate couple dance in triple meter for which Janáček gave the text “Bystra voda vylela” (“The quick stream flowed on”) (Music Example 3.1).<sup>26</sup> Janáček described the *starodávny* dance as “the most beautiful musically and most graceful” [*nejkrásnější po stránce hudební a nejpůvabnější*] and a Moravian “possession” [*majetek*] (Janáček 1955 [1893], 189, 200). Janáček points out that the song is in two main parts (bars 1–5 and bars 6–12), the first a short introductory melody that is followed by slightly longer section intended for dance (ibid., 190). He also points out that the tonality appears to modulate from D minor at the outset, move to C major at the repeat sign, and then return to D but in major by the close. He describes this as an “inventive tonal grouping for a composition of such small dimensions” (ibid.). These “modulations” in the transcriptions indicate that the instrument was able to play some “chromatic” notes even though it may not have contained a fully chromatic range (Schoříková 2004, 6). The transcription indicates that the overall playing style was to undergird a main melody and accentuate it with basic harmonies. The most frequent embellishment is at the octave (bars 1, 2, 3, 5, 7, 9, and 10–12); in addition, a sixth appears briefly in bar 5 and thirds embellish bars 6, 7, and 8. Simultaneous strokes or arpeggios do not create these “sustained” harmonies; instead, the impression of harmonic motion is created through quick tremolos. In the transcription, Janáček sometimes wrote this out and sometimes indicated it with a tremolo sign.

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<sup>26</sup> Similar melodies with the same text appear in Sušil’s collection (No. 438). Janáček published this melody with an attached text in his later collection with František Bartoš as melody number 1820 (Bartoš and Janáček 1901, 964–965).

The following summer Janáček heard the *cimbál* again. Janáček's field notes from this trip are the oldest to have survived intact until the present (Procházková 2006, 135). On 5 August 1889, Janáček visited František Klepáč in Kunčice pod Ondřejníkem, a village near Janáček's birthplace in Hukvaldy. Klepáč (1835–1898) worked as a miner until 1890 when he bought his own cottage and lived as a pensioner with his wife and six children (Procházková 2006, 139). The information from this trip and a subsequent visit on 6 September 1900 provide a more detailed outline of the instrument.

Janáček appeared to have a deeper interest in Klepáč and his instrument than in Myška's—Procházková (2006, 137) describes this interest as “exceptional diligence” [*mimořádná pečlivost*]. This visit was two years after Klepáč died. Janáček was aware of Klepáč's death, having noted in his diary sometime in fall 1899, “Old Klepáč, *cymbalista*, died in 1898, ‘second week’ after Easter.”<sup>27</sup> The 1900 trip was likely made specifically to prepare a photograph of a *cimbál* that appeared in Janáček's 1901 essay on folksong for his collection with František Bartoš (Bartoš and Janáček 1901). Although he could have visited a living player, it seems likely that he chose to photograph Klepáč's instrument because it was the closest to Hukvaldy where he often vacationed during the summers.<sup>28</sup>

The notes, sketches, and photograph of the instrument provide detailed information about an instrument of the period. The range of the instrument covers three octaves plus a major third, stretching from a low G (the pitch typically notated on the bottom line of a piano grand staff) to  $b^2$  (notated above the first ledger above the top line

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<sup>27</sup> *Starý Klepáč, cymbalista, zemřel r. 1898 po velkonocích „druhý týdeň“*. The diary is held at the JA, sign. Z 20, p. 91; also quoted in Procházková 2006, 139.

<sup>28</sup> Klepáč's instrument is further described in BIII (XV/163; LJOLP 315-318, 319-321; *passim*?)



of a piano grand staff).<sup>29</sup> The instrument was missing its top string, so presumably it had been designed to cover a slightly larger range. Janáček noted that the instrument was able to play chromatic melodies; however, this would have been possible only in the range of pitches between e and f<sup>2</sup>, an ambitus of two octaves and a half-step. In his rough sketch of the instrument, Janáček noted that Klepáč had to “sharpen” (tune) the instrument [„*brusit*“ (*sladit*)].<sup>30</sup> Along with this observation, Janáček noted that the Klepáč played in D major and minor as well as in G major.

Janáček recorded a mix of songs and dances on his 1889 visit to Kunčice. As described in his “Vesna” lecture, he heard a four-part ensemble with clarinet, fiddle, bass, and *cimbál* on this occasion. The band was likely the “Válek band” [*Válkova muzika*], comprised of three brothers and Klepáč: Josef Válek, clarinet; František Válek, violin; Kašpar Válek, bass; and Klepáč, *cimbál*. A photograph of the band with an unknown second clarinetist appears to be posed, but the presence of beer mugs on the table allude to the band’s work as entertainers, appearing in a “wide vicinity” at pubs, weddings, and dances (Procházková 2006, 135). Procházková states that Janáček “undoubtedly” heard Klepáč repeatedly as a member of the *Válkova muzika*, which played at the “U Harabiša” pub in Kozlovice, less than a mile from Hukvaldy. Although he heard the four-part instrumentation, surviving transcriptions feature only *cimbál* and voice.

Janáček made visits to more players in north Moravia during the summers of 1890, 1891, and 1892. Information gathered on these trips appears to be consistent with what he learned from Myška and Klepáč. It appears that Janáček made his first

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<sup>29</sup> According to Janáček’s designation of pitches, c<sup>1</sup> corresponds to “middle C” on the piano keyboard. Upper-case letters indicate lower octaves, each subsequent octave being indicated by a subscript numeral; higher octaves are indicated by lower-case and each successive octave denoted by a superscript numeral.

<sup>30</sup> The notes are at EÚB, sign. A 1 468, f. 2 a 3; the photograph is also at EÚB, pozitiv 1 580. Reproductions of both sketches and the photograph appear in Procházková 2006, 136 and 138.

transcriptions of the *cimbál* with other instruments in September 1893 during a visit to the player Jan Míček in Valašská Polanka (near Vsetín). On the same trip he also visited Jan Mikuš, a player from the nearby village of Janová. He asked them both about pedagogy.<sup>31</sup> Mikuš related a story about learning to play from a musician named Blabla. Accounts indicate that Blabla had been an active musician in the 1850s with a band consisting of *cimbál*, violin, and bass. Blabla appears to be among the earliest *cimbál* player in north Moravia whose name is known.<sup>32</sup> Míček said that he had learned to play from his father, who had learned to play in Březová. The technique for learning the layout of the instrument involved placing “small papers” [*cedulečky*] with the “names of the strings” below each pitch. Janáček noted that Míček did not read staff notation; however, “he quickly makes each song sung his own in tones and knows the correct accompanying style of his instrument.”<sup>33</sup>

The reason for these 1893 visits was the looming preparations for the massive program at the Ethnographic Exhibition in Prague of 1895. Though not yet officially a member of the planning committee, Janáček was aware of the planning through František Bartoš. Janáček heard Míček while visiting Vsetín during the 1892 ethnographic exhibition there, one of a number of regional events that took place in preparation for the national exhibition in 1895. In 1895, Míček played in the “Valachian wedding” staged at the Prague Exhibition. These two visits to Vsetín marked the last substantive information that Janáček gathered about the *cimbál* for the next decade. His ethnographic activities

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<sup>31</sup> The remarks on pedagogy come from Janáček’s feuilleton “Hudba pravdy,” published in the newspaper *Moravské listy*, 16 December 1893 (republished in Vysloužil 1955, 183–185).

<sup>32</sup> The notes are at EÚB, sign. A 1 459; Procháková (2006, 119) explains the provenance of the *cimbalista* Blabla, whom Janáček mentions only briefly.

<sup>33</sup> *Osvojuje si rychle zpívanou píseň v tónu a zná pravý sloh průvodný svého nástroje* (Vysloužil 1955, 183). Janáček’s notes from this visit are at EÚB, sign. A 1 472.

during that time were devoted to the national Ethnographic Exhibition and preparing folk song editions.

Janáček undertook a final *cimbál*-related collection trip in 1906. The trip did not result in much information, mostly names of musicians.<sup>34</sup> However, he did briefly describe the trip in two newspaper accounts in the hopes that his visit to the “musical Lhoťan family” in Ostravice would elicit more information from other locals who read the notices. During the visit, the article stated, Mr. Janáček “listened to the sounds of the *cimbál* and violin – and was enraptured with the beauty and expressiveness [*výraznost*] of true Lachian songs.”<sup>35</sup> The Lhoťan brothers in Ostravice referred Janáček to another player named Jan Jurek, but little information from the Jurek visit survives.<sup>36</sup>

On the same trip, Janáček visited the player Ignác Kotek in Lubno, to the east of Hukvaldy. It is unclear as to how Janáček heard of the musician, but he had received a positive response to a written inquiry and made a one-day trip on 30 July 1906. In his work diary for the day, Janáček noted a payment of 4 crowns to Kotek for the day. Janáček described the visit in a feuilleton published in 1907. He describes Kotek as an “old youngster” [*starý mládenec*] who played clarinet violin, bass, and *cimbál*. Janáček describes Kotek as a musician in demand at local weddings, recording in his account that Kotek “came home ‘from a wedding’ about four in the morning yesterday” (Vysloužil 1955, 232). Janáček also noted that Kotek knew songs that Sušil had heard “70 years before. They are still known here today” (ibid., 231).

Musicians were important at Valachian weddings. The *cimbálovka* musicians held an important role in the celebration, as described by accounts from this area recorded in

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<sup>34</sup> EÚB, sign. A 1 393, f. 1r, 3r.; Procházková 2006, 150.

<sup>35</sup> The *Ostravan*, 29 July 1906; quoted in Procházková 2006, 150.

<sup>36</sup> EÚB, sign. A 1 394; Procházková 2006, 169.



**Music Example 3.2.** Janáček’s transcription of “Frydečti verbiři, to su velci pani.” The song was played by *cimbalista* Ignác Kotek in Lubno 1906; original at EÚB.

the 1950s. On the wedding day, guests met at the groom’s house and were taken to the church in a procession led by the musicians. Afterward guests proceeded to a local inn, and “here everyone began to sing every sort of song. Young men whooping [*juchat*] and sometimes even old women let loose and began crowing [*výskání*]. Young women did not whoop. The band played and wedding guests threw money into the *cimbál* to make the musicians play more and longer” (Vetterl 1955, 191). A subsequent ceremonial giving away of the bride was followed by an evening celebration.

This was the high point of merrymaking, when after midnight the bride and groom were discovered among us. They were recognized as a married couple and no longer as a single man and woman. The band trumpeted and played a solo for them. . . . [After a ceremonial dance], the guests threw money into the *cimbál* for the musicians and requested more music. The band played until the morning, sometimes even until the second or third day. (Vetterl 1955, 192)

Janáček’s 1906 transcription of the song “Frydečti verbiři, to su velci pani” from Kotek (Music Example 3.2) shows the handwritten documents Janáček produced. The transcription is notable for its relative starkness compared with Janáček’s earlier notations (cf. Music Example 3.1): most of the phrases begin and end in octaves (bars 1,

6, 10, 11, 14, 15) while only occasionally punctuated by thirds and sixths (bars 5 and 19); the remaining harmonies seem to derive from passing melodic lines.<sup>37</sup>

Jiří Vysloužil points out that most of Janáček's observations were made from a "composerly" standpoint rather than a scholarly one (Vysloužil 1955, 48). Janáček's transcriptions from this period are also significant since they comprise "some of the earliest made of Moravian ensemble folk music" (Tyrrell 2006, 343). Instrumental folk music often received less attention than vocal music. Because it lacked words, only someone with Janáček's musical education could articulate its possible meanings, thus instrumental folk music presented a less powerful vehicle for a nationalism built on concerns for the Czech language.

As Janáček became more familiar with the music heard in Velká and Slovácko, his ideas about the *cimbál*'s significance became more complicated. He was thrilled on his 1892 visit to Velká to hear the "last remnants of the folk harmony . . . preserved in Valachian *cimbál* playing; how my heart danced when all of a sudden I was hearing not only dance music (influenced in harmonic aspects), but also *táhlá* arrangements of songs [*průvody písni táhlých*], songs not meant for dancing; I heard original arrangements [*průvody svéravné*]!" (Janáček 1955 [1893], 188). However, as he learned more the instrument no longer seemed to hold the secrets to the source of old Moravian musical forms and modes. His 1901 introduction to the instrument (Bartoš and Janáček 1901, LXXII–LXXV) makes no mention of the *cimbál* as a possible instrument for unlocking the secrets of old Moravian music. Because it was tuned diatonically, it represented an outside imposition. It would not fit into the "true" forms that he sought to define

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<sup>37</sup> This apparent difference might reflect a change in detail on Janáček's part while transcribing; typically, Janáček's transcriptions are highly detailed.

Moravian music. As Janáček heard more music in south Moravia, his perspective on what he heard as the oldest layers of Moravian music undoubtedly changed.

The summer of 1893 appears to mark Janáček's final significant encounters with the *cimbál* in the field. He did not revive his interest in the instrument again until 1900 and 1906, when his visits were more directed. Janáček continued important activities with folk music, however—particularly his visits to the village of Velká nad Veličkou and his involvement with structured staged performances of rural musicians—that helped form the way that the instrument was perceived in the twentieth century through organized “folkloric” performances.

### **Janáček's Trips to Velká**

The town of Velká nad Veličkou—Velká for short—in the region of southern Moravia often called “Moravian Slovakia” [*moravské Slovácko*], has long been presented as a particularly significant center of folk music. Sitting in the foothills of the White Carpathians [*Bílé Karpaty*], the area is dubbed with the toponym *horňácko* (akin to “highlands,” from the root word *hora*, “mountain”). Anyone from the area could rightly be called a *horňák* (masculine form), but outside the region, the name inevitably calls up associations of musicians, in particularly fiddlers. The region is highly localized and consists of only ten villages (Holý 1963, 66). Velká is the largest village of Horňácko.

The grandfather figure of Horňácko fiddlers [*horňáčtí hudeci*] is Pavel Trn (1841–1917), a nineteenth-century fiddler whose music was transcribed by Janáček during his trips to Velká in the early 1890s.<sup>38</sup> Trn (along with other folk musicians both then and now) is usually described as a *hudec* [fiddler] as opposed to *houslista* [violinist], the

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<sup>38</sup> For further biographical notes on Trn, see Procházková 2006, 298.

second term apparently connoting a conservatory-trained classical musician. Janáček defined *hudec* (plural, *hudci*) as a general term for musician in 1901: “The folk fiddler [*lidový hudec*] has mastered playing whether on violin or on bass, or on bagpipes or *cimbál*” (Bartoš and Janáček 1901, CXXVIII).<sup>39</sup>

Because Velká’s lively musical life fit the “living folklore” paradigm so well, it gained a large place in the imagination of Moravian folklore. Today, in fact, the town holds an almost mythic stature as one of the most musical locations in the region. Janáček’s own writings contributed to the fame of Velká. Late in his life he wrote an impressionistic reminiscence published in 1924 called “Thoughts on a Journey” [*Myšlenky cestou*], which purportedly describes Janáček’s 1875 student trip to visit his uncle in Vnorovy:

The Břeclav zámek, the pharmacist’s apartment on the ground floor in one wing. Across the Morava River to Strážnice. . . . At the foot of mountains, the limpet-like town of Velká: . . .

In Velká the bearded Martin Zeman, slivovice and Trn the fiddler, bagpipes, violin, and *cimbál*—it was my student paradise.<sup>40</sup>

It is easy to visualize Janáček, himself authoritative and lively, moving between the urban space of Brno and the countryside, still home to the “living” folklore he sought.

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<sup>39</sup> Etymologically at least, instrumental music and song seem to be distinct categories in the Czech language world: musicologists point out that *hudba* derives from words for string playing that have, by “language reformers,” gradually come to denote the entirety of musicking; on the other hand, the word *píšťba* is thought to be a wind-playing equivalent of *hudba* that never gained wide usage (Černý 1998, 12). The same root of *housle* also has a verb form: *houst*. Though an archaic verb, it may be the closest approximation of a verb for making music or what Small calls “musicking.” Tellingly, the general word for music, *hudba*, is also derived from *houst*, indicating a primacy of instrumental music in this category rather than song. Genres of vocal music have their own word family, stemming from another root word, including *zpěv* (song, voice), *zpívat* (to sing), *pěti* (to sing, archaic, bookish, or poetic). Both *hudec* and *houslista* are related to the word *housle* (“violin”) and have deep Slavic roots on the string-playing side of this conceptual division; for example it is presumably from the same root as *gusle*, the instrument that accompanies southern Slavic epic singing. Smetana evokes what he thought the archaic instrument might have sounded like at the beginning of his symphonic poem “Vyšehrad” in order to signify an ancient singer of tales recalling ancient Czech and Slavic myths.

<sup>40</sup> Quoted in Procházková 2006, 27.

**Table 3.2.** Janáček’s visits to Velká nad Veličkou. Compiled from Procházková 2006, 292–302.

<i>Date</i>	<i>Songs transcribed</i>	<i>Musicians noted</i>
1891, c. 8–9 September	Kázala mi máti Žalo dívka trávu	Jano Hrbáč, bagpiper 2 unknown violinists, bassist
1892, early September	Co se stalo v nově Já to je ten chodníček Pase Janko krávy Pod dúbavu v černém lesi Rakúský císař pán	Pavel Trn, lead fiddle František Kornút, second fiddle Martin Tomešek, bass
1893, c. 27–29 August	Brodil Janko koničky na vodu Byla jedna sirá vdova Ej, létala laštovička Ked zme šli na hody Muzikanti, co děláte Před našima oknama Před vaši je zahrádečka Sadil sem si višenečku Ten břeclavský mýtný Už je moja mila V tom velickém širém poli [dance “verbuňk”] Proč, kalino	Pavel Trn, lead fiddle František Kornút, second fiddle “Cigan”=Jozka Kubík II, bass
1907, 18 August	Zasadil sem čerešenku	Guests at a funeral wake

This reminiscence seemingly elides impressions from Janáček’s various trips to Velká. Though Janáček says this is a student trip to Velká, current research suggests that contact between Janáček, Zeman, and musicians in Velká did not occur before 1891 (Plocek and Nečas 1998, 21 n. 7). Despite the impressionistic style of this account, it clearly reflects Janáček as the principal actor moving between the urban and educated space of Brno (where he was a student at the time) into the countryside, still home to “living” folklore that might be collected by those aware of its value.

Janáček first heard the *Veličtí hudci* [Velká musicians] in September 1891. This and subsequent visits of Janáček to Velká were organized by the local teacher Martin Zeman, whom Janáček met in Prague at the 1891 Jubilee Exhibition. Janáček was



seemingly enchanted with the musical world he encountered in Velká, and he continually championed Velká musicians for their unique musicality. Janáček visited the town in 1892, 1893, and 1907 (Table 3.2). In 1892 he invited a fiddle group to perform in the city of Brno, and in 1895 he brought the same fiddle group to Prague for an appearance at the Czechoslavic Ethnographic Exhibition.

Janáček's activity in collecting traditional music in Velká was not only significant for Czech folklore. It also marked a decisive moment in Janáček's subsequent career (and fame) as a composer of classical music. Janáček was known better locally in the 1890s as a folklorist than as a composer of operas and instrumental art music. Velká, according to some Czech musicologists, changed this and was a formative source of Janáček's musical expression. Jiří Vysloužil described Janáček's visit to Velká in September 1891 as the "first steps" in "the next meaningful epoch of his [Janáček's] collection research" (1955, 40). Likewise, Jan Racek writes that

the year 1892 was immeasurably significant for Janáček's creations. It was then that Janáček again returned to Slovácko, where he studied and notated folk music [*lidová hudba*] in Velká nad Veličkou and in the surrounding area. He found there an undisturbed tradition of fiddle playing [*hudecká hra*], particularly the fiddle group of the unique *primáš* Pavel Trn. . . . With the recognition of folk life in Slovácko, Janáček opened a new area of folk creative activity [*lidová tvůrčí činnost*], which became the basis for his subsequent artistic output, work directions, and goals. (Racek 1955, 17–18)

Other documents reflect Janáček's contemporary thoughts from his trips to Velká in the 1890s. These confirm that he venerated the area for its music and found it to be in some ways richer than his native north Moravia. In 1892 he wrote, "Without question, the little town of Velká is the most important center of the clean style [*čistý sloh*] of folk music in Slovácko." "Up to this point," he continued, "I have not become aware of similar places even in Valachia or Lachia. The industrial plants, which flooded the terrain

along the Lubina and Ostravice rivers washed away the old-fashioned [*starobylyj*] songs just as they did the dances.”<sup>41</sup> (Procházková 2006, 295).

### Janáček and Folk Concerts

Janáček’s experiences in Velká were significant to his reputation as an organizer of folkloric performances in Brno and Prague. Alongside Janáček’s growing interest in village music, other urban residents in Brno were also interested in (re)acquainting themselves with traditional cultural life. For example, Janáček’s lecture to Vesna in January 1891 has been described as one in a “series of talks on Moravian folk culture” that were taking place at the Besední dům under the auspices of Vesna (Tyrrell 2006, 357).<sup>42</sup> The subsequent ethnographic exhibitions of the 1890s served a similar goal, often described in part as a reaction to the massive urbanization of the late nineteenth century when many families moved from the countryside into larger cities (Sayer 1998, 125). These exhibitions invariably included live musical performances, which were often described as “folk concerts.”

Janáček’s organization of such concerts was part of the discourse of living folkore. For example, he wrote in 1892 that “He who holds only to the notation of folk songs will be lost in their analysis. Only the living folk song can be the material for true scientific research. . . . Collections of folk songs are only important aids” (Vysloužil

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<sup>41</sup> The statement was published in the article “Musical Synopses of Folk Dances in Moravia” [*Osnovy hudební lidových tanců na Moravě*], published in the Czech ethnographic journal *Český lid* 2 (1892–1893): 494–509; republished in Vysloužil 1955, 186–200; JAWO XV/145.

<sup>42</sup> These endeavors typically embodied a nostalgic view of rural life and culture typical of nineteenth-century Romanticism. A similar feeling—that most Czechs remain close to village culture—was suggested in various conversations, in which friends pointed out to me that “even today” many Czechs are “only one or two generations from the village.”

1955, 163).<sup>43</sup> Public live concert performances seemed to be a primary goal of this collection activity. The Vesna lecture, for example, was followed by a performance of the songs and dances that Janáček discussed. Live performances of village music were described by Janáček as *lidové koncerty*, or “folk concerts.”<sup>44</sup> Folk concerts helped to maintain the idea that “the folk” was still “alive” [živý] and fostered the discourse of the “living” folk. Public performances reified and inscribed conceptions of traditional Czecho-Moravian musical life. Janáček’s folk concerts were regarded with interest by audiences, well documented, and viewed as authoritative representations of folk music.

Janáček organized the first “folk concert” in 1892. It was the result of a collaboration with musicians from the village of Velká that he had met in September 1891 on a visit organized by the local teacher Martin Zeman. Janáček wrote to Zeman in Velká in August 1892, “I want to come to your area for about two weeks, . . . in part to arrange with you a guest performance of Horňácko music at a folk concert [*lidový koncert*] that I’ve been invited to direct in November” (exact date uncertain, reprinted in Uhlíková 1994, 82).

Citizens in Brno, the provincial capital and Janáček’s primary place of residence after 1880, appear to have been fascinated with his endeavors. Following Janáček’s visit to Velká, the Brno paper *Moravské listy* reported on 9 November 1892: “Herr Director Janáček lingered during his vacation this year in Velká in Slovakia; there and in the surroundings he found very beautiful national harmonic music [*krásná harmonická*

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<sup>43</sup> The comment is from a review of O. Hostinský’s *36 nářevů světských písní českého lidu ze XVI. století*. It is also translated in Plocek and Nečas 1998, 112. Procházková 2006, 13 suggests here a tacit allusion to Janáček’s unsuccessful efforts to obtain a phonograph to “capture” songs.

<sup>44</sup> I translate *lidový koncert* as “folk concert” in order to avoid the Marxist connotation of “people’s concerts,” an undertone that may have been present yet carries a certain implication of totalitarianism in the post-1945 period.

*hudba národní*]. Five musicians always play: fiddler, *kontráš*, bassist, bagpiper, and *cimbál*.”<sup>45</sup> This was presumably publicity for a public concert that Janáček organized on 20 November 1892 that featured musicians from Velká.

The concert took place in *Besední dům*, a lavish society center. The building is a product of Brno’s relationship with Vienna, but it symbolizes vibrant Czech cultural life, particularly in the face of a German-speaking majority population.<sup>46</sup> The *Besední dům* was built 1871–1873 and designed by the Dutch-Viennese architect Theophil Hansen, who also designed Vienna’s *Musikverein* only a few years earlier (1870). The *Besední dům* is like a smaller version of the *Musikverein*. The *Musikverein* is home to the Vienna Philharmonic, and the *Besední dům* is today the seat of the Brno Philharmonic.

*Musikverein* means “music club,” referring both to the building’s purpose as well as to the group that raised money to build the structure; *Besední dům* means “gathering house,” and it was a cultural club for Brno’s Czech-speaking society.<sup>47</sup> Both structures are located on main streets circling the cultural and historic centers of their respective cities. The *Koliště* [ring road] was built on the site of the city’s mediaeval walls on the model of Vienna’s *Ringstrasse*.

The venue carried significant cultural capital and weight for Brno’s cultivated Czech society. By choosing a venue with such high status, Janáček gave the concert of village musicians an erudite patina. The choice of venue would have indicated to concertgoers that the event was a significant and important cultural affair. Janáček was

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<sup>45</sup> The passage is quoted in Vysloužil (1955, 40 n. 3), who describes the instrumentation as an “interesting group, the bagpiper is particularly surprising” (ibid.). Janáček also transcribed the playing of Trn and his band, and some of the transcriptions were published in Bartoš and Janáček 1901, nos. 1732–1736.

<sup>46</sup> In 1890, a few years before the 1892 concert, over 63,000 of Brno’s 95,000 residents identified themselves as German-speaking, comprising almost seventy percent of the city’s population (Tyrrell 2006, 38).

<sup>47</sup> See also Tyrrell’s explanation and translation of *beseda* (2006, 42).

also well-known as a conductor of the *Beseda* choir, an art music chorus sponsored by the music society of the *Besední dům*. He had parted ways with the choir after the ensemble's managing board was sympathetic to the concerns of a local newspaper review that criticized Janáček. In light of his angry departure from this conducting position, some have speculated that Janáček turned to the study of folk music in retaliation; however, as illustrated above, he had already been active in this endeavor. John Tyrrell points out that Janáček had already laid the foundation for a more in-depth study and characterizes the more intensive folkloric activity that Janáček undertook in the 1890s as a natural pursuit of this interest when other areas had not been satisfying (Tyrrell 2006, 339–340). The concert may thus be seen as an attempt to move Brno's cultural life in new directions.

The concert mixed elements that might be thought of as “folk” music and “art” music.<sup>48</sup> The concert included three selections performed by an orchestra and chorus, including Antonín Dvořák's overture *Domov můj*; a selection of arrangements by Janáček, both choral pieces and instrumental arrangements of folk dances; and finally, a performance by Trn's band of five musicians and seven dancers who doubled as singers (see Tyrrell 2006, 378). The concert made possible a relatively direct comparison of Janáček's arrangement of the song “*Muzikanti, co děláte?*” (“Musicians, what are you doing?”) with the performance of the folk musicians. Tyrrell observes that this

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<sup>48</sup> The relationship of “folk music” and “art music” has been discussed as a common thread in the musical and intellectual life of the Czech lands from the nineteenth century through the interwar period. Jan Racek and Jiří Vysloužil, for example, frame Czech twentieth-century music as connected to the “native traditions.” They see this connection as a source of uniqueness as well as a source of conservatism (Racek and Vysloužil 1965, 191). Janáček's tenure as director of the *Beseda* chorus placed him as an authority in art music circles. He was director of the *Filharmonický spolek Beseda brněnská* in 1876–9, 1880–1, 1883–8, and director of the *Beseda* music school from 1882–9 (Tyrrell 2006, 42).



**Figure 3.1. Pavel Trn, his band, and dancers from Velká nad Veličkou, 1892. Trn is seated at center. Photographed in Brno, 1892. Photo printed in *Český lid* 2 (1893), p. 433.**

“juxtaposition” was “remarkable” and “given much attention in the local press” (Tyrrell 2006, 378).<sup>49</sup>

Stories of the musicians’ unfamiliarity with the “showy” surroundings (Plocek and Nečas 1998, 105) has become the stuff of legend.<sup>50</sup> As Lubor Niederle wrote in a review of the concert, “the Velká band and singers were not and could never be at home among the palms on the stage of the expansive hall, full of golden decorations, lights, and full of the public stiffly watching. . . . If the production is repeated in Prague, then decidedly it must be larger, and the surroundings in which they will sing and dance must imitate their familiar home environment as closely as possible” (Niederle 1955 [1893], 518).

Photographs of the ensemble were taken (Figure 3.1) and published with Niederle’s review in the second volume of the new ethnographic journal *Český lid*. The

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<sup>49</sup> A prose description of the concert is given in Tyrrell 2006, 374–379.

<sup>50</sup> E.g., Tyrrell 2006, 379; Plocek and Nečas 1998, 105; Procházková 2006, 33.

performers appear rather stiff, gathered in a tableau around Pavel Trn. The absence of the cimbalom, also apparent in the photograph, was noticed by the audience. As Niederle wrote in his review, “We unhappily did without the cimbalom, but they said it was not possible to obtain a suitable player. It’s already disappearing in Moravian Slovakia. It will simply have to wait until next year to correct this” (Niederle 1955 [1893], 518). Janáček had hoped to secure the cimbalom player Tomáš Kaláč from Březůvky, as he wrote to Zeman in Velká on 20 September 1892 (Uhlíková 1994, 83). Though not an eyewitness, composer Vítězslav Novák later wrote an account of the concert that included a *cimbál* player (reprinted in Tyrrell 2006, 379). Novák’s description is noteworthy since he reconstructed it from second-hand accounts and did not actually attend the concert; it seems, however, that the close association of the instrument with folk music had filled in its absence in the imagined recreation of the event.

Despite the concert’s shortcomings, however—Niederle described it as a “chance to learn” for the organizers (Niederle 1955 [1893], 518)—the event established Janáček as a concert organizer.<sup>51</sup> The event certainly raised his stature and strengthened contacts that helped him organize the later Moravian musical performances at the Czechoslovak Ethnographic Exhibition to be held in Prague in 1895. This event attempted to fully and faithfully represent the entirety of Czech village culture, which was the subject of intense nineteenth-century concern. The purpose of the Exhibition, claimed the accompanying written guide, was to depict Czech village life “strictly in accordance with reality and truth” (quoted in Sayer 1998, 125). Historian Derek Sayer questions “whether this representation at all accorded with ‘reality and truth’ of either present or past.” Instead,

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<sup>51</sup> Jarmila Procházková, whose modern scholarly work is largely devoted to the study of Janáček’s folklore activities, echoes Niederle’s sentiments and notes that this event “bore witness to [Janáček’s ability as] an able specialist to coordinate a musical concert in cooperation with folk musicians” (Procházková 2006, 33).

he claims, the Exhibition “offered an idealized portrait of a rural mode of life, . . . [and] essentialized a particular conception of Czechness on that basis” (Sayer 1998, 125).

Janáček was closely involved with preparations for the 1895 Czechoslovak Ethnographic Exhibition in Prague. His official role with the Exhibition began when the central planning committee requested his membership on 23 January 1894;<sup>52</sup> he was elected convenor [*jednatel*] of the Ethnographic Division for Music in Moravia [*Národopisný odbor pro hudbu na Moravě*] at its first meeting in Brno on 15 April 1894 (Procházková 2006, 33). He was, however, active prior to this in part through his colleague dialectologist František Bartoš, whom Janáček would later assist with the publication of three volumes of folksongs. Bartoš chaired the Exhibition’s Ethnographic Division for Moravia [*Národopisný odbor pro Moravu*] from December 1892 onward. In his biography of Janáček, John Tyrrell describes Janáček’s contact with Bartoš “the single most important factor in stimulating Janáček’s interest” in folklore (Tyrrell 2006, 340).

The Exhibition plans were elaborate. These began in earnest during 1894, when Janáček began setting up contacts with individuals around Moravia with whom he hoped to coordinate performances at the 1895 Exhibition. On 17 June 1894, Janáček presided at the third meeting of the central organizational committee for the Moravian musical events.<sup>53</sup> It was decided that the groups involved in the performance should perform set programs and rehearse ahead of time. The committee decided that groups from four Moravian regions—Valašsko, Slovácko, Horácko, and Haná—would perform,

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<sup>52</sup> A smaller original committee first met on 15 December 1892, shortly after the concert Janáček organized, presided over by František Bartoš and a Mrs. Koudelová, leader of *Vesna* (Procházková 2006, 33 n. 26).

<sup>53</sup> Janáček’s notes for the meeting are reprinted in Vysloužil 1955, 524–526.



numbering over 200 performers in all. Cimbalom players would be requested in the groups representing Valašsko, from which Janáček hoped to secure appearances from a group in Valašská Polanka and Kozlovice. In order to realize what they described as an “unprecedented folk concert,” the committee declared that each group was to prepare “securely thought out programs” that were to be planned with the “specific agreement between the presenters, rehearsers, and chief organizers” (Vysloužil 1955, 524). These were to be prepared and rehearsed over the summer prior to the performance. Janáček’s chief contacts, and those that he hoped would be responsible for overseeing prior rehearsal, were Zeman in the Slovácko region, Lucie Bakešová in the Brno region, and Jan Lužný in Kozlovice (Procházková 2006, 34).

As with the Brno folk concert, Janáček planned that *cimbál* players would appear at the Exhibition. The most significant portions would be the re-creation of a wedding by the group from Valašská Polanka with the player Jan Míček, a harvest ritual (*dožatá*), and the entertainers at the Valachian pub.<sup>54</sup> The *dožatá* was to feature music and dance, for which Janáček had contacted Jan Richter, a teacher in Petřvald, and Jan Myška, the *cimbalista* he had transcribed in 1888. Janáček recalled Myška as a “skillful” [*dovedný*] musician and the way that the *starodávny* was “beautifully danced” in Petřvald (Vysloužil 1955, 524). “Unfortunately,” he had not received answers from either Richter or Myška, whom he had “inquired as to whether he was still alive” (*ibid.*). In a delayed response, Richter ultimately responded that Myška was “enjoying good health” and with a request that Janáček visit Petřvald in order to renew the “string band” [*hudecká hudba*] (undated letter from Richter to LJ; quoted in Vysloužil 1955, 524 n. 2).

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<sup>54</sup> By the mid-twentieth century, folklorist Karel Vetterl described *dožatá* as a largely symbolic ceremony still practiced in villages in the south of Valachia that consisted of laying a wreath on the recently harvested field to ensure future fertility. Songs and speeches accompanied the event (Vetterl 1955, 116).



**Figure 3.2. Jan Pellár's Valachian Band, 1895. Photographed at the *Národopisná výstava československá v Praze 1895*, in front of the Valachian pub, "Na posledním groši." From left (sitting): Jan Pellár, violinist Josef Trusina, and cimbalom player Dudík; from left (standing): J. Blažek's partner, Rozálie Matějů, and bassist Josef Blažek. Photo printed in *Český lid* 5 (1896), p. 205.**

The Committee's plans culminated in the "Moravian Days," held in Prague from 15 to 18 August 1895. The event began with a festive procession of the folk groups in full dress through downtown Prague to the Exhibition amphitheater.<sup>55</sup> Many took the "Moravian Days" to be the highlight of the Exhibition, one observer: "Their impression was so original, so new, that they will not disappear from the memory of anyone who saw them" (quoted in Brouček et al. 1996, 73). The Exhibition grounds realized Niederle's vision of a "familiar home environment," featuring numerous village settings. This elaborate set included a reconstructed wooden church, farmhouses with live animals, country pubs, and more, all of which were erected in Stromovka Park north of the city.

A Valachian band performed at the recreated "Valachian pub." The band was notable enough to be featured in a full-page portrait in the 1896 volume of *Český lid*

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<sup>55</sup> The program is reprinted in Vysloužil 1955, 527 ff.

(Figure 3.2). The photograph shows an instrumentation consistent with the “national harmonic music” noted by *Moravské listy* in 1892: clarinet, *cimbál*, fiddle, bass, and singer.<sup>56</sup> Janáček secured Jan Pelár’s Valachian Band [*valašská kapela Jana Pelára*] to perform at the “*Na posledním groši*” (“At the last penny”) Valachian restaurant (Uhlíková 2000, 292 and 294). Judging by the vivid audience memories of the Pelár band, one Czech historian described their performance as “demonstrably unforgettable” (Mišurec 1995, 3).

The intensity of Janáček’s folkloric activity declined following the 1895 Exhibition event and the publication *Národní písně moravské v nově nasbírané*, a large collection of folksongs published with František Bartoš (Bartoš and Janáček 1901).<sup>57</sup> Janáček, however, continued to organize collection activities. Until World War I, he was associated with the project *Das Volkslied in Österreich* (Folksong in Austria, *Lidová píseň v Rakousku* in Czech), and following the foundation of Czechoslovakia in 1919, he served the newly organized State Institute for the Study of Folksong as chairman of the Moravian-Silesian working committee.

As Chair of the PVms for *Das Volkslied in Österreich*, Janáček suggested that Moravian songs be performed in Vienna. In a letter dated 4 February 1912, Janáček suggested a short program of Moravian songs to Dr. Karl Wiener, director of the Folksong project (reprinted in Vysloužil 1955, 537). Seemingly in a hurry, Janáček wrote “the good idea arrives at the last. I am designing the following little production of dance songs. . . . They would demonstrate Czech folk *poesie* in Moravia and Silesia in the best

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<sup>56</sup> The songbook that was published to accompany Pelár’s performances at the Exhibition has recently been reprinted, indicating that the Exhibition performances are still of interest to Czech scholars and musicians (Mišurec 1995).

<sup>57</sup> The roots of this collection date to activities with the 1895 Exhibition, and it had originally been intended for publication in conjunction with the Exhibition (see Tyrrell 2006, 404).

light.” With the letter Janáček sent arrangements for piano or harmonium and solo or choral voices (Vysloužil 1955, 537 n. 2) for five songs that he presumably meant to represent a range of Moravian folk music.

The only surviving page of the letter is headed “Concert of Folk Songs [*lidové písně*]” and lays out a suggested program for performance. After four of the songs, he noted in parentheses the regions they were meant to represent: “Starodávny–Lašský” from north Moravia, “Pilařský” from Haná, “Vrtěná” from Moravian Slovakia, and “Krajcpolka” from western Moravia. This letter came shortly before a meeting of a select committee in Vienna from 26–27 February 1912, in which the attendees were informed that a 15,000 crown budget was approved for publication activities (Procházková 2006, 48). Given Janáček’s indication that his idea is coming in late, it seems possible that the concert performance he suggested was meant for the meeting attendees. Jiří Vysloužil suggests that the steering committee [*řídící výbor*] of the *Volkslied in Österreich* project intended to sponsor the concert (Vysloužil 1955, 537 n. 2). The songs that Janáček suggested all came from his own folksong arrangements and would have thus been additional evidence indicating the worth of the work that the Moravian committee was doing.

The range of songs—offering a breadth of dance types as well as a selections from many regions—suggests that Janáček was interested in presenting materials to outsiders that showed a breadth of cultural styles, not only music from narrowly localized areas.<sup>58</sup> The variety is similar to that covered by the 1895 performances, and although

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<sup>58</sup> The project finally dissolved a few years later as wartime events impinged. In early 1917, Janáček decided, as chair of the PVms, to refuse the Institute’s request that all the gathered materials be sent to Vienna (Procházková 2006, 48); instead, the Moravian materials were kept in Brno. The PVms committee voted for “complete autonomy” from the Austrian project in May 1918, and the records were never sent to

there is no record of the performance coming to fruition, the letter shows that Janáček continued to be interested in presenting to non-Moravians the Moravian musical materials that he was collecting.

One of Janáček's final organizational efforts was a performance of Slovakian musician Samko Dudík's band in Frankfurt am Main, Germany, in the summer of 1927. The occasion for Dudík's performance was a festival entitled "Music in the Life of Nations" [*Musik im Leben des Völker*]. Janáček's reason for traveling to Frankfurt was as a featured composer at the fifth summer gathering of the International Society for Contemporary Music (ISCM). His *Concertino* for piano and chamber ensemble was to be featured at a concert.<sup>59</sup> Yet he was well aware of the concurrent festival, at which he helped organize an entire group of Moravian performances. Three invitations, seven tickets, two maps, and a program of exhibitions and concerts remain in his personal papers, which attest to his attendance at and interest in the festival.<sup>60</sup>

Though the ISCM Festival was one impetus for Janáček's trip to Frankfurt (his *Concertino* for piano and chamber ensemble was to be performed),<sup>61</sup> Janáček was closely involved with plans for the "Music in the Life of Nations" Festival. Since 20 January 1919, Janáček had served as chair of the Moravian and Silesian Committee for the newly

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Vienna since Janáček believed that transport to and storage in Vienna would endanger the valuable records (Procházková 2006, 49).

<sup>59</sup> He was in Frankfurt from 27 June to 3 July 1927 and passed through Prague on 26 June. See letter from LJ to Kamila Stösslová, 21 June 1927 (Tyrrell 1994, 123). The *Concertino* was written in 1925 and premiered in February 1927.

<sup>60</sup> These items are at the Janáček Archive in a folder titled "Leoš Janáček v Frankfurtu v r. 1927 u příležitosti mezinárodní výstavy *Musik im Leben des Völker*" (D 110 LJ).

<sup>61</sup> The *Concertino* (1925) contains what Czech musicologists have termed "impressionistic" or "expressivistic" elements that invoke a folk ethos. Such "folk influences" may, in particular, evoke the *cimbál*. This follows the typology laid out by Miloš Štědroň in which Janáček incorporated folk music in his art music according to three broad paradigms—*verismus*, *impresionismus*, and *expresivita* (Štědroň 1998, 19). Štědroň suggests that "expressivism" was a final stage of Janáček's compositional style; expressivism stems from speech melodies and tends towards a "montage [*montáž*] . . . manifested in unexpectedly bravura combinations of these microtectonic objects . . . [and inspired by] laws of contrast, of speech, and of expression, to transfer speech melodies and rhythms into the instrumental world" (ibid., 20).

founded State Institute for the Study of Folk Song in Czechoslovakia [*Státní ústav pro lidovou píseň v Československu*], and he also served on the Institute's main committee headed by the literary historian and folklorist Jiří Horák (see Mišurec 2002, 50 n. 111). Having heard in April that musicologist Zdeněk Nejedlý was urging the Ministry of Culture to send a bagpipe group from the Bohemian town of Domázlitz, Janáček wrote to Jiří Horák, chair of the State Institute for Folksong in Prague, and requested that a Slovakian group be sent. The reason was nationalistic: Janáček suspected that the Hungarian government was sending a "group of Gypsies" who were going to "lend" their songs and playing style from Slovakia;<sup>62</sup> the only way to "confront these lies," he contended, was to send a true Slovakian group to represent Czechoslovakia. Janáček suggested the "Myjava Musicians" [*myjavští hudci*] for this task (LJ to Horák, 27 April 1927; Mišurec 2002, 62; see also Mišurec 1978, 229 n. 66).

The Myjava Musicians were a *cimbálová muzika* led by Dudík. Janáček probably first encountered the Myjava Musicians in late August or early September 1907 while vacationing in the South Moravian spa town of Luhačovice (see Procházková 2006, 341).<sup>63</sup> Janáček was likely to have heard Pellár's band as well as the Myjava Musicians on this trip. Janáček had already made partial transcriptions of a performance by Pellár's band in Luhačovice in August 1903 (Procházková 2006, 273). It is evident that the Myjava musicians were of interest to other cultural elite interested in folk culture. For example, Antoř Frolka recalls that his father may have met with them in Prague: "It's possible that father met with them [*myjavští hudci* and Samko Dudík] in 1903 when he

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<sup>62</sup> In the letter, Janáček placed the word *vypůjčit* (to lend) in quotation marks. In such close proximity with a less-than-complimentary description of "Gypsies," this is probably a euphemism for stealing.

<sup>63</sup> Another possible meeting for Janáček with the Myjava Musicians was at the end of August in 1907 (see Procházková 2006, 341).

was staying in Prague. On 18 March, he participated with Franta Úprka, Milan Rastislav Štefánik, and others, in a Slovácko evening, as I already recalled. Alongside Trn's band from Velká, the band from Myjava also played this time" (Frolka 2000, 163–164).

The details of Dudík's performance was left open. However, Janáček was quick to recommend his former student Hynek Bím (1874–1958), by this time a well-known folklorist, to ensure that the musicians were properly prepared.<sup>64</sup> Writing to Horák in May, Janáček cautioned, "The folk musicians playing is improvisational: formed in the familiar space around the sung melody. . . . When they are taken into foreign lands, it is more often necessary for the fiddlers to practice their improvisations and establish a set program—otherwise, nothing would occur to them at the necessary moment!" (LJ to Horák, 30 May 1927; Mišurec 2002, 65). Mustering his resources, Janáček ultimately secured 31,000 crowns from various government offices and Moravian organizations to send the Myjava Musicians to Frankfurt (LJ to Horák, 4 May 1927, 20 May 1927; Mišurec 2002, 63–64).

This was related to the final folk concert event during Janáček's career. He secured a final appearance of the Myjava Musicians at the *Výstava soudobé kultury* [Exhibition of Contemporary (Czechoslovak) Culture] held in Brno in the summer of 1928, shortly before his death. Writing again to Dr. Horák in Prague, now about publishing his collection of Moravian love songs, Janáček noted: "I was at the Exhibition here yesterday and I spoke with the Myjava Musicians. They would be interested in visiting Prague in October. There are 11 of them" (LJ to Horák, 4 June 1928; Mišurec 2002, 81; see also Procházková 2006, 33). This recommended Dudík's band for a performance at the *Mezinárodní kongres pro lidové umění* [International Congress for

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<sup>64</sup> Bím had also been a member of the Institute for Folksong since 1926.

Folk Arts] in Prague, October 1928. Capitalizing on the Frankfurt success, Janáček included a photograph of the Musicians and made reference to a plan that the State Institute for Folk Song had designed in January 1928 to record the Musicians (see Mišurec 2002, 82 n. 193). Writing to Kamila Stösslová on 10 June 1928, Janáček fondly described the Musicians' performance: "In the afternoon we went to the exhibition. It's magnificent and I'll show you round it too. After the walk we went into a wine bar where the Myjava Musicians were playing; among them two Gypsies" (Tyrrell 1994, 306). Janáček's wrote a letter to Jiří Horák on 4 June 1928, which suggested the Myjava Musicians for a performance at the *Mezinárodní kongres pro lidové umění* in Prague, October 1928.

### **The *Cimbálek*: Playing with Historicity**

Janáček's ethnographic efforts captured the imagination of later musicians. Since the 1950s, interest in older instruments increased, and the *cimbál* has become a visual and aural symbol of the historical past of Moravian folk music. While the majority of nineteenth-century *malý cimbáls* are no longer extant, their memory appears strong. As Kunz notes, during the explosion of interest in folklore after 1945, the *malý cimbál* was "rescued from the position of an instrument playing only 'spicier' rhythms and ensemble texture to one of a melodic, musically scintillating, and a folkloristically attractive instrument" (Kunz 1993a, 18).<sup>65</sup> The Brno Radio Orchestra of Folk Instruments, an institution of growing "folklorism" in post-war Czechoslovakia, made use of the small

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<sup>65</sup> [Oni] schopné ještě hry [male cimbály], reaktivovaly se snahou pozvednout z polohy nástroje pouze „ostřícího“ rytmus a hrajícího continuum k nástroji melodickému, hudebně třpytnému, a folkloristicky atraktivnímu.



instrument after the 1950s in specialized circumstances, mostly to add a surface timbre of “early” music to their orchestral arrangements.<sup>66</sup>

The instrument has been used as a suitable representation for village music culture in museums and exhibitions since the late-nineteenth century. The earliest iconic examples are the concerts that Janáček organized at the 1895 Exhibition of Czechoslovak Folk Culture. In a series of articles in the 1950s, the *cimbálek* was discussed as a historical element of Moravian folk culture (Nehýbl). During my fieldwork, I noted *cimbáleks* in various museum displays, including the “Valachian Museum in Nature” in Rožnov pod Radhoštěm, the Zither Museum in Ostrava, and the musical instrument exhibit at the National Institute of Folk Culture (NÚLK) in Strážnice. The Rožnov museum is a *skanzen*, a style of outdoor museum with reconstructed village buildings that mimic the surroundings of the 1895 Exhibition. The exhibit guide at NÚLK dates “news of the *cimbál* in villages to the mid 1700s” (Kunz 1993c, 17). The NÚLK display of the large *cimbál* (Figure 2.3) also clearly groups the instrument in a display alongside other instruments said to hold historical importance in folk music of the Bohemian Lands.

The station of Czech Radio in Ostrava has also been a center of interest in the historical aspects of the *cimbál*. This has been largely due to the efforts of Jan Rokyta, a musician and editor at the station from 1980 until the present. His interest in Central European Baroque music was shaped by the study of Baroque dances preserved in Slovakian codexes from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries and a career as cimbalomist with the Prague Madrigalists, an early music ensemble, from 1970 to 1980.<sup>67</sup>

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<sup>66</sup> The timbre is usually achieved by featuring spare “open” harmonies (perfect fourths and fifths) and combining the *malý cimbál* with whistles, strings without vibrato, and occasionally drums.

<sup>67</sup> The latter ensemble was important in my fieldwork since it provided an “in” moment with Mr. Rokyta, who had fond memories of his North American tour—particularly a concert in Ann Arbor—while a

Rokyta's experience seems representative of the post-WWII generation's experience with folk culture. He suggested that his musical roots were in work that he had done in the 1950s while collecting songs in the area around the town Kysuce, but also with published song collections and archives:

I of course draw on experience in the field. In the fifties and sixties I recorded and transcribed songs in Kysuce, where the tradition of multipart singing was intensely alive. I worked with collections and also drew a lot on sound recordings in radio archives where my friends (or even I personally) worked. I am also inspired by the playing of younger groups and hold the opinion that it is possible to learn anywhere and from anyone.<sup>68</sup>

Rokyta also alluded to the importance of Janáček's work with the *cimbálek*.

Janáček's name and work was familiar to most people with whom talked during my fieldwork. Many people are not, however, familiar with the extent of his research about the *cimbál*. Rokyta told me that he did not think Janáček's transcriptions influence the way that people play the *cimbál* in contemporary Moravia. However, he has made recordings of all of Janáček's transcriptions on a reconstruction of Josef Kotek's instrument, and these recordings are played often on Radio Ostrava.<sup>69</sup> Rokyta suggested, however, that Janáček's transcriptions were an object of "curiosity" for many players in the present. In a later discussion, he suggested that while Janáček's transcriptions had a limited audience, Janáček's activities were present in the minds of many folk groups.<sup>70</sup> The contemporary Moravian *cimbál* performer Zuzana Lapčíková, for example, describes drawing on the transcriptions as a source for improvisations on the early Moravian use of the instrument.<sup>71</sup>

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member of the Madrigalists. Interview with Jan Rokyta, Sr., 29 November 2006, Ostrava; biographical details were checked against Kunz 1993b.

<sup>68</sup> From a radio interview with Jan Rokyta (probably around 2002), transcript from Rokyta.

<sup>69</sup> Interview with Jan Rokyta, 11 November 2006, Zlín.

<sup>70</sup> Kašava Concert, 11 November 2006, Zlín.

<sup>71</sup> Interview with Zuzana Lapčíková, 19 September 2006, Brno.

Working at Radio Ostrava, Rokyta has been able to record local Moravian groups, produce recordings, and make decisions about what music is broadcast. In addition to recording Janáček's *cimbál* transcriptions at Radio Ostrava, Rokyta has organized recordings of full ensemble reconstructions of a few songs that were transcribed for entire ensembles. Vladimír Holiš, a member of a folklore group in Kozlovice and an aspiring instrument maker, was inspired by these efforts to reconstruct a *cimbálek* like those Janáček had transcribed. Holiš's first instrument was between a small and large *cimbál*, presented in 1991 as a wedding gift to a friend. By the early 2000s, Holiš was producing instruments that he considered faithful copies of the instrument played by František Klepáč at the "U Harabišů" pub, which still stands only a short car ride from his Kozlovice workshop. Measurements for the new instruments were taken from the instrument displayed at the Leoš Janáček Memorial (located at Janáček's former summer house in Hukvaldy), an instrument that Holiš suspects to be the one played by Josef Kotek.<sup>72</sup>

Another example of the small instrument's contemporary position is the 2005 recording *Dobře je s muzigú*. The recording is by Solaň, a *cimbálovka* active since 1990 in the area around Ostrava in north Moravia. The recording was released on the Czech label Indies Records, which distributes many popular music albums. Rokyta served as a producer for the album, which he characterizes as "in a nicely 'earthy and Valachian' style" [*pěkně „po valašsky od země“*]. It is apparent that the instrument appears to be functioning here as an index of "Valachianness," perhaps even in a resurgent local sense of identity. As Rokyta continues, "I think Valachian [language] sounds on this CD almost

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<sup>72</sup> The exact provenance of the instrument is unknown, though it matches Janáček's description of Kotek's instrument. The origins of the instrument at the Janáček Memorial are unclear. Interview with Vladimír Holiš, 5 November 2006, Kozlovice; interview with Jan Rokyta, 18 November 2006, Zlín.

completely the same as it did at its inception and during its full flowering. . . . The musicians don't only play notes, double-stops, and arpeggios anymore; rather, they paint with the sounds of their instruments and the words and syllables of our songs.”<sup>73</sup> The group's small *cimbál* comes from the workshop of Pavel Číp, an instrument maker in the village Zubří who specializes in reconstructing historical instruments (Sobotka 1995). The group performs at many community events, particularly community balls called *plesy* (singular, *ples*). A nod toward the music's presence on a “world stage” was indicated by their performance on 6 January 2007 at the “GloBál,” which was described as an event conceived “somehow globally.” A more historical outlook was indicated on 5 January 2008, when the group described being requested to perform at a “traditional” *cimbál* fancy-dress ball.<sup>74</sup>

The performances discussed in this chapter set the stage for folkloric performances from the 1920s up to the present, which are discussed in following chapters. While folk songs are still described as “alive” in villages, the position of folklore is institutionalized and legitimized through concert performances. If the texts of Janáček's collecting, including the implication of the *cimbál* in concert performance are seen as important in the present, then they have served as a way for musicians to perceive a sense of connection with past musical practices. It seems that the instrument might be compared to the symbolic place of folk song as described by Brno-born novelist Milan Kundera in his last Czech-language novel *Žert* (*The Joke*, originally published 1967): “The folk song or folk rite is a tunnel beneath history, a history that preserves

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<sup>73</sup> *Na tomto CD zní myslím valašština téměř úplně tak, jak jí bylo při zrodu a rozkvětu. . . . muzikanti už nehrají pouze tony, dvojhmaty, a akordy, ale malují svými instrument slabiky a slova našich písničků.* Rokyta's remarks in the liner notes of the CD; Indies Records, MAM272-2. See also Plocek 2003, 24.

<sup>74</sup> From the group's Web site, <http://www.solan.cz/>, accessed 21 January 2008.

much of what wars, revolutions, civilization have long since destroyed aboveground. It is a tunnel through which I see far into the past” (Kundera 1992, 133). I suspect that, in this situation, the *cimbál* has been perceived as an instrument in a tradition of Moravian instrumental music that escaped the ideological fashioning of the Communist period, which are discussed in the next chapter.

## CHAPTER 4

### CULTIVATION AND COMMUNISM: “FOLK CULTURE” AND THE *CIMBÁL*

*Sing naturally, unaffectedly, without wild abandon, do not yell. This is summed up in a single guideline: sing simply! But truly, simplicity and unpretentiousness of expression is given only to great artists and performers in an uninterrupted folk tradition.*

—Karel Plicka, “How to Sing a Folk Song” (1949)<sup>1</sup>

*We find not only that folk song is not dying, as it was alleged earlier, but that it is enlivening more and more and living among the people.*

—Karel Vetterl, 1955<sup>2</sup>

Throughout the twentieth century, the *cimbál* continued to be involved with ideas of Moravian folk culture. Folk culture continued to play a role in nationalist ideologies. The significance of these ideologies, however, went through many radical changes during the political turmoil of Czechoslovakia in the twentieth century. An independent Czechoslovak state was founded in 1919, which lasted until World War II. The Communist Party seized on the goodwill toward the Soviets for liberating most of the Bohemian Lands in 1945 (Korytová-Magstadt 1993, xix), and after gaining a majority in Parliament, seized government control in February 1948. Through this mid-twentieth century, “folk culture” [*lidová kultura*], in which the *cimbál* held a central place in Moravia, continued to hold a position in a pantheon of sanctioned national culture.

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<sup>1</sup> *Zpívejme přirozeně, nehledaně, bez planého pathosu, nekřičme, což vše lze shrnouti v jediný požadavek: zpívejme prostě! Ale právě prostota a nehledanost výrazu je dána jen velkým umělcům a představitelům neporušené lidové tradice* (Plicka 1949b, 355).

<sup>2</sup> *Shledáváme, že lidová píseň nejen že nevymírá, jak se tvrdilo dříve, ale dále a dále se rozvíjí a žije mezi lidem.* From *Folk Songs and Dances of Valašskokloboucko* (Vetterl 1955, 16).

Scholarly efforts to document traditional culture shifted gradually from elucidating national folk essences to defining a state-sanctioned people's culture.

Traditional music and dance, which held great significance in socialist cultural ideology, became proof of the existence of “folk creativity” [*lidová tvořivost*] and were viewed as a tool to shape burgeoning socialist society. It is tempting to see the sudden political changes of 1948 precipitating a sudden break in culture—forced by changing government patronage and social ideologies. The changes in Czechoslovak life after 1948 that appear to stem from new ideals may, however, be based on broader social and political changes that took place over the course of the twentieth century. As this chapter suggests, changes in large instrumental ensembles that appear to be associated with the Communist regime were rooted in pre-existing ensembles and ideologies. World War II was the catalyst for many sudden societal changes rather than Communism.

This chapter explores the relationship of the *cimbál* with folk culture from the early twentieth century until the 1980s. I survey the concept of folk culture as part of a discourse of cultivation, discuss its meanings under the Communist regime, and show how urban ensembles and radio orchestras were based on *cimbálové muziky*. Radio in particular gained stature as a mass media conduit for spreading information about the *cimbál* and folk music. Furthermore, during the Communist period efforts to combine traditional Moravian musics with elite art music and the adoption of art music aesthetics, which drew on an existing discourse of cultivation, were amplified and encouraged.

The second half of the chapter draws on my interviews and conversations with Jaromír Nečas (b. 1922) in the fall of 2006. Nečas is a retired radio editor who worked at Czechoslovak Radio Brno from 1952 to 1986, and he has been an active member of the

Brno “Slovácko circle” folklore group [*slovácký krúžek*] since 1941 (Štěpánek 2003a, 31). He has also been an active cimbalom player, composer, record producer, and self-described ethnomusicologist.<sup>3</sup> Nečas was born in Kyjov, a town about 50 kilometers to the east of Brno. He grew up in Strážnice before moving to Brno to attend the university and conservatory, and graduated in 1951. In addition, data comes from my survey of *cimbál* recordings related to the Brno Radio Orchestra of Folk Instruments [*Brněnský rozhlasový orchestr lidových nástrojů*], typically identified in speech and writing by its acronym BROLN.<sup>4</sup> These were primarily from the collection archived at Czech Radio Brno (formerly Czechoslovak Radio Brno) as well as others held at the National Institute of Folk Culture (NÚLK) in Strážnice.<sup>5</sup>

Social changes such as increasing urbanization were often thought to threaten the pure existence of folk music and many feared that folk music would “die out” as the village—which seemed the natural home of folklore—became less important in social organization. Bohemia and Moravia saw heavy industrialization by the twentieth century, and village populations moved to regional urban hubs for jobs in factory industries. Cities expanded rapidly: between 1870 and 1910, Prague’s population expanded by 154% to reach 640,000 during the same period, while Brno expanded 73% to reach a population of

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<sup>3</sup> Describing oneself as an ethnomusicologist is not necessarily an academic designation in Czech. The word *etnomuzikologie* is used in Czech, but there is no academic establishment of ethnomusicology per se. The academic study of music is typically classed as “musical science” [*hudební vědy*], while what is called ethnomusicology in the U.S. usually falls under the purview of departments of ethnology [*etnologie*], homeland culture [*vlastivěda*], or musical folkloristics [*hudební folkloristika*] (see Poledňák and Fukač 2001, 152). Nečas has, however, taught university courses in Brno.

<sup>4</sup> My discussion of BROLN in particular is thus based on the perspective of an individual. Rice suggests that individual stories are the best ways to explore the relationship of ideology and music. He stresses that cases are individual and particular; thus, “if we want to understand how culture, history, economics, or ideology determine or influence music, we will have to examine how these grand categories are translated into practice through the agency and action of individuals” (Rice 1994, 210); cf. Cooley’s remarks on the importance of individuals to cultural studies (Cooley 2005, 201–202); see also Kennedy 2002, 315 n. 14.

<sup>5</sup> For their assistance with these sources, I particularly thank Jiří Plocek (Czech Radio Brno), Michal Škopík (NÚLK), and Jan Blahůšek (NÚLK).



126,000 (Magocsi 2002, 96). In the 1920s, Czechoslovakia was reputed to comprise three-fifths of the industrial capacity of the prewar Austro-Hungarian empire (Sayer 1998, 163). Traditional venues like yearly planting and harvest festivals, life-cycle ceremonies, village feasts, and religious rituals began to lose their significance. They were gradually supplanted with urban folklore groups and the conscious maintenance of folk culture through cultural exhibitions and festivals. Moreover, with the takeover of government by the Communist party in 1948, folk culture—seen as a non-elite, collective expression—appeared to be the most ideologically desirable form of culture.

Changing political regimes, technology, and social organization affected traditional music and shaped its “folk” ethos. Under Communism, the search for an ideologically acceptable “people’s” music was necessary to replace the elite forms of art music that had been supported by rich landowners and German-speaking nobles throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Folk music was thought to spring from “the people” [*lid*] and voice a cultural essence of the “nation” [*národ*]. The Communist government also sponsored large state folklore ensembles and festivals. Zelinska-Ferl confirmed that most folklore groups “enjoyed considerable support from the Communist Party and the state-run media” (Zelinska-Ferl 1997, 81; also Beckerman 1996). A few folklore groups existed without this patronage, but this seems to suggest that folklore’s ideological compatibility with Communism was such that it was not deemed necessary to monitor all such groups.

Activities described as “cultivation” are often valued by Czechs. The blurred relationship between people’s music and art music was often accomplished by describing folk culture in terms more associated with high culture. In consequence, the interpretation

of *lid* slightly changed from an implication of “national” in the nineteenth century toward a suggestion of a collective “people’s” culture throughout the twentieth century. While the adjectives *národní* [national] and *lidový* [folk or people’s] appear to have had practically the same meaning in the nineteenth century, by the Communist period most traditional culture was described as *lidový*. “People’s culture” meshed with Communist ideals, particularly the championing of the “new socialist man” [*nový socialistický člověk*]. While Communist society was thought to be based on the collective, it was maintained by individuals, and therefore the idea of the “folk” or “people” began to shift from a Herderian view in which the folk were an undifferentiated, uneducated mass that produced *poesie* expressing a national essence toward a new view in which the individual socialist man was charged with upholding “folk creativity” [*lidová tvořivost*] as a proof of national culture.

Radio broadcasting was also important. With Communist support, the Brno radio station developed a large instrumental ensemble that was based on the existing model of the *cimbálová muzika*. In addition, radio stations seemed to encourage the professionalization of folk musicians by broadcasting heavily rehearsed performances and complicated arrangements. Musicians were largely educated at conservatories. They also made it possible for rural festivals such as the Strážnice Folk Festival in southern Moravia to be heard by larger audiences in urban settings. What is notable in the case of large festivals and radio broadcasts in Moravia is that they are often not presented for “outsiders” but rather for Czech and Slovak audiences. As with the Czechoslovak Ethnographic Exhibition of 1895, these performances are a way for locals to reconnect with their own roots. As a broadcast media, radio had the power to make cultural forms

accessible to everyone and to foster what Susan Squier has termed “communities of the air” (Squier 2003).

Finally, urban ensembles formed. Musicians from villages in particular regions often congregated in urban *krúžky* or “circles.” Such groups typically were focused around the songs or dances of specific regions. These groups, which were spaces for social interaction at regular meetings, recreated some of the intimate sociability idealized in village culture. Many of these groups—including the *krúžek* in Brno—were still active during my fieldwork, and songs, music, dancing, and instrumental performance continue to be important in these groups.

The *cimbál*, at least by the mid-twentieth century, was closely associated with folk music and was easily visible in staged performances. It represented a nexus in discourses about folk music. *Cimbál* players and musicians were often at the center of efforts to disseminate Moravian folklore as well as to define what a Moravian musical identity was. It is useful to consider here a few basic definitions as a way to introduce “folklore.”

### **Folk Music and Ideology**

Large-scale folkloric performances, the stereotypical emblem of folklorism, were heavily supported by the Communist regime, but in Czechoslovakia they were historically preceded by similar events. As was seen with Janáček’s “folk concerts,” folklorism was common under other political systems as well. Likewise, Jančář claims that the first overtly “ethnographic” [*národopisný*] performance in Moravia might be the participation of ethnographic groups from various Moravian estates in a program in

Olomouc on 19 August 1845 to celebrate the opening of the first Prague–Olomouc railway line (Jančář 1995, 21).

Despite the growing study of musical folkloristics in the twentieth century, there was a lingering idea that anything described as *folklor* was automatically inauthentic (Holý and Sirovátka 1985, 76; Bausinger 1970, 217). This idea was associated with German thinkers and favored by some Czech speakers (ibid.). Adherents to the idea that *folklor* was inauthentic included Vladimír Úlehla, an influential postwar folklorist whose ideas were influential in Moravia and particularly in the Brno intellectual community and Brno radio. Events based on “traditional” expression were often labeled folklorism, or “stylized folklore” [*stylizovaný folklor*] (Holý and Sirovátka 1985, 77). This included events such as structured and rehearsed performances, festivals, and radio broadcasts. Similarly, the urban folklore groups taken up in this chapter also instantiated ideologies surrounding folklore and the *cimbál* through the twentieth century.

### *Folk Music and Cultivation*

Maintaining a high level of education and cultural knowledge has a positive value in Czech culture. In general, greater cultural education brings prestige and respect in Czech culture. This is tied to cultural beliefs about the “culturedness” [*kulturnost*] of Czechs (Holy 1996, 85–87).<sup>6</sup> Where folk culture is concerned, it has been the province of Czech specialists—nationalists, intellectuals, folklorists, and other “informed persons”—to maintain the correct connection between the cultural nation and its roots. Even the 1895 Ethnographic Exhibition in Prague was interpreted as a didactic effort to put urban Czechs back in touch with their rural roots (Sayer 1998, 125). This takes place through

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<sup>6</sup> For further elaborations of about the tradition of high culture and education in Czech culture see Holy 1996, 83, 85, 114, 136.

*vzdělání* [education, training], which places value on the prospect of cultivation through cultural education and intellectual traditions. This suggests that one justification for the combination of folk music, in this case traditional music featuring the *cimbál*, with the Czech art music traditions was to raise the level of folk culture. Combinations of folkloric music with art music, therefore, allowed individuals and cultural institutions to tap into the cultural emphasis on cultivation while remaining plebeian rather than elite. The discourse of cultivation [*vzdělání*] continued in the twentieth century. At this time, educated experts were charged with the responsibility of keeping Czechs in touch with the roots of folk culture.

Cultivation is also linked to moral uplift and nationalism. The verbal noun *vzdělání* [education, training] is related to the verbs *vzdělat* and *vzdělávat*, both of which imply education as well as improvement; thus, they connote a link between education, moral edification, and cultural uplift. A person described as *vzdělaný* is educated, cultured, cultivated, and sophisticated while someone who is *málo vzdělaný* is uncultured. Self-described *vzdělávací činnost* [educational activity]—such as concerts, lectures, or seminars about folk culture—were part of the activities of cultural institutions. Janáček’s lectures to the *Vesna* society may be described under this rubric, and the value of such activities remained strong throughout the twentieth century and into the present.<sup>7</sup>

Cultivation was institutionalized in the structure of the national radio administration. Since the 1930s, Czechoslovak radio had been organized into four main departments [*oddělení*]: music [*hudební*], announcing [*slovesné*], reporting [*reportážní*],

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<sup>7</sup> Holy links the importance of *kulturnost* among intellectuals to the importance of proving Czech cultural value in the face of German cultural accomplishment; in everyday discourse, however, he suggests that this discourse is seen in relation to Slovaks, who are constructed as an uncultured and ahistorical foil to complement Czech accomplishments (Holy 1996, 92).

and cultivation [vzdělávací] (Ješutová 2003, 245). In 1952, Czechoslovak Radio was reorganized into four editorial divisions—politics, literature and drama, music, and youth programming (ibid., 245–246). The reorganized music department included subdivisions for folk creativity as well as “music cultivation” [redakce hudebněvzdělávací] (Ješutová 2003, 246). The reorganization also initiated “ideological guidelines” that in the case of music programming placed “significant emphasis on the presentation of progressive traditions of folk art. . . . Folk music steadily received more broadcasting time” (Ješutová 2003, 282). Each department was headed by a “reliable” [spolehlivý] party member who had “learned” [učetl se] and understood all party policies (Ješutová 2003, 245).

This emphasis on folk music, however, was connected to directions that were present prior to the Communist government. These were often linked to cultivation efforts. Karel Vetterl initiated the broadcast of “folk orchestral concerts” beginning in 1935 (Ješutová 2003, 492).<sup>8</sup> Radio programs were published in advance in national newspapers such as *Lidové noviny* (published in Brno). In a survey of the paper from May 1937, I found weekly “folk concerts” [*lidové koncerty*] were broadcast nationwide in Czechoslovakia by the radio orchestra in Ostrava (e.g., *Lidové noviny*, 23 May 1937, p. 13) and folk groups were also featured (e.g., *Lidové noviny*, 22 May 1937, p. 16). In addition, programs such as the weekly “Course in Music Education” were broadcast throughout Czechoslovakia in the 1940s (Ješutová 2003, 227).

Urban populations were often considered to be out of touch with indigenous folk culture, and it was the duty of Czech specialists to maintain the proper connections between national culture and traditional culture. Dissemination of this knowledge is often

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<sup>8</sup> Vetterl, who later gained renown as a folklorist and director of the EÚB (under various names prior to 1993), worked as a music editor with the Brno radio station from 1928 (Ješutová 2003, 111); he ultimately became director of the entire station before leaving in 1942 (Ješutová 2003, 493).

couched in terms of cultural education and, with a slightly paternalistic tone, retains a flavor of moral uplift and edification. For example, the photographer Karel Plicka, known for his depictions of village culture, deplored the state of singing in an essay titled “How to Sing a Folksong.” “Today’s generation has theoretically grown farther than the previous one, but it only sings a little bit and does not enjoy it” (Plicka 1949b, 367).

Plicka suggests that this is in part due to the urban nature of modern society:

In the best case, the city man can naturally only imitate folk delivery. And we don’t want that. Just as we will never master the dialect of an area in which we did not grow up, so we cannot sing a song faithfully to its native delivery. It is impossible to sing everything even from the most precise transcription. After all, that is only a photographic picture of the song, and the song’s inner life, pulse, and the scent of the terrain remain unseen.<sup>9</sup>

Folk music was also fashionable, and already garnered much interest before the Communist government seized power. Vojtěch Brada, the first teacher of *cimbál* at the conservatory in Kroměříž, is an example. Brada’s musical education [*hudební vzdělání*] was at a teacher’s college. However, while teaching in Slovakia during the 1930s he apparently gained interest in folk culture. “He became fascinated with *cimbál* playing after 1945 during the period of spontaneous boom of musical folklorism and essentially became responsible for the development of the then-blossoming special-interest musical activities” (Kunz 1993b, 45).<sup>10</sup> With his experience as a pianist and a teacher, Brada was soon able to establish the *cimbál* as an instrument in the conservatory, a bastion of music cultivation and symbol of high art music.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> *Městský člověk může přirozeně lidové podání v nejlepší případě jen imitovat. Ale to nechceme. Jako nikdy neovládeme nářečí některého kraje, jsetliže jsme v něm nevyrostli, tak ani nezapíváme píseň věrně v domácím podání. An z nejpřesnějšího zápisu nelze vyzpívati všechno. Vždyť je to jen fotografický obraz písně, při čemž její vnitřní život, tep a krajová vůně zůstávají utajeny.*

<sup>10</sup> *Ke hře na cimbál se přiklonil po roce 1945 v období spontánního rozmachu hudebního folklorismu a podstatně se zasloužil o rozvoj tohoto tehdy kvetoucího zájmového hudebního hnutí.*

<sup>11</sup> The next chapter discusses the integration of the *cimbál* into the conservatory curriculum in more detail.

### *Folk Music and Communism*

The belief that folk music could serve as a tool with which to educate society continued after 1948, but folk music took on new ideological implications as the bearer of “people’s culture” [*lidová kultura*]. Folk music was positioned as proof of the vigor of the new society. According to one triumphant account published in the West, “After 1945, hundreds of thousands of people—especially the young—turned their attention to folk song, music, and dance. . . . Hundreds of ensembles, including people from all walks of life, foster folkore traditions wherever they may exist” (Markl and Karbusický 1963, 28). In postwar society, folk music was thought to be “taking on a new social function. Contemporary groups of folk instrumentalists do not play folk music merely for their own enjoyment. They want to give pleasure to others with their music, and to educate them” (Chlíbec 1960, 49). Thus, new developmental approaches to the study of folklore found correspondences between expressive culture and “economic changes in the village, new relationships between the people, and so on” (*ibid.*).

The new ideology of folk culture stressed agency and a developmental approach. In a survey of Czechoslovakian folk music, it was declared “unsatisfactory to speak of ‘genuine’ and ‘pseudo’ folk music; rather should we speak of individual stages in the course of a development” (Markl and Karbusický 1963, 29). Folk music was linked with elite musics in this view. If art music was another “stage of development,” it was thought natural that a national music should combine elements of folk and art music. “Contemporary folk music is comparatively strongly influenced by art music. It would be wrong to consider this as harmful to folk music or undesirable” (Chlíbec 1960, 48).

Music scholarship often disseminated such ideologies. Slovakian ethnomusicologist Oskár Elschek (1991) has noted the strong European traditions of



scholarship about the history of folk music and the classification of folk songs. An example is Walter Wiora's attempt to map the history of German folksong from Antiquity to the present (Wiora 1965, 189–191). Elschek, however, has also noted that in Eastern Europe “governmental, scientific, and cultural policies as well as ideology influenced and determined both the aims and the results of [ethnomusicological] research” (Elschek 1991, 92).

The relationship between Communism and music is clearly drawn in Czech musicological scholarship of the 1950s. Remarks from the period suggest that scholars attempted to develop research projects that were ideologically in accordance with Communist values. These often took the shape of rigorously positivist studies that were, perhaps, more easily described as ideologically neutral in their results and thus more easily used to fit political agendas. For example, rather than focusing on social aspects, scholarship in folk song was often quantitative: the goal was to catalog and classify all the melody types of Moravian folk song (Vetterl 1965, Vetterl and Hrabalová 2003), to map the “vertical” and “horizontal” elements of Moravian folk song and thus theorize the historical development and relationship of harmony and melody (Trojan 1980), or to conduct detailed surveys of all possible folk songs existing in narrowly defined locales (Vetterl 1955, Vetterl 1960). Generally, these studies seem to go beyond gathering data in a positivist spirit and approach the heavily scientific terminology of systematic musicology (see Seeger 1951). Dušan Holý's article on the “metrorhythmical analysis” of folk songs is an example of the rigorous scientific approach: he suggests that “folklore specialists” should be assessing folk music “objectively” and proposes “the use of

mathematical methods” to uncover “the laws of ornamentation” in dance-music of the Hornácko region in south Moravia (Holý 1965, 263).<sup>12</sup>

The viewpoint is also observed in a largescale song collection effort of the 1940s described as “musical folkloristic edition” based on “complex research of a specific ethnographic area” [*komplexní výzkum určité národopisné oblasti*] aimed at “scientific clarification” [*vědecké ozřejmění*] (Vetterl 1955, 9). The publication was described by editor Karel Vetterl as a product of a team of researchers who conducted scientific field collection in a localized region of Valachia, “fully conscious of the reality that folk song is not possible to study only from the perspective of melody and form; it is also necessary to consider its thematic contents given in individual textual patterns” (Vetterl 1955, 9).<sup>13</sup> There is little mention of social context, although folk song was clearly regarded as a product of rural culture and agrarian non-industrial society; it is obvious that the literary paradigm still held considerable influence.<sup>14</sup>

Folk music was often referenced as proof of *lidová tvořivost* [folk creativity]. This expression is often translated as “folk art,” but I have chosen to translate it as “folk creativity,” since it corresponds more closely to *lidové umění*.<sup>15</sup> The concept of *lidová tvořivost* indicates that the nineteenth-century conception of national essences was still, in some senses, propagated. There is a significant change, however. If folk culture was

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<sup>12</sup> These studies are comparable to contemporaneous projects undertaken by American scholars, including Bronson’s study of the Child Ballads (Bronson 1969), Lomax’s theory of cantometrics (Lomax 1976), and Seeger’s championing of the melograph for objective transcription (Moore 1974). In an effort reminiscent of Seeger’s melograph experiments, Holý (1963) used a Pegelschreiber machine to transcribe and analyze small rhythmic variations with accuracy up to three-thousandths of a second.

<sup>13</sup> *Vydavatelé této sbírky jsou si zároveň plně vědomi skutečnosti, že lidovou píseň nelze studovat jen po její stránce hudebně nápevné a formové, nýbrž že je třeba zabývat se jí i po stránce obsahově tematické, dané jednotlivými textovými předlohami.*

<sup>14</sup> The edition does, however, suggest that folk songs may be seen as a window into the “expression” [výraz] and “customs” [zvyky] of “folk life” [*lidový život*] and thus a “source of historical knowledge” [*pramen historického poznání*] (Vetterl 1955, 10).

<sup>15</sup> The latter appears to correspond to the German expression *Volkskunst*.

viewed as a product of creativity, it was no longer a static property of a collective, but a dynamic product of complex social processes. By shifting the focus toward creativity, “the people” are given agency in the process of creation. Folk culture is no longer a timeless, primordial essence but a product of particular individuals and temporalities.<sup>16</sup> References to “new folk music” began to appear in folklore studies (e.g., Chlíbec 1960). In addition, the combination of folk and art music was an ideologically acceptable practice. This effected a rise in the status of folk music to that of art music while maintaining the prestige of people’s culture.

In Czechoslovakia, collectivization and the state takeover of property took place to a greater extent than any other Eastern Bloc country.<sup>17</sup> Under Communism, Czechoslovak institutions, as in other Communist countries, often had a penchant for large instrumental ensembles.<sup>18</sup> Large music and dance ensembles were often sponsored by the state through radio stations and other institutional organizations. Czechoslovak Radio alone employed 464 musicians in large ensembles by 1948. The largest of these was the Symphonic Orchestra at Radio Prague with 96 members, and among the nine other dedicated orchestras and choirs that the radio supported, none were under 30 members (Ješutová 2003, 229). Such ensembles may be seen as performative emblems of socialist collectivization. Ironically, large professional-level music ensembles demanded specialist musicians and the expansion of folk ensembles to orchestral size. The resulting

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<sup>16</sup> Primordialism is outlined (and heavily critiqued) by Appadurai 1996, 140.

<sup>17</sup> British-educated anthropologist Ladislav Holy writes that, “although many countries of the socialist bloc retained at least vestiges of a private sector, . . . all private businesses in Czechoslovakia—including services, shops, and artisans’ workshops—were fully liquidated and the collectivisation of land . . . was completed by 1960” (Holy 1996, 19).

<sup>18</sup> Other studies of similar ensembles in eastern Europe have focused on Bulgaria (Buchanan 2006, Rice 1994); there has also been significant attention to similar ensembles in Central Asia (e.g., Beliaev 1975, Levin 1980, Djumaev 1993, Frolova-Walker 1998, Levin 2002).

folk music arrangements and compositions often drew on “elite” art music rather than plebeian folk music.

A good example of this tension is found in a description of BROLN. The orchestra was first charged with a mission to attain a “professional standard of perfection, expertly based on the stylistically exact interpretation of folk song and music” (BROLN 1977, 115). On one hand, BROLN’s singers only sang songs from the regions where they lived or came from, thus suggesting a value placed on local authenticity; on the other hand, instrumentalists were “professionally trained” in urban Czech music schools (ibid.). The cultivation and refinement of folk music was also part of the orchestra’s mission. In a publication honoring the orchestra’s 25th anniversary in 1977, the “main task and aim” of BROLN was “the endeavour to raise folk musical art to the level of the other fields of national musical culture and to ensure for it a rightful place in broadcasting and on the concert platform” (BROLN 1977, 116).

Part of the success of Czechoslovak socialism may have been rooted in the generally positive value placed on collectivism in Czech culture even before 1948. Already valued collective entities, particularly the Czech nation and the folk, provided cultural formations onto which Communist collectivization could be mapped. Collectivism therefore comprised a powerful social discourse. Holy notes that the term “society” [in Czech, *společnost*] was the term used to “construct the collective identity which was the subject of the political and economic endeavour and in whose name and on whose behalf it was carried out” (Holy 1996, 20). For socialist society to succeed, it was deemed necessary to educate the “new socialist man” whose job, as Ladislav Holy described it, was to make society the “active subject of history” (Holy 1996, 20). This

contrasts with earlier conceptions of the folk as an undifferentiated mass, typically embodied by Romantic idealizations of village life (see Lass 1989). Czech scholars typically trace conceptions about folk art to Herder's concept of the *Volk*. Herder's idea was generally taken to signify national essences that were reputed to be expressed by the undifferentiated masses through folk *poesie* and a general *Wirkung*, or "affect" (Clark 1969). In Czech ideologies about the folk in the 1950s, the individual appears to have been recognized as exercising creative agency.<sup>19</sup>

Folk creativity, despite seeming to emphasize the individual, may be seen as a discourse that perpetuated collective ideals in socialist society. Music was seen as one area that could accomplish the re-education of the new socialist man. This was expressed most clearly in musicological writings. For example, ethnologist Karel Vetterl wrote in a 1955 edition of songs from an area in northern Moravia: "Our people's democratic republic has a particular understanding for folk creativity in the widest sense of the word and in folk song; in that living and true expression of the spiritual and material culture of the folk, [our republic] sees an important means for the cultural education of the new socialist man" (Vetterl 1955, 18). In his 1955 essay, "The Musical Folkloristic Work of Leoš Janáček," musicologist Jiří Vysloužil justified the study of Janáček's works because they celebrate folk creativity:

[An] unusually significant and decisive impulse [for continuing scholarship on Janáček's folkloric activities] was brought by our national democratic revolutions in 1945 and February 1948, which underscored and enlivened to a new level the development of our folk creativity. This had a vigorous influence on Janáček's

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<sup>19</sup> This appears somewhat ironic as the sanctioned political ideology prized the collective over the individual; however, individuals exercising folk creativity were, of course, charged with forwarding overarching national art. Rice suggests three different reasons that folk music was a valuable ideological tool for the Communist regime around the same time in Bulgaria: new political policies that elevated the folk, the charge to forge a new society, and the pleasing aesthetics of folk music (Rice 1994, 181–182).

life as a composer, on the awakening of his interest in arranging folk songs, and even Janáček's study of the theory of folk song. (Vysloužil 1955, 30–31)<sup>20</sup>

A final suggestion that the Communist government was willing to support folk culture was the short-lived manufacture of large cimbaloms in Czechoslovakia. This was an effort initially begun through the Brno instrument manufacturer Josef Lidl in 1947. Lidl's factory consulted with local "expert" players Antoš Frolka, Jaromír Běhůnek, and Štefan Čikoš who tested early models. Between 1950 and 1956, the company produced about 100 instruments under the *Primas* brand, many of which are still played throughout Moravia. Although the plan was initially thought to have good financial prospects, the endeavor was not supported for long. By 1960 production was stopped because the instrument did not fit into the "economic management plan."<sup>21</sup> Another reason that the *Primas* instruments were not accepted was that they did not live up to folk expectations. Jan Rokyta described the instruments:

After the War—the Second World War—we wanted to encourage things [i.e., growing interest in folklore], and we began to manufacture *cimbáls* ourselves in our Republic under the *Primas* or Lidl brands. These instruments differed from the Hungarian ones in that they had a black finish with gold letters; the *Bohák* [successor to Schunda's brand], on the other hand, was always basic wood that had a brown finish with decorative carvings, which was attractive. They tried making those black *cimbáls* for one or two seasons and then abandoned it. People didn't like it [the black finish] very much. It was too sad [*smutný*].<sup>22</sup>

The rural aesthetic of "authentic Czech folklore" may also help to explain the ideological acceptance of folklore under Communism. Beckerman notes resonances

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<sup>20</sup> *Neobyčejně závažný a rozhodující impuls přinesla naše národně demokratická revoluce v roce 1945 a Únor 1948, které podnítily a oživily v nebývalé míře rozvoj naší lidové tvořivosti. To mělo čínorodý vliv na uživotnění Janáčkovy skladatelského odkazu, na zvýšení zájmu o Janáčkovy úpravy lidových písní a spolu i o studium Janáčkovy teorie lidové písně.* Such sentiments strike those who escaped from Communist Czechoslovakia as ingratiating and dated. They also draw comment from Czechs in the present. A passage of marginalia from the Moravian Provincial Library sticks in my mind. Next to this passage a penciled-in comment addressed the writer, "Way to go, Jirka!" The comment was presumably written after 1989 and intended in an ironic tone to poke fun at the scholarly effort to tow the party line.

<sup>21</sup> This paragraph is based on Kunz's account of instrument makers significant in Moravia (Kunz 1993b, 59).

<sup>22</sup> Interview with Jan Rokyta, 11 November 2006, Zlín.

between Czech ideas about the folk, the pastoral, and authenticity in an essay focused on the writing of Milan Kundera (Beckerman 1996). He notes two qualities of the idealization of the Czech countryside. First, time is circular rather than dynamic, and thus the village is unchanging, perhaps even stuck in time (37). Second, the pastoral embodies the “recollection of a Golden Age or Paradise” (37). These idealizations of the pastoral, claims Beckerman, are “largely dreamed up by city folk” (37). His observation comes from a statement by Tereza, a character in Kundera’s novel *The Unbearable Lightness of Being*:

As long as people lived in the country, in nature, surrounded by domestic animals, in the bosom of regularly recurring seasons, they retained at least a glimmer of that paradisiac idyll. [To city folk], life in the country was the only escape open to them, because only in the country was there a constant deficit of people and a surplus of living accommodations. No one bothered to look into the political past of people willing to go off and work in the fields or woods. (quoted in Beckerman 1996, 38)

The sentiment springs from a Romantic notion that the purity of Nature is unassailable. From this perspective, the countryside is not only an idealized location, but also a place that escaped the scrutinizing eyes of the Communist government. The notion appears to be based on the presumed purity of the countryside, which as a result is constructed as a place that even the Communist functionaries could not question.<sup>23</sup> Thus, activities associated with the pastoral were beyond suspicion in the eyes of the government.<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> The situation is humorously captured in Jiří Menzel’s 1985 film *Vesničko má středisková* [My Village, Regional Center]. The title suggests the government administration in which villages were ranked in regional hierarchies. One subplot of the film involves a high-ranking Communist official who plots to obtain vacation rights for a house in the village by duping the village idiot into exchanging his cottage for a modern apartment and administrative job in Prague. The village, needless to say, comes off as the more desirable place to live.

<sup>24</sup> Ironically, the *chalupa* [country cottage] has been interpreted as one of the only personal spaces of Communist Czechoslovakia in which families and friends could gather away from the prying eyes of the state (Hoffman 1993, Beckerman 1996). This countryside culture, which idealizes a “back to nature”

## Slovácko Circles

The main link between village folklore and urban ensembles were social gatherings described as *krúžky* (plural).<sup>25</sup> A *krúžek* (singular) is an informal association of musicians and singers that gathers regularly to talk, sing, dance, and listen to music. The word suggests a social gathering in which the setting is intimate enough for all attendees to face each other and engage in face-to-face interaction, perhaps reminiscent of the intimate social sphere attributed to village life. These groups, however, are associated with urban locales such as Prague and Brno. *Slovácké krúžky* are named after the Slovácko region in southern Moravia. These groups usually meet once a month to celebrate the culture of Slovácko: attendees play music, dance, sing songs, share wine, and watch special performances by local folklore groups.<sup>26</sup>

It is thought that *krúžky* were started by youth who left villages to pursue education or jobs in larger urban areas.<sup>27</sup> The development of such groups precedes the advent of Communism and appears to be rooted in late–nineteenth-century social changes, particularly growing urbanization. During this time many villagers moved to cities to pursue education or employment. Thus, this significant change in the setting of traditional music preceded the major political changes ushered in by the Communist takeover.

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aesthetic and places emphasis on maintaining small gardens, is distinct from the collective village culture on which the idea of folk culture rests.

<sup>25</sup> *Krúžky* are literally “little circles,” which suggests the intimate and conversational aspect of an informal social gathering. The spelling and pronunciation suggest a rural dialect rather than the standard Czech *kroužek*.

<sup>26</sup> The area of Slovácko, comprising southern and southeastern Moravia along the Slovakian border, is occasionally described as Moravian Slovakia in English, though I maintain the Czech designation. I suspect that “Moravian Slovakia” is a historical holdover from the Austro-Hungarian period when Slovakia was a part of Hungary and occasionally termed “Hungarian Slovakia” (for example, in František Sušil’s forewords to his song collections).

<sup>27</sup> I gained this insight in a conversation with Jan Miroslav Krist, one-time director of the Brno *slovácký krúžek*, at a meeting of the Brno *krúžek* in May 2004; it is corroborated in other accounts (see Štěpánek 2003b).



Czech scholars often describe these groups as “folkloric” (e.g., Plocek 2003, 52) or as examples of folklorism, which implies that they are relatively recent venues for the presentation of folklore outside its regular habitat. Such groups are not thought to be in authentic “folk surroundings” [*lidová prostředí*]. In other words, the rural village context is important in defining music as “folk.” Folklorist Vladimír Úlehla suggested in the 1940s that it was necessary for urban residents to go to the country to experience living folklore (Úlehla 1949, 11), but almost seventy years later, *krúžky* seem to be as lively as village folklore groups.<sup>28</sup> The content of both sorts of groups did not strike me as substantively different, although there are differences in setting.

Such urban groups, in fact, appear to be the most frequent setting in which city dwellers encounter and experience folk culture from the mid-twentieth century to the present.<sup>29</sup> Many *krúžky* boast a long history. The Prague *krúžek* has been in existence for more than a century, the Brno *krúžek* traces its roots to 1907 and 1908 (Hasil 2003, 7), and others have existed in small towns that would resemble villages to a casual observer. A group described as a *krúžek* was active in Strážnice, a small border town with Slovakia, as early as 1912 (see Úlehla 1949, 97).

The *cimbál* has played a central role in *krúžek* ensembles. The inclusion of the *cimbál* has been characterized as a conscious preservation effort aimed at historical continuity. *Cimbál* player Antoš Frolka—who Vladimír Úlehla (1949, 774) described as a “significant” *cimbál* player and was later a member of the Brno *krúžek*—described the playing of the Strážnice *krúžek* as follows: “We endeavor to be the most like the old

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<sup>28</sup> Úlehla himself was a chemist who taught at the university in Brno.

<sup>29</sup> The transmission of village traditions in urban settings has also been described as “secondary urbanization” (see Rice 1994, 227, 341 n. 10). Likewise, Czech ethnologists often discuss the “second existence” [*druhá existence*] of folklore and folklorism, which is thought to be the conscious performance of folkloric materials under the guidance of informed professionals (Procházková 2006, 17).

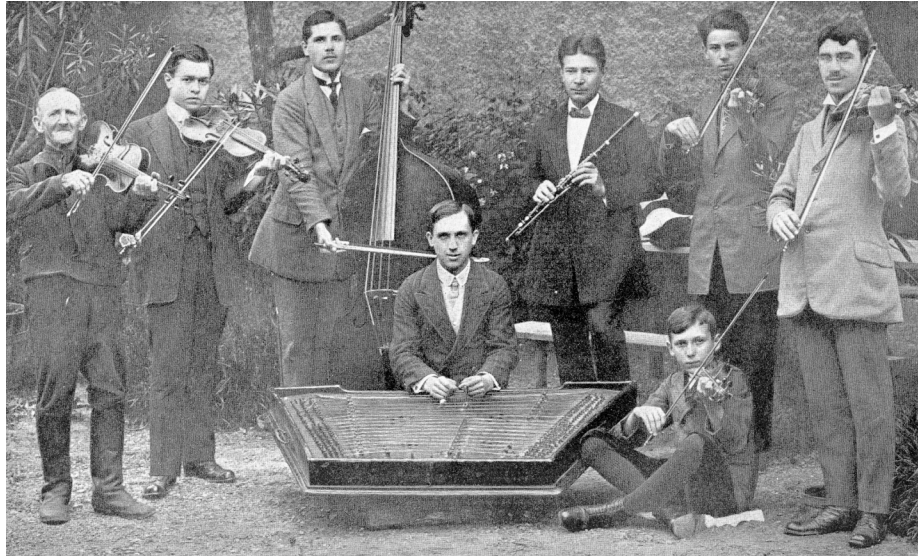


Figure 4.1. *Krůžek* band in Strážnice, c. 1917. Standing, from left: Jiří Pánek, unidentified violinist, bassist, and wind player, *primáš* Jan Horný, *primáš* Arnošt Reis; seated: at *cimbál*, Jan Poláček, and *tercař* František Smutný. Photo by J. Chlub, reprinted in Úlehla 1949, 656.

musicians” (quoted in Úlehla 1949, 97). Their ensemble emulated the band of Jan Ráček (1851–1908), a local farmer and musician.<sup>30</sup> According to Frolka, the *cimbál* was important because it had existed earlier in the nineteenth century even though Ráček’s band had not included one:

And before the times of the [Ráček] band there weren’t even bagpipes in Strážnice. But there probably used to be both [*cimbál* and bagpipes]. In the surrounding villages—Petrov, Lideřovice—there were bagpipes until not long ago. And the songs, which they sing there with the bagpipes are also known in Strážnice. Old singers will still tell you today that this or that song was with the bagpipes. It’s similar with the *cimbál*! Old people say that the *cimbál* stopped before the time of Blind Náček, thus before the Strážnice band became this ensemble that is known as the Ráček band and survived into our time. And they even had the *cimbál* in surrounding areas—Velká, Myjava, Senic, Holič—until recently or even until today. (quoted in Úlehla 1949, 97)<sup>31</sup>

The Strážnice *krůžek* band is also described as a “student band” since it was founded at the local secondary school [*gymnazium*] in 1912 (Procházková 2006, 287).

<sup>30</sup> Biographical notes on Ráček are found in Procházková 2006, 286; Janáček mentioned Ráček’s band in the same article that he first described the *cimbál* as a significant Moravian instrument (Janáček 1955 [1893], 188); Úlehla also provides a brief note on Ráček’s band (Úlehla 1949, 777).

<sup>31</sup> Blind Náček was thought to be the teacher of the Ráček band (Úlehla 1949, 777).

The band was thought to be trained by players from Ráček's band. Pictures of the band suggest that they used a large *cimbál* of the type developed by Schunda in the 1870s. In one picture it is standing on legs rather than being supported by a neckstrap or on a tabletop. In a picture from 1917 (Figure 4.1), the instrument appears to be unsupported, but the design of the soundholes (a larger central hole surrounded by six smaller ones) and expanded lower range of the instrument suggests a Schunda instrument.<sup>32</sup> Thus, there must have been differences between the instruments of the early twentieth-century ensemble and its predecessors.<sup>33</sup> Recalling a Strážnice *krúžek* event of 1912, Vladimír Úlehla wrote in his book *Living Song*, “And listen to how truly the *krúžek* musicians play it! It is almost the same to the letter to what Janáček wrote down forty years before or more from the musicians in Velká, and it is harmonized in practically the same way” (Úlehla 1949, 97).<sup>34</sup>

The Brno *krúžek* traces itself to a group of intellectuals who gathered to drink wine in Brno cafes in 1905. By 1907 or 1908, they held regular gatherings that featured music and singing (Hasil 2003). During the Nazi protectorate from 1939 to 1945, the Brno *krúžek* was one of the few social groups that the government allowed to continue regularly meeting and performing (Hasil-Ňancek 2003, 56). The *krúžek* also sponsored cultural educational activities. For example, between 1936 and 1943 the first three volumes of a planned seven-volume *Slovácké pěsničky* [Slovácko songs] series were

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<sup>32</sup> The instrument lacks dampers and legs, however, and thus may be of local manufacture. In another contemporary picture of the band, the instrument is supported on legs (Procházková 2006, 287). In any case, it certainly does not appear to be a *malý cimbál*.

<sup>33</sup> Dušan Holý suggests, in fact, that Frolka's reminiscence has “obviously no basis in reality” (Holý 1969, 93 n. 152). Nonetheless, it is significant that the *cimbál*, whether or not it was as important as Frolka suggests, held an important place in the imagination of local musical life.

<sup>34</sup> Úlehla made a transcription of the performance, which he wrote in the form of a piano transcription that is published as melody 133/2b in *Living Song* (Úlehla 1949, 417).

published by the *krúžek* and edited by Jan Poláček (Štěpánek 2003a, 27–28).<sup>35</sup> By the mid-1940s, the Brno group was organized enough to offer lectures and educational performances described as “*slovácko* academies” during 1943 and 1944; in 1953, the *krúžek* organized a six-month set of seminars to teach dances of south Moravia (Jelínková 2003, 12, 10).

During my fieldwork, the meetings of the Brno *krúžek* often involved the performance of invited groups from villages outside Brno or even other *krúžky*. Non-members were asked to pay an entrance fee, and program booklets were often available to everyone for a small extra charge. The Brno *krúžek* even keeps an archive of photographs, news clippings, and recordings that pertain to the group’s history. As they became more structured, then, these groups appear to have adopted the ideals of cultivation and began to frame their events as cultural performances.

The current importance of the *cimbál* in the Brno *krúžek* has been attributed to Frolka, who was active in the Brno *krúžek* during the 1920s and 1930s.<sup>36</sup> Nečas thought that Frolka secured an old *cimbál* from a “blind Gypsy” who repaired the instrument for the *krúžek*.<sup>37</sup> Frolka later became a regular radio personality and program host after leaving the *krúžek* in 1936 (Štěpánek 2003a, 22). Frolka’s “unforgettable” playing was described as “rhapsodically passionate and lyrically singing . . . with very complicated rhythmic divisions” by Milan Simáček, a Brno composer (quoted in Frolka 2000, 336; see also Štěpánek 2003a, 22).<sup>38</sup>

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<sup>35</sup> The first volume saw a second printing in 1936; however, the final four volumes were never printed as they were not finished before the Communist takeover in 1948.

<sup>36</sup> Interview with Jaromír Nečas, 15 October 2006, Vřešovice, Moravia.

<sup>37</sup> Jaromír Běhůnek, Frolka’s successor at the *krúžek*, is reputed to have learned the instrument from the same Gypsy (Štěpánek 2003a, 24).

<sup>38</sup> *Frolkovou nezaměnitelnou cimbálovou hrou “rapsodicky vášnivou i lyricky zpěvnou . . . s velice složitým rytmickým členěním.”*

**Table 4.1.** Known *cimbalistas* active with the band of the Brno Slováký krúžek, 1913–1980. After Štěpánek 2003a, 19–37.

<i>Name</i>	<i>Dates active</i>
Karel Kotek*	1913–?
Jaroslav Páč*	1924–?
Antoš Frolka (1910–1986)	1929–1935
Josef Frolka†	1930s?
Jaromír Běhůnek (1898–1965)	1935–1949**
Jaroslav Nečas	1949–present
Jan Sladký-Janina	1949–?
Jaroslav Čech‡	1950–1954
Miloš Bulíček	1954–1966?
Luboš Přecechtěl	1966–?
Zdeněk Chaloupka	?–1973
Zdena Křivánková	1973–[c. 2000?]

Notes: \* The early players are thought to have used the *malý cimbál*; however, by the end of the 1920s and during Frolka’s tenure the *velký cimbál* was played; † Josef was the younger brother of Antoš and also played *cimbál* with the *krúžek* while studying law in Brno; ‡ Čech also led the *krúžek* band while playing *cimbál*, after the departure of *primáš* Jura Petřů in 1950 until 1954 (Štěpánek 2003a, 30, 32); \*\* Běhůnek first joined the *krúžek* band as a clarinetist in 1927 (Štěpánek 2003a, 21).

Other reminiscences, however, suggest that the band of the Brno *krúžek* featured a *cimbál* prior to Frolka’s arrival (see Table 4.1). Leoš Zeman, son of the Velká collector Martin Zeman, recollected the first band of the Brno *krúžek* performing in 1913. Zeman attended their rehearsals in a Brno apartment with a group of students from a Brno technical college: “[They had] *cimbál*, bass, and violin strewn about on the bedspreads. On the table were kielbasa, bacon, and other good foods sent from home. . . . Laube played *primáš*, Kotek strummed away at the *cimbál*, Prát played bass, and Demela sang. We soon started playing together and soon the music was roaring to everyone’s delight” (quoted in Štěpánek 2003a, 18–19).<sup>39</sup>

It is likely that the *malý cimbál* was used in this early ensemble and subsequently in the Brno *krúžek* until 1929 (Štěpánek 2003a, 22). However, pictures of the *krúžek* band in Strážnice dating from 1914 depict a *velký cimbál*, which suggests that the large

<sup>39</sup> [Měli] *cimbál*, basu a housle rozložené po rozestlaných postelích, na stolech klobásku, slaninu a jiné dobrotiny zaslané z domova. . . . Laube primoval, Kotek břínkal n *cimbál*, Prát basoval a Demela zpíval. My jsme se k nim přidali a brzy muzika k radosti všech zahučela.

instrument was already known in Moravia before the First World War. It seems that the use of the instrument in Brno may be connected to Strážnice. The Brno *krúžek* was led by *primáš* Jan Horný from 1929 to 1939, who had earlier led the *krúžek* band in Strážnice. Horný's arrival coincides with that of Frolka's. In a 1973 interview with Radio Brno, Frolka suggested that he had revived *cimbál* playing in the *krúžek*, which also suggests that this was a period of significant change in the organization of the band at the Brno *krúžek*.

For Mr. Nečas, who was born and grew up in *slovácko*, the Brno *krúžek* was the gateway to his interest in the cimbalom and folklore. Nečas had heard folk music growing up in Strážnice, but he did not get actively involved with it until he was a student in Brno in the late 1940s. While leaving a concert one evening, he said, he “heard some strange music making in a pub. . . . It was a meeting of the Brno *Slovácký krúžek*, which had its own band.” He particularly recalled the *cimbál*, which was propped up on four chairs with beer glasses in order to add extra height. Nečas subsequently joined the *krúžek* and began learning to play *cimbál*.<sup>40</sup>

#### *The Brno Slovácký Krúžek and Radio Brno*

The *krúžek* band began playing at the Brno radio station as early as 1927. It began playing regularly on Brno Radio in 1933 under the leadership of *primáš* Jaroslav Němec (Štěpánek 2003a, 24–25). Live broadcasts of the *krúžek* band were more frequent throughout the 1940s. It seems that the relationship between the *krúžek* and the radio station grew until the founding of BROLN, the folk orchestra resident at the radio station, after which these broadcasts were less of a novelty. Radio broadcasts greatly aided the

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<sup>40</sup> Interview with Jaromír Nečas, 15 October 2006, Vřešovice, Moravia.

*krůžek*'s goal of encouraging the growth of folkloric activities in Moravia (Štěpánek 2003a, 17).

Playing at the radio station spurred some changes in the *krůžek* band's playing. Under pressure from its cimbalom player, Jaromír Běhůnek, the band had started rehearsing regularly, largely in preparation for appearances at the radio station (Štěpánek 2003a, 24–25). They hoped to play their repertory entirely from memory, although Běhůnek had prepared careful arrangements. Běhůnek's arrangements were refined and well-received on the radio and he is credited with making arrangements for many radio broadcasts. The arrangements were notated in shorthand harmonizations with chord symbols placed above the text of the song. Běhůnek described these as “telegrams” [*telegramy*] (Štěpánek 2003a, 26).<sup>41</sup>

The need for arrangements was reinforced by feedback from the radio directors. Upon hearing the band's rehearsals Karel Vetterl, director of the radio's music department in Brno from the 1931 until 1942, remarked “it was good, but your playing is a bit folksy” (quoted in Štěpánek 2003a, 26).<sup>42</sup> After this, Běhůnek insisted on making arrangements for the group and rehearsing them prior to radio broadcasts. This was an annoyance to some of the players who felt that playing from notation “cut into the ‘folkliness’ [*lidovost*] of the band's playing” (quoted in *ibid.*). Also during the 1930s, members of the *krůžek* began to take part as creators of ethnographic broadcasts on the radio that were themed around southern Moravia (*ibid.*). This suggests that by this time

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<sup>41</sup> This method of notation continues to the present in the band's rehearsals (see also Trojan 1980, 11). Jan Beránek (b. 1939), a later *primáš* of the *krůžek* (from 1982 to 1990), learned this style of notation from Běhůnek. (Štěpánek 2003a, 36).

<sup>42</sup> *Bylo to dobré, ale trochu moc lidové.*

radio broadcasts were considered to be a key element in the distribution of folkloric knowledge and an ideal sound was to be polished and rehearsed.

The *krúžek*'s relationship with the Brno radio station continued to grow after 1940. During the war, the *krúžek* was one of the few social groups not forbidden by the Nazi protectorate government and was allowed to broadcast on the radio (Hasil-Ňancek 2003, 56). The band was heard once or twice a month in live broadcasts in the years 1940–1943. Broadcasts were subject to heavy censorship from the government, although this was relaxed by 1945 as the Soviet army began encroaching on the Nazi-held territory. One *krúžek* member described the band broadcasting a song with the words “the boys are gathering and making big plans,” which was presumed to hail the imminent arrival of the Soviets (then seen as liberators). The broadcast was recalled by Jan Miroslav Krist: “The band played with passion: the boys and girls chorus sang with verve, “uncle” Běhůnek ran across the *cimbál* with his mallets, the *kontra* Patrik gave courage to the *primáš*, and the clarinetist Zdenek Sušil blinked his eyes with joy over the small politico-folkloristic triumph” (quoted in Štěpánek 2003a, 29–30).

### **Tuning in Folklore: Czech Radio Brno and BROLN**

Radio was a major medium for the mass distribution of state ideology, information, and culture, whether Communist or not. The first Czech radio broadcast that reached beyond national borders took place in Prague during a state holiday in 1920. In February 1922, a second international Czech broadcast was undertaken in Brno. This broadcast featured a few folk songs performed by solo singers. By 1 March 1925 daily broadcasts lasted two hours, and by the late 1930s state-sponsored radio had fulltime employees and broadcasts included news and entertainment programming (Ješutová



2003, 487). There is little doubt that radio was involved in ideological battles after the Communist takeover. For example, in 1948 Maria Koťáková, chief news editor for Czechoslovak Radio Prague, canceled domestic news programming and replaced it with news read directly from the Soviet press (Ješutová 2003, 237). In addition, Radio Free Europe began full-time broadcasting into Czechoslovakia in May 1951, including the Voice of America and BBC programs (ibid.).

Despite the political overtones to radio broadcasting, great attention was paid to music. Music had long received a great amount of air time on Czechoslovak Radio. In 1955, sixty-two percent of all programming was occupied by music, and “against all pressures” at least one evening concert was broadcast live every week (Ješutová 2003, 256). BROLN’s first broadcast live on 10 May 1952 in a country-wide program (Ješutová 2003, 282). The broadcast came just months before the Communist reorganization of the state radio stations according to a “Soviet model” (Ješutová 2003, 245). BROLN was charged with attaining a “professional standard” and broadcasting “stylistically exact interpretation of folk song and music” (BROLN 1977, 115). Nečas suggested that there was much overlap between the membership of the Brno *slovácký krúžek* and BROLN during the orchestra’s early years (see also Štěpánek 2003a, 30–31). He also noted that the core of BROLN’s instrumentation, like that of the *krúžek* band, was based on the Moravian cimbalom band (see also BROLN 1977, 115).<sup>43</sup> The scale of BROLN, however, was modeled more closely to a symphony orchestra than a village folk group. BROLN was regularly active until 1993, and in its heyday regularly featured two

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<sup>43</sup> Interview with Jaromír Nečas, 15 October 2006, Vřešovice.

cimbaloms in each concert that were divided into “sections” called “first (solo)” and “second (accompaniment).”<sup>44</sup>

Despite its mission to play at a professional level, however, there was a lack of trained personnel. According to Nečas, there were only three competent cimbalom players in Moravia during the early 1950s. Thus, BROLN relied on Jaromír Běhůnek until permanent players could be hired. Early on, these players were from Slovakia and Hungary. The Hungarian virtuoso Štefan Čikoš—whom Nečas described as the “king of cimbalom players” [*král cimbalistů*—played in BROLN for a few years during the 1950s, as did a Slovakian Roma player named Jan Gašpar Hrisko. Both players left their mark on the repertory of the orchestra through compositions of their own or arrangements of folk songs. “Professionally trained” Moravian cimbalom players only joined BROLN after the music conservatory in nearby Kroměříž began to graduate trained cimbalom players around 1956 and 1957.<sup>45</sup> Through an audition process, it was decided to hire Helena Červenková along with Hrisko as the two permanent players in the orchestra. Červenková remained principal cimbalom in the orchestra until her retirement in 1992. Dalibor Štrunc has served as the principal cimbalom since 1992, although BROLN has been significantly less active since 1993.<sup>46</sup>

The repertory of BROLN suggests further development of ideologies surrounding folk creativity. From straightforward arrangements of folk songs in its early years, BROLN’s music appears to move in more avant-garde directions. Although its later music sounds experimental, it was always based on the combination of folk music with

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<sup>44</sup> Dalibor Štrunc, personal communication, 27 April 2008.

<sup>45</sup> The Brno conservatory did not begin training cimbalom players until 1965.

<sup>46</sup> Radio Brno discontinued BROLN in 1993; since 1999, however, Jiří Plocek has made efforts to revive the orchestra at Radio Brno. BROLN was declared officially active again in 2006. The orchestra currently maintains a Web site at <http://www.rozhlas.cz/broln>.

art music. This may have been related to the denigration of other musical traditions as legitimate sources for the “modernization” of BROLN in the 1970s. In a 1974 presentation about folklore on the radio, Professor of ethnology at J. E. Purkyně University in Brno,<sup>47</sup> Dušan Holý, said that he approved of “modernization” in groups like BROLN, but never in the direction of popular music. In reaction to what he described as a proposal to “exchange the violins and cimbaloms for guitars,” he said that it was healthy for BROLN to experiment, but not so far as to go completely outside the realm of local tradition. If “guitar groups” were found all over Moravia, said Holý, he would “in no case prohibit them since after all then the change would just bear further witness to the adaptability [*přizpůsobivost*] and thereby even the vitality of folkloric material” (Holý 1974, 91). Experimentation was justifiable as long as it showcased folk creativity, which was thought to be based on extant folk traditions, and also brought new musical directions to radio listeners. Music could thus cultivate the “new socialist man’s” experience of both folk and art music.

BROLN’s experimental pieces from the 1960s and 1970s often feature chamber instrumentation in contrast with the full orchestral sound of BROLN. The compositions also come from a handful of composers who claimed to be inspired by folklore but often followed their own interests in avant-garde forms, including Nečas and the composers Jaromír Dadák (b. 1930), Emanuel Kuksa (1923–2003), and Vlastimil Peška (b. 1954).<sup>48</sup> All of these composers graduated from the Janáček Academy [JAMU] or the State Conservatory of Music, both in Brno.

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<sup>47</sup> This is now Masaryk University.

<sup>48</sup> These names are drawn from the list in Kunz 1993b. All of them worked with BROLN as composers and guest conductors.

An example of the traditional approach is *Variace na východoslovenskou Karičku* [Variations on an East Slovakian *Karička*], an arrangement attributed to Štefan Čikoš and often played by BROLN. The piece is a theme and variations based on a Slovak folksong.<sup>49</sup> The *cimbál* is a featured soloist and the style of the piece is typical of a nineteenth-century virtuoso instrumental composition. The style of the piece suggests the “New Hungarian” style based on the style of playing by Gypsy bands in Budapest coffee houses (Macek 1997, 633) and may also evoke the tradition of virtuosic *cimbál* performers in roadside inns [*czárda*] during the nineteenth century (Gifford 2001, 114). It seems to have become a standard of the BROLN repertory with later *cimbál* players. The piece was a frequent showpiece for Čikoš and his successors at the station where it was played during the 1960s and 1970s.<sup>50</sup> The arrangement bears aspects of folklore as well as cultivated art music:<sup>51</sup> the melody is based on a folksong; however, the cimbalom part is virtuosic and requires agile technique from the player, and it is meant for public concert performance. At the same time, the piece bears some evidence of more avant-garde directions, particularly when extended techniques like plucking, strumming, and overtones are called for from the *cimbál*.

The piece is a series of three variations between opening and closing sections. In the opening statement, a full string section energetically presents the folksong melody.

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<sup>49</sup> Rice (1994, 177) mentions theme-and-variations form as a new approach in the arrangement of Bulgarian post-War folk music. This case, however, seems to owe more to nineteenth-century art music ideals and the presentation of a virtuoso solo art rather than as a new way to make folk music accessible to wider audiences.

<sup>50</sup> Interview with Helena Červenková, 28 September 2006, Brno. It was recorded at a concert by Červenková and a group of BROLN musicians on 31 January 1972 (tape T 27130, NÚLK archive).

<sup>51</sup> Although it has no clearly articulated ideological underpinnings, the arrangement might be seen through a lens of socialist realist art: the style is accessible, the piece is geared toward audience entertainment, and via radio broadcast it accomplishes the mission of distributing folk art to a wider public audience.

This is followed by a dramatic entry by the *cimbál* and a solo cadenza.<sup>52</sup> The initial presentation of the folk melody is more relaxed with the *cimbál* sounding overtones with the stings providing muted background harmony. This is followed by two slower variations: a plucked variation (the soloist plucks the strings and the string section plays pizzicato), and a lyrical variation during which the *cimbál* plays in rubato style alone with many rich harmonies and contrapuntal lines. The final variation is separated by a short tutti section for the orchestra. The *cimbál* enters for the final variation that features quickly repeated rhythms within the string section and begins a coda in a bravado accelerating tempo.<sup>53</sup> The energy of this section builds to the final coda in which the opening string flourishes return.

Červenková premiered many compositions for solo cimbalom with the orchestra, many of which were in the more modernist style.<sup>54</sup> These were often experimental treatments of folk music, but they usually were based on combinations of folk music and art music. One example is Nečas's *Hledání: Rhapsodieta na píseň Hnalo dívča kravy* [Searching: Rhapsodieta on the Song "The Girl Searched for the Cows"]. The composition was completed around 1973 and won a composition prize in Bratislava in the same year (Schoříková 2004, 73). It was written for Červenková and BROLN, who recorded it at Czechoslovak Radio Brno on 13 February 1974 (Radio Brno archive, tape no. ST 5278). The Rhapsodieta is based on the folksong "Hnalo dívča kravy." One version of the words and the melody was collected by Joža Černík from the Kopanice

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<sup>52</sup> The moment is punctuated and made more dramatic by referencing classical concerto genres, as the cadenza is introduced with an inverted chord over the dominant (cadential  $V_4^6$ ) that resolves to the tonic.

<sup>53</sup> The quick repetition of notes is reminiscent of Herbert Clarke's and J. B. Arban's theme-and-variations solos for cornet.

<sup>54</sup> She regards this as one of the important highlights of her career as a *cimbál* player; interview with Helena Červenková, 28 September 2006, Brno.

107 - Hnalo dievča krávy  
 Kopaničárská Moravská od Starého Hrozenkova  
*Andante mesto e tenuto* Černík 140 (199)

Hna - lo dzie-vča krá - vy, hna - lo dzie-vča krá - vy

z U - her do Mo - ra - vy, z U - her do Mo - ra - vy.

[ : Hnalo dievča krávy : ]	Tvé krávy sa pasú,
[ : z Uher do Moravy, : ]	tvé krávy sa pasú
[ : na merindu <sup>1</sup> ) malo : ]	v hľbokej doline,
[ : koláček makový. : ]	v drobném rozmarýně.
[ : Pod duba si sadlo : ]	[ : Drobný vytrhajú, : ]
[ : a koláček zedlo, : ]	[ : hrubý nechávajú. : ]
[ : na duba pohlédlo, : ]	[ : A to tým panenkám, : ]
[ : orla tam uhlédlo. : ]	[ : čo sa vydávajú, : ]
[ : Orle, milý orle, : ]	[ : a to tým mládencom, : ]
[ : hdze sú krávy moje? : ]	[ : čo sa ženíc majú. : ]

Music Example 4.1. “Hnalo dívča krávy,” text and melody collected by Joža Černík in 1908. Reprinted in Plicka 1949, 82.

region in East Moravia near the Slovakian border in the town Moravská od Starého Hrozenkova (Music Example 4.1). Černík published it in his 1908 *Songs of Moravian Kopaničáři* (Prague: J. Otto; Plicka 1949a, 82).

The musical relationship between the folk song melody and the Rhapsodietta is freely conceived. When I asked Mr. Nečas about his use of folk song in his compositions, he replied “composition is composition—one should bring something new.”<sup>55</sup> The piece represents an approach based in art music traditions. The harmonic material, perhaps derived in part from the song’s apparent dorian modality (there is a minor third and raised sixth scale degree in Černík’s transcription) at times suggests whole-tone harmonies.<sup>56</sup> The melodies are angular and often based on short rhythmic cells. In addition, the spare chamber instrumentation of flute, percussion, and strings suggest slightly avant-garde

<sup>55</sup> Interview with Jaromír Nečas, 15 October 2006, Vřešovice.

<sup>56</sup> Modes have been the source for much esoteric theorizing about the roots and classification of folk songs in Europe (see Bohlman 1988, 39).

chamber music. However, the composition features no serialism or tonally challenging material.<sup>57</sup>

Although BROLN was rooted in musical practices and cultural values that preceded Communism, the ensemble depended on Communist political support. The ensemble was disbanded in 1993 after another reorganization of radio station budgets. Thus, its fate was closely linked to sudden political changes even if the music that it was supporting did not change at the same rate.

### Conclusions

During my research in the early 2000s, the Communist cultural administration was regarded negatively. Musical culture, as discussed in the next chapter, was important to the government, but after the fall of Communism there seemed to be a reluctance to delineate any clear agenda for culture. In the early 1990s, the Czech cultural minister declined to comment on his view of cultural politics because, he said, they were a Communist invention and therefore he refused to articulate a direct policy of his own (Liehm 2000, 48). While government may undertake to shape cultural expression through policy, the idea that culture is maintained by education is commonly held. This has only been strengthened by the image that Czechs have of themselves as a cultured nation with a “tradition of high culture and education” upheld by intellectuals (Holy 1996, 82, see also 85). Thus, while folk culture is regarded as valuable, it carries increased cultural value when disseminated through recognized cultural authorities and within established forms.

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<sup>57</sup> It has been suggested that orchestral ensembles are more easily equated with large collectives than chamber ensembles, which are more likely to be based on individualistic playing. This may be a further level of interpretation to explore in compositions like *Hledání*.

These ideas are encapsulated in two specific radio broadcasts. Both suggest the importance of the *cimbál* to ideological constructions of folkloric culture in the twentieth century. An “Evening of Cimbalom Players” [*Večer cimbalistů*] was recorded in Brno on 31 January 1972 as part of a special exhibition about the *cimbál*.<sup>58</sup> This concert featured more folkloric works, including Čikoš’s “Variations,” arrangements by Antoš Frolka, and other early arrangements of BROLN. However, cultivation was suggested with the incorporation of three Baroque-era pieces arranged for *cimbál* from Jan Rokyta’s historical research. This concert suggested the historical aspect of the instrument and its connection with the Bohemian Lands. On 25 March 1969, Jaromír Nečas hosted a forty-minute program titled “The *Cimbál* and Its Relatives” [*Cimbál a jeho příbuzní*] that was broadcast as part of a series titled “About Folksong” [*O lidové písni*].<sup>59</sup> The program had a didactic tone and discussed the relationship of the *cimbál* to similar zither-type instruments throughout the world. While his program begins by noting the *cimbál*’s connection to folk music, he concludes that the instrument is gradually taking a greater role in art music as composers gain greater familiarity with the instrument. The lecture thus suggests a narrative of increasing cultivation for the appreciation of the instrument.

The emphasis on the education of the “new socialist man” after 1948 indicated a change in thinking about the folk. From Herderian ideas in which the folk are an undifferentiated mass, emphasis moved toward the individual. The meaning of folk [*lidový*] began to transform from one of “national” and toward “people’s” with the suggestion that “folk culture” [*lidová kultura*] was actually a collective “people’s culture” that proved the cultural accomplishment of “folk creativity” [*lidová tvořivost*].

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<sup>58</sup> Tape held at the NÚLK archive, no. T 27130.

<sup>59</sup> My notes here are from a copy of Nečas’s reading script, though the sound program is listed in the Brno Radio archive on tape H 31000.



The movement of the *cimbál* and folkloric music from rural to urban settings took place throughout the entire twentieth century, and therefore the establishment of state-sponsored folk ensembles in the 1950s is not a Communist innovation but rather an outcome that built on pre-existent fascination with rural culture and was made possible by governmental support. The use of the *cimbál* in more avant-garde classical music, however, did not change the instrument's status as a "folk music instrument." In fact, later in the 1950s the instrument was incorporated into the curriculum of Moravian music conservatories. This cultivation of folkloric music through music conservatories is discussed further in the next chapter.

## CHAPTER 5

### COMMUNITIES OF PRACTICE: TEACHING AND LEARNING THE *CIMBÁL*

*Old musicians didn't know notation, of course, but they mastered basic scales and arpeggios. — Because a light and flexible touch with the mallets is very important in cimbál playing, beginners had to play scales in various manners.*

—Joža Ország Vranecký<sup>1</sup>

*A sufficient amount of [cimbál] primers, etudes, and exercises are available; lacking, however, is musical literature that alongside technique develops a student's sense of beauty. For beginning musicians, the best path to this goal is folk song, which is subconsciously present in all of us. It's only necessary to sound it out! The brevity and uncomplicated expression of folk tunes is appealing: the student does not see a technical nut to crack, but an artistic work for which he becomes the creator through the instrument.*

—Jaromír Nečas<sup>2</sup>

This chapter discusses transmission of knowledge about the *cimbál* in Moravia, particularly the learning processes of individuals and the institutions that support musical training on the *cimbál*. The chapter ranges from the idea that situated learning in structured musical training creates a community of practice to a detailed discussion of phenomenological aspects of music learning. Conservatory teaching creates chances for students to become involved in the everyday practices of other instrumentalists; these opportunities range from solitary practice, to the choice of repertory, to accepted modes

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<sup>1</sup> This comment (Vranecký 1963, 21) was made in the 1960s in reference to earlier teaching practices and presumably refers to *cimbál* pedagogy before 1914.

<sup>2</sup> Excerpt from the Preface to Nečas's method book for *cimbál* entitled *Little Songs on the Cimbál* (Nečas 1988).

of performance. An understanding of the learning process is developed by investigating the close relationship between the player and instrument.

My understanding is grounded in my experience studying the *cimbál* with Dalibor Štrunc during two extended periods in 2004 and 2006. My goal is to elucidate learning processes that take place in music lessons and related activity. The chapter is a result of my intense curiosity about the kinesthetic elements of playing the *cimbál* as well as my observation that the *cimbál* is now taught primarily in conservatory settings. As a complete beginner at the start of my studies, the extent of my proficiency was limited and my conclusions about spatio-motor skills and human-instrument interaction may differ from a more advanced player's. My understanding was further augmented by my observations of Štrunc's lessons with four advanced students over the course of 2006.

This chapter is prefaced on the idea that musical knowledge is transmitted and learned at many levels, which I discuss here within the setting of a Moravian music conservatory. From detailed elements of musical activity—movement patterns, beginner etudes—to broader fields of social action—public cultural performances, and appropriate repertory—students learn about many aspects of musical activity. It is thus important to analyze what sorts of knowledge are learned through the social interaction described as a music lesson. Following Lave and Wenger's concept of "situated learning," I suggest that a wealth of knowledge about the appropriate behaviors, at both micro and macro levels, is communicated through music study at the conservatory. Lave and Wenger point out that "situated learning" goes beyond "conventional notions of 'learning *in situ*' or 'learning by doing'" (Lave and Wenger 1991, 31). They go beyond the idea that learned thoughts and actions are "located in [a specific] space and time" (32); instead, their approach

focuses on the “relational character of knowledge and learning” and implies “emphasis on comprehensive understanding involving the whole person rather than ‘receiving’ a body of factual knowledge about the world; on activity in and with the world; and on the view that agent, activity, and the world mutually constitute each other” (33). They conclude that,

In our view, learning is not merely situated in practice—as if it were some independently reifiable process that just happened to be located somewhere; learning is an integral part of generative social practice in the lived-in world. . . . Legitimate peripheral participation is proposed as a descriptor of engagement in social practice that entails learning as an integral constituent. (Lave and Wenger 1991, 35)

My application of these ideas builds on Lave and Wenger’s approach by centering on learning in a music lesson, a situation that they deliberately excluded from their analysis (Lave and Wenger 1991, 39–42).

My approach implicates a specific relationship between the structure of musical training and the structure of musical activity.<sup>3</sup> Musical training establishes “interpretive communities” through structured pedagogical approaches. Performers in Western music conservatories (Kingsbury 1988) are often described as “interpreters,” and conservatory teachers in the United States are typically concerned with developing a students “interpretive” skills. Shaping an approach to a given repertory, as is often done in conservatory lessons, however, is a specialized sort of interpretation. The “interpretive community” of players is loosely established by what players learn and not necessarily

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<sup>3</sup> Music lessons also involve relationships structured by authority, a theme that I have specifically not dealt with here. The teacher is typically constructed as a figure of respect and, while teaching approaches vary, is often able to make decisions that shape the student’s ultimate performance decisions and knowledge. This does not mean that students do not make their own decisions. One student at the Conservatory, for example, explained to me that while he was capable of the technique required for playing virtuosic showpieces, he was more interested in playing in a *cimbálovka*. The decision was practical: he saw an opportunity to promote the culture of his home region (Valachia). He also saw a lucrative performance opportunity. Likewise, another student told me that he had often busked on the street with friends in German towns (abroad), which made more money than performing with an orchestra at home.

what they are taught. Interpretive communities of musicians in this sense have internalized levels: at the most personal level are players who have studied with the same teacher during the same period; slightly farther removed are the entire “family” of players who have studied with a specific teacher; next are players who have studied at the same school; finally, players who share a common repertory. For *cimbál* players, these levels may have been established in many cases by “extra-musical” factors. Those who have studied with particular teachers have particular mallet grips (ways of holding mallets), value particular timbres over others, and favor particular genres. At a general level, the World Association of Cimbalomists signifies that a sense of global community exists among cimbalom players.

A student learns far more than what is taught in music lessons. While lessons are usually based on a teaching curriculum, Lave and Wenger describe a simultaneous “learning curriculum.” In “didactic situations,” learning curriculums develop “out of participation in a specific community of practice engendered by pedagogical relations and by a prescriptive view of the target practice as a subject matter” (Lave and Wenger 1991, 97). The target practice in a music conservatory is flawless public performance, and music lessons are based on the general assumption that experienced musical performers are qualified to teach aspiring performers. In the conservatory, however, far more than a mere schedule of individual lessons is thought to be required for a musical education.

Musical learning, shaped by music lessons and other musical experiences including physical movements and performance, intimately shapes an interpretive community. I am thus interested in how students of Czech music conservatories engage

in “situated learning” (Lave and Wenger 1991) by participating in regular musical events. This chapter’s epigraphs point out two ways that teachers have constructed exercises with the hopes that students learn “Moravian approaches.” First, exercises encourage certain ways of playing, which are inculcated through teaching methods. Second, certain musical tastes are inculcated through the valorization of certain repertoires—the importance of “classical” music in a conservatory setting—and playing styles—for example, “lyrical” over “aggressive.” Learning situations, which encompass far more than just the music lesson, and resulting patterns of practice shape what Lave and Wenger (1991) describe as a “community of practice.” Timothy Rice’s study of Bulgarian *gaida* (bagpipes) resulted in a similar observation: “The tradition could not be learned and played in just any way but in particular ways, and [as I learned] my explanatory devices grew, adapted, and adjusted to account for new understandings” (Rice 1994, 87).

An important part of understanding instrumental music is learning how to move the body and interact with the physical instrument. This area of understanding is intensely personal and elusive; however, kinesthetic, visual, and tactile dimensions are particularly important for *cimbál* performance. Moreover, proper ways of movement are essential points on which one’s position in a community of practice is established. This aspect of what Mantle Hood described as the “music mode of discourse” (Hood 1960, 230) is often understood only through musical “practice” sessions on the instrument carried out in private, during which a player comes to *learn* to play an instrument. Yung (1984, 505, 510, 512) notes three areas of musical experience: aural, visual, and kinesthetic. Kinesthetic elements are “perceived only by the performer and no one else” (Yung 1984, 516 n. 1). In understanding this aspect, I have relied on many previous analyses of

relationships between player and instrument (Sudnow 1978; Berliner 1978, 112–159; Yung 1984; Baily 1985; Baily 1995; Baily and Driver 1992; Rice 1994, 64–88).

I focus in particular on how music performance is learned, a process that is rarely articulated and often only unconsciously comprehended. If spatio-motor knowledge comprises a realm of phenomenological knowledge and experience known only by players, then learning to play the instrument is the only way to gain an understanding of this aspect of music. Ethnomusicologists emphasize the importance of musical training in the field. This has been of central concern since Hood (1960) explored the concept of “bi-musicality,” and promoted the claim that music study and performance were essential tools for ethnomusicologists engaged in fieldwork. As Hood observed, “lessons in performance provide a sharp tool for ferreting out the musical norms on which descriptive and analytical studies must be based” (Hood 1960, 230). Helen Myers notes that “there is no substitute in ethnomusicological fieldwork for intimacy born of shared musical experiences. Learning to sing, dance, play in the field is good fun and good method” (Myers 1992, 31; see also Rice 2001).

My route to this analysis has been through studying musical pedagogy, specifically public cultural performances and the significant kinesthetic aspects of playing the *cimbal*. My insights, like Baily’s, are drawn from personal experience and “my own observations and introspections learning to play” (Baily 1992, 148). I have taken specific interest in explicating spatio-motor musical experience, an area of knowledge that is rarely articulated outside the community of players and, judging by my experience, is only gradually understood as a student moves through the learning process.

To summarize, students learn not only detailed instrumental technique in music lessons and individual practice, but also much more about a broader field of social action—musical life—that prepares them to function competently. The transmission of knowledge is a key element of any culture, and in this chapter, I show what implications it has for the general milieu of cimbalom playing in Moravia. The most desirable and appropriate performance venues, public live performance, and traditional and “classical” repertory are shown to be core values, though not directly discussed in lessons. I focus here on what it may be suggested that students *learn*. While students are taught to “practice” the motions required to produce the appropriate sounds on their instruments while, simultaneously, they learn to be competent in specific modes of musical performance—most notably the structured concert performance, which fits under the rubric of cultural performance. Thus, by exploring the historical bases for these lessons and then analyzing specific situations for learning (one focusing on inner cognitive processes and another on public performance training), I hope to show how music lessons shape “the ‘natural’ categories and forms of social life [in this case, musical life]” that are “(historically and culturally) produced and reproduced” (Lave and Wenger 1991, 39).

Since musical learning takes place in a specific local history, this discussion begins with a brief overview of music teaching in Moravia and the Bohemian Lands as it pertains to the *cimbál*. I focus in particular on the rise of institutionalized teaching after 1945. Subsequently, I describe a lesson in detail. I then sketch the underlying method that structures *cimbál* pedagogy and suggest how this may be related to kinesthetic aspects of playing. Finally, I theorize broader implications of an instrument-centered approach to pedagogy: I scrutinize the relationship between player and instrument, and I claim that



the instrument constitutes a central node in defining a community of practice that is fostered through structured conservatory training.

### **Transmission to the Mid-Twentieth Century**

At least in remembered history, the *cimbál* in Moravia has been transmitted primarily through more-or-less structured teaching. The Conservatory system that helps to transmit playing today is a product of the post-WWII era, but the value placed on such arts educational institutions has a longer history. Music education has long been an element of school curriculums in the Czech lands.<sup>4</sup> While the *cimbál* has not always been a part of this curriculum, it now has a place in this music education system. It is important to understand the high cultural value placed on music teaching. After briefly indicating earlier routes of musical transmission in the Czech Lands in this section, I turn to music conservatories that arose in the 1940s and subsequent developments in systematic teaching.

In the published account of his “musical tour” of Central Europe, English music critic Charles Burney (1726–1814) showed that music education was widespread and systematized Bohemian Lands. In the section of his published travelogue devoted to Bohemia and Moravia, Burney noted many music schools. One of his goals was to investigate the rumored musicality of the Bohemians, by which Burney was so taken that he labeled Bohemia the “conservatory of Europe” (Wolff 1994, 108; cf. Bek 2003). On his trip north and west from Vienna to Prague in September 1772, Burney endeavored to discover “how the common people learned music” and found “that, not only in every large town, but in all villages, where there is a reading and writing school, children of

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<sup>4</sup> More information on the transmission and teaching of music in the Czech lands prior to the nineteenth century is presented by Renton 1990.

both sexes are taught music” (Burney 1959 [1775], 132). Burney mentions visiting two more music schools on his trip north from Prague toward Dresden. Near the German border, he found a school “with more than a hundred children, of both sexes, of which number all learn music who chuse [sic] it” (136). Burney concluded that these schools were a considerable factor in the practice of music in the region, which made musical training available not only for elite nobility but for the children of townspeople and officers as well:

these schools clearly prove that it is not from a partiality in *nature* that Bohemia abounds so much with musicians; for *cultivation* contributes greatly towards rendering the love and knowledge of music general in this country: and the Bohemians may as well be called a *learned* people because they can read, as superior musicians because they can play upon instruments, since the study of both are equally made by them essential parts of common education. (Burney 1959 [1775], 138)

The *cimbál* was not taught in this system of schools until the twentieth century.<sup>5</sup>

According to accounts from the nineteenth century and early-twentieth century, the *cimbál* was transmitted primarily orally within families. Yet, there appears to be a connection between the pedagogy used today in the conservatory and prior teaching methods. The exercises and techniques given to beginning musicians in the oral tradition are similar to exercises still practiced in the conservatory.<sup>6</sup>

Scant information was preserved about how the *cimbál* was learned and taught prior to its establishment in the conservatories. A published account from 1963 by folklore revivalist Joža Ország Vranecký, Jr. (1913–1977), however, provides an in-depth

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<sup>5</sup> Burney makes little mention of any instruments related to the *cimbál* while he was in the Czech Lands. He did cryptically allude to an instrument he called “the triangles”; Percy Scholes points out that this is likely a reference to the spinet (Burney 1959 [1775], 135 n. 5). Moreover, Burney later mentions a “dulcimer,” an instrument purportedly sounded with sticks, and it seems unlikely that he would have described a hammered trapezoidal zither as a “triangle” (Burney 1959 [1775], 148).

<sup>6</sup> It is also worth considering the possibility that mid-twentieth-century observers couched their observations in terms more acceptable to conservatory- and university-trained musicians and folklorists.

a  
1 p 1 p 1 p 1 p atd. vzestupně i sestupně.

b  
1 p p 1 p p 1 p p 1 p p atd. vzestupně i sestupně  
1 p p 1 1 1 1

c  
1 p 1 p 1 p 1 p p 1 1 p p p p

Music Example 5.1. Vranecký's scale exercises from village musicians.

picture of north Moravian instrumental music. His monograph titled *A měl sem já písčalenku* [And I Had a Little Whistle], treats the *cimbál* in detail (Vranecký 1963, 17–24) and discusses the way that players learned the instrument prior to the 1940s.

Vranecký was greatly interested in the construction of musical instruments; his reconstructions of a number of instruments were added to the instrument collections and exhibits of the *Národní ústav lidové kultury* in Strážnice (NÚLK) (Vranecký 1963, 7).<sup>7</sup>

The book is based on knowledge that Vranecký attributed to his father, Joža Ország Vranecký, Sr., and his lifelong musical activities in the village Nový Hrozenkov. The elder Vranecký is credited with purchasing the first large cimbalom in Moravia (Schoříková 2004, 7).

Vranecký's knowledge as an instrument-maker and what he learned from the “folk *cimbalista* Smetaník” (Vranecký 1963, 21)—from whom he is thought to have learned to play and also to have purchased a *cimbálek* (Schoříková 2004, 7)—were later published by his son. Vranecký relates a few foundational exercises that are attributed to

<sup>7</sup> Recordings of some of Vranecký's instruments are found on *Proměny v čase* (Brno: Gnosis, GMusic 020, 2001), disc 1, tracks 10–13 (Plocek 2002).

Smetaník in his book. These exercises are mostly scales and arpeggios, which Vranecký claimed “every beginner had to play” in order to learn the “light and flexible touch” that he says was valued by the older generation of players.

Vranecký describes three major types of exercises and the names that older players used for them: *škála sekaněj* (“chopping” scale, Music Example 5.1a), for which the player plays each pitch of a scale multiple times, each time alternating between hands; *škála zdržaná* (“held” scale, Music Example 5.1b), for which the players plays a set rhythmic pattern on each pitch of the scale; and the *škála hustěná* (“thickened” scale, Music Example 5.1c), which practices tremolos on each pitch and, as the scale ascends and descends, the player begins adding a single contrapuntal voice to form thirds, sixths, or octaves.<sup>8</sup> Vranecký remarks that each scale pattern was practiced in “various scales,” but “of course each scale was not begun with the left hand; it was necessary to play so that the hands did not cross” (Vranecký 1963, 21). The alternation between the right and left hand is stressed in the “chopping” scale, which Vranecký describes as a “good exercise to accustom the hands to alternating strokes on the strings, which is very important for playing the *cimbál*” (Vranecký 1963, 21).<sup>9</sup> Vranecký describes the “thickened” scale as a tremolo exercise, “necessary to play with short-small,

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<sup>8</sup> The term *škála* is presumably taken to be a “folk expression” for a musical scale, here substituting for the more standard term used in the conservatory, *stupnice*. Vranecký highlights the term *škála* by setting the text in italics, but when he discusses the exercises, the term *stupnice* is used. It is emphasized that the term is in dialect by using *l*, pronounced like an English “w,” which is taken to evoke a more “Silesian,” perhaps even Polish, pronunciation (Nový Hrozenkov is near the Polish and Slovakian borders in northeast Moravia). In its standardized modern spelling, *škála* indicates a possible range, while *stupnice* more specifically refers to a tiered spectrum of possibilities and most specifically to a musical scale. Although many of the harmonies that Janáček recorded in his fieldwork could be described as “modal” in the way tonal harmony is treated, the exercises Vranecký relates are clearly major and minor scales that pattern harmonic practice as codified in schools of a German tradition of music theory.

<sup>9</sup> The idea seems similar to the way that many beginning piano methods specify which finger the student is to use for each note; likewise, in music published for more advanced pieces, famous pianists often publish special editions that reveal fingering patterns that they find work the best. As with the *cimbál*, though the fingering (interchange of hands for the *cimbál*) for scale exercises is relatively agreed upon, the patterns for more complicated pieces can vary and is often settled upon by individual players.

*thick* strokes alternating both hands, and trained the proper exercise of the tremolo, which is indispensable in the execution of *táhlá* melodies. At the first tone of the scale [*stupnice*] both hands play in unison, subsequently they play on in thirds, sixths, and octaves, which were the basic intervals of folk duets [*lidový dvojhlas*]” (Vranecký 1963, 22).

The general goals of these exercises, still rooted in “folk” traditions, seems to be taken up by later method books. Even with the changes brought about by the growing importance of music conservatories, which led toward increased musical specialization and professionalization, amateurs still learned the *cimbál* on their own.

Two method books from the 1980s appear to have been published with the goal of maintaining “traditional,” or at least identifiably “Moravian” approaches to the instrument. Horymír Sušil and Jaromír Nečas, two notable *cimbálistas* of the post-World War II generation, authored them separately. Both emphasize the playing of folksong melodies as the source for a Moravian musical sensibility. Nečas (1988) stresses the ability of the player to realize solo versions of each folksong melody, while Sušil (1987) stresses the underlying techniques that a player may use when playing solo or in an ensemble. Players who have trained in conservatories suggest that *cimbálistas* in the present are more aware of a theoretical relationship between scales, arpeggios, harmonies, and European harmonic structures; however, regardless of the importance of structured conservatory training, a certain “feeling” for the “correct” flow of harmonies in Moravian folk songs remains in a realm that is learned but not explicitly taught.<sup>10</sup> The

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<sup>10</sup> Interview with Lucie Uhlíková, 4 November 2006, Zlín; the expression “learned but not taught” is borrowed from Rice (Rice 2003a, 65).

“smooth” [*jemný*] aesthetic of playing the *cimbál* with soft, cotton-wrapped mallets, which is thought to be especially Moravian, is also associated with the conservatories.<sup>11</sup>

### Overview of Conservatory Teaching

The system of music education in place during my fieldwork consisted of a tiered system of institutions that were available to most children, whether living in villages or towns. The level for the youngest students is the *Základní umělecká škola* [Basic Arts School, or ZUŠ]. This institution, found in many villages and towns, serves students at the primary and secondary levels. This sort of institution structures arts education, offering music lessons and ensembles and occasionally individual lessons. In addition, these schools often teach visual and movement arts. Many children attend these institutions even though they are an adjunct to the state education system and akin to North American “extra-curricular” activities.

Following ZUŠ, students may apply to the conservatory [*konzervatoř*]. This institution is for advanced students who plan to make a living as music performers and teachers, although it is not exactly equivalent to a college- or university-level degree. Conservatories are located in larger towns and cities, thus students from smaller towns often commute or find accommodations away from home with relatives or friends. Conservatory students are typically between ages 15 and 21 and complete a six-year program of study. Upon finishing the course of study, students received diploma and the title Di.S., *diplomovaný specialista* [diploma-holding specialist]. Students have the option of taking a diploma exam that attests to their *maturita*, a qualification akin to the North American high-school diploma focused on preparation for university.

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<sup>11</sup> Interview with Vladimír Holíš, 8 June 2006, Kozlovice.

The Brno Conservatory [*Konzervatoř Brno*] illustrates this type of institution. Its history also shows that the structure of such institutions was often affected by social and political developments. It was founded in 1919 with the support of Leoš Janáček. Initially funded privately, it was by 1920 linked with the fledgling post-war Czechoslovak state and renamed the *Státní hudební a dramatická konzervatoř* [State Music and Drama Conservatory]. Until 1928, the only subjects taught at the Conservatory were composition and piano. The school grew substantially after the end of World War II in 1945. *Cimbál* was added to the curriculum in 1965 and as of 2006 was taught in the Department of Folk Instruments [*Oddělení lidové hudební nástroje*] along with guitar and accordion. The school describes itself as a comprehensive institution that teaches all types of European musics: “The Brno Conservatory at present time teaches all instruments in the symphony orchestra as well as guitar, accordion, cimbalom, recorder, composition, conducting, and singing. . . . Graduates are active as soloists, orchestral players, members of philharmonic and theater ensembles, and teachers at music schools.”<sup>12</sup>

Following conservatory training, student may continue at the music academy. These are the top institutions of Czech musical education, primarily directed at musicians who plan to be performers, composers, and college teachers.<sup>13</sup> These major institutions are located only in large cities, such as Brno and Prague. The Brno academy, *Janáčkova akademie múzických umění v Brně* [Janáček Academy of Musical Arts, or JAMU], attracts students from around Europe and elsewhere. The degrees offered at this level are equivalent to the bachelor, masters, and doctoral level. Musical training at these

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<sup>12</sup> *V současné době se na Konzervatoři Brno vyučují všechny nástroje symfonického orchestra a dále kytara, akordeon, cimbál, zobcová flétna, skladba, dirigování a zpěv. . . . Absolventi se uplatňují jako sólisté, orchestrální hráči, členové filharmonických a divadelních sborů a učitelé na hudebních školách.* From the school's Web site, <http://www.konzervatorbrno.eu/>, accessed 28 January 2008.

<sup>13</sup> JAMU also teaches theater.

**Table 5.1.** First *cimbál* teachers at Czech conservatories since 1950. Compiled from Schořiková 2004 and Kunz ed. 1993; also, interviews with Helena Červenková (Brno, 28 September 2006) and Jan Rokyta, Sr. (Zlín, 18 November 2006).

<i>Teacher</i>	<i>City</i>	<i>Years taught</i>
Vojtěch Brada (1911–1983)	Kroměříž	1950–1983 <sup>c</sup>
Albert Pek (1893–1972)	Prague	1953–1958 <sup>d</sup>
Jiřina Liebermannová-Kuklišinová (b. 1936) <sup>a</sup>	Ostrava	1961–1967, 1973–1983 (?) <sup>c</sup>
Milada Orská-Orsáčková (b. 1937) <sup>b</sup>	Brno	1965–2000 (co-founder)
Helena Červenková (b. 1937)	Brno	1966–1971 (co-founder, adjunct)

Notes: <sup>a</sup> student of V. Brada, graduated 1956;

<sup>b</sup> student of V. Brada, graduated 1958; also known as Milada Vlasáková-Orsáčková and Milada Kapitánová-Vlasáková;

<sup>c</sup> Růžena Děcká (b. 1946), a student of Liebermannová-Kuklišinová in Ostrava, began teaching at the Kroměříž conservatory in 1992;

<sup>d</sup> according to my interviews in Brno, *cimbál* was no longer taught in Prague by 2006;

<sup>e</sup> Ludmila Dadáková-Zapletalová, a graduate of Kroměříž in 1960, taught in Ostrava from 1969 to 1981.

institutions is geared toward preparing solo performers and orchestral players—the curriculum does not include the *cimbál*. If a *cimbál* student wishes to continue studying *cimbál* beyond the conservatory level, study is usually undertaken at the music academies in Banská Bystrica or Bratislava (Slovakia) or in Budapest (Hungary).

The *cimbál* has appeared in the conservatory curricula only since the 1950s (see Table 5.1). This closely followed the Communist takeover of power in February 1948. A connection between these events is unverified, but it seems plausible that the new government hoped to bolster its ideological program by including traditional instruments alongside those of elite European art music traditions. This possibility is suggested by the grouping of “folk” instruments—accordion, cimbalom, and guitar—together in one department under the name *oddělení lidových nástrojů* [Department of Folk Instruments], as is the case at the Brno Conservatory. This interpretation is also supported by the location of the first conservatory at which *cimbál* was taught—Kroměříž was an important urban center in seventeenth-century Moravia, but by the twentieth century it



was a relatively small factory town. It thus would have represented an arguably rural and working class population.

The *cimbál* was first added to the conservatory curriculum at the *Konzervatoř Pavla Josefa Vejvanovského* in Kroměříž.<sup>14</sup> The instrument was introduced there by Vojtěch Brada, a pianist and organist trained at the teaching institute. Brada was “inclined toward the *cimbál* after 1945 in the period of spontaneous boom of musical folklorism and fundamentally served the development of the then-blossoming interest of musical activity” (Kunz 1993b, 45). Brada is credited with authoring the first Czech method book for *cimbál* in 1982 (ibid.). Brada was not regarded as a virtuoso, and may have learned the instrument from village players as had Vranecký. Brada taught at the Kroměříž conservatory until 1983. The Conservatory program he began is still active.

Helena Červenková was one of Brada’s first *cimbál* students in Kroměříž. Her father was an organist and she took entrance exams at the conservatory on piano. Upon realizing the large number of pianists at the school, however, the director decided that some students would be shunted into the new program for *cimbál*. Because Červenková hailed from Slavičín u Uherského Brodu, which the director knew as a Valachian town, she was chosen to be in the new class of *cimbál* players. This criteria suggests how closely *cimbál* was associated with Valachia at the time.<sup>15</sup> After graduation from the conservatory in 1957, Červenková went on for a career as a soloist with the *Brněnský rozhlasový orchestr lidových nástrojů* [Brno Radio Orchestra of Folk Instruments,

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<sup>14</sup> The conservatory is named after Pavel Josef Vejvanovský (c. 1640–1693), who was in charge of musical activities at the arch-bishop’s palace in Kroměříž. He is now celebrated as “one of the few Czech musicians . . . who had the possibility to exercise his talents fully in his homeland” (Vrkočová 1999, 186), since many Czech musicians of the time found employment in courts throughout Europe rather than in the Bohemian Lands.

<sup>15</sup> Interview with Helena Červenková, 28 September 2006, Brno.

BROLN] and traveled on many international tours. Červenková was also a founder of *cimbál* classes at the Brno Conservatory in 1966.

The Prague Conservatory also offered classes in *cimbál*. The first Prague classes were taught by Albert Pek, a trained pianist and organist. Pek worked with Czech Radio in Prague from its beginnings in 1914. By the 1950s he was the producer of a folklore radio program titled *Zpěvy domova* [Songs of Homeland] (Kunz 1993b, 48); in 1946, he produced 114 programs and collaborated on 269 programs of vocal music for Radio Prague (Ješutová 2003, 229). Pek taught the *cimbál* at the Prague Conservatory from 1953 until 1958. He is also credited as the composer of concertos for “instruments of folk music,” including the *cimbál* and bagpipes (Kunz 1993b, 48).

A second wave of teaching the *cimbál* came in the 1960s when the conservatories in Ostrava and Brno began offering courses. These courses were established by students who had studied with Vojtěch Brada, and unlike the first two studios, this second wave of teachers were all women. The studio in Ostrava was taught from 1961–1967 by Jiřina Liebermannová-Kuklišinová. She graduated in 1956 from the Kroměříž studio where she had studied organ and *cimbál*. After graduation she taught piano at a ZUŠ in Ostrava and simultaneously dedicated herself to folkloric music. She again taught *cimbál* from 1978 to 1983 in Rožnov pod Radhoštěm and Ostrava (Kunz 1993b, 47).<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> From 1963 to 1973, Liebermannová-Kuklišinová lived in Bolivia. The *cimbál* studio at Ostrava conservatory was taken over from 1969 to 1981 by Ludmila Dadáková-Zapletalová.

**Table 5.2.** *Cimbál* teachers at the Brno Conservatory since 1965.

<i>Teacher</i>	<i>Years Taught</i>
Milada Orská-Orsáčková (b. 1937)	1965–2000
Helena Červenková (b. 1937)	1966–1971 (adjunct)
Dalibor Štrunc (b. 1966)	2000–present

In Brno, the *cimbál* studio was begun in 1965 by Milada Orská-Orsáčková and Helena Červenková (Table 5.2).<sup>17</sup> Orská-Orsáčková, a 1958 graduate of Brada's studio in Kroměříž, initially taught at a ZUŠ in Brno and then moved into the conservatory level (Kunz 1993b, 46); she continued teaching at the Brno Conservatory until 2000. Červenková, who had graduated from Brada's studio in 1957, played *cimbál* as a member of BROLN after graduating and worked as an adjunct pedagogue with the Brno Conservatory from 1966 to 1971.

Current conservatory teachers can often trace their teaching experience back to one of early conservatory *cimbál* teachers. Růžena Děcká, who has taught in Kroměříž since 1992, graduated from Liebermannová-Kuklišinová's Ostrava studio (Schoříková 2004, 34). Dalibor Štrunc, teacher at Brno Conservatory since 2000, was a graduate from Orská-Orsáčková's Brno studio in 1986 (Schoříková 2004, 46).

Contemporary Czech conservatory teaching of the *cimbál* has been centered in Moravian urban areas. It has been taught for the longest time in Kroměříž, at the center of Moravia, which indicates a symbolic association with the region. It is taught in more Moravian conservatories (Brno, Ostrava, and Kroměříž) than Bohemian ones (only in Prague). The capital city thus reflects the diversity of musical and cultural expression throughout the country, but there does not appear to be interest in the instrument in the

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<sup>17</sup> Milada Orská-Orsáčková is also identified in some sources by other married names Milada Kapitánová-Vlasáková or Milada Vlasáková-Orsáčková.

rest of Bohemia. Of thirteen *cimbál* teachers soloists singled out as significant leaders for the *cimbál* in 1993, eleven hailed from Moravia (Kunz 1993b, 22–48).

By the early 1990s, the conservatories had trained a significant number of students on the instrument. According to statistics gathered by Ludvík Kunz, 62 students majoring in *cimbál* graduated from Czech conservatories between 1961 and 1992 (Kunz 1993b, 44).<sup>18</sup> These students went on to play in local *cimbálovky*, as soloists, or to teach at ZUŠ schools. Kunz reported that “more than 20” ZUŠs were teaching *cimbál* in 1993 and, “thanks to this preparation,” Moravian *cimbál* ensembles were “living, creative, and musically imaginative” [živý, tvůrčí, a hudecky vynalézavý] (ibid.). The instrument is learned through intensive practice, by listening to recordings, and practicing etudes and exercises. While the exercises featured in basic pedagogy may not radically differ from teaching prior to the rise of conservatories, the systemic change ushered in many changes.

The conservatory approach reinforces the role of cultural performances in both folkloric and art music spheres. Individual lessons at the conservatory do not establish cultural performance on their own, however: the methods of evaluation and importance of public performance in the curriculum underscore cultural performances as the most important and significant moments for performance. Students learn how to put on concerts, place importance on preparation and rehearsal of pre-selected repertory, impose standards of attire and behavior on performers and audience, and raise the importance of technical perfection in the evaluation of players. Though many of the pieces the students at the Conservatory were practiced in a tradition of art music, most of the students I knew

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<sup>18</sup> Most came from the older studios—31 from Prague and 18 from Kroměříž—while fewer graduated from the newer studios—8 from Brno and 5 from Ostrava.



**Figure 5.1. Main entrance of the Brno Conservatory.**

were interested in or garnered their disposable income from performances in folkloric genres. Thus, while lessons appeared on the surface to be establishing the *cimbál* in the sphere of art music, it seemed to have an effect on folkloric players as well. Most of the *cimbál* players whom I met—that is, those who seemed to draw a majority of their economic support from musical performance on the instrument—had studied *cimbál* at a ZUŠ, held Conservatory degrees in music, or had earned University degrees in related disciplines.

### **Music Lessons and Interpretation Seminars**

My *cimbál* lessons were largely undertaken as a private student with Dalibor Štrunc at the Brno Conservatory in 2005 and 2006 (Figure 5.1). Štrunc has taught at the

Conservatory since 2000, and as his awareness of my project grew, I took part in more events at the Conservatory. I was invited to sit in on other students' lessons, monthly *interpretační semináře* ("interpretation seminars," which were informal recitals open only to students in the department of folk instruments), and end-of-term performance juries that were evaluated by a committee of faculty members. I arranged my first lesson over the phone with Štrunc in May 2004. As it was only my third visit to Brno, I was not sure exactly how to find *Černá pole*, the nineteenth-century suburb of the city where the Conservatory was located. However, having received only a time and street address (and vague partly-understood instructions from my phone call with Štrunc), it was a good opportunity to explore the city.

From the historical center of Brno, I followed the *Třída Kapitana Jaroše*, a once-grand tree-lined boulevard. Walking down the asphalted promenade in the center of the street between two rows of trees, the city surroundings contrasted with the white, yellow, and pink chestnut flowers scattered on the walkway. The sight of flowering chestnuts is linked in my imagination with Central European cities in springtime. This part of the city was planned before cars were commonplace, and the neighborhood was grand. What I assumed had once been green verges and walkways were now paved over in order to provide parking for cars. Plaster statuettes or sphinxes, common decorative features of the neighborhood's late-nineteenth-century apartment buildings, held up the lintels of many second-story windows, and the main entrances were often flanked by pillared porticos and massive doors. One side street was even gated by a two-story triumphal arch. It was easy to imagine all the neo-Renaissance facades painted in bright colors as were some of the recently restored buildings. Most of the facades were drab or

dilapidated, however, and the pavement was cracked. The Conservatory lay at the end of the street away from the city center across the street from *Lužánky*, Brno's largest and oldest park. The park's entrance was watched over by a bust of Emperor Franz Ferdinand II that reminded visitors of the Austrian monarchy's impact on urbanization.

The Conservatory building was unmarked except for the number plate. I did not see any sign that identified the conservatory, though I noticed on subsequent visits a small inscription on a glass panel above the door. However, the sounds of trumpets and violins floating out of open windows suggested that this was the right building. The doors were apparently locked, and I was unable to enter until a small group of students exited the double doors. I took my opportunity to go inside. The foyer, visible through a set of glass the doors, was still locked and I stood in a small glass-enclosed foyer. To my left sat an older woman behind a small window, the ubiquitous *vrátná*, an employee who monitors the entrance of most institutional buildings. In smaller towns and villages, it was usually necessary to ring, sometimes even at shops, in order to gain entrance, but it rarely required convincing a gatekeeper to let you pass.<sup>19</sup>

The *vrátná*, who is usually female, is responsible for monitoring the comings and goings of people through the entrance as well as serving as a receptionist.<sup>20</sup> A keypad was available for students and faculty, who could enter without permission. As a visitor, however, I needed to explain my purpose at the Conservatory and to convince the *vrátná* that I had authorization to enter the building. Though *vrátná* did not hold much authority,

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<sup>19</sup> Timothy Rice notes a similar situation in his interviews with the Bulgarian singer Todora Varimezova who was employed as a receptionist at the entrance to Radio Sofia during the Communist period. Todora, hailing from a rural village attracted attention at her job because she recognized and greeted the regular employees by name; Rice describes "face-to-face interaction" as a "village skill" (Rice 1994, 188). After a few weeks of showing up at the entrance to the Brno Conservatory for lessons and practice, some of the *vrátná* seemed to recognize me, though none ever greeted me.

<sup>20</sup> *Vrátná* is the feminine form, *vrátný* is masculine. While men work in such jobs, most gatekeepers at the Brno Conservatory during the day were older women. *Vrátná* is an adjectival noun related to *vrata* [gate].

I found negotiations with them difficult and they did have the power to grant or deny entrance to many buildings. I regularly went through extended explanations of my purpose, which I assumed were necessitated by my accent and unexpected appearance. Having convinced the *vrátná* I had an appointment with Professor Štrunc, I was asked to sign a visitor's log and allowed to proceed into the main lobby. Following as best I could the *vrátná*'s confusing set of instructions, I eventually made my way through a warren of hallways and back stairwells to room 51 on floor three. Apart from a handwritten time schedule on the padded door (for soundproofing), there was no further indication that this was the *cimbál* studio.

My polite knock turned out to be an atypical entrance. Students often opened the door and stuck their head inside without announcement. If there was a lesson going on or someone was practicing, the visitor would enter quietly so as not to disrupt. Štrunc's full-time conservatory students regularly stopped by between classes to retrieve books, coats, bags, tuners, mallets, recordings, cell phones, and other paraphernalia that were stored in the studio lockers.

This first meeting was somewhat stilted by language difficulties. I could haltingly express myself in Czech, and Štrunc spoke a spattering of English and German as well as Czech. When I returned to Brno in 2005, most of our substantive communication was in Czech. After greeting me, Štrunc asked if I would sit down and listen to the lesson in progress. I was worried about interrupting a lesson, but after being introduced as an "American interested in *cimbál*," it seemed best to sit quietly and observe the rest of the lesson. The flow of the lesson had already been interrupted and, as I later learned, small interruptions were routine. Štrunc occasionally mentioned them as helpful tests of



concentration that prepared students to deal with distractions that might happen during a “real” performance.

Though I was unprepared to have a lesson right away, Štrunc said that he would like to get a general idea of my abilities and invited me to play something after the lesson was finished. I found the lesson situation familiar. Despite the language difficulties, this initial lesson was organized the same way as most of my subsequent lessons. As I progressed, the material differed, but the basic structure remained the same. Lessons typically lasted around forty minutes (determined in part by the Conservatory’s class schedule). Lessons (and practice time, it seemed), though the essential component of the curriculum, were scheduled between required classes.<sup>21</sup> Štrunc started typical lessons by asking the student to perform a scale (in both minor and major tonalities for advanced students) and corresponding arpeggios in set patterns; the key of the exercise was specified by Štrunc the week before. After the scales, the student would play through a prepared etude that had also been assigned the week prior. Finally, the student would play a piece that was in preparation for a performance occasion, such as a recital, an *interpretační seminář*, an end-of-term jury, or for the most advanced students, public performance. During and after each of these major sections, Štrunc would interject with observations, criticism, or advice about the student’s performance.

Lessons began with a warm-up exercise to orient the hands and arms to the relationship between the body and the instrument. This usually took the form of scales, arpeggios, and chord progressions. (At my first lesson, this involved identifying the pitches of the C-major scale in two octaves in the middle register.) The scale would be

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<sup>21</sup> In addition to lessons, students in the *cimbál* studio were taking courses that included Czech, a secondary language (typically English, though many also studied German), music theory, and music history.

assigned during the previous week when Štrunc would choose a key for the student to work on, preparing in the chosen key various rhythmic patterns, arpeggios (or other specific exercises such as scales in thirds or octaves), and “rolled” chords (the pitches struck in quick succession) in a specific key. As the student advanced, the keys would involve wider and wider leaps between pitches and greater independence between hands. More advanced students were also expected to play their scales at faster tempos, with balance (in timbre and volume) between the hands, and with the smoothest connection between pitches.<sup>22</sup>

The scale portion of the lesson was described as a portion of the lesson meant to exercise and test “technical” ability more so than “musical” aspects. As a “complete beginner,” it was understood that my technique did not lend itself to such quick, balanced, and smooth playing. Štrunc took time during this portion of the lesson to comment on my posture and, most often, to correct my hand position and strokes. This was most easily isolated in the scale portions of the lesson—the pitch relationships between notes in different scales remain constant, but the hand patterns change markedly—as discussed later in the section on ideas about learning the instrument.

The goal of the arpeggio exercise was to learn a “feel” for the instrument. As Štrunc emphasized to me numerous times, the music’s *cit* or “feeling” was a large part of what made it Moravian.<sup>23</sup> Scales and etudes were the building blocks of movement for *cimbál* playing that Baily and Driver (1992) describe as spatio-motor thinking. In

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<sup>22</sup> The scale may be considered the most rigorously “disciplined” aspect of musical training. The implications of “disciplining” music, though not specifically discussed among Conservatory students, has been of theoretical interest to musicologists (Bergeron and Bohlman 1992).

<sup>23</sup> Jiří Plocek also focuses on the idea of “feeling” in Moravian music in his article for the *Rough Guide*: “Moravian folk song is quiet, deeply felt. . . . Its main richness is not in rhythmic volatility or fierceness, but in emotive coloration that is imparted from the melodic and harmonic variation” (Plocek 2003, 40). Cf. Holy’s observation, which describes *cit* as a “value-free” term in everyday speech while *emoce* [emotion] “always has negative connotations” (Holy 1996, 181).

essence, repetitive exercises establish certain kinesthetic actions as second nature so that these patterns of movement are easily recalled when playing. Moreover, when arpeggios were paired to a melody as harmonizations, students knew how to “feel” the melody by ear so it was not necessary to “think” about the progression of the melody and ensuing harmonic changes. It is important for *cimbalistas* to quickly and easily assemble logical harmonic progressions since they often provide the harmonic underpinnings for sung or played melodies.

“Musical” aspects of playing were covered in the second portion of the lesson. In this portion, students would play through assigned etudes or solo pieces. These were often being prepared for public performance or exam performances for faculty members at the Conservatory. Etudes were typically taken from a 1958 Hungarian method book (Tarjáni-Tóth and Falka 1958). This method is based on short melodic etudes that exercise the player’s ability by focusing on specific groups of four or five notes (tetrachords and pentachords). In this method, students gain familiarity with specific movement patterns that, theoretically, are later integrated into larger patterns that may realize harmonies or melodies in specific keys or styles. Another beginning primer was a book of thirty eight-bar “technical” etudes. This operated on the same building principle as Štrunc’s basic progression of scales: from keys that were easier, the book progresses toward more difficult ones, and from exercises that require short and flowing movements it progresses toward ones with larger leaps and thus longer reaches. Both of these methods, I suggest, rely on a principle that cognitive psychologists have described as “chunking,” which is discussed in more detail below.

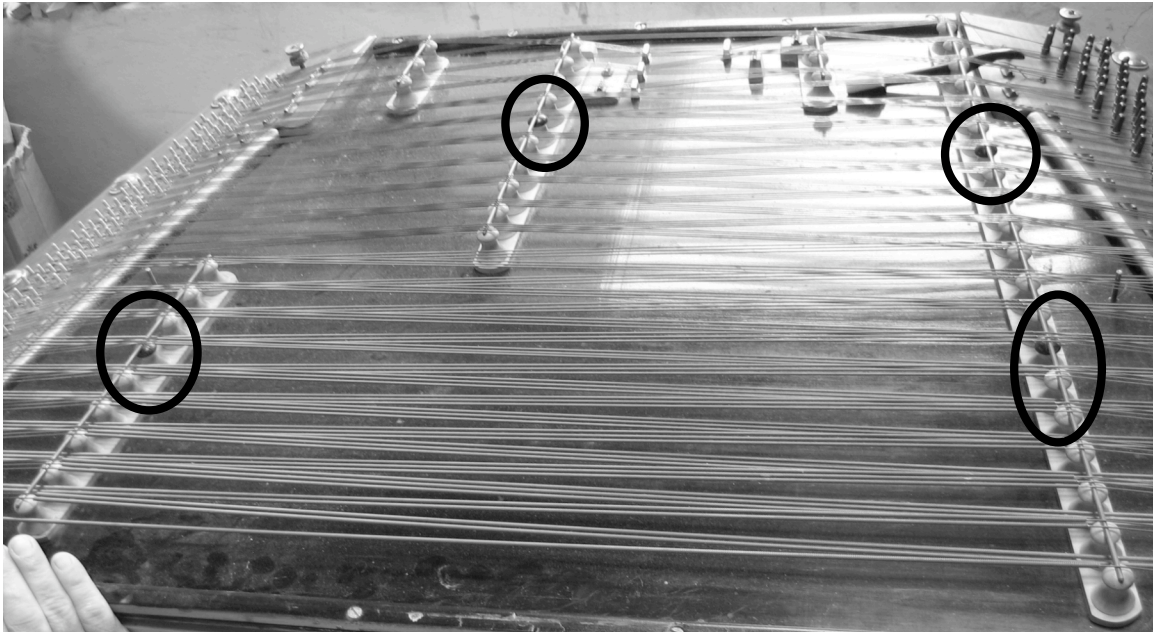
There were other important considerations at my first lesson. Štrunc told me what supplies I should get to make a serious study of the instrument, including a set of mallets, a book of etudes, a general method book (published in Hungary), and some familiarity with at least a basic Moravian melody or two that I could practice harmonizing. The etude book and method book would provide short exercises that would focus on specific skills for the player, and the melody would develop “musicality” and the sense of appropriate chord changes and elaboration of harmonies. For the time being, I was not assigned a “piece” to learn and for this month it turned out that the short etudes took the place of any larger-scale composition. Given the difficulty in accessing the building, it was also necessary to set up a schedule of times when I could come to the building to practice so that Štrunc could inform the *vrátná* that I was to be allowed in.

The first lesson involved two other important areas. I learned and explored the entire chromatic scale of the instrument, which involved playing almost all of the courses except for the very highest ones. Also, Štrunc discussed and demonstrated what he considered to be the proper mallet technique. As he made clear then and subsequently, it was his opinion that the correct amount of freedom and elasticity in the wrists as well as follow-through was essential to good technique. Otherwise, he contended, a player would reach a technical plateau that it was not possible to reach beyond. He also gave me a recording of various Moravian songs to listen to from which to select a melody. After about forty-five minutes, after which my musical self felt quite exhausted, Štrunc suggested that we go to lunch and, at his suggestion, we proceeded around the corner from the Conservatory to a Chinese restaurant that was supposed to have a good value on lunch specials.

At a broader social level, students learn acceptable modes of performance and how to think about repertory. This is most apparent in the “interpretation seminars” [*interpretační semináře*] held monthly at the Brno Conservatory. These occasions are structured like concert performances—they begin at specific times, students prepare solo repertory, there is an audience, a set program, and a moderator who introduces each student. I attended and videotaped three seminars October and November 2006, which all followed a similar pattern. They were held at the *malá scéna* [small stage], a small performance space at the Conservatory.

The events mimicked concert performances. The hall was a long narrow room that had chairs for an audience of about fifty people. The entrance was set off from the rest of the building by a small vestibule and lobby that provided sound insulation. At one end of the room was a raised platform separated by curtains, and other stage paraphernalia—lights, music stands, and an upright grand piano—suggested a theatrical feel in the space. Repertory that the students would play was announced before the event on a bulletin board for the department of folk instruments. In the audience were students of the guitar and accordion studios as well as the *cimbál*. Each performer was announced and applauded before they began. After completing their selection, they bowed and were applauded by the audience. Štrunc gave evaluative comments about the performance to the students who had performed during their next lessons. Thus, the seminar was a chance for evaluation. However, it was also important as a chance for the students to practice the way that they might someday perform in the “real world.”

The interpretation seminars represented a gathering of a strictly defined community of students who are all studying with one teacher at the same institution.



**Figure 5.2.** A player's view of the *cimbál*. The player would be seated facing the edge at the bottom of the illustration. Darkened chessmen for orientation (highlighted with circles) are visible on the left, center, and right bridges. (The dampers at right and left have been removed from this instrument). Photo by author of an instrument by Vladimír Holiš.

While such structured interpretive communities are a relatively new development, they seem to draw on learning practices that have been in place since at least the nineteenth century. Many of the important techniques taught today appear similar to those illustrated from late-nineteenth century teachers. In addition, the stress on fluid physical movement and technique remains. The model of public performance established in the interpretation seminar is largely consistent with performances for paying audiences. Ethnographic accounts of two *cimbál* performances that follow this same pattern of cultural performance are presented in Chapter Six.

### **Cognitive Worlds: Experiencing the *Cimbál***

European-style conservatory teaching typically focuses on the final sound product as the most important aspect of music, but this may not accurately represent the way that musicians in all areas and on all instruments think about playing music (Baily 1985,

Baily 1992).<sup>24</sup> Conservatory teaching is based on a “hierarchical model of performance which gives pre-eminence to the auditory representation,” which significantly downplays the importance of spatio-motor skills in terms of “musicianship” (aural skills, musical analysis, etc.) and practically eliminates the body as a legitimate source of knowledge in the process of music-making (Baily 1992, 151).

In contrast, “auditory and spatio-motor modes of musical cognition” may be of “potentially equal importance” in “certain musical cultures” (Baily and Driver 1992, 59). Baily hypothesizes that “the musician may be thinking primarily in terms of movements rather than sound patterns. If so, for the musician it [playing music] is a question of ‘how do I move next?’, not, ‘what’s the next sound pattern I should produce?’ It is a form of creativity in movement, the ‘dance of the hand’. The motor grammar may form an important element in this kind of musical thought” (Baily 1992, 154). In his study of the Chinese seven-string zither *guqin*, Bell Yung compares hand movements with dance choreography. Just as sounds only “make musical sense” in specific contexts and specific combinations, so “in zither music, a movement, which produces a tone, will make choreographic and kinesthetic ‘sense’ in the context of the other movements that come before and after” (Yung 1984, 507). Kinesthetic understanding may also be more salient for certain musical instruments, and the *cimbál* seems to be an exemplar for this approach since a player must negotiate complex spatial relationships and movement.

In exploring the cognitive processes behind musical structure, Baily has suggested that ethnomusicologists investigate a “cognition of performance” (Baily 1992, 148).

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<sup>24</sup> It is possible that certain instruments without long affiliations with this system—such as accordion, *cimbál*, or in Baily’s case, Herati lutes—rely more on visual and kinesthetic elements than piano or violin, instruments that rely more heavily on tactile sense but have been the traditional stronghold of conservatory teaching.

Refining this theory is an attempt to better understand the ways that instrumentalists learn to play music, for which the relationship between humans and instruments—what Baily describes as the “man/instrument interface” (Baily 1995, 12)—is particularly important. This demands close attention to the movements required to play instrumental music, an investigation of a bodily aspect of music that is rarely studied. Baily’s work is aimed at understanding the influence of bodily and instrumental constraints on musical structure, and how musical patterns may arise from deeper structures of “motor grammar” (Baily 1992, 152–154). My goal in this section is to draw on Baily’s work to explicate how *cimbál* players learn to play and the basis for the pedagogical system in which I studied.

Seeing the *cimbál* at close range from the player’s perspective (Figure 5.1) is quite different than observing a lesson. It is immediately apparent that complex spatial relationships and arm movements are required to play the instrument. Upon sitting down at the instrument, one is confronted by thirty-nine parallel courses of strings. Two long bridges span the length of the instrument at each side, and two shorter bridges divide some of the strings in the upper half of the playing area. From the long edge near the player, the plane of the strings inclines slightly upward. While holding a pair of ten-inch hammers, it is necessary to draw the elbows back and to the abdomen in order to reach the lowest pitches (nearest the player). To sound the highest pitches, it is necessary to stretch almost to arm’s-length (farthest from the player). The hammers modify the player’s relationship to space by extending the reach, and the sheer number of strings to choose is somewhat overwhelming.

Moreover, the pitches are not organized in an immediately comprehensible pattern. The layout of the large *cimbál* (Figure 5.1) was consistent on most of the



instruments that I saw, excepting the small *cimbál*. The arrangement of strings and the tuning schema was based on that devised in the 1870s by J. V. Schunda. Modifications have allowed the addition of low and high strings that encompass a fully chromatic range of 58 pitches spanning a four-and-a-half-octave ambitus from C to a<sup>3</sup>. The layout is not easy to relate with other stringed instruments. The piano and similar keyboard instruments feature a “linear array” of notes (see Baily 1995, 23): moving from left to right, each key corresponds to a rise in pitch by half-step. Violin and guitar fingerboards, with multiple strings that can each be simultaneously stopped at varying positions, feature a “tiered array” of notes (see Baily 1995, 24). In a tiered layout, the relationship between the direction of body movement (in these cases, inward or outward from the body) is not constant with the direction of pitch produced (i.e., moving out from the body may produce either a rise or fall in pitch).<sup>25</sup> The pitches on a *cimbál* are arranged in neither a linear nor tiered pattern, although there are two general rules. On the axis stretching away from the player, pitch tends to rise; when moving from right to left, pitch also tends to rise. Blackened chessmen bridges designate four points of reference: B-flat, c, b, and g-sharp<sup>1</sup>/d<sup>2</sup> (the latter pitches are formed by the same string on either side of the central bridge).

Given the spatial and kinesthetic challenges faced by a beginning player, I explain some of the thought processes that I suspected Moravian *cimbál* players develop in the course of musical training. These observations are somewhat limited to the instrument’s role in accompanying songs, during which players must improvise within close constraints imposed by pre-existing melodies, chord progressions, and playing styles.

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<sup>25</sup> The terms “up” and “down” for pitch are obviously relative and refer to spatial relationship on certain instruments. When I refer to movement directions in this section, I orient them in terms of the player’s body: thus, an inward movement is toward the body.

Although the expansion of the instrument has substantially increased the range and volume of the instrument, the fundamental process of accompaniment, which is typically based on scales and arpeggios, is largely unchanged. The improvisation of song accompaniments is based on the basic “chunks” of movement/music that players practice.

It is helpful to first establish a basic understanding of kinesthesia. Kinesthesia describes the

perception of body position, produced by stimulation of the proprioceptors or sense organs in the muscles, tendons, joints. and It is this ‘muscle sense’ that makes an individual aware of his position when sitting, standing, lying, bending, or stretching. . . . Kinesthetic sense provides an awareness of the degree of force used for moving the body or its parts, and causes the individual to make adaptive movements for performing a task, consciously or otherwise. Kinesthesia enables the individual to duplicate a movement, even after a long period of not performing it. (Latchaw and Egstrom 1969, 52; quoted in Yung 1984, 515 n. 1)

Kinesthetic sense is the most personal of all musical elements and, as Yung points out (1984, 505), it is experienced only by the player.<sup>26</sup> Proprioception, often described as “muscle memory,” is the “inherent sense of your body’s position and motion in space” (Blakeslee and Blakeslee 2007, 9). Recent cognitive and neurophysical studies of proprioception indicate that this is the sense that the brain uses to “map” the entire body and keep track of spatial relationships between parts of the body (Blakeslee and Blakeslee 2007).

Cognitive psychologists studying human behavior hypothesize that people process information about the world in “chunks” (Harwood 1976, 524). Harwood describes “chunking” as the “imposition of abstract categories on complex information” as a way in which people structure actions (Harwood 1976, 528). Actions, he contends, are

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<sup>26</sup> While experience obviously differs between players, the work of Baily and Yung both suggests that physical movement, as a widely shared human experience, can be extrapolated to have meaning across individuals (see also Blacking 1977).

“predicated on expectations that the environment is somewhat predictable. That is, we notice ordered patterns of events, and we act as if those patterns occur reliably” (Harwood 1976, 522). In other words, chunks might be compared to the magnified portion of a city map: individual locations are only visible in the closeup, but the overall shape of the city and relations of its parts are not understood as a whole until the entire area is seen in one unit. While learning jazz piano, David Sudnow described short formulaic series of pitches and harmonies as “pathways,” which were “peculiar sorts of routes” that he learned from his teacher in order to improvise harmonies and melodic fragments (Sudnow 1978, 18; Wolf 2007, 10). I have borrowed Sudnow’s usage to refer to the chunks of movement that are remembered through proprioception. The term pathways suggests that these chunks are not static, but patterns of movement that a cimbalom player learns through repetitive practice.

Baily adapts the ergonomic term “man/machine interface” to “man/instrument interface.” The expression in ergonomics has focused on design and layout for “ease of use” and “maximal compatibility between the machine and its human operator” (Baily 1995, 28 n. 3). Musical instruments are not always designed with “ease of use” in mind, but players nonetheless must negotiate ways of moving and interacting with the object in order to produce desired sounds. Baily also discusses “compatibility,” which refers to constraints in the relationship between player and instrument. Specifically, different musical instruments and styles vary “with respect to the degree to which the motor patterns of the performance technique embody the constraints imposed by the morphology of the instrument, and utilize movements and sequences of movements that are intrinsically easy for the human sensori-motor system to organize” (Baily 1992, 149;

Baily and Driver 1992, 58). On the *cimbál*, for example, I found long reaches to be less compatible with my sense of motion than short ones.

*Finding Your Way: Cognitive Representations of Physical Space*

I describe the playing area and layout of strings on the *cimbál* as a “console.”<sup>27</sup> Despite evoking images of an airplane cockpit, this seems to be the most appropriate term to describe the myriad options and technical complexity that faces the player when sitting down at the *cimbál*. I further characterize the strings surrounding the central bridge as the “central playing area.” These strings represent the most obvious center of the instrument, and the term reflects my experience that these strings are the first ones that players learn to fluently navigate.<sup>28</sup>

The console may be likened to a dance space. Yung adopted this term in his discussion of the fingerboard on the *guqin*: “the two hands can thus be considered as two dancers, and the fingerboard of the instrument as a dance space” (Yung 1984, 508). The hands move in the space above the string console on three axes in relation to the player’s body: up/down, left/right, and in/out. Baily describes this as a “tactuokinesthetic field” (Baily 1985, 253). It is essential for the player to know this space intimately, not just from a visual standpoint, but from a bodily one as well.

Tuning charts are schematic representations of instruments based on the player-instrument interface. The tuning chart is what Latour (1986) calls an “immutable mobile”—a fixed visual representation that can easily be moved, reprinted, and used as a heuristic device in publications as well as for teaching. Tuning charts thus provide

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<sup>27</sup> These strings, which are essentially organized around a C-major scale, are at the center of the instrument’s layout as discussed in Chapter 2.

<sup>28</sup> Sudnow similarly observes that the beginning jazz pianist works outward from the center of the keyboard to gradually “incorporate” the necessary “sense of places and distances” traversed by the hands (Sudnow 1978, 11–12).

conveniently scaled metaphorical representations of the console of pitches, and thus enables the player to think about the entirety of the instrument through a visual representation. The two-dimensionality of the chart essentially glosses over the physicality of playing the instrument. The tuning chart's "bird's-eye view" represents an idealized "optical consistency" (Latour 1986, 7): it shrinks the layout of pitches for easier comprehension, at the same time creating a thinking aid that players can refer to mentally (or visually) on any instrument with the same layout. It also makes a portable and easily consultable "scale model" that is much more convenient than a full-size demonstration instrument would be (see Latour 1986, 21). As with nautical charts that represent an idealized point of view never actually seen by a ship's navigator (Hutchins 1995, 61–65, 107–116), the tuning chart shows the instrument in a way that the player never actually sees or experiences it in physical space.<sup>29</sup> One significant aspect of tuning charts is their two-dimensionality, which conveniently lays out the entire instrument on one page but also narrows the complexity of the actual player interface with the instrument.

Tuning charts also represent the dance space for the hands above the console. Thus, as a sort of "cognitive map" for the instrument, tuning charts offer ideal representations of the instrument that can help in thinking about the movements. They provide conceptual maps that might allow players to draw conceptual relationships between instrument maps and body maps. Research on cognition and body maps suggests that guided visualization yields significant results in physical competence even when completed away from the instrument. Experiments by Alvaro Pascual-Leone suggest that

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<sup>29</sup> I did not think about this disjunction until I attempted to create a tuning chart of my own, which proved to be a much more complicated task than I had anticipated. Although it was easy for me to "find my way around" on the instrument after a few months of study, creating a chart from memory required an intimate knowledge of the instrument at a level that I did not require immediately. Thus, representing the three-dimensional console area on a much smaller two-dimensional surface was a challenge.

physical practice “literally increased the size of the brain map involved in acquiring new skill” (Blakeslee and Blakeslee 2007, 57; Cohen et al. 2005). In addition, similar experiments suggest that, “as far as the motor cortex [of the brain] is concerned, executed and imagined movements are almost identical” as long as the mental visualization rehearses specific physical movements (Blakeslee and Blakeslee 2007, 60; Ryan and Simons 1982, Zecker 1982).

Tuning charts essentially allow players to “think through” and plan their actions. Modified to represent sound and movement patterns visually, these charts illustrate how the instrument structures the player’s movement. (Figure 5.5 presents a chart that I received in a lesson.) For example, the  $c^1-d^1-e^1-f^1$  tetrachord at the center of the instrument (Figure 5.2), may be visualized away from the instrument to strengthen “off-line” muscle memory (Cohen et al. 2005), which later reinforces kinesthetic memory, visual input, and aural result to form pathways that the performer may later fluently duplicate. The symbolic representation encourages certain groupings of sound, visual input, movement, and muscle memory, into “highly learned patterns” of action that become “virtually automatic” (Wolf 2007, 14).

#### *Establishing Pathways: Getting around the Instrument*

In order to use the information schematized in tuning charts, a player must be able to convert the information into actions. Subsequently, these actions must be realized in physical space by the body, in a sequence that sounds the desired pitches in the desired order, at the desired volume, and with the desired timbre. This is only possible if the player has assembled a basic “grammar” of movement that can be converted into action. Sudnow (1978, 10–14) describes the mastery of this physical grammar as an

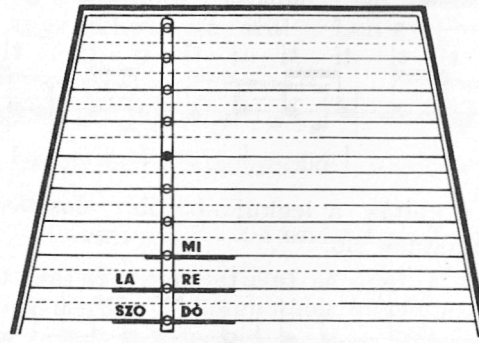
“incorporation” that gradually comes to inform the musician’s movement into and away from key points. This grammar is what is learned through scale exercises and etudes.

The way I played at my first lesson was halting and tentative, but Štrunc recognized that I grasped music-theoretical concepts. My playing at this first lesson was judged (by Štrunc as well as myself) as unsatisfactory by conservatory standards—that is, the auditory result was not the expected outcome. The problem was that I did not have the motor skills to realize my thoughts fluently in sound. I lacked spatio-motor competence. However, Štrunc seemed pleased with my *hudebnost* (musicality or “musicalness”)—in essence, my musicianship—which was a product of my training in institutions structured around the same tenets and values as the Brno Conservatory. I was thus well oriented musically, but unable to convert my thoughts into action.

The small movements established and re-established in scales and etudes chunks of musical material that embody the movements that are required to “sound Moravian” when playing the instrument. These exercises establish the basic interface between player and instrument. Baily notes that “spatial relationships are very important at the cognitive level, being directly linked to the physical operations to be performed” (Baily 1992, 150). Following Baily’s insights about “motor grammars” in improvisation and composition on the Herati *dutār* lute in Afghanistan (Baily 1992, 151–154), I present here a basic set of rules that outline basic underlying principles that a *cimbál* player might follow when planning movements.

### *Rules of Hand Movement*

These rules codify the movement strategies that achieve the maximum compatibility between the player and instrument. Given the physical constraints of the



**Figure 5.3. A tuning diagram showing five pitches. (“dó” corresponds to  $c^1$ .) In the diagram, only the upper strings of the instrument are represented.**

instrument, as well as the physical constraints of the player’s movement, these considerations can be seen as a basic distillation of a player’s planning process in preparing hand movements. These should not be regarded as prescriptive rules. They are derived from my learning process through lessons and practice. Nonetheless, I consider them fundamental enough that they may be generalized to suggest a basic movement grammar for hammered zithers.

- 1) Do not cross hands. Crossed hands raise the probability that the hammers will collide, and potentially cause the hand to drop the hammer. The wrists should never cross, although one hand often reaches in front of the other; in these situations, the hand following the pitch contour is said to be “leading.” The choice of which hand “leads” often depends on which hand the player considers to be dominant. (One of Štrunc’s first questions to me was whether I was right- or left-handed.)
- 2) Alternate strikes between right and left hands when possible. The regular alternation between hand strokes ensures that each hand has the chance to prepare its next movement before striking the string. This is meant to ensure the best stroke possible. The second of two successive strokes by the same

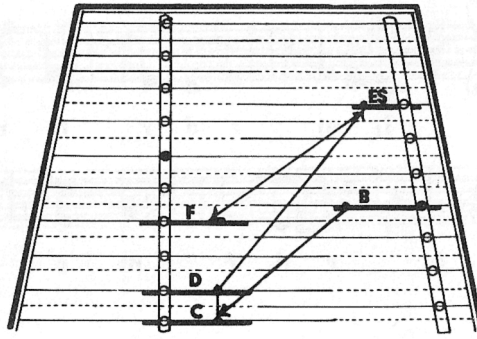


hand is more likely to be uneven in timbre or volume. Moreover, alternating between hands allows a quicker succession of notes since it allows for slightly more time for the preparation of each stroke. That is, alternating between hands should allow the player to execute passages demanding high levels of movement more quickly. However, the player should break the pattern of alternation flow if it would result in the hands crossing.

- 3) Minimize long reaches. Players have a greater possibility of hitting a wrong pitch on longer reaches since they are not as easy to gauge precisely. Long reaches also require more time. To make up for the delay, in some cases one hand must strike twice in succession so as to allow the other hand enough time to move.

The first fundamental movement is paramount, but the other items in the list represent interrelated considerations in a process of planning that a player might use while working out the sequence of hand movements while preparing to play a given passage. Thus, in Figure 5.2, if the right hand sounds the first pitch, the ascending group can be easily played when each hand alternates strokes. However, if the left hand begins, both arms must move between the third and fourth strokes in order to ensure that the hands do not cross when the player switches to the left side of the central bridge. By following these overall guidelines, players idealize their physical movements in playing the instrument toward maximum fluidity and smoothness whenever possible.

Visual markers (bridges and darkened chessmen) were necessary necessary for navigating larger leaps. Keys requiring long reaches are less compatible for the player/instrument interface because they pose a greater challenge to the player's spatial



**Figure 5.4. First pentachord of a B-flat-major scale.**

orientation. Likewise, a greater number of pitches outside the central playing area creates more “difficult” situations for the player, and keys requiring these “awkward” motions are more difficult because of the decreased compatibility for the player.

The rules may be demonstrated with the first pentachord of the B-flat major scale (Figure 5.3). Since the first pitch is on the right-hand side of the instrument, the pentachord is begun by the right hand. (If the left hand started, the hands would begin in a crossed position.) Likewise, the E-flat will be sounded by the right hand since it is also to the far right of the playing area. The C and D are sounded by the left hand since the right hand would be required to make two long reaches (between B-flat to D and then back to E-flat) and strike twice in succession. Thus, when the left hand strikes C and D, it strikes twice in succession, but only on two adjacent strings. At the end, right-left alternation is preserved when the left hand strikes F; this creates a short, linear reach for the left hand (skipping only one string between D and F).

These considerations are both pragmatic and practical. While some of these rules may appear as natural ways for the player to relate to the instrument, they are often taught and reiterated directly. This suggests that the player’s approach to the instrument is not an automatic or given relationship but a slowly practiced and laboriously learned behavior.

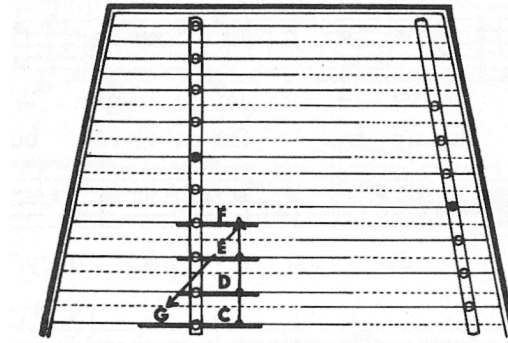


Figure 5.5. First pentachord of a C-major scale, beginning at  $c^1$ .

During my first months of lessons, Štrunc repeatedly instructed me to “alternate hands” whenever possible while practicing scales, to let the upper hand (that is, the one farther away from the body) lead the lower, and to pay close attention to the posture of the hands and wrists while striking the strings.

### *Pathways*

Basic movements are learned, repeated, and strengthened through technical exercises. “In a technical exercise,” as musicologist Naomi Cumming observes, “a performer’s attention is to the movement of her body in making sound” (Cumming 2000, 28). Technical exercises establish basic routes and pathways (Sudnow 1978) of movement that the player uses as building blocks for a larger vocabulary of movement. For example, each individual sextuplet in Music Example 5.2 may be seen to correspond to a chunk of basic movements. Through practicing such exercises, players learn to make the movements that allow fluid and fluent movement throughout the playing area second nature.

The first pentachord of a C-major scale was the first pathway that I learned (Figure 5.4). At the center of the string console is a course of strings corresponding in pitch and location to the “middle C” ( $c^1$ ) on the piano keyboard. The pitch is easily

identifiable by the end of the central bridge, which is located at the player's center of vision when facing the instrument from the long edge. When sitting down at the instrument, players tend to adjust their posture so that their hammers rest near this pitch when they are sitting at a rest position. The C-major scale is arranged in two groups of four adjacent strings on either side of this central bridge. At the right side of the central bridge are the pitches  $c^1-d^1-e^1-f^1$  and at the left are  $g^1-a^1-b^1-c^2$ . These two tetrachords occupy the central playing area.

The triads based on C, F, and G—easily formed once a player is familiar with the central playing area—are also important chunks. Štrunc's basic arpeggiation exercise isolated these three major triads. In other words, the basic chord progression of I–IV–V–I, which could be used to harmonize many melodies, was learned at the same time as scales. As the *cimbál* player can generally sound no more than two pitches simultaneously, Štrunc explained that it was important to be able to roll chords quickly (whether accompanying a singer or playing a piano transcription) in order to give the impression of full harmonies and sustained chords. Although the location of individual pitches was important, it was necessary to be able to quickly sound the scales, chords, and basic chord progressions. It would be too time-consuming to map out anew each time the player repeated a harmony or melodic section.

### *Thinking Harmonically*

In order to create meaningful musical expression, the chunks of movement and sound must be put into a coherent sequence. This next step could be described as the harmonic dimension. Harmonic thinking is reflected in notation used by players, which often consists of chord symbols paired with a line of lyrics. The notation is based on the

**Music Example 5.2. Exercise No. 1 from Vojtěch Brada’s “30 Eight-Bar Etudes.”** The manuscript shows Štrunc’s markings indicating hand exchanges (1=left hand; 2= right hand) and points where the player should dampen the strings (“p”).

assumption that the player is familiar with the general outline of the melody. It is not the *cimbál*’s responsibility to play the melody, which is left to a singer or lead violinist, but to fill out underlying harmonies. This step is accomplished by putting together arpeggios in specific sequences that fit specific melodies.

An intermediary step between movement chunking and harmonic thinking is illustrated in the first of the eight-bar technical etudes by Vojtěch Brada (Music Example 5.2). The exercise features groups of six pitches (written as sextuplets) that cover one beat; in the following beat, the sextuplet is repeated. The harmony changes with each two-beat group, and the reach of the hands slowly expands throughout the exercise. It begins by outlining a simple C-major triad embellished with a passing tone (D) and an upper-neighbor tone (A). This first harmony allows strict alternation between hands and

Otvírajte sa . (Strážnice)

Otvírajte sa strážnické brány .  
F C C7 F

I: k asentě jede šohajek svárny . :]  
F F7 B C7 F  
(G1)

Music Example 5.3. “Telegram” notation for “Otvírajte sa.” From a *cimbál* lesson with Jan Beránek. simple linear progression between pitches (c.f. Figure 5.4). Each harmony can be perceived as a kinesthetic unit, or “chunk.” Each chunk is repeated, thereby reinforcing a sense of kinesthetic repetition and pattern of muscle movement, what could be termed a choreographic unit in Yung’s terminology. By the end of the exercise’s fourth bar, the hands are required to negotiate the movement over a space of two octaves and a major third. This expansion also demands more complicated hand exchanges: rather than regularly alternating between right-hand and left-hand strokes, each hand is required to strike twice in success by the beginning of the fourth bar. Štrunc’s instructions to this effect are recorded in the Figure, with “1” indicating use of the left hand and “2” indicating the right. (Further complexity is added with coordination of the foot pedal, which is indicated by the marking “p” in the first bar.)

Harmonic thinking was also manifest in notation that I often saw or received, which provided a basic shorthand notation for individual songs (Music Example 5.3). This “telegram” [*telegram*] notation provided the basic song text paired with the root of the underlying harmony for the corresponding lyrics. In a *cimbál* lesson with Jan

Beránek, for example, I received notation for “Otvírajte sa” [Open the Gates].<sup>30</sup> In parentheses next to the title, he noted that the song was usually associated with the town of Strážnice in South Moravia, the home of the annual folklore festival. The lyrics are as follows:

*Otvírajte sa strážnické brány  
K asentě jede šohajek švárný*

Open the Strážnice gates  
The handsome boy is going to  
the recruiters.

The song describes a young man going through the famous gates, built into the walls that once surrounded the town (the gates are the only section of this wall left standing today), presumably on his way to participate in a recruitment exercise for the army. Such recruitment was often done through virtuosic solo dancing that allowed men to show off their physical strength and endurance. This dancing was often accompanied by a cimbalom band hired by military recruiters (Leach 1972, 138–139).<sup>31</sup> Since the text describes an event that will likely separate the boy from his home, there is an air of melancholy indicated by the free *táhlá* tempo.

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<sup>30</sup> This example is discussed from a lesson with Mr. Beránek on 16 December 2006 at his apartment in Brno. The discussion is based on my written notes and photographs from the lesson. Telegram notation is attributed to Jaromír Běhůnek (see Chapter 4).

<sup>31</sup> The ensuing dance is called *verbuňk* (derived from the German verb *Werben*, “to recruit”). In Hungarian, the dance is called *verbunkos* and was so popular that it inspired a genre of solo pieces in this style for the cimbalom; these gradually developed in the nineteenth-century social dance *csárdás* (Sárosi 1978, 53, 71).

The image shows two staves of musical notation in G-flat major (one flat). The first staff contains the melody for the first four measures, with lyrics and chord symbols below: 'Ot - ví - raj - te sa, stráž - nic - ké brá - ny'. The second staff starts at measure 5 and continues for four more measures, with lyrics and chord symbols below: 'Ka - sen - te je - de so - ha - jek svar - ny'. The time signature changes from 2/4 to 3/4 and back to 2/4. Chord symbols are F, C, C7, and F.

**Music Example 5.4. Melody of “Otvírajte sa” transcribed in staff notation. Paired with lyrics and chord symbols.**

Beránek instructed me in the basic patterns to reproduce the harmonies on the *cimbál*. He suggested that we play the song in the key of B-flat as it was an easy range for his voice. As the player responsible for realizing the *cimbál* part, I was responsible for filling out the harmonies; however, I was not very familiar with the key of B-flat and so the exercise presented a challenge. To aid my playing, Beránek provided a notation of the B-flat triad superimposed on a tuning diagram (Figure 5.5). By quickly rehearsing the arpeggio patterns and other bits that I had practiced in technical exercises—the essential pathways for realizing an accompaniment in B-flat—I was able to play a basic version of the song’s harmonies while Mr. Beránek sang the melody.

As a beginner, I was particularly conscious of the many cognitive steps between learning a new melody, figuring out appropriate harmonies, and playing them for a singer from the *cimbál*. Along with the basic telegram notation, I needed to have a basic grasp of the melody (Music Example 5.4). As the *cimbalista*, it was my responsibility to outline the song’s basic harmonies while Beránek sang the melody. This task was, as I had realized numerous times in my lessons with Štrunc, quite difficult for me to realize in real time. When practicing, I had the luxury of sounding out each triad at my own rate, but with a singer I was obliged to keep up. It was clear to me that I had not yet firmly



Freely ♩ = 120

Ot ví raj - te sa, stráž nic ké brá - ny

Ka-sen-te je - de so-ha - jek svar - ny

Music Example 5.5. Melody and basic *cimbal* accompaniment of “Otvírajte sa.”

established the pathways of the harmonic arpeggios and melodies that were required. I did, however, approximate a basic version of accompaniment for the melody (Music Example 5.5).

My experience confirmed the observation that a conceptual understanding of the desired aural outcome (which I could often produce relatively easily on the piano), was not tantamount to mastering the physical movements required to produce the desired harmonies on the *cimbal*. While my music theory training while studying music performance prepared me well to grasp the concept of this harmonic notation, my first attempts to realize it on the instrument were incompetent. The harmonies could only be satisfactorily realized once the player can easily recall the “chunks” of musical material—pentachords from scales, arpeggios, and rhythmic patterns. When a competent

singer is performing the melody, then the *cimbalista*'s job is to embellish the underlying harmony. When appropriate, melodic embellishments are improvised. The melody appears to be of somewhat secondary importance for the *cimbal*'s musical output unless it is a solo performance.

In sum, students learn kinesthetic plans and spatio-motor control through practice and lessons. Actual playing transforms experience into knowledge and is thus an important part of learning. This experience is concentrated through small chunks of musical material that provide the building blocks for instrumental technique. Arpeggios and scale patterns iterate these chunks so that a player can draw upon the movements when accompanying a song melody or realizing an embellished accompaniment. In the terminology of Yung's choreography or Baily's "dance of the hand," these small units comprise the basic dance steps that are the foundation of the entire choreography that shapes a musical piece. *Cimbal* players translate written or mental notations into aural products. This translation takes place through the movements of players, which are based on the small "chunks" of learned musical material. In this way, knowledge that is planned on tuning charts, practiced through exercises, and put into coherent order while accompanying songs, is converted into sound.

### **Conclusions**

The player-instrument interface and kinesthetic elements are important for all musical instruments, and the relationship between players and instruments has not gone unnoticed among practitioners of Western classical music. As cellist Tom Machover relates of his experience composing, "when I hear melodies or intervals, I can feel what my left hand fingers would do to create them. When I am imagining—in the quiet of my

study—a full orchestral sonority, my muscles reproduce the gesture as if I were playing it on the cello” (Machover 2007, 20). Musical instruments are, at this level of knowledge, objects with which “concrete ways of [musical] thinking” are accomplished (Turkle 2007a, 7). Cumming discovered a similar experience as a violin student: “Radically change a student’s basic technique, and you have also altered his or her expressive medium. . . . To reorient a violinist’s hands on the violin is to change his or her mode of touch, of movement” (Cumming 2000, 7). She identified a “gap” between the interior and exterior quality of musical sound that partially eluded her violin teachers: “As they could not fully articulate the relationship of bodily states, emotional experience, and qualities of sound, all these teachers could do was to push students to a point of crisis, making them confront the gap between any ‘interior’ state they might feel in contemplating a work, and the expressive content heard by others in their performances” (ibid., 8).

As the case of music pedagogy on the *cimbál* makes clear, musical instruments provide primary physical objects that constrain musical activity and define communities of practice. In this case study, practice not only refers to general cultural practices of public performance and art music traditions, but also to the learned and practiced ways of interaction between musician and instrument. In essence, instruments are the objects that become a “focus around which the negotiation of meaning becomes organized” (Wenger 1998, 58). Conservatory training programs, which require students to declare a principal instrument, encourage the formation of communities centered by music instruments.

Recent research further clarifies and underscores the importance of kinesthetic sense. This sense comprises an embodied knowledge of musicians. The case of the *cimbál* illustrates the importance of kinesthesia in musical learning and ultimately

musical performance. These insights open up a rewarding new emphasis and direction for further study into what has been recently described as the “ethnomusicology of music learning” (Rice 2003a). I suggest that detailed knowledge of instrumental performance practice such as that described above for the cimbalom forms a fundamental, yet intimate, level of the interpretive community around the Moravian *cimbál*.

This should not imply that musicians lack individual agency, are unable to think past their structured musical training, or trapped in a discourse of their learning communities. Creativity is often indexed by the way in which musicians are able to stretch the constraints of the human-instrument interaction (Baily 1992, 149). Issues of individual creativity in the relationship to the instrument as well as individual approaches to the interpretation of folk music are discussed in the next chapter.

## CHAPTER 6

### BLURRING GENRES: PERFORMING *CIMBÁL* IN THE PRESENT

*There are many people for whom folklore is . . . an inspiration, and they want to work more with it.*  
—Zuzana Lapčiková<sup>1</sup>

*Every cimbalista has his original approach, and I am proud that I am trying to go on my own path whether or not I get lost from time to time. As long as something worked, or is working, for me, I am always conscious—for better or worse—that these reserves are bottomless.*  
—Dalibor Štrunc<sup>2</sup>

In the twenty-first century, *cimbál* music continues to be evocative in Moravia. Its significance has recently been amplified, particularly with pressures of regionalism from the EU and globalism from free-market economic approaches. In the following discussion of local traditions, Moravian music is occasionally interpreted as metonymically representative of Czech traditional culture since these musicians and musics are of interest across the Czech Republic and not just within South Moravia. However, current musical activity must also be heard as an element in post-socialist society. Under Communism, folklore was heavily subsidized by the government and thus, musicians and enthusiasts today must still grapple with the ideological undercurrents of the previous regime. These responses are often couched in equally ideological discourses in the postsocialist present.

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<sup>1</sup> Interview with Zuzana Lapčiková, 26 November 2006, Brno.

<sup>2</sup> *Každý cimbalista je svým způsobem originál a já jsem hrdý pouze na to, že se snažím jít svou vlastní cestičkou, nehlede na to, že mohu občas zabloudit. Pokud se mi něco povedlo, či povede, vždycky si bohužel či bohudík uvědomím, že rezervy jsou nekonečné.* Personal communication with author, 17 December 2006.

This chapter takes up current musical activity among Moravian *cimbál* musicians and situates them within discourses on globalization and world music. The analysis revolves around performances by two *cimbál* players well-known in South Moravian folk music. The first is Zuzana Lapčíková (b. 1968), a *cimbál* player and native of Zlín, a town in eastern Moravia. Her musical roots are in folklore ensembles, but she has gained stature as an interdisciplinary artist in the last decade, particularly in collaborations with local and international jazz musicians as well as modern dancers. The second is Dalibor Štrunc (b. 1966), a *cimbál* player who grew up playing in north-Moravian folklore groups in the town of Rožnov but has made a career as a freelance player in Brno and Prague since the 1990s.

Both Štrunc and Lapčíková were musically active during the political changes of the 1990s and were performing regularly during my fieldwork between 2004 and 2006.<sup>3</sup> The *cimbál* provides a focal point around which their musicking revolves and, due to its association with Moravian traditional music, it has enabled both players to participate in dialogues about Moravian identity in contemporary Europe. Their musical activities showcase the activities of individual musicians under changing artistic conditions. These observations are based on my attendance at many live performances, interviews with the two players, and discussion of performed and recorded music. In particular, I focus on how these musicians have increasingly “blurred” musical genres (Geertz 1983) and kept local cultural values viable in an increasingly Europeanized and global society.

Examples in this chapter continually negotiate between performing and celebrating local elements while searching for niches within regional, European, or global

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<sup>3</sup> Complete discographies of recordings by these two artists are supplied in Appendix 4.

cultural imaginaries.<sup>4</sup> A related dichotomy in Moravian musicking has been the tension perceived between “Eastern” and “Western” musical influences. Jiří Plocek, a Brno record producer and folklorist, headed his entry on the Czech Republic for the *Rough Guide to World Music* with the title “East Meets West” (Plocek 1999). This encapsulates not just a local narrative about Central Europe as a cultural crossroads, but also points toward broader narratives of postcommunism and globalization. When the East met the West, would it be culturally overpowered and become blandly homogeneous and “Americanized”? Would people reject new systems and musics perceived as Western? If these varied fields intermingled, what sorts of fusions would result?

I explore musical change in this context through two broad questions. First, what sort of musical relationships are possible given more fluid possibilities for individuals to decide what elements of folk culture to adopt? And second, how (if at all) are social and political changes dealt with musically? In particular, if accession to the EU has affected the relationship between global, local, and regional concerns, then how have *cimbál* musicians responded, given that the instrument and its associated musical genres are deeply implicated in local identities?

### **Folklore after Communism**

As Hungarian scholar László Kürti pointed out after the fall of Soviet-supported states across the Eastern Bloc in 1989, “surely there is a new change sweeping through this region, a transformation of which we can say very little at this point, but which will

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<sup>4</sup> On the meaning of “imaginary” and its role in the establishment of national communities, see Anderson 1991; Askew 2002 applies the idea from the point of view of an ethnomusicologist and cultural anthropologist. Recent surveys on musicality in the Czech lands include Vičar 1997; Fischmann 2002, 7–19; and Bek 2003.

fundamentally alter the cultural and musical life of Europe.”<sup>5</sup> As a harbinger of social change, cultural theorists have given more attention to popular music in Eastern Europe. This is manifest in the significant attention to and interest in the changing status of rock and popular musics, particularly the role of rock music in the social changes of 1989 (Ryback 1990, Ramet 1994).

Yet, traditional music has not been regarded as a significant agent in social change in Eastern Europe. Ethnomusicologists have focused on the personal and experiential aspect of historical change (Rice 1994), aspects of gender and women in music (Sugarman 1997), theoretical classification of classical musics (Naroditskaya 2002), and the meaning of folkloric performance (Buchanan 2006, Cooley 2005). A broader scope was offered in a collection of essays titled *Retuning Culture*, which offers specialized essays on different countries in the region (Slobin 1996). However, changes in society have allowed traditional and popular musicians alike changed opportunities for artistic collaborations. Acting as individuals and collaborators, they have approached changes in different ways.

The conception of the individual’s role in society has changed again since folk creativity was celebrated in the 1950s and 1960s. After the fall of Communism, more social power fell to individuals rather than the collective state. This is particularly true in the field of traditional music, which has been ideologically constructed as the product of a collective nation since the nineteenth century. Individuals, of course, did play a role under the Communist government; however, they were no longer bound to support state

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<sup>5</sup> Kürti, a professor at the University of Miskolc in Hungary, is quoted in a program for the booklet accompanying the CD set *Unbloc(k)ed: Music of Eastern Europe* (Ellipsis Arts, 1997, CD 3570), p. 65. The quote is assumed to be from the early 1990s and in reference to the fall of Communism in the former Eastern Bloc countries.



ideologies. Václav Havel, famous as a playwright, dissident, and first president of the post-1989 Czech government, suggested that it is the moral duty of the individual to explore and exercise his or her cultural creativity so as to explore the political freedoms of the new society:

Ever since the period of Communism, when it was considered a part of the so-called superstructure, culture has always and everywhere been relegated to the back row. . . . But I, at least, would like to point out that culture is the basic tool of a society's self-awareness. . . . We must not constantly swear by the free individual and at the same time overlook the space in which human beings become conscious of and able to articulate most clearly their freedom.<sup>6</sup>

Thus, the autonomy of individuals as creative actors was amplified in the aftermath of the changes that have taken place since 1989. In a discussion of the post-1989 musical situation, Magda Želinská-Ferl noted a “prevailing post-revolution ideology of ‘democracy’” that resulted in an outlook that “everyone has to make it on their own” (Zelinska-Ferl 1997, 82).<sup>7</sup> Many individuals, whether or not influenced by postsocialist discourses, have chosen to embrace aspects of traditional music in the present. Late twentieth-century political changes heightened the importance of capitalism as an economic system and democracy as an institutional systems. While the musicians discussed in this chapter do not necessarily articulate their ideas in the language of “democracy,” they are clearly acting as individual artists and expressing unique sensibilities in their musical performances.

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<sup>6</sup> Havel made these remarks as Czech President in his annual address to the Chamber of Deputies of the Czech Parliament on 14 March 1995 (Havel 1999, 401).

<sup>7</sup> Likewise, True observes a social discourse of democracy, in which issues “could only be addressed in the language of capitalism and freedom” in the postsocialist context (True 2003, 11). Holy suggests that, post-1989, democracy was defined in opposition to totalitarianism and thus equated to unfettered expression of individual freedom (Holy 1996, 70); whether or not there is an overarching cultural agreement on democracy, Czechs see themselves as a nation with a democratic tradition rather than a totalitarian tradition, even though post-1948 totalitarianism lasted twice as long as the democratic First Republic (1919–1939) (*ibid.*, 79).

Many Moravian musicians in the present grew up among institutionalized systems that controlled the content and meaning of folk music. The end of Communism in 1989 gave Czech access to “Western” musical styles in ways that had not been possible previously. Further political changes soon followed with the split of the Czech and Slovak Republics in 1993 and the accession to the European Union (EU) in 2004. This signaled the relative disappearance of top-down censorship and allowed new syntheses of genres to tap existing folk traditions. Western styles no longer carried dissident connotations, and artistic collaborations with musicians outside the former East Bloc became easier. The political change coincided with the rise of world music in the 1990s. Under the privatized economy many musicians took advantage of these new opportunities, including collaborations between “traditional” folk musicians with jazz musicians, gospel singers, and classical musicians. At the same time, some musicians maintained focus on local identity, a particularly pressing concern with the accession of the Czech Republic to the EU.

Folklore-associated activities were often overshadowed in the post-Communist period by negative associations harbored against the former regime. Folklorist Amy Horowitz characterizes the ambiguity of the post-1989 situation in a discussion of folk costumes:

For most of Czech history, regional folklore traditions . . . became bulwarks against the penetration of foreign culture. While these communal folk customs may have been reappropriated by the Austro-Hungarians, the Nazis, or the Communists to forward their own particular goals, the fact was that they had simultaneously served as mechanisms of cultural resistance. Now these traditions themselves are undergoing a profound shift in meaning and function. For example, some Czech musicians, dancers, and craftspeople maintain costumes that are no longer worn in daily life as a symbol of their heritage; others have rejected them as a symbol used by the previous Communist government. (Horowitz 1995, 61–62)

Czech critics have articulated two musical responses to post-1989 events. Like Horowitz, one interpretation suggests that musicians, given the strength of their anti-Communist sentiment, would reject altogether anything folkloric. By purging their musical expression of any elements associated with Communism, musicians would adopt Western pop styles to erase the ideological damage of the totalitarian regime. In this view, folklore could never shed its association with an ideologically suspect political regime. As Plocek suggests, “people often . . . associate folklore troupes with the deformations of the totalitarian regime” (Plocek 2003, 22).<sup>8</sup> Czech music critic Jiří Černý, likewise, notes that many suspected that folk music was hurt by its ideological association during the Communist period:

From the beginning of the Communist regime in 1948, folk music became a sort of state music, propagated everywhere. It was supposed to serve as a barrier against what was called Western quasi-culture. . . . In its authentic version, but more frequently interpreted by stylized and complexly choreographed state ensembles, folk songs over the radio, on state television (no other existed), and from the stages of large halls flooded audiences. . . . The Communist ideologues were trying to create a joyful picture of the life of the Czech people and their future. . . . In this way the majority of young people soon were put off by Czech folk music. They were simply saturated with it. (Černý 1995, 55)

A second interpretation views traditionalization as a reaction against Westernization: musicians embrace what they perceive as the most traditional. As Magda Zelinska-Ferl (1997, 82) notes, post-1989 Czech culture was “inundated” by Western products and culture, and “the reaction to these performances was negative and became another factor contributing to the new interest in indigenous folklore expression.” This viewpoint often defines what is Moravian by showing what it is not. Thus, the sound of Moravian music is not under scrutiny, but rather what it does not sound like—for

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<sup>8</sup> *Lidé často . . . u folklorních souborů cítí deformaci totalitním režimem.*

example, Western rock music or jazz. This chapter takes up the responses of Moravian musicians since these predictions of the 1990s.

However, folk culture did not disappear with the political changes of 1989. Folklorism has, in fact, remained an element in the playing of many contemporary Moravian *cimbal* players. Jiří Plocek distinguishes two modes of folkloristic recontextualization since the 1990s: *organizovaný* [organized] and *živelný* [lively] folklorism (Plocek 2003, 24). These differ in the amount of freedom allowed the individual musician. He suggests that the former, the organized second existence of folklore, is not spontaneous. On the other hand, the latter may include alternatives like rock music, folk (of the twentieth-century North American sort), and world music have offered more options of genre for musicians to choose from since the 1990s.

Czech traditional culture in the postcommunist period is regarded to be not only strong, but giant in comparison with the country's political stature. The sentiment was summed up by the late Minister of Culture Pavel Dostál, who told Radio Prague at the declaration of a 2004 as a Year of Czech Music,

With the entry into the EU, Europe will not be interested in how much sulphuric acid the Czech Republic manufactures, but rather in what our culture is like. Culture tells the most about us. Because the word plays no role, music is the best means of communication to present us in Europe and the world.<sup>9</sup>

Dostál's remarks confirm the widely held Czech conviction that "Czech culture" is of significant interest to other European nations, and even a global world. Cultural homogenization is feared in this situation since it threatens the stability and autonomy of

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<sup>9</sup> *Pak vstup do EU, protože se domnívám, že Evropu nebude zajímat, kolik se v ČR vyrábí kyseliny sírové, ale spíš jaká je naše kultura. Ta o nás vypovídá nejvíce. Hudba je nejlepším komunikačním prostředkem, protože slovo nehraje žádnou roli, je tou nejlepší prezentací v Evropě a světě.* Dostál was quoted in an article from Radio Prague (Český rozhlas 7), <http://www.radio.cz/cz/clanek/49151>, accessed 7 January 2004.

Czech culture. While the Czech Republic has been gaining stature in supranational economic entities like the Schengen Trade Agreement, the European Community, and the EU, the perception of the Czech Republic (here conceived as the *český národ* [Czech cultural nation]) as an unnoticed player on the world stage is strong. This is strengthened by character types like the “little Czech man” and the positive value attributed to being a small nation.

### **Globalization and “World Music” in a Euro-Moravian World**

In Europe, the idea of world music has been a genre that allows for the creation of a specifically modern identity with a basis in traditional musical genres. Timothy Rice (2000, 225) has described it as a fusion through which musicians represent “nations, regions, or ethnicities” and seek to “modernize their tradition.” New musical fusions can evocatively bridge the past and present or re-present old identities in a culturally compelling way. As Rice further observes, by “fusing traditional and modern elements rather than choosing between them,” European musicians fashion a particularly European and cosmopolitan vision of themselves. Thus, they “create a symbolic image or icon of how they understand themselves and experience their world: simultaneously global and local, of the past and the present, traditional and modern, national and international” (Rice 2000, 225).

World music is a concept that Moravian musicians with whom I talked were familiar. Many have used the term as a marketing phrase in their own recordings. It is thus helpful to survey scholarly understandings of globalization that have been useful to cultural theorists. Ethnomusicologists have drawn on ideas about globalization in discussions of “world music.” The prevalence of the concept of world music has been

linked to increasing globalization (Stokes 2003). The term's growing usage since the late 1980s has been closely associated with the rise of "world music" as a commercial genre (Taylor 1997, Frith 2000). Ethnomusicologists, however, have theorized world music in diverse ways: in its relationship to ideas of "the local" (Guilbaut 1993), its portion of and marketing in international markets of popular music (Taylor 1997), its role in the "global imagination" (Erlmann 1996), and its significance as a scholarly discourse (Feld 1994, Frith 2000). These scholarly studies of world music hinge upon ideas about globalization.

Globalization has been a well-worn scholarly theme. It has been of use to a wide range of scholars, including cultural theorists (Appadurai 1996), sociologists (Featherstone et al. 1995), gender theorists (True 2003), and musicologists (Taylor 1997). Given the breadth of globalization studies, there is no widely standardized definition. Jan Aarte Scholte's understanding of globalization as "the spread of transplanetary (and in contemporary times also increasingly supraterritorial) connections between people" (2005, 424) is broad yet useful. A precise yet pragmatic definition is offered by Manfred Steger. Steger describes globalization as "a multidimensional set of social processes that create, multiply, stretch, and intensify worldwide social interdependencies and exchanges while at the same time fostering in people a growing awareness of deepening connections between the local and the distant" (Steger 2003, 13). Steger's emphasis on globalization as a process is key, as is the distinction between two concepts: globality and globalization. He describes globality as a "*social condition* characterized by the existence of global economic, political, cultural, and environmental interconnections and flows" (Steger 2003, 7, emphasis in original; see also Robertson 1995, 27). Specifically regarding cultural aspects, Steger notes that "cultural globalization refers to the

intensification and expansion of cultural flows across the globe” (Steger 2003, 69).<sup>10</sup>

Likewise, cultural anthropology has generally found that globalization implies a “fundamental reordering of time and space” perceived as a general speeding up of time and a disembedding of social interaction from local contexts (Inda and Rosaldo 2008, 8–11).

While Steger writes of “social processes,” I focus closely on conceptions of musical genres and form, in this case specific moments within cultural performances involving the *cimbál* as a musical instrument. These offer specific instances in which to consider what processes are actually at stake. Steger also refers to “social interdependencies,” while I am more concerned with the interactions of cultures as “distinct worlds of meaning” that can form a “thin” cultural coherence (Sewell 2005), which are in turn becoming increasingly interdependent. In these Czech examples, the definition of the local in cultural terms continues to be a pressing issue, whether in the regional terms of the European Union or in the broader space of globality. It is apparent that the *cimbál* and its relatives are not newcomers to global cultural flows.

Issues of change in traditional music, at the heart of my Moravian study, play into broader issues of globalization and change in contemporary culture. At issue is whether processes of globalization move toward a homogenous and undifferentiated culture or whether the processes invigorate local particularities. Popular conceptions of globalization often suggest a monolithic view of globalization as a one-way cultural flow

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<sup>10</sup> Steger specifically regards cultural aspects as those parts of social life “concerned with the symbolic construction, articulation, and dissemination of meaning” (Steger 2003, 69). In addition, Steger differentiates *globalism* as a social ideology based on neoliberal, capitalist narratives rooted in globalization (ibid., 94); this is also consistent with Cooley’s usage (2005, 200–201).

that is spreading Western popular culture around the world.<sup>11</sup> Scholars, however, have largely come to reject this idea of outright cultural imperialism. Instead, focus has been on tensions between cultural standardization and local difference or between homogeneity and variation (Hannerz 1987, Robertson 1995). Appadurai (1996, 29) has characterized this difference as a “confusion between some ineffable McDonaldization of the world and the much subtler play of indigenous trajectories of desire and fear with global flows of people and things.” Zelinska-Ferl confirms that in Czech music, musicians’ recontextualization of traditional music with popular genres has resulted in a “hybrid,” which she describes as “stylized revivals of older traditions and, in some cases, newer expressions of them” (Zelinska-Ferl 1997, 82).<sup>12</sup>

Most important for this discussion of change are global flows that deal with ideas, information, and people: infoscapes, technoscapes, and ethnoscapas (see Appadurai 1996). Thus, it may indicate the Czech Republic’s relative affluence and success in establishing an information society in which these performances play a part. “As globalism is largely a question of access to and flow of information,” observe Kürti and Langman (1997, 10), “it then clearly follows that the power elite as well as intellectuals will have more access to and thus more influence over the importing (or not) of particular ideas, and over particular interpretations of ideas such as nationalism, civil society, and Europeanness.”<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> Iwabuchi describes this as the “Americanization paradigm” (Iwabuchi 2002, 35–42).

<sup>12</sup> The terms “hybrid” and “hybridity” have been extensively debated: in cultural studies, see Young 1995, Werbner 1997, and Joseph 1999; among musicologists, in see Everett 2004 and Born and Hesmondhalgh 2000. Culture contact is surveyed by Hoerder 2002, an ethnomusicological study of cultures (and musics) in contact is discussed by Stillman 1993, and a list of earlier writings in cultural anthropology that address concepts of “interculture” and culture contact can be found in Clifford 1988, 15 n. 4.

<sup>13</sup> Kürti and Langman use “globalism” here in the way I use globalization.



“World music” is the topic of an active discourse among Moravian musicians. In fact, world music appears to have become a viable genre for marketing local recordings locally.<sup>14</sup> Czech recording companies typically label albums drawing on traditional Moravian roots as *folklór*, but many *cimbál* musicians have recently begun using the term “world music” to market their recordings. A three-CD set titled *Unbloc(k)ed: Music of Eastern Europe* (1997), represents a recording marketed to West European and North American buyers. It presents a whirlwind tour of traditional and popular musics from eastern Scandinavia, through Central Europe, and to the Balkans and includes a booklet of notes by László Kürti. The major selling point seems to be the unknowable culture that was hidden before the fall of Communism, essentially “unbloc(k)ed” for the Western listener as the title cleverly declaims.

Such marketing indicates that Moravian musicians see their music in terms of “world music.” This is apparent from the Brno group *Cimbal Classic*’s recent releases from the Brno record label Gnosis run by Jiří Plocek. Their 1996 album, *Čichám člověčinu* (Barny 001) is identified on the back as “Folk Music-World Music,” the only prominent English words on the package. Štrunc’s later album *Prameny* from 2000 (G-Music 017) is much more specific in its labeling of genre and use of English: all major titles and credits are given in English and Czech, and the genre—“World Music-Eastern European folk and Classical Music Crossover-Music for Cimbalom”—appears only in English.

The possibility of selling to a market of “world” proportions has, at least, entered the local music scene as an imagined possibility. However, contracts with global record distributors and recording companies have largely eluded Moravian performers. While

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<sup>14</sup> This trend is discussed and tracked by Taylor 1997; see also Frith 2000, Taylor 1997.

their recordings are sold within the Czech Republic, they are usually difficult to find elsewhere. For example, when I first contacted Dalibor Štrunc, via information printed in his compact disc *Prameny* (2001), he was puzzled as to how I had found him. He was surprised when I explained that I had bought three of his albums from online stores in the Czech Republic but had them shipped to the United States. While his surprise may have been in part that I would pay outrageous shipping costs, it was clear that he was rarely contacted by listeners outside the Czech Republic even though many of his recent albums included dual English-language liner notes and his band's Web page offered an English description alongside the Czech portion. Štrunc, however, seemed satisfied with his devoted listeners in Brno and elsewhere, which already provided him a considerable Moravian audience base.

As Moravian recordings have multiplied, more specific genre descriptions have appeared. One example is a 2002 release from Gnosis Records and Czech Radio Brno that samples selected recordings by violinists famous as leaders of *cimbálovky* in the 1950s and 1960s. This release was described as “Traditional Folk Music from Moravia—Postwar Regional Folklorism.” Below this descriptor a short paragraph in English adds a light scholarly patina, identifying the contents as “archive recordings of three legendary musicians . . . the most significant personalities in the development of post-war regional instrumental folk music.”<sup>15</sup> This designation suggests a move toward greater specificity. The large number of folklore and folklore-related recordings from Moravia, indicates an abiding economic and cultural interest in local products.

The remainder of this chapter focuses on the activity of two key *cimbál* players who have gained recognition through their knowledge of musical genres, compositional

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<sup>15</sup> *Primášké legendy* (G-Music 025, 2002).

activity, prowess as performers, or originality of expression. These Moravian case studies show that networks of interpersonal relationships, particularly of relationships between Moravian musicians and other musicians, other musical styles, and audiences, are changing in increasingly expansive ways. While these expansions inevitably move within local systems of history and culture, they engage with imagined possibilities accessed through discourses of globalization. Moravian musicians seem to be sounding out “imagined worlds” (Appadurai 1996, 33) made possible under narratives of globalization while also exploring actual connections between people and musics.

### **Jazzing It Up: Zuzana Lapčíková and the Fusion of Genres**

On 1 June 2006, *cimbál* player Zuzana Lapčíková performed in Brno with a jazz quintet and the Brno Philharmonic. This concert was billed as a *večer s cimbálem* [evening with the *cimbál*], which suggested something similar to the *besedy u cimbálu* [gatherings at the *cimbál*] popular with the Brno *slovácký krúžek*. The concert was listed with the Philharmonic’s “non-traditional cycle” [*netradiční cyklus*]. I initially assumed that the billing of the event as a *večer s cimbálem* suggested a folkloric performance, but it was soon clear that the concert comprised a more formal sort of cultural performance.<sup>16</sup>

The concert took place at the concert hall in the *Besední dům*. This had been the venue of Janáček’s “folk concert” one-hundred-twenty-five years earlier. It was now home to the Brno Philharmonic and symbolized postsocialist civic rebirth, burgeoning wealth, and social status. Its location on the *koliště* [ring road] once again reminded me of Vienna’s cultural influence. The female statuettes supporting the second-floor gallery

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<sup>16</sup> I chose this concert for its significance as well as for pragmatic reasons. I attended two other notable concert performances by Lapčíková, one with a jazz quartet at a venue called Semilasso in Brno in November 2005, and a jazz ballet at Brno’s newly renovated *Reduta* theater on 11 November 2006. However, I was unable to make sound recordings those performances. I interviewed Lapčíková twice in Brno, once on 19 September 2006 and again on 26 November 2006.

appeared to have been recently restored with the gilded opulence of Vienna's *Musikverein* in mind.<sup>17</sup> The importance of the *Besední dům* in Brno's cultural life indicated that the city again judged itself by the standards of its wealthier neighbor to the south, a relationship that appeared to still be tinged with the post-colonial remembrance of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. Renewed cultural ties were also highlighted by a summer festival that brought Viennese classical musicians to perform in Brno, and the street outside the *Janáčkovo divadlo* (the opera house named after Janáček) was regularly lined with Austrian tour buses.<sup>18</sup>

I arrived at the concert just moments before it was to begin. My ticket was for a seat at the end of a row close to the doors so it was not necessary for me to squeeze past other audience members as the orchestra was tuning. Some crucial elements were apparent before the music started. First, the music and performers were self-consciously local. For those in the audience who were unfamiliar with the performers, the 10-crown program booklet detailed the musicians' local connections. Lapčíková claimed roots near Zlín (about one-hundred kilometers to the east of Brno), but she was well known to the audience from her recordings and frequent concerts. The violinist Petr Růžička was lauded as a performer in various locales across Europe and had trained at the Janáček

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<sup>17</sup> Just up the hill at Špilberk Castle, it was possible on a clear day to see to the Austrian border when looking out from the castle's fortifications. The border was marked by the characteristic Pálava Hills near Mikulov to the south of Brno. The "dead zone"—the area within a mile of the border during the Communist regime—had lain along the south edge of these hills. In 2006, it was only necessary for Czechs to show an identity card to cross the border on the two-and-a-half hour trip to Vienna by bus or train.

<sup>18</sup> I suspected that these buses were hired by groups from lower Austria and Vienna as an alternative to the high prices of Viennese venues. This economic difference can easily be seen in the difference in ticket prices. In March 2006, I attended a performance of Mozart's *Don Giovanni* at the *Wiener Staatsoper*, which arguably represents the pinnacle of the Viennese opera scene, and bought a standing-room ticket (with obstructed view) for 2 Euro (about 60 Czech crowns). The prices steeply rose from there, however, ranging to over 200 Euro for main floor seats. In contrast, in the same month I bought a seat for the premiere performance of a new production of Bedřich Smetana's *Prodaná nevěsta* (The Bartered Bride, 1866) at the Brno opera house for 250 Crowns, or less than 10 Euro. In this case, which contrasts a premiere performance at Brno's principal venue with a repertory performance in Vienna, a comparable Viennese ticket would have cost twice as much as one in Brno.

Academy, located across the street from the concert hall. Pianist Emil Viklický was also known as a composer and “jazzman,” and the conductor Aleš Podářil was an active teacher at the Brno Conservatory. The Brno Philharmonic was a local institution. Bassist Josef Fečo was of Romani origin, but in this concert setting, the program more explicitly noted him as an amateur *cimbál* player. At this event, then, his status as an outside, marked minority was played down rather than amplified. All of the above information, featured in the program notes, portrayed the performers as insiders to the local music-culture. To varying degrees, all of them had grown up around Moravian traditional music.<sup>19</sup>

The concert lacked a moderator. The conductor was an obvious authority figure, but the highlight of the performance were the soloists. They essentially formed a jazz quintet (violin, drums, piano, bass, and *cimbál*). None of the performers introduced or contextualized the music beyond what was written in the program notes. This gave the evening a formal, restrained air that was slightly at odds with idealized portrayals of folklore and jazz. At first I assumed that this was due to the audience’s familiarity with the concert’s music; however, as discussed below, it later seemed that more fundamental issues were at stake.

The program notes offered an authoritative interpretive framework in the place of a moderator. They shed light on significant aspects of the performance, particularly on local discourse about Moravian traditional music. With the lack of a moderator, the immutability of the printed text implied that by and large the audience did not participate

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<sup>19</sup> A frequent trope about Moravian folklore concerns whether it is necessary to have it “in your blood” or whether it can be satisfactorily learned. The consensus seems to be that a person must grow up within Moravia, though not always to be born there, to correctly perform in a Moravian style (e.g., Pavlica 2004, 43–44). Thus, a Prague audience cannot be assumed to completely comprehend a Moravian performer, but a Brno audience can.

directly in this discourse; they only participated in it through constrained and authoritative means—instances or events such as this concert were their main conduit through which the audience accessed discourses about Moravian traditional music. The audience was, in fact, a largely collective and passive participant in the concert; as implied by the term *posluchači* [listeners], they were regarded primarily as receivers of music. People attending a concert and identified as such, or at least in an art-music venue like *Besední dům*, were there for one purpose: to listen to music. Their primary role at the concert was to appreciate music, which the program notes guided but did not overtly dictate.<sup>20</sup>

The program notes did take up a sensitive issue: the purity of folklore. Perhaps the performers only trusted this issue to the authority of a written text. The notes clearly attempted to justify the “fusion” [*fúze*] of folklore (delineated as a genre) with other genres. It seemed that the notes wanted to pre-emptively defend the creative activity of the performer-composers from charges that they might be besmirching a genre perceived as sacred (folklore) with others perceived as secular (jazz and world music).<sup>21</sup> “A performance linking Moravian folklore with jazz,” exclaimed the note, “may seem to many of us somewhat violent.” It was assured, however, that Lapčíková and Viklický “treat folklore very piously.” Another approach to defend the fusion was accomplished by likening the creative processes that had resulted in the evening’s music to the methods of nineteenth-century nationalist composers who had also been “inspired by” folklore.

The program notes continued,

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<sup>20</sup> Thus the audience was almost purely involved in the process of *esthesis* (appreciation) while the performers were involved in *poiesis* (creation) (Nattiez 1990, 10–16). Of course, the audience also had an evaluative role when they responded with the conventional applause following individual performances.

<sup>21</sup> The program notes contained no clear definitions of the musical characteristics of these genres, so they remained as rather empty categories.

Since the second half of the 20th century, folk music [*lidová hudba*] has been inspiration for the most varied directions of popular music. We have in recent years become accustomed to demarcating the fusion [*fúze*] of traditional music [*tradiční hudba*] of individual ethnicities with elements of popular music as *world music*. Proponents of this unusually broadly branching genre [*žánr*] stand in a sort of opposition to folklorists, who present folk music dressed up in *kroj* in an ossified and preserved likeness [*zkoštatělá zakonzervovaná podoba*]. Just like those creators of artificial music [*artifická hudba*] inspired by folk music [*lidová hudba*], they [the proponents] hold the rightful opinion that folklore always has been and up to now is a dynamic phenomenon. Therefore, it is necessary to perform [*představovat*] it in the most varied and musically up-to-date contexts [*aktuální souvislosti*].<sup>22</sup>

This note implicitly criticized folklorists (those, presumably, defining the genre's form) for being too rigid, fussy, and parochial about definitions. The note relied on the idea that varied musical genres were distinct and, somehow, clearly bounded, though only vaguely defined by content if at all. At the same time, the fusion into new genres implied that these clear, stable, and distinct musical genres were somehow changed in a new context. The author of the program notes, at least, based his portrayal of the concert's significance in the combination of distinct genres. Jazz and world music appeared as given entities that acted as foils that assured the importance of Moravian folklore at a global level in a local event. In other words, the significance of Moravian musical genres was at stake in these concerts, especially when the music was ostensibly fusing something new from the combination of foreign and domestic elements.

This note also distanced the *cimbál* from its associations with folklore as a closed genre and the external structures that have largely defined it: museums, folklorists, musicologists, and institutes. Lapčíková, it seems, was attempting to give performers more control over how the instrument is defined in order to enable her fusion of genres.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> The note is credited to Petr Ch. Kalina. The translation here and those previously are by the author.

<sup>23</sup> It is necessary to note here that Lapčíková, in addition to her experience as a performer, also has credentials that qualify her in structured institutions. She holds a degree in musicology from Masaryk

However, the connection between the *cimbál* and folklore was never completely severed since in fact folklore is an inseparable part of Moravian understandings of the *cimbál* as a folk musical instrument. Lapčíková does stress the *cimbál*'s link to other Central European musics, though. When I spoke with her she recounted the importance of the instrument in Budapest salon circles around 1900, where it neared the status of the piano.<sup>24</sup> Likewise, in a 1993 interview with the magazine *Rock&Pop* that likened the spread of the instrument to a “musical virus,” both Lapčíková and Pavlica stressed the *cimbál*'s non-Moravian roots (Lapčíková and Pavlica 1993). Lapčíková at that time pointed out that “today’s *cimbál* has existed for about one hundred years. It came to us [*k nám*] from Hungary.” Pavlica confirmed that even the Moravian *cimbálovka* was “inspired by” Slovakian musicians. Nonetheless, they implied, the *cimbál* remains a dynamic instrument able to express a Moravian musical “spirit” [*duch*] rooted in “Moravian songs” even in the present.

From the program booklet, I inferred that the audience was assumed to be local. The only section of the program printed in English read “the duration information is approximate,” referring to the approximate timings of pieces listed in one column. The rest, however, would have been largely unintelligible to an audience member who was not fluent in Czech. Likewise, signs in the lobby were only in Czech.

The program notes provided more information about the performers from a local point of view. It was most notable in establishing their authority in the genres that were heard in the evening’s concert. Lapčíková is well known locally as a performer who

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University in Brno, where she was the student of Miloš Štědroň, one of the most eminent Czech musicologists. She has also been a member and choreographer of *Včelaran*, a Zlín-based children’s folklore group, since 1980.

<sup>24</sup> Interview with Zuzana Lapčíková, Brno, 19 September 2006.



combines genres. The program notes identified her as a native [*rodačka*] of *Moravské slovácko*, as well as “our most requested folkloric *cimbál* player and singer.” This clearly located her musical beginnings and inspirations in traditional Moravian music, thus granting her birthright authority in the genre of folklore. Pianist Viklický was identified as a “significant figure of our jazz scene,” having studied jazz in the United States. Bassist Josef Fečo was identified as a conservatory-trained musician who had “even had the option to play with excellent jazzmen in the cradle of jazz—America.”<sup>25</sup>

The word *rodačka* [female, native to a place] as a descriptor for Lapčíková is important. The term establishes her authority as a musician in the sphere of Moravian traditional music. While “native” seems the most direct translation in English, the idea of *rodák* (masculine) and *rodačka* (feminine) denote familial hereditary relationships but at a broader level signify a local *communitas*. For example, *rodiče* denotes “parents” and comes from the same root, *rod*, that denotes family, ancestry, and bloodline. Likewise, *národ* (nation) in Czech is a political entity, but also something that an individual is born into, a larger community connected by place, language, and family. Thus, identifying Lapčíková as a *rodačka* means that she is not just a local, a “fellow countrywoman,” but also “descended from” people in that place. Birthright always seemed to me to be taken as a primary marker of authority among Czechs; it gives a person authority to speak on behalf of the people in a given place and occasionally to speak for a place. The specificity of “place” depended on familiarity; thus, as someone born in the United States, I was often expected to speak generally for “America,” but the assumption that my opinions should reflect a unitary “national” culture seemed odd. Likewise, pointing out my Czech ancestry was usually a satisfactory answer to questions about why I was interested in the

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<sup>25</sup> All quotes in this paragraph are translations from the program note signed by Petr Ch. Kalina.

*cimbál*, but if I suggested that my interest was also scholarly, more questions were sure to be asked. In the case of Lapčíková, who was represented here as a “native” of a nearby place, she had the authority to speak on behalf of—or, more accurately, to music on behalf of—Moravian Slovakia.<sup>26</sup> In any case, this indicates that, at least in Czech, places and people help to define each other. In many cases this results in places being understood in terms of people. This is a common function of metonyms, language devices that “use one entity to refer to another that is related to it” (Lakoff and Johnson 1980, 35). As Lakoff and Johnson (1980, 36) observe, “metonymy is not merely a referential device. It also serves the function of providing understanding.” Unlike metaphors, metonymies are ways of understanding that make a speaker “focus more specifically on certain aspects of what is being referred to” (Lakoff and Johnson 1980, 37).<sup>27</sup> Thus, although qualified authorities generally define and preserve folklore, birthright and place can sometimes trump condoned authority.

Lapčíková acknowledges a debt to traditional conceptions of folklore and folk culture. For example, her 1999 recording *Moravské písně milostné* [Moravian Love Songs] takes its name from Leoš Janáček’s song collection published posthumously in the 1930s with Pavel Váša.<sup>28</sup> Her composition entitled “Jako sú ty hory” is an improvisation for solo *cimbál* based on Janáček’s nineteenth-century transcriptions of pieces played by Valachian *cimbál* musicians.<sup>29</sup> The compact disc is decorated with a

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<sup>26</sup> From my American perspective, I would compare this to asking a resident of Ann Arbor, Michigan, to introduce his or her local culture to the residents of Kalamazoo, Michigan. In this case, major differences in local culture would be considered negligible; however, in Moravia, these adjacent areas are thought in popular imagination to inculcate significant musical differences.

<sup>27</sup> See Aksnes 1999 for a discussion of metonymic association in art music using Lakoff and Johnson’s observations. This is not, of course, to deny birthplace as a marker of authority in other communities or cultures.

<sup>28</sup> *Moravské písně milostné* (Lotos, 1999, LT 0072-2 431, compact disc).

<sup>29</sup> Interview with Lapčíková, 19 September 2006.

yellow and blue pottery design featuring ferns, flowers, and birds reproduced from the collection of the *Slovácko muzeum* in Uherské Hradiště. Finally, the liner notes contain an excerpt from Milan Kundera's 1968 novel *Žert* [The Joke] that showcases Kundera's Romantic conception of folklore expressed in the novel:

I felt happy within these songs, . . . where, for that matter, love is still love and pain is still pain, where the original emotion is not yet devoid of itself and where values are still unraveled; and it seemed to me that within these songs I was at home, that I had my roots in there. That their world was my primal point of reference.<sup>30</sup>

The program notes were relatively silent on Czech classical music traditions, yet the orchestra was an integral part of the evening. In fact, most of the concert's music had a distinct feeling of academicism and high art music. Art music, it seemed, was the unmarked genre that framed the evening's music. This was not surprising since all of the featured musicians held conservatory degrees, the local orchestra accompanied the jazz ensemble, and the venue was a symbol of the importance that the city attached to Czech art music.

Musical features also supported this view. Most significantly, the program notes suggested that Viklický's music fit into a lineage of composers of "artificial music" [*artifická hudba*]. This situated Viklický at the end of a long musical progression in which he followed works in various styles: "Romanticism," "nationalism," and finally, "neofolklorism." These were references to musical compositions by composers including Smetana, Dvořák, Janáček, and Martinů, all considered major figures in the development

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<sup>30</sup> The English translation given here is credited to Ivan Vomáčka and appears on the final page of the CD liner notes. The passage is from the conclusion of the novel, although the "definitive" published English translation as authorized by Kundera (Kundera 1993, 315–316) varies somewhat. A publishing history and thoughts on the significance of the novel are in Beckerman 1996. I understand Kundera's novel as a meditation on the ideals of artistic honesty and authenticity in a non-ideal world. However, it is also clearly a document written under a specific totalitarian regime that focuses on the redemptive and direct emotional affect of Moravian folk music within a dishonest ideological society.



**Music Example 6.1. “Na horách, na dolách” theme. Transcribed from the Variations by Viklický as performed on 1 June 2006. The speed of the eighth note was approximately 220 beats per minute.**

of Czech art music, which would place the concert at a high level of importance as a current manifestation of these antecedents. The classical tradition was readily apparent in form and orchestration. The concert’s opening piece, composed by Emil Viklický was entitled *Symfonické variace Na horách, na dolách* [Symphonic Variations on “In the Mountains, In the Valleys”]. This piece was a nine-minute series of orchestral variations based on a short folk-song theme (Music Example 6.1). The theme was similar to the song melody collected by Ulehla in the 1940s (cf. Úlehla 1949, 408), which suggested a musical link to the region of Slovácko. The orchestra dominated most of the sections, but during some variations, sections with limited instrumentation featured Lapčíková singing with the *cimbál* or Viklický improvising in jazz style on piano with drum set. Viklický’s *Moravian Triptych* was akin to an orchestral song cycle in which each of the three movements was based on one folksong melody that was sung by Lapčíková; while the jazz ensemble contributed occasionally (mostly solo piano insertions from Viklický), the orchestra was the dominant musical element.

“Jazz” and “folklore” were both marked genres. The final paragraph of the program notes pointed out that “the main protagonists of this evening’s concerts have been demonstrating for many years that both of these musical areas [jazz and folklore] have common musical elements (modality, irregular rhythms, improvisatory elements) and that jazz harmonies as a foundation for Moravian songs does not come across as an affectation.” Thus, Lapčíková and Viklický draw on folklore while at the same time

“enriching” it with “interesting harmonies” and “tone colors” of the jazz band and *cimbál*. The folk song, as a basic melody and text unit, does not undergo change and therefore the basic unit of the musical system of folklore is not debased or questioned. The contents of the genres, then, do not undergo significant change but take on new appearances. When I inquired about the significance of genre mixing, Lapčíková indicated that it was a relatively new phenomenon and that some “purists” would object; however, she hoped that her musical ideas would persuade them otherwise:

Some people regard [the *cimbálová muzika*] as the only way to present traditional culture, the only correct way. On the other hand, there are many people for whom folklore is more of an inspiration, and they want to work more with it. They want to utilize folkloric motives [. . .] and so they arrive at what today is relatively typical in our musical culture: that is, Moravian folk songs really appear in various combinations and in many assorted forms.<sup>31</sup>

My analysis of this concert muses on the meaning of various types of music within the culture. Lapčíková’s music seemed to represent a hybridized folklore genre. Yet it gained authenticity *in situ* since the performers were exclusively local musicians or musicians who have grown up in Moravia and regard it as a “source” or “identity” for their artistic activity. In contrast to Pavlica’s “dialogues,” then, Lapčíková’s approach sounded more like a monologue taking place within one culture—in Brno and around south Moravia where the concept of Moravian music appears most significant—and establishing its place alongside foreign musics. By removing the *cimbál* from its associations with the cultural system of folklore, Lapčíková was able to effect and justify her fusion of folklore with other musical genres.

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<sup>31</sup> Interview with Zuzana Lapčíková, 26 November 2006, Brno.

### Between Genres: Dalibor Štrunc and *Cimbal Classic*

Another example of blurring genres is presented by the band *Cimbal Classic*, a group founded and organized by my *cimbál* teacher, Dalibor Štrunc.<sup>32</sup> Štrunc cuts a unique figure on the Brno musical scene. In addition to teaching at the Brno Conservatory, he is a frequent freelance musician with other bands in the Brno area as well as an occasional player in classically-oriented ensembles seeking a cimbalom player. His combination of musical styles and genres with the *cimbál*, however, was what first attracted my attention.

Štrunc is the founder and leader of *Cimbal Classic*, a “group with an inter-genre focus” [*skupina s mezižánrovým zaměřením*].<sup>33</sup> The ensemble, typically four or five players, suggests a *cimbálovka*. The violin, viola, and bass roles are filled by two or three violinists and a bassist (who doubles on upright acoustic bass and electric fretless bass). Štrunc plays *cimbál*, and an oboist usually takes the place of the more typical clarinet. Their repertory consists of various song melodies that are well-known folksongs in the region. Some of the songs are of the slow, *táhlá* type, associated with the late night atmosphere of wine parties and summertime folk festivals, which are popular numbers for late-night parties. František Černý, the lead violinist of *Cimbal Classic*, who is often the main vocalist and *primáš*, leads the melodies; however, Štrunc is the artistic center of the ensemble. He writes many of the group’s songs and is the main organizer of their concert appearances.

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<sup>32</sup> The spelling of *cimbál* is kept in Czech, but the *čárka* (acute accent) is removed to indicate an “English” spelling. In addition, Czech uses the spelling *klasika* for “classic,” so the title of the group may be regarded as Anglicized.

<sup>33</sup> Description from program note, Brno Philharmonic at Besední dům, 22 and 23 June 2006. I interviewed Štrunc on 17 December 2006 in Brno. However, I formed many of the observations in this section during many *cimbál* lessons, informal meetings, and conversations with Štrunc between 2004 and 2006, as well as attending concerts of *Cimbal Classic* during that period. Where possible, I have given specific references, but in many cases these are not attributable to single occasions.

*Cimbal Classic*'s attire is not typical of a folklore ensemble. A more traditional *cimbálovka* would wear *kroj*. Members of *Cimbal Classic*, however, usually dress in a way that has no specific association with Moravia: men in all-black, and women wearing colorful dresses. This appearance is more typical of a contemporary art music ensemble than a folklore ensemble. This also suggests the versatility of a freelance ensemble: the outfit is appropriate to a variety of situations in which the musicians are expected to blend in and only provide a musical background for social events.

The group makes frequent concert appearances and is also available for hire. They perform a blend of Štrunc's songs, but always offer a sampling of traditional Moravian tunes as well. Between 1996 and 2006, *Cimbal Classic* released seven albums, four of which feature songs by Štrunc. The group's basic identity is modeled around Štrunc's role as a *písničkář* [singer-songwriter].<sup>34</sup> This role is influenced by Štrunc's interests in American-style "country" music, his involvement with folklore since childhood, and his activities as a teacher at the Brno Conservatory. Music critic and festival producer Milan Kolář offered an evocative characterization of the group printed in the liner notes to the 1996 album *Čichám člověčinu*:

*Cimbal Classic* is a band that knocks down all sorts of conventions. You will not find an artistically stylized [*nastylizovaný*] performance of a folklore group in *kroj* (which the image of a *cimbálovka* may call to mind), and you will not find starchy poses and tailcoats (which may hiding behind that little word classic). My sense of this band is that they play something plainly folk and human [*obyčejně lidský*

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<sup>34</sup> The *písničkář* figure fits into a stream of "Czech modern folk music" described by musicologist Helena Pavlíčková (2000). The genre basically models American singer-songwriters (such as Bob Dylan or Simon and Garfunkel) who often wrote their own songs and song-texts, were often involved with social protest movements, and performed at clubs and festivals. Pavlíčková dates the beginning of this genre from the 1950s and 1960s, during which time it often connoted subversion or dissidence toward the socialist Czechoslovak government. While not always intersecting with Moravian folk traditions, some performers in this style, such as guitarist and singer Jaroslav Hutka, played nineteenth-century Moravian folk songs collected by František Sušil.

až člověčí]. Here everything is played on the *cimbál*, from serious things . . . to ragtime to Irish folk, as well our folk songs [*naše lidovky*] of every sort.<sup>35</sup>

The language of this note tells much about the presentation of *Cimbal Classic*.

Words like *nastylizovaný*, derived from *styl* [style], and *classic* appear to come from English. The adoption of English words is common in modern Czech, and while it hints at the freedom to venerate Western idioms (particularly English and American), it also presents an image of business elites. Multinational corporations and high-level managers seem to favor the use of English, and occasionally these figures are parodied for bringing in so many English words that their language appears to become “unCzech.”<sup>36</sup> On the other hand, words like *lid* [people or folk], *naše lidovky* [our folk songs, here understood to mean “Czech” or “Moravian” folk songs], and *cimbálovka* bring up associations of local traditions.<sup>37</sup>

The note also elucidates Štrunc’s view of music. While he describes music as a shared human expression, its provenance is in the natural realm. This is indexed by the adverb *uměle* [artistically] in the band description above, which has a broader linguistic

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<sup>35</sup> *Cimbal Classic je kapela, která bourá jakékoliv zvyklosti. Nejde tu ani o uměle nastylizované krojované vystoupení folklorního sdružení (což by mohla vyvolat představa cimbálovky) a nejde ani o naškrobené pózy ve fracích (což by se mohlo skrývat za slůvkem Classic). Můj pocit zhraní této skupiny muzikantů je především pocit něčeho obyčejné lidského až člověčího. Na cimbálu se tu hraje vše od vážných věcí, . . . přes ragtime, irský folk až po naše lidovky všeho druhu.* Milan Kolář, liner note, *Čichám člověčinu* (Brno: Bárny 001, compact disc, 1996).

<sup>36</sup> A humorous column about this was in the *[Brno] Metro*, a newspaper distributed free to commuters riding public transportation (trams and buses), in December 2005 and January 2006. The joke was that, in order to be trendy, business executives had injected so many English phrases into their speech that they required a translator to speak with normal people.

<sup>37</sup> After the *cimbál*, the group’s most prominent symbol is *Balík*, Štrunc’s cocker spaniel who attends many of *Cimbal Classic*’s live concerts. He is pictured on the cover of the 1996 album *Čichám člověčinu* [I sense a human], from which the title track is told from a dog’s perspective. *Balík* often wandered amongst the audience, usually to the delight and welcome of listeners, and in a curious way gave *Cimbal Classic*’s concerts a “human” yet distinctly Czech feel since dogs are so widely accepted in Czech life. Dogs are accorded a special respect as family pets, and Czechs pride themselves as a “dog nation.” (This was the subject of a feature article in *Lidové noviny*, a major daily newspaper with nationwide circulation, in the fall of 2005.) Dogs often accompany their owners to pubs and restaurants with little comment or objection from managers or other customers, and *Povídání o pejskovi a kočičce*, a series of children’s stories written and illustrated by Josef Čapek, features a dog as a main character.



usage in Czech. In music, only folk song is regarded as a naturally constituted genre, and thus a root of Moravian musical sensibility. Other genres, like art music, country music, and pop, might seem more easily conceived as human creations. Among nineteenth-century collectors and national revivalists, folksong and folk music were natural elements like wildflowers, readily described as *přírodní* [natural], *neumělý* [unaffected], or *nonartificiální* [non-artificial]. Art music, on the other hand, is *umělý* or *artificiální*, an object consciously created by composers. The Czech *skládat* and *skladatel* match the English *compose* and *composer*, and thus implies meticulous, planned assembly.

This plays into a wider cultural belief about the dichotomy between what is “naturally constituted” and what is “consciously created.” The two must be balanced to create harmonious social relations as well as pleasing artistic productions (Holy 1996, 180–185). The Czech usage of *umění* for “art” initially surprised me; seeing the derivative adjective [*umělý*] advertising items like plastic flowers [*umělé kvítky*] at a shop in Brno seemed hardly “artistic.” The word implies creation in a sense similar to the words “artifice” or “fiction” in English. The usage is similar to that recently recovered by anthropologists and folklorists seeking to redeem literary genres like ethnography in a crisis of representation. Jeff Todd Titon, for example, points out that “all writing is artifice. The ethnographic text is a fiction in the root sense (*facio*) that it is a making, not in the sense that it is false” (Titon 2003, 83).

The liner notes to Štrunc’s 2000 recording *Prameny* provide further insights. In this case, the language not only refers to the dichotomy of natural versus unnatural, but to a more global discourse around world music. The latter is a narrative paralleling idealized conceptions of globalization, that implicates world music as a force to unite humans and

create equality (Stokes 2003, 297).<sup>38</sup> Štrunc compares music to a “great river for which the watershed is the entire world. . . . Rivulets and brooks springing from the most diverse places around the world and most varied parts of the soul join in its [music’s] powerful current.” This may play into spiritual conceptions associated with some world music discourses, but it also plays on the Czech discourse between the natural and human. The “natural” aspect of Štrunc’s music that is drawn from a collective human spring is balanced by its obviously human creator. This is manifested in the unique integration of Moravian musical characteristics of *Cimbal Classic*’s music. Moreover, it allows Štrunc to increase the marketability of his music, selling recordings to Moravian and wider audience, and participate in a market for world music.<sup>39</sup>

Of the many *Cimbal Classic* performances that I attended, their concert of 15 December 2006 was notable (Figure 6.1). Štrunc used it as an opportunity to release a new recorded album and there were many clues about the importance of regionalism in the present-day Czech Republic. The concert was a lavish Christmas party and, though I was busy with preparations to return home from my fieldwork, I accepted Štrunc’s invitation to what he described as a “private function” [*soukromá akce*]. He did not give me clear details, but I understood that it would be a formal party and that it was taking place in a chapel often used for concerts. It turned out to be an atypical cultural performance since it was sponsored by a local corporate office; nonetheless, it demonstrated the pervasiveness of cultural performance as a recognized mode of musical performance.

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<sup>38</sup> Steger (Steger 2003, 110 ff.) critiques this as an idealistic and unitary narrative about globalization.

<sup>39</sup> It also seems to be an example of Veit Erlmann’s observation about the underlying “samenesses” celebrated by world music as a global aesthetic. Commenting on concerts at world music festivals, he observes that “while the concerts celebrate the diversity of artistic expression in the world’s cultures, this celebration of difference conceals as it rests on a more fundamental ‘sameness’” (Erlmann 1996, 477).



**Figure 6.1. *Cimbal Classic* performing in Brno on 15 December 2006.**

The event took place in a neighborhood in the southern part of Brno called *Staré Brno* [Old Brno]. The neighborhood skirts the banks of the Svatka River and, as well as containing some of the city's architectural landmarks—the functionalist Exhibition Grounds from the 1920s, a series of art nouveau apartment buildings, and the monastery and gardens where Gregor Mendel undertook early experiments in genetics. The concert hall was a chapel in a Baroque monastery, the *Konvent milosrdných bratrů*. The monastery was also the site of a new hospital, and it appeared that the chapel had been renovated very recently. This hall was frequently advertised as the location for performances by local music students, particularly instrumental and vocal recitals of art music.

I arrived early to set up my camera and microphone, and I was surprised to find a small military regiment preparing to welcome guests with a snare drum and rifle salute in

the main foyer. It seemed to be a fancier party than I had bargained for. This turned out to be a corporate Christmas party for INFRAM, an “engineering and consulting firm” that maintained offices in Brno and was alleged to make underground tunneling machines. It appeared that they had enjoyed a good year. In the upstairs foyer, just outside the concert hall, savory smells wafted from buffet tables topped by white linen cloths. The preparations promised more than the usual bread and cold cuts served at many receptions. Inside the concert hall, a small bar at the back featured bright cardboard placards advertising various mixed drinks with tropical flavors. I had noticed that cocktails of this sort were very recently popular, and the absence of the iconic Czech *pivo* [Pilsner beer] was surprising. Mixed drinks of this sort generally cost five or six times more than beer, and were thus a mark of distinction and affluence. White covers were laid over appetizers of seafood, tropical fruits, and chocolates arranged in elaborate arches and other shapes around a large ice sculpture in the shape of the company’s logo. Particularly eye-catching was a plate of meat cuts surrounding a roasted boar’s head, replete with an apple in its mouth. Had the tall windows not shown the dark Moravian evening outside, the trappings would not have been out of place on a cruise ship.

**Table 6.1.** Sequence of events at the *Cimbal Classic* performance, *Konvent milosrdných bratrů*, Brno, 15 December 2006.

<i>Event (initiator)</i>	<i>Time</i>	<i>Action (if any)</i>
<i>Spoken remarks (moderator)</i>	1:50	
Introduction of recording <i>Blízká krajina</i>		
Introduction of Dalibor Štrunc		<i>Cimbal Classic</i> enters stage
	0:10	Applause (aud.)
<i>“Dialogue” (moderator and DŠ)</i>	1:00	Responsibility transferred
		Moderator leaves stage
	(0:20)	Applause (aud.)
<i>Musical performance (CC)</i>	44:00	
Medley of Czech Christmas carols (CC)	4:50	
		Applause (aud.)
<i>Remarks (DŠ)</i>	0:45	
“Nikdo není daleko” (CC)	4:00	
		Applause (aud.)
“Vyšla dívčina” (CC)	3:35	
		Applause (aud.)
<i>Remarks (DŠ)</i>	0:25	
“Příběhy”	4:00	
		Applause (aud.)
<i>Remarks (DŠ)</i>	0:55	
[Cigánský tanec] (CC)	3:50	<i>cimbal</i> feature (DŠ)
		Applause (aud.)
		DŠ takes solo bow
“Vrávorám” (CC)	5:00	
		Applause (aud.)
<i>Remarks (DŠ)</i>	0:16	
“Koničky moje” (CC)	3:20	
		Applause (aud.)
<i>Remarks (DŠ)</i>	1:05	introduce new CD
“Krajina želo-bludná,” ”Na kraji” (CC)	4:20	
		Applause (aud.)
<i>Remarks (DŠ)</i>	0:32	“farewell” (DŠ)
[violin aria–energetico]	3:30	
		Applause (aud.)
		CC bows
<i>Transition (DŠ acting as moderator)</i>	0:50	CC exits stage

**DŠ**=Dalibor Štrunc

**CC**=*Cimbal Classic*

**aud.**=listeners

*Notes:* time flows vertically from top to bottom, thus the start of the concert is represented by the first line, and each succeeding line is a later event; events in italics represent portions appearing to be understood as individual segments; inset lines show subsegments of these larger units; times are given in minutes and seconds; the given times denote the entire span taken by the given line, thus the timing on inset lines is a subportion of the larger segment; times in parenthesis are not exact because of breaks in filming. This sequence is based on the author’s video recording of the concert.

In the hall, the sound check was in progress when I arrived. *Cimbal Classic* relied on microphones and amplification during their performance. The *cimbal*, at least when

played in the softer Moravian style, does not project well among the sounds of the more timbrally insistent violins and voices. Shortly before this performance, Štrunc had mentioned a difficulty in finding a sound engineer who was able to deal equally well with both voices and the *cimbál* in achieving the sound ideal that Štrunc wanted for *Cimbal Classic*. As a musician with studio recording experience, Štrunc had a specific idea of the group's sound in mind. And, since the group is led by and identified with the *cimbál*, Štrunc considered it important to be heard. In addition, many of the group's songs were written by Štrunc and therefore featured *cimbál* passages in varying levels of importance. The sound engineer, then, was crucial for the group's musical presentation. This evening, the soundboard operator was less accustomed to Štrunc's group and the check took longer than usual. Due to the low temperature in the hall and low humidity of the air, the *cimbál* also seemed liable to quickly lose its tuning. Thus, a significant amount of time was spent conferring over how this might be adjusted. Štrunc seemed displeased with the situation. In the performance, about forty-five minutes later, the *cimbál* did seem slightly out of tune.

The performance began slightly before 7 P.M. Though there were no latecomers, no one seemed bothered by this slightly-earlier-than-usual start time.<sup>40</sup> After a speech from the company chairman, a moderator began introducing *Cimbal Classic*. The moderator immediately drew attention to the identity of local music, particularly as reflected in instrumental tradition. His remarks were in reference to Štrunc's new recording *Blízká krajina* [Close Country] with *Cimbal Classic*, which was to be released at the concert:

*Víte, proč se to jmenuje "Blízká*

*Do you know why it's called "Blízká*

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<sup>40</sup> Concerts typically started at 7:30 or 8:00 P.M.

*krajina, ” ceděčko? [. . . ]  
Tak si představte— že ten cimbál patří  
na Moravu (je původně prý)—a ta  
blízká krajina, že něco přijíždí do  
Prahy [. . . ], že prezentuje mlhou  
nějaký Česko.*

krajina,” this CD? [. . . ]  
Imagine—the *cimbál* belongs to  
Moravia (it’s said to be original)—and  
this nearby terrain is something that  
you pass through going to Prague [. . . ],  
a bit of Bohemia presented as if  
through a mist.

The moderator continued, delineating differences that cityfolk—*Brňáci* [from Brno] and *Pražáci* [from Prague]—might notice as they travel between the two cities. The music on the recording was meant to evoke the *krajina*, the terrain that they would pass through on the journey, and likened it to a memory passing outside a car window more than reality. He also alluded to differences in dialect associated with each city. The celebratory release at the concert ensured that the meaning of Moravian music would be an explicit concern throughout the performance.

The performers were evidently to enter the stage as the moderator introduced them—“. . . *Cimbal Classic* . . . and Dalibor Štrunc.” Instead, however, a few seconds’ empty pause followed the remark before the audience decided to applaud. It appeared that the musicians had missed their cue. The moderator drew attention to this as he hastily made a small gesture to the stage right indicating that the performers should hurry. The awkward moment was caused, however, by the moderator’s apparent lack of confidence.

His lack of authority was complicated after *Cimbal Classic* entered the stage. Štrunc interrupted the speech as soon as his microphone was turned on. This happened during an anecdote about the first time Štrunc and the moderator met when both were members of the Prague-based *Státní soubor písní a tanců* [State Ensemble of Songs and Dances], a government-sponsored folklore group, in the 1990s. The moderator related jokingly that he had “cared for” the female singers, and Štrunc interjected an aside about

“only accompanying [the singers] on the *cimbál*.” The moderator seemed slightly flustered and resumed only after asking Štrunc, “may I continue?” By this point, however, the moderator’s authority was compromised and he “gave over the speech” [*předat slovo*], after a side observation that Štrunc was obviously *vyřečný* [talkative, presumably meant in an ironic sense here].

The audience applauded as the moderator left the stage, and *Cimbal Classic* began their first piece as soon as the applause quieted. (Table 6.1 outlines the performance.) It was a medley of Christmas carols and sprightly “Renaissance dances.” The brittle sound of the *cimbál* played with hard mallets lent the medley an “early music” sound. This was followed by a set of songs from various recordings that *Cimbal Classic* would offer for sale after the formal performance was finished.

During this portion of the evening, Štrunc acted as moderator by introducing individual songs and providing short anecdotes to the audience. Rather than the reserved style often favored in more formal cultural performances, his manner was closer to that of a folk singer: he told personal stories and eschewed *spisovná čeština* [written Czech] for the more regionally marked Moravian dialect.<sup>41</sup> Štrunc remained the central figure guiding the performance until the CD baptism was completed and he left the stage.

The “baptism” [*křtiny*] of a new recording was a high point of *Cimbal Classic*’s performance.<sup>42</sup> This event was a ritual celebration of the release of *Cimbal Classic*’s new

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<sup>41</sup> He spoke this way in everyday speech as well. This often caused me added confusion in lessons and while transcribing conversations as my prior language training was rooted in formal usage.

<sup>42</sup> The word *křest* also denotes baptism. Both *křest* and *křtiny* share the same root as *křesťan* (a Catholic male). Much religious symbolism pervaded the performance, although it was never explicitly brought to the fore. Behind and towering above the stage and performers was the remaining chapel altar, featuring a large crucifix on which hung a crucified Christ. Since this was also a Christmas party, the conjunction of these symbols gave the evening a decidedly religious air, though all official activity of the evening commemorated the company’s profitable year. Thus, the focus was on the successes of capitalism in



album in 2006. The moderator had drawn attention to this approaching occasion as he introduced *Cimbal Classic*'s portion of the program. Thus, the newly recorded and just-released-for-sale compact disc was the center of attention. Štrunc described the recording as a dialogue between genres of Bohemian and Moravian songs. Both areas were metonymically represented in music by individual musical instruments. Štrunc represented Moravia as a *cimbál* musician (significantly, as regarding the local tradition, he stood for the entirety Moravian folk music), while folksinger Jaroslav Samson Lenka represented Bohemian song traditions.

Bohemia was represented on the recording by Jiří Čihák, an exponent of the Bohemian bagpipe tradition. Bagpipes, though also common in Moravia, metonymically represented the whole of Bohemian folk music on the recording. Bohemian *dudy* [bagpipes] were described as a highly representative regional instrument, similar to the *cimbál* in Moravia. Most notable is the town of Strakonice in south Bohemia, often referred to as a center of south Bohemian bagpiping, which hosts an annual summer bagpipe festival. The association of bagpipes with Bohemia is rooted in nineteenth-century nationalistic ethnographic projects, including the folklorist and song collector František Ladislav Čelakovský's observation in 1852 that "the town of Strakonice is deeply linked with this musical instrument [bagpipes]." <sup>43</sup> This association was reinforced by the familiar *Strakonické dudák* [Strakonice Bagpiper] chain of pubs found in Brno and other towns.

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postsocialist society. In this regard, any open expression of religion might also be regarded as a new freedom since there was no official marking of religion under the Czechoslovak socialist system.

<sup>43</sup> The remark is from Čelakovský's *Mudrosloví národu slovanského ve příslovích* [Wisdom of the Slavonic Nation in Proverbs]. Another example is the nationalist nineteenth-century Czech playwright Josef Kajetán Tyl's dramatization of a folktale entitled "The Strakonice Bagpiper, or, Feast of the Wild Women" (1847). This and other information regarding Bohemian bagpiping and Strakonice are from Režný 1999, 5.

The structured portion of the evening, including speeches from the company director, ended after the “baptism.” In the closing moments of the performance proper, the ice sculpture was rigged with small, multicolor fireworks ignited to the sounds of a heroic pop song rendered by synthesizer and played over the sound system. This music was distinctly less linked to the local surroundings and much more generic in its appeal. At this point, the audience was invited to get up and have dinner as provided by servers at buffet tables in the lobby. While the dinner was served, some of the waiters moved chairs into small groupings around tables, which gave the impression of a more informal setting that invited the audience to talk, eat, and socialize rather than giving their whole attention to events happening at the front of the hall. The musicians shared in the food, but after finishing one plate they were asked to begin playing again. This portion of the evening stretched out with no clear ending in sight and was scheduled to go until the band had played at least three sets, which lasted until about midnight.

The conclusion, which to some extent mirrored a *beseda u cimbálu* [gathering at the *cimbál*], was not a typical element of a cultural performance. Other elements of the performance were also atypical of cultural performances: it was open only to invited guests, there were no tickets or assigned seating, there were no printed programs, and it was meant to mark an annual event in the life of a company and not explicitly to edify folkloric or local culture. The company was not closely linked to the local cultural scene, but sponsoring a concert showed that economic success could help support the local music culture, even though it may not have had a direct role in shaping or creating it. While the company’s cultural capital could not compare with the stature of museums and government-funded institutes, their economic capital gave the company significant

Ko - ní - cky mo - je, ko - ní - cky mo - je, kdo - pak vás na - po - jí.  
 5 Kra - ven - ky mo - je, kra - ven - ky mo - je, kdo - pak vás po - do - jí.  
 9 Az me vám od - ved - ou do po - le sir - é - ho a tam me za - bi - jou  
 12 za pá - na nas - e - ho, za pá - na nas - e - ho.

**Music Example 6.2. “Koničky moje.” Melody and lyrics by Dalibor Štrunc.**

influence in the local cultural sphere. However, the audience easily distinguished the concert as a separate portion of the evening. The final speeches, ceremonial dinner, and the reconfiguration of the performance space into a space for social interaction marked the boundary of the cultural performance and transition back into quotidian time. In addition, Štrunc early on said that the goal was to place the audience in a “special seasonal mood,” thus the focus was appreciation of the occasion and music in addition to recognition of a productive business year.

It was clear after the event that the event organizers saw the evening as a cultural performance. The formal markers of a concert and its sequence of events were apparent: its beginning and ending were known in advance, the audience responded in a formulaic way to the performers and dressed in formal attire, and the event was held where concerts of art music often took place. Most significantly, the sequence of events was guided by a moderator who offered information about each segment of the evening. The audience was requested to arrive at a specific time; the venue was established as one for formal music recitals, concerts, and lectures; the performers were clearly differentiated from the

*Koníčky moje, koníčky moje,  
kdopak vás napojí.  
Kravěnky moje, kravěnky moje,  
kdopak vás podojí.  
||: Až mě vám odvedou do pole širého,  
a tam mě zabijou za pána našeho,  
za pána našeho. :||*

*Maměnko moje, maměnko moje,  
kdopak vás pohladí.  
Až mě císař pán, až mě císař pán  
na koně posadí.  
||: Na koně vraného, do pole širého,  
kde já mám utratit života mladého,  
života mladého. :||*

*Dcérenky moje, dcérenky moje  
kdopak vás políbí.  
Až se mě mundůr, až se mě mundůr  
vojanskej zalíbí.  
||: Mundůr se zalíbí, láska se vytratí  
srděnko zatvrdne život se nevrátí,  
život se nevrátí. :||*

*Hlavěnko moje, hlavěnko moje,  
na co tě já nosím.  
To pro tu radu, to pro tu radu,  
že na vojnu nesmím.  
||: Koníčky, kravěnky, maměnku, dcérenky,  
hlavěnky, myšlenky a dobré pálenky  
opustiti nesmím. :||*

My lovely horses, my lovely horses,  
Who will water you?  
My precious cows, my precious cows,  
Who will milk you?  
||: After they take me to the wide [battle] field  
And kill me there defending our lord,  
Defending our lord. :||

My dear mother, my dear mother,  
Who will caress you?  
Once our emperor, once our emperor  
Sits me on a horse.  
||: On a black horse, in the wide [battle] field,  
Where I shall lose my youthful life,  
My youthful life. :||

My sweet girls, my sweet girls,  
Who will kiss you?  
Once the uniform, once the uniform  
Once the soldier's uniform grabs my fancy.  
||: With a fancy for the uniform, love will go,  
My heart will turn to stone, life will be gone,  
Life will be gone. :||

My poor head, my poor head,  
What do I have you for?  
To offer me counsel, to offer me counsel,  
That I mustn't become a soldier.  
||: Horses, cows, mother, girls,  
Thoughts in my head, and a good drink;  
I mustn't leave [them all] behind. :||

**Music Example 6.3. Text of “Koníčky moje.” By Dalibor Štrunc.**

audience in spatial relationship and social hierarchy; and the events followed a clear structure with a beginning and end.

The songs that *Cimbal Classic* performed at the concert showed the influence of genre mixing and regionalism in the contemporary Moravian music scene. For example, “Nikdo není daleko” [No One Is Far Away], composed by Štrunc, was constructed on a syncopated repeating bass ostinato that would have been funky were it not for its rhythmic precision. The song also featured a vocal section in a semi-improvised “scat style.” Thus, a combination of jazz and popular elements were coupled with the sound of a Moravian *cimbálovka*. Štrunc’s song “Koníčky moje” [My Horses] suggested a more

traditional approach to folk music through its text and melody (Music Example 6.2). The song is in a lilting duple meter that suggests a dance. The regularity of the phrases and the melody indicate instrumental music from Bohemia. The song has a strophic form in which a melody cycles four times through different stanzas of the text. Each strophe begins with a four-bar melody that is repeated twice, each time with different lyrics (bars 1–4, bars 5–8). The second half of the melody presents a new a new six-bar tune that features a similar repetitive rhythm (bars 9–14); this repeats twice, each time with the same lyrics. The band inserted an instrumental break between the first two stanzas.

The text of “Koničky moje” (Music Example 6.3) suggested Moravian folk songs by alluding to pastoral images, army recruitment, departure, love, and drinking, all of which are recurrent themes in Moravian songs. While folk songs about lost love are typically sung from a female perspective mourning a lost lover, this song adopts the male protagonist’s point of view. Although there is no clear plot, the text suggests that a young man from a village is being tempted by offers from an army recruiter. Looking at his surrounding farm and family, the singer wonders what will happen when he leaves. But upon reflection, and with the help of a stiff drink (presumably a locally brewed shot of *slivovice* [plum brandy]), the singer decides to reject the army and not leave the safety of his home. This plot suggests the MČČ character archetype and reinforces Czech values of home and comfort, all of which are characteristic of Moravian folk songs. The relatively positive outlook of the ending is less typical of such songs, but the upbeat mood of the song foreshadows the singer’s fortuitous insight.<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>44</sup> Štrunc told me he composed the song in 1995 for his two children (personal communication, 28 April 2008).

The text was sung clearly without melisma and repeated lines suggested simplicity. Repetition was also accomplished through a linguistic device that linked the beginning of each stanza: Štrunc uses a diminutive noun form [*zdrobnělina*] for the words horses, cows, mothers, daughters, and head in each stanza. The form, which often indicates a small size, here indicates endearment. Other words in the text (*mundûr*, *dcérenky*, and the use of *zabijou* for third person plural rather than *zabiji*) indicate regional dialect, which further evokes rural Moravia. “Koníčky moje” suggests a joining of east and west Moravia through the inflections of the text and the construction of the melody. As such, it presented at the concert a musical exploration of contemporary Czech regionalism that was again amplified in the presentation of *Cimbal Classic*’s new album.

While the performers saw this party as an economic opportunity that would pay them well for their services, the performance also filled musical and artistic goals. Štrunc took the lucrative possibility offered: as part of a commissioned private performance, he also released a new recording that many in the audience would be able to afford as a unique and local gift. While the sponsors of the event appeared to subscribe to international corporate tastes, the performance of Štrunc and his band added a distinct local flair to the evening.

### **Conclusions**

These two case studies offer examples of music in changing social systems, political ideologies, and economic circumstances. The following conclusions are my own, although I believe them to be congruent with sentiments and perspectives of Moravian *cimbál* players I have discussed here. While Moravian fusion genres may not be seen to directly affect global discourses of aesthetic activity (cf. Werbner 1997, 7), my

intent is to draw out theoretical issues that clarify the significance and meanings of this music in its global as well as local contexts. These extra-Moravian discourses help to explicate the significance of these examples in relation to global culture and world music.

The above case studies focus on original music performed by Moravian artists. Imagination, as Appadurai has theorized at a global level, is a key consideration in Moravian “world music.” Appadurai (1996, 31) acknowledges a “new role for the imagination in social life” and encourages anthropologists to explore the emergence of the imagination as “a social fact.” Appadurai indicates that modern actualities could not have happened without their possibility first as abstract imaginaries. To understand this new role of the imagination, Appadurai suggests, the “idea of the imaginary (*imaginaire*) as a constructed landscape of collective aspirations” is not more nor less real than “collective representations” that are “now mediated through the complex prism of modern media” (ibid.).

The combination of traditional styles with new genres did not result in bland homogenization. “Imported sounds,” as Simon Frith observes about the global spread of “Anglo-American commercial music,” often provide “a resource, a supply of new sounds and instruments and ideas which local musicians can use in their own ways to make sense of their own circumstances” (Frith 1989, 4). The exploration of such sounds by Moravian musicians has not spurred an all-out acceptance of bland pop music, nor a direct return to folklore. Ideologies, political and otherwise, have been associated with both “outsider” styles and with “homegrown” ones. These styles allowed for the creation of new music that integrates new genres but is resolutely rooted in local styles. Combinations that are deemed appropriate, inappropriate, or aesthetically suitable show the ways in which

Moravian musicians schooled in traditional styles have made sense of new circumstances. At the same time, Czech musical thought relies on ideas of stable genres, even though their musical content may be only loosely defined. In these Czech cases musical combination is most often described as “dialogue” or “fusion.” More radically, Štrunc’s performance suggests a paradigm shift that falls between or outside of traditional genres.

The village seems to lose its hold as the single and autochthonous center of folkloric culture. This was already happening in the nineteenth century when song collectors began preserving folk culture and folk culture became an object exhibited among urban populations. Subsequently, internal horizons of folk music were explored during the relatively closed period of totalitarianism. But now, with the opening of closed borders, rise of the Internet, and influx of culture tourists, Moravian music-culture is more easily available to wider audiences than ever before. It thus seems that globalization has amplified the importance of intensely localized places with particular cultures. In some cases, trends indicate that “cultural practices frequently escape fixed localities such as town and nation, eventually acquiring new meanings in interaction with dominant global themes” (Steger 2003, 70). Yet in Moravia, the idea of the village and the pastoral still hold as markers of authenticity and authority.<sup>45</sup>

These events fit a model in which “we can see the ‘nation-state’ being reconstructed over and over in ever smaller and more exclusive sets to correspond with new freedoms in self-definition on the part of national and/or ethnic groups” (Kürti and Langman 1997, 3). These cases reinscribe ideals of regional identity through performance. In this sense, these performance events are rewriting a past that seemingly

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<sup>45</sup> Beckerman (1996) explores the importance of the pastoral as an aesthetic in folk music and literature as well as classical music.



erases Communist overtones in favor of the ideological purity found in nineteenth century ideas of folklore and traditional music, as well as Enlightenment ideals of stable cultural essences and core identities. The drive to reaffirm such local identities may in effect be a reaction to the homogeneity and effective erasure of national and ethnic difference propounded by Communist regimes in Eastern Europe. As Kürti and Langman conclude, “nationalism, regionalism, and a renewed interest in cultural identities lie at the heart of the ‘post-communist’ era” (Kürti and Langman 1997, 6).

These cases also support revised views of musical hybridity. In 2000, Born and Hesmondhalgh described a “new, still-current discourse” among ethnomusicologists “centered on notions of musical hybridity and interaction. . . . In contrast with ethnomusicology’s former object of study—‘traditional musics’—it is diasporic music that has moved to the center of attention” (Born and Hesmondhalgh 2000, 25). They note that this “object” is not necessarily new, but the idea of a divide between traditional and hybrid musics seems entrenched. More recent ideas are in line with a view of “tradition” as a cultural process that continually renews and recycles cultural forms (e.g., Calhoun 2001, Burdette 2002). These Czech cases show that new “hybrid” styles and more “traditional” styles are not opposed to each other, but are in fact integrally entwined. Nor are new fusions necessarily “diasporic”: these case studies implicate issues of local and global identity in ways similar to that of local “traditional” musics.<sup>46</sup> In fact, if the idea of Moravia as a cultural crossroads of East and West is taken at face value, then the fusing of various elements in local traditional music is assumed to be part of the regional musical identity.

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<sup>46</sup> Thus, there is not any attempt here to divorce local sounds from local environments, a phenomena that Feld (1994) describes as “schizophonia.”

These Moravian examples may be seen as local manifestations of what Erlmann (1996, 468) calls a “new aesthetic form of the global imagination, an emergent way of capturing the present historical moment and the total reconfiguration of space and cultural identity characterizing societies around the globe.” The *cimbál* has thus been inserted into a global imaginary of world music, but at a local, Moravian level, it is understood within local histories and played in local performances.

New combinations and fusions of traditional music with other genres have been created over the last decade in the Czech Republic. These fusions are distinguished from the art music compositions played earlier by BROLN since they combine genres that are thought to be “foreign” [*cizí*] to the Czech Republic. In addition, when compared with the earlier syntheses of folk and art music, they are available to a narrower audience. Since they are not regularly broadcast via live performances on the radio, Štrunc and Lapčíková’s music is transmitted primarily through compact disc sales. This method of distribution lies within the structures of capitalism that characterize the Czech economy in the post-Communist period. In addition, these recordings were only readily available to audience members with the disposable income to purchase recordings.<sup>47</sup>

There are not historical or indigenous precedents for combining jazz, rock, bluegrass, or ska music with Moravian music. In this sense, music appears to play into a sense of a global postmodern in which, as Clifford (1988, 14) writes, local performances form “(re)collected pasts, drawing on foreign media, symbols, and languages” fashioning identities that “no longer presuppose continuous cultures or traditions.” For example, the

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<sup>47</sup> In my experience, retail sales tended to attract an older audience since Czech secondary school and college students typically did not have a disposable income to spend on recordings. Among students that I met, recordings were usually circulated via copied CDs or self-selected mix CDs. Mp3 players were not a common sight during my fieldwork.

popularity of Celtic elements in the music of the band Čechomor, who used Moravian folk melodies in combination with rock and folk genres, may suggest that Czech listeners hope to establish a felt connection with the Celtic tribes who settled in some areas of Central Europe before Roman times.<sup>48</sup> However, the integrity of “Moravian” music and its basis in folk songs and folk musical instruments remains important throughout these examples. It is still based within a conception of Czechness and cultural unity, even if the nation has little political weight in a globalized world. The examples I explored here cannot be fully understood when stripped of their references to the signs and discourses of Czech culture. These examples fit an image of Czechness that was established in the nineteenth century but filtered through the social imaginaries of the early twenty-first century.

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<sup>48</sup> Interview with Karel Holas, April 2006, Brno.

## CHAPTER 7

### CONCLUSION: WORLDS OF THE *CIMBÁL*

*Each instrument, each tool, theoretical or concrete, implies a sound field, a field of knowledge, an imaginable and explorable universe.*

—Jacques Attali (1985, 133)

The overarching themes that structure the preceding chapters sketch rough boundaries for what I describe as a Moravian interpretive community. Within this interpretive community, as I have described it, the cimbalom is enmeshed within a web of cultural contexts and worldviews that shape it into the Moravian *cimbál*. In this guise, the cimbalom, a Central European instrument, takes on significance within local ideas of identity and culture. A Moravian understanding of the *cimbál* is constrained within and constitutive of many local cultural discourses. I have discussed how the *cimbál* is understood through discourses about history, folklore, music learning, and genre mixing.

Without attending to the ideas and meanings that infuse Moravian thinking about the *cimbál* and for which the instrument acts as a node in a web of interactions, it is impossible to understand the instrument as it is understood within Moravian folk culture. While the role of composers, the nature of the folk, and the implication of cultural ideologies are continually revised, this does not threaten the conception of the instrument as an identifiably Moravian object nor its status as a folk music instrument. For those familiar with the spheres of knowledge that I have outlined here, it is likely that a certain understanding of the Moravian *cimbál* will be assumed and generally agreed upon.

By focusing on a musical instrument, I have situated this dissertation as a study in cultural organology. Each chapter of this dissertation undertook the exegesis of specific areas in which the cimbalom is understood and represented as a Moravian folk music instrument. I began with questions about how musical instruments are understood as meaningful. Does performance on specific instruments connote certain values? And what, specifically, is the import of playing the cimbalom as a Moravian *cimbál*? These questions led to a broader consideration of instruments as evocative objects that center interpretive communities.

Culturally specific meanings of musical instruments may be disclosed through processes akin to textual interpretation. In this study, I have traced the *cimbál* as an evocative object that is a focal point for ideas about musical practice, history, expressive culture, contemporary regional identities, and globalization. By interpreting cultural performances, describing performance practice, and tracing the *cimbál*'s association within folk culture, we are able to more fully grasp the meanings that radiate out from the cimbalom in its Moravian guise as the *cimbál*.

Musical ethnography typically reveals the “human face” of ethnomusicological studies (Myers 1992, 21). It has also been suggested that fieldwork is the most distinctive tool of ethnomusicologists (Cooley 1997, 4). Written ethnographies, the product of most scholarly fieldwork, are generally based on “observation and description (or representation) of culture” (Cooley 1997, 4) and the “eyewitness report” (Myers 1992, 21). Ethnomusicologists often focus their ethnographic fieldwork studies on systems of musical thought as they are historically determined, personally experienced, and socially maintained (Rice 1987). In this ethnographic pursuit of unveiling music’s human face,

ethnomusicologists have been recently encouraged to focus on what Rice (2003b) describes as “subject-centered musical ethnography.” He encourages ethnomusicologists to structure ethnographies around the experiences of and interactions with specific musicians in order to “bring some narrative coherence to the complex and seemingly fragmented world that so many social theorists, cultural critics, and ethnomusicologists are writing about” (Rice 2003b, 157). Rice suggests that subject-centered ethnographies could be structured by a focus on biography and “the interaction of people occupying slightly different subject positions but interacting in time and place” (ibid.).

My dissertation may be viewed as an exercise in an ethnomusicological approach that stresses the importance of musical instruments in ethnographic study. Using cultural organology as a theoretical framework, this dissertation illustrates an approach that may be termed “object-centered ethnography.” If instruments are regarded as among the primary things through which people interact with music, then an “object-centered musical ethnography” may be an equally rewarding complementary approach to musical ethnography. I would propose that an “object-centered” approach, such as I have undertaken in this dissertation, comprises a fruitful and complementary avenue to approach musical ethnography. Such an approach has the potential to uncover distinct and local worlds of meaning that take shape around musical instruments.

Musical instruments occupy a central place in Moravian music. This may be similar for other musical instruments in other places as well. Ethnomusicologists have never avoided musical instruments; in fact, musical ethnography has prized the study of musical instruments as a valuable technique for fieldwork. However, the significance of instruments in addition to being material artifacts has not been explicitly thought out and

the significance of similar “evocative objects” as nodes in musical experience has been under-theorized. The *cimbál*, for example, can be found in Moravian collections of musical instruments; however, museum displays rarely address questions about how the object may influence or be influenced by human musical cognition, broader cultural formations of folklore, and changing political movements.

This exemplifies a model for further studies in cultural organology. It seems likely that other musical communities also center around musical instruments. This may be noted in music conservatories, for example, where musicians are divided into groups according to their “primary” instrument. Likewise, group identities in large ensembles such as orchestras and wind bands may also be seen to be divided by “sections.” These groupings do more than just designate musical roles: they begin to negotiate identity and social group by musical instrument. Instruments in many varied music cultures fill different musical roles depending on their purpose and musical functions, and in any setting that encourages cultivation of skill on particular musical instruments, similar interpretive communities might be found. A cultural approach to organology, as exemplified here, may be a fruitful approach to investigate ways in which musical instruments are thought about and evoke musical and cultural knowledge.

Musical connection with history is another area of knowledge in which musical instruments provide insight. One might interpret the popularity of Moravian folkloric music in the postcommunist period as a musical way to recapture an unimpeachable cultural expression from an ideologically rejected political period. It may be suggested that this occurs through song melodies, but the few extant sound recordings from before the 1950s give only a vague idea of how music sounded. Through visual evidence and

transcriptions, however, musical instruments may be construed as links to past musical practices. Likewise, musical instruments present material artifacts that evoke thought about cultural expression and permit a steady point of comparison that permits fruitful scholarly analysis of cultural ideology at various points in time. If musical instruments are seen as culturally significant objects that stay relatively consistent through time, then organological study offers an important lens through which to study social change.

In the context of postcommunist East and Central Europe, ethnographic studies have been able to expose alternate views of cultural continuity and change. Rather than equating the disruptive and sudden political and economic changes of 1989 with radical and sudden cultural changes, ethnographic approaches are suited for the study of lived experience as a connective strand in times of transition. As Daphne Berdahl points out, “anthropologists have challenged a certain linear, teleological thinking surrounding the collapse of socialism and pointed to the contradictions, paradoxes, and different trajectories of postsocialist societies” (Berdahl 1999, 9; Hann et al. 2002; Kennedy 2002, 5). Instead of placing focus on the “main themes” of “transitology,” particularly privatization, market economies, democratization, nationalism, and civil society (Verdery 1996, 10; quoted in Berdahl 1999, 10), ethnographic studies have drawn out the lived experience of postcommunist social changes.<sup>1</sup> In this vein, my study of the Moravian *cimbál* stresses the long-term continuity of Moravian folk culture. However, in the case of Moravian folk culture and traditional music, these continuities are shown to stretch not only to the communist and postcommunist periods in the last decades of the twentieth, but present moments of comparison from at least the mid-nineteenth century until the present.

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<sup>1</sup> An exemplary ethnomusicological study of East European transition culture is Buchanan 2006.



The fall of Communism in 1989 has been a flash point in “transition studies” of East Europe (Berdahl 1999, 9–14; Hann et al. 2002; Kennedy 2002, 4–12). Yet, it is now possible for many Czechs to step back from the immediacy of the Velvet Revolution. The growing historical distance of “the transition” from the present has revealed that this change was only one large-scale event that affected, but did not solely alter, the shape of local cultures. As the postcommunist period plays out in the present supra-national politics of Europe, new interpretive communities are presented to Moravian musicians and folk culture has anchored a dialogue in which cultural change is the dominant consideration. The suggestion of continuities between pre-communism, communism culture, and postcommunism does not deny the dramatic changes in political and social structure throughout the twentieth century. However, it does draw attention away from the discontinuities of 1989 in politics and economics, toward the cultural and social continuity of everyday Moravian life. Studying a musical instrument has been a fruitful and ultimately rewarding vantage point from which to observe the changing (and in most cases diminished) stature of communism while simultaneously recognizing new questions about European relations.

Expanding this concept of continuity further, musical instruments may be seen as variables of community that expose the changing significance and ideologies of interpretive communities over time. Taken together, the tangible properties of the object, the conception of the object as a relatively fixed textual unit, and the concept of interpretive community constitute a prism that elucidates locally contiguous cultural realities. While communities are often thought to be comprised of a shared infrastructure for living or shared state of mind (Rapport and Overing 2007, 76–77), cultural

organology shows that musical instruments may also be constitutive factors in communities. Instruments may be taken as markers of cultural continuity, and they may also be used as resonators to sound out interpretive communities. The intellectual traction of this approach is gained not only by investigating the physical properties of a musical instrument, but by combining these insights with other areas of cultural study. It is this breadth of approach that allows us to “open up” musical instruments in order to more completely understand cultural formations within which they are entangled.

Musical instruments are objects that accrue meaning through their use in and association with human activities. As I suggest, musical instruments may be usefully regarded as “evocative objects” (Turkle 2007a, 5–7) that lie at a nexus between musical systems, cultural worldviews, history, and embodied musical experience. Musical instruments are, essentially, technological artifacts with which worlds of meanings are constructed by their “users”: not only *cimbalistas*, but also listeners, dancers, musicians, scholars, and other participants in cultural performances. As Nicholas Thomas notes in discussing the exchange of material goods in the southwestern Pacific, “objects are not what they were made to be but what they have become” (Thomas 1991, 4; quoted in Dawe 2003, 282). Sherry Turkle describes a “relational web” that animates “the network within” an object (Turkle 2007b, 312). Objects are placed within these networks through specific actions and cultural understandings that make use of them. These networks of association, webs of meaning and association that “entangle” (Thomas 1991) every object, are particularly apparent among interpretive communities centered around musical instruments, in which specific cultural associations and practices are activated by interaction with musical instruments.

To adopt a musical metaphor for this network, we might say that the instrument becomes a resonator that can resound, amplify echoes of, or compose new melodies for Moravian identity. It is not just a turn of phrase to suggest that the *cimbál* “sounds out” Moravian identity for those who know what to listen for. The metaphor also rings true in Czech, where it is clearly implied that instruments indeed center coherent worlds of meaning. While musicians are said to play [*hrát*] music, it is more commonly said that individual songs or compositions are “played through” or “played out” using the expression *zahrát*, the verb’s perfective form. The perfective character of *zahrát* implies a completed act. It assumes that, even though the goal may be incomplete at the time of speaking, the playing will be carried through to a complete performance. A song that has been played through is a complete musical unit. The idea may be extended to instruments, which may be seen to evoke complete ideas and suggest worldviews.

To borrow Lévi-Strauss’s formulation, instruments are *bonnes à penser*. This play on words captures both the tangibility of objects as well as their cultural significances as it implies that things are both “goods to think with” as well as “good-to-think-with” (Turkle 2007a, 4; cf. Leach 1974, 32 n. 8). It suggests the way in which musical instruments may structure musical thought—which I have discussed through the idea of communities of practice that center around specific ways of interacting with the instrument—and are thus material “goods” to think with; simultaneously, musical instruments suggest webs of cultural thought and are thus “good-to-think-with” things for guiding ethnomusicological explorations toward more complete understandings of musical worlds.

## **APPENDICES**

## APPENDIX 1

### SUŠIL'S INTRODUCTION TO *MORAVIAN FOLK SONGS*, 1835

The following is an English translation of the Introduction to František Sušil's 1835 collection of *Moravské národní písně* [Moravian Folk Songs], originally printed in Brno. I have included this full translation since I am not aware of any previously existing complete translation of Sušil's work. For the translation, I used the Czech text, "Předmluva k sbírce z roku 1835," as it was reprinted in *Moravské národní písně*, 4th printing (Prague: Vyšehrad, 1951), pp. 7–8.

#### Foreword to the 1835 Edition

To pass judgment on the value of these folk songs—which we call Moravian because we collected them in Moravia, though many of them are sung elsewhere with little change—seems superfluous; we would only have to repeat what others have said of similar songs. Everyone gladly admits that these songs are appreciated not for poetic tropes that a learned poet might use to beautify the fruits of his labor, but for their unaffected simple beauty. This collection does not resemble a precious garden into which a knowledgeable gardener has gathered exotic plants from the distant ends of the earth, willfully organizing and cultivating them with great skill; rather, we offer here a posy of field flowers [*polní kvítky*], as they were born naturally among our song-loving people. Even field blossoms, often delightfully fragrant and glowing with colors, force connoisseurs to admire them. Without boasting, Czechs and Moravians can put their folk songs side by side with those of any other nation.

It was requested that we group every song from the Haná region together, and likewise the songs from Slovácko, and so forth. It is difficult, however, to determine the borders between our dialects exactly. A Moravian resident living near the Hungarian border is called a Slovak but does not pronounce everything as a Hungarian Slovak would.<sup>1</sup> The differences between one and another place multiply with practically every

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<sup>1</sup> A Slovak living in Hungary. In Sušil's time, "Hungarian Slovaks" were residents of the Austro-Hungarian Empire; today, they would live in the Slovak Republic.

hour one travels away from the borders. Near the Hungarian border they say *najmakší, ňěsu, mohel, bol, vychadzám, preháním, na veži vysokej, rebrik, radost', duša, dušu, koňa*.<sup>2</sup> Go only a few hours from the border, but instead of the latter, they will say *na vysokej, rebrik, radost', duša, dušu, koňa*; in the place of the former, they will prefer *najmekší, nesu, mohl, byl, vychádím, proháním*. Go not much farther away, and you will find *najmekší, věži*; you lose *rebrik*, and then even *vychádím*; the words *rebrik* or *řebrik* and *vycházím* will enter. Continue again a mile along the road, and you will hear *řebrik*, and so on, until you lose one and then another of the aforementioned ways of speaking. Finally, having arrived at the Czech border, nothing more than *duša, dušu, koňa* will remain from the above. In fact, in some villages they hang on to the Czech *duše, duši, koně*, and from *rebrik* one gets *žebrik*.

One hears something similar if you travel away from the Polish border. There, instead of *ú* (not at the beginning but at the end of a word, for example, *rukú, ňěsú*) they use *ó*, to which they append a slightly nasal sounding *n*, and something close to the Polish *a* (*ręka, niesa*). It gets murkier the closer you get to Haná, where it becomes more difficult to distinguish this nasal sound. Even in Haná where you will not be reminded of this *n*, you will still hear something more than just *ó*. It is as if a lazy whisper of breath can foretell that soon you will be hearing *ou*. Sometimes when a native of Haná is startled or moved by some emotion, this extended *ó* will sneak in and he will shout, *hoří, ó, Bóže!*, pronouncing it differently than *ó* in his *kóří, rukó, nesó*. There are places where, if the residents tell you something about their hands, you will say that you heard *rukó*, and your apprentice will quibble with you, claiming he heard *rukou*. Let us be silent about how some teachers, misled by writing, were prompted to say *ruko-u* as in the word Augustýn. — The changes of *ú, ó, ou*, are like *ý, é, ej* in the masculine gender (e.g., *milý, milé, milej pán*); or *ej* for the feminine gender on the Hungarian, Polish, and Silesian borders, *é* around Haná, and then again *ej* or *ý* on the Bohemian borders (e.g., *milej, milé, milý*, or again *milej paní*).<sup>3</sup> In short, the Slavic language in Moravia is in a state of constant change from one dialect to the next. Often two dialects meet in one village so that one man would say *milej paní*, and another *milý paní*. It is no wonder, then, that the

<sup>2</sup> This border, close to the present-day border between the Czech and Slovak Republics, marked the division between the upper Hungarian and Moravian provinces within the Austro-Hungarian empire.

<sup>3</sup> I.e., these adjectival endings follow a pattern similar to the declension of adjectives for masculine nouns.

folk songs, especially in rhymes, are not governed by strict grammatical rules. Therefore, we did not try to separate the songs from Haná, Slovácko, Podhorácko, and so forth. Following *najmakší, najmekší, najměkší, nejměkší, nejměkčí*, should we have distinguished five different dialects? Where *ú* prevails, let the reader hold that the song is from Slovácko, where *ó*, let him think that he hears a Hanák, and if he wants, he may also acknowledge that language as written sometimes trumps the local dialect.<sup>4</sup> However, the local preference will immediately be heard; soon custom overcomes intellect and you have, especially when common sense supports it, that they would say *koňa* one time and *koně* the next, or *růža* once and then *růže* many times.<sup>5</sup>

We will only offer 94 of the tunes and melodies because we did not manage to hear more of them completely, and incomplete fragments would not help anyone. We do not feel anointed to analyze them critically; the songs alone can speak for themselves. How could the tender pain be expressed or emerge in song more tenderly than in songs 79 and 115? Would not even Mozart confess that songs 75 and 171 express heartfelt grief? The tune of number 53 displays a beauty connected with joy as if one of our girls were evoking the scene. In number 94, is not the treble repetition of the first bar characteristic, and does it not carry the entire melody as if a lover were gazing at his beloved, bewitched by her beauty? – One could scarcely lay hands on a more appropriate folk [*prostonárodní*] melody than song 59. Only in a few minor modes [*málo tónech měkkých*], this grief-stricken song walks with resolve, as would a slim orphaned soul completely captivated with longing for her mother and father. — When we first heard melody 145 (in Hodějice u Slavkova in a tiny country cottage), it seemed to us that we had been elevated to a higher plane. What a beginning in minor and what an end as the bride bids farewell to her mother and father! Sadness at first (minor scale), but joy already plays in her heart (in the middle of the song it transforms into more uplifting tones [*přejíti do jasného*]), until finally at the end it merges with the most lovely flow into the clear tones of major. — We similarly enjoyed “*Za najpřední stól*,” which we heard near Rousínov.

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<sup>4</sup> “Language as written” [*řeč spisovná*] refers to standardized language, which would presumably have been taught in Czech schools of the time, rather than local dialects.

<sup>5</sup> These examples illustrate differences between colloquial and standard pronunciations.

Do these tunes have distinguishable Slavic traits? What are they? The Slavs give particular preference to the soft tones in their songs,<sup>6</sup> which long to express pain and grief in words. Yet there are enough of these songs that, like number 1, express grief with clear scales.<sup>7</sup> Immediately upon listening, one perceives pain and predicts that the wretched girl will drown in the Danube. The entire melody and its musical rhythm carry and support this emergence of grief. — What, then, is the mark of a Slavic melody? Slavism in these songs is in the audible transition from nature to the heart, and these transitions, in whatever melodies, are appealing to Slavic people. Few [of these songs] finish in the mode with which they began. Very often, they will transition to another—e.g., in numbers 2, 4, 5, 9, 34, 60, 62, 70, 72, 79, 95, 106, 116, 120, 125, 144, 149, 150, 153, and so forth—most often from the soft to the clear in the middle, and then back to the soft at the end.<sup>8</sup> Because such lyrical transition is observed not only in these offerings, but also in other Slavonic songs, we will state the following: We decide that, in order to find the characteristic trait of Slavonic melodies in this so-called transition, we will call it clear-soft [*jasná měkkost*] (minor-major [*molleza dura*]).

We also think that—for these melodies to bring the most joy to the national spirit [*genia*] as, for example, the songs which Mr. Čelakovský<sup>9</sup> collected and in the same measure as those songs—our musicians have to study these songs assiduously.

*In Brno, 14 November 1832*

František Sušil

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<sup>6</sup> That is, use of the minor scale.

<sup>7</sup> That is, with the use of major scales.

<sup>8</sup> That is, they switch from minor to major.

<sup>9</sup> František Ladislav Čelakovský (1799–1852) was an early collector of Slavic folk songs. Sušil presumably refers to Čelakovský's collection *Slovanské národní písně* [Slavic folk songs], published between 1822 and 1827, though the reference may also be to the censorship of Čelakovský's attempts to publish other Bohemian songs; see Markl 1987, 24–28.



## APPENDIX 2

### SUŠIL'S INTRODUCTION TO *MORAVIAN FOLK SONGS*, 1859

The following is an English translation of the Introduction to František Sušil's 1859 collection of *Moravské národní písně* [Moravian Folk Songs], originally printed in Brno. I have included this full translation since I am not aware of any previously existing complete translation of Sušil's work. For the translation, I used the Czech text, "Předmluva k sbírce z roku 1859," as it was reprinted in *Moravské národní písně*, 4th printing (Prague: Vyšehrad, 1951), pp. 9–11.

#### Foreword to the 1859 Collection

During the past years, Slavic folk songs have attracted many admirers and performers for more than one reason. On one hand, the loveliness [*libeznost*], simplicity, and freshness of these native-grown [*samorostlý*] blossoms captivated the spirit of those who beheld them; on the other hand, the songs were seen as a magical key which could unlock the mysterious essence of the nation and reveal its many facets. The songs we present here have both aspects; and, although we cannot say that they depict our national *history*, or that they are a national shrine of sacred knowledge, consciousness, and faith, one can still see in them the inner [*soukromý*] life of our nation as in a transparent crystal. Leafing through them for relics of bygone eras [*starožití*] is not absolutely without profit; the air that hovers around them graciously refreshes the spirit.

However, we are not here to speak of the essence of Slavic songs; Václav z Oleska, Berviňský, Boďanský, Štúr, and others have already done this. Nor will we expound on the nature of the songs in our collection, although it would not be out of place to offer a few words, particularly on the religious nature of some folk songs or on their national character. We will limit ourselves to a few short comments about the origins of this collection and about its relationship to other collections of Moravian folk song.

It has been a considerable number of years since the idea occurred to me to find these songs—these native Moravian pearls—, to collect them, and to publish them. It was

the year 1824 when the late celebrated Fr. Čelakovský requested some Moravian songs for his pan-Slavic collection. Having admitted the need for such collecting, I devoted my free time from teaching to the work of collecting; and, although I could not go to the regions of Moravia more distant from my birthplace, in just four years I amassed a sizeable collection of folk songs. After this collection, augmented with some randomly collected songs, first saw God's light in the year 1835 (it was published in Brno by Trassler), I was unable to continue. Only when I received a new position in the year 1837 did I charge myself with a new duty: to continue collecting folk songs during my free time and all periods spent away from the school. This time I expanded the scope of the work to include all regions where Moravian is spoken [*moravsky se mluví*]. I then journeyed through some parts of my native Moravia, even in the Opava region and a part of the Těšín region—places where the Czech language was not retreating due to the advance of Polish. Apart from these regions, I deemed it unthinkable not to include the Slavic communities in northern Austria because they are so close to villages in Moravia. Of course this also meant that for my purposes I could not collect folk songs from Hungarian Slovakia since I was concentrating on Moravia.<sup>1</sup>

At first, in order to better the work and to speed its completion, I considered enlisting the aid of some helpers. I entrusted part of the work to those who seemed naturally destined for this task, i.e., to teachers in the countryside; I hoped they would agree to bring the collection's various facets to completion. I actually received many partial collections, some of which I used in the second volume, printed in Brno in 1840, although I used some of them with hesitation. When these collections were verified in the region where they were collected, I was convinced that many of my helpers were neither careful nor correct enough. I realized that they were not working unfailingly, so I canceled their contracts and fired them. I finished the work myself. This collection is the fruit of many years of laborious and callous-forming digging in the mines of Moravian folk poetry. Although this collection mostly includes the first two editions, the songs accepted from other collectors for the 1840 edition are now presented here as I wrote down their words and melodies directly from the mouths of the people. I usually listed the place where I first heard the song or where it was most completely sung. It must be

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<sup>1</sup> Sušil uses the expression *uherské Slovensko* in reference to the present-day Slovak Republic.

remembered regarding these place names, however, that e.g., *Nová Ves* Břeclavská, *Pavlovice* Brněnské are given if the location is not marked accurately.<sup>2</sup> Few of the songs I accepted from other collectors with texts and melodies are presented here unless I was convinced that they were really drawn from the mouths of the people; the names of amateur collectors are written next to songs that they collected and sent to me. The name of Mr. Cypr[ián] Lelek belongs among the names of the most prolific contributors; he permitted me to include his songs from the Prussian Opava region in my collection;<sup>3</sup> though these were without melodies, it was easy for me to find and record their melodies directly from the mouths of the people since I had the name of the song that I was searching for. We ignored many of the songs because they were found as a text or melody in Mr. Erben's collection of Czech folk song.<sup>4</sup> We can proudly say that there is not even one Bohemian folk song that could not be heard in Moravia. The same can be said about Slovak songs in Hungary. Our songs share fewer similarities with those of southern Slavic regions—where the similarities appeared, we noted them. When we use the abbreviation *Mein.*, we refer to the collection of German songs collected in Moravian Kravařsko and published by Meinert under the title *Fyelgie* in 1817.<sup>5</sup>

In the texts, as with the melodies, *accuracy* was prized above all so that nothing was added, changed, or omitted. Therefore, every song is written in the dialect in which it was sung. This verges on a few inconsistencies, but eliminates the marked influence of schools on the disappearance of particular spoken dialects; this inconsistency is particularly obvious in those songs which are in one dialect but borrow from another, causing the local spoken speech to be somewhat transformed. It must be said, then, that these folk songs cannot present a *perfect* picture of dialects in the region. It is also

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<sup>2</sup> In other words, many small villages might have been called *Nová ves* [New Village], so Sušil added more well-known or distinctive names of nearby places to be more precise.

<sup>3</sup> German, Troppau.

<sup>4</sup> Karel Jaromír Erben (1811–1870) was secretary of the National Museum from 1846 and official archivist of the city of Prague from 1851. He is well known for his book of verse, *Kytice z pověstí národních* [A Bouquet of National Legends, 1853], which stands as one of the major literary works of the national revival period. His two-volume collection of folk songs, *Písňe národní v Čechách* [Folk Songs in Bohemia, 1842, 1845], was also influential and became an early model of folk-song collecting in Bohemia.

<sup>5</sup> Kravařsko is *Kuhland* in German. Josef Meinert's *Fyelgie* of 1817 is thought to be one of the first publications in Moravia heavily influenced by Herder's essays as well as propagating "myths of folk song" published by the Grimm brothers (Markl 1987, 21).

unfortunate for our cause that in Kollár's collection<sup>6</sup> we cannot differentiate, due to a lack of documentation, between hard *l* and soft *l*, or where hard *l* would often be pronounced *u*. There is simply no way to differentiate soft *ś* and *ź* from hard *s* and *z*, because this difference is not noticeable everywhere in the eastern part of Moravia and Poland and the spelling of some words did not designate the difference clearly. Similarly, we are sorry that in some of the songs the difference between *e* and *ä* is not considered. But we hope that these trifles will be forgiven and since their utterance is always close to [standard] Czech.

Also, the melodies are recorded and written as they were originally sung. If one sees here or there a deviation from the regular manner of singing, it accordingly attributed to individual people or singers from whose mouths the song sprang. No melodies are presented here after only one hearing; just to make sure, we asked that the songs be sung in other regions as well. Thus, none [of the melodies] have a completely original character since it is not based on only one interpretation. Only those melodies that were sung a few times and in various areas are written. The beauty, purity, profundity, and elevated quality of these melodies were already publicly acknowledged by competent experts. For example, the well-known Chrysander expressed this in Mainz a musical newspaper (which in 1854 was already translated by a Slovak newspaper). Many an expert, unsolicited by the collector, also expressed these sentiments and in very flattering words (even though the text was for them unintelligible). We must also repeat here a remark expressed even in collections of German song—e.g., Erk's (Berlin 1856)<sup>7</sup>—that something is to be learned from these melodies, even though theories of music have so far neglected this. Even that some of the melodies are printed twice with small changes in this collection may be of interest or illuminating. The tempo is given by the character of the song.

Immediately after the printing of the first volume in 1853, and again recently, it was requested that the collector (as was done in *Zpěvanky*)<sup>8</sup> provide many annotations,

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<sup>6</sup> This presumably refers to Jan Kollár and Pavel Šafařík, *Písň svěřské lidu slovenského* [Secular Songs of Slovak People] (1823), a collection published in Hungarian Slovakia (Urbancová 2004, 25; see also Markl 1987, 24).

<sup>7</sup> Likely reference to Ludwig Christian Erk (see Markl 1987, 215).

<sup>8</sup> The reference is presumably to Kollár's *Narodnie spievanky* (Bratislava: 1834), a collection of Slovakian songs (see Markl 1987, 214).

including a detailed treatise, a guide to phonology in Moravian subdialects, and some topography of the songs and melodies. I regret that I cannot grant even one of these requests: in part because I do not feel qualified for the task, and in part because such analysis is already under preparation and, God willing, will soon see God's light. I also dropped the idea of collecting the melodies of dramatic folk plays around Moravia; however, I do not consider this a blemish on the collection of Moravian folk songs: because these plays do justice only partly to the purley national character.

Overall, in this new collection and with the finish of this edition one can see that the spring of new songs has not dried up. Songs expressing the life of the folk are welling up from the source, and there are still many pearls that wait from ancient times, hidden under ruins, to be found. It would be well deserved to look for these precious remnants and bring their hiding place to light.

Let heartfelt thanks be expressed to all those who, in any possible way, aided the collector in the collection of these songs.

*In Brno, 17 December 1859*

František Sušil

### APPENDIX 3

#### JANÁČEK'S APPLICATION TO THE ROYAL ACADEMY, 1891

This appendix is an English translation of Janáček's Application to the Czech Academy of Sciences and Arts of 17 November 1891. I have included this full translation since I am not aware of any previously existing complete translation of Janáček's application; in addition, it contains names and information about Valachian *cimbál* players that Janáček's visited. The application is stored at the Janáček Archive (JA) in Brno under the record number C3. According to a letter from the Royal Academy dated 5 December 1891, the application was denied because it arrived after the competition for funds had closed (JA C4); regarding the denial, Tyrrell (2006, 863 n. 41) also cites Dvořák's letters (ADKD, vol. x, p. 101).

Most of the following translation is based on the Czech text reprinted in a critical edition by Jiří Vysloužil (1955, 515–516; referred to below as LJOLP). However, after checking this reprinted version against the archived original, I determined that the reprinted text in LJOLP includes only the sections after point 3); thus, I filled in the rest of the material below from the document archived at JA. A partial version is also reprinted in *Janáček ve vzpomínkách a dopisech*, ed. Bohumír Štědroň (Prague: Topič, 1946), p. 124. A partial English translation appears in John Tyrrell's biography, *Janáček: Years of a Life* (2006, 368–369).

Unless otherwise noted, I have used “national” as a translation for *národ* and *národní* (in cases where Janáček used the abbreviation *nár.* I use “natl.”) and “folk” for *lid* and *lidový*. All footnotes are my editorial additions. The setting of the text approximates the format of the original.

Great Presidium  
of the Czech Academy  
of H. E. Franz Josef  
for Science and Arts

I venture to apply for a research stipendium of 200 zl. in the discipline of music. I base my application on the following:

1) I am a teacher of music for the Czech Institute for the Education of Teachers in Brno and concurrently director of the Organ School.

2) I present the following from my work as a composer:

a) “Men’s Chorus,” printed at the cost of K. Winkler in Brno. Dr. Ant. Dvořák regards the composition appreciatively, as the enclosed paper shows.

b) “Valachian Dances,” score printed at the cost of Bursík & Kohout in Prague.

c) “Rákoš Rakoczi,” ballet presented at the National Theater in Prague.

3) I have been preoccupied with the study of national songs and national dances. I point out here the design of a new classification of national songs, differing from Erben’s classification, which I wrote out in the musical part of the introduction to Bartoš’s collection of folk songs.

Mr. Helfert in his publication “Čecho-slaven” (p. 169) says that to analyze and identify natl. song would be very commendable.<sup>1</sup>

Much more important, however, is the analysis of natl. dance. Whereas it may be possible to glean stylistic rules from collections of national songs, which could guide even artificial composition [*skladba umělá*], if one wants to preserve the character [*ráz*] of Czech folk music, then various aspects of our music—harmonic, modal, and particularly formal (used musical forms)—can be revived through natl. dances.

I have already been collecting and studying national dance in Moravia for three years.

Up to this point, I have experienced the area in eastern Moravia around Hukvaldy (Čeladná–Kunčice–Tichá; Mniší–Sklenov–Rychaltice; Kozlovice). I touched on particularly interesting used musical forms in Moravian newspapers, which I am enclosing.<sup>2</sup>

Among the results of this study is the ballet “Rákoš Rakoczi.” Until recently I did not know the remaining typical [*obvyklý*] natl. dances of Slovácko. And I did not wonder

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<sup>1</sup> Janáček refers to the essay “Volkslied und Tanz” by Joseph Alexander Helfert printed in Jaroslav Vlach, *Die Čecho-Slaven*, vol. 8 in *Die Völker Oesterreich-Ungarns: Ethnographische culturhistorische Schilderungen* (Vienna and Teschen: K. Prochaska, 1883).

<sup>2</sup> Jiří Vysloužil (1955, 515 n. 3; referred to below as LJOLP) identifies this enclosure as Janáček’s article “Tance valašské a lašské [Valachian and Lachian Dances],” published in the Brno paper *Moravské listy*, 3 January 1891 (volume 3, number 1) (see LJOLP, 596–601); this was later expanded in Janáček’s study “Osnovy hudební lidových tanců na Moravě [Musical Echoes of Folk Dances in Moravia]” in *Český lid* 2 (1893): 494–509 (see LJOLP, 186–200).

a little at the end of my journey at the more active knowledge of dances in Slovácko than in Valachia; the *danaj* dance in particular surprises with its rhapsodic form.

Naturally, the south of Moravia breathes [*dýše*] with a different spirit even in its dances than the destitute area of Valachia.

It would be extremely interesting to follow the gradual transition in style of these compositions [progressing] from the east along the Moravian border to the south.

The collection of folk dances is therefore extremely important since we are here at the source of harmonic folk music. We Czechs have so far not recognized this—it was thought that we do not have it at all. The collecting, and at that the quick, immediate collection of natl. dances in Moravia must be, accordingly, like a holy duty for us.

The *cimbál* players whom I met in Valachia are, after all, old people. (Myška from Petřvald is around 60 years old, Mikeska in Košatka around 70, and Klepáč in Kunčice over 60.)

And how difficult it already is for them to remember the old tunes! And this should be the highest reason for concern: the death of these individual tradition bearers [*znalci*] would destroy forever much of the important proof of our culture.

Therefore, during the summer holidays (beginning 16 July 1892) I want to return again to Hukvaldy near Příbor. From there, I want to undertake research trips to the northeast: to Košatka on the Oder River and to Sedliště across the Ostravice River.

This year, I have already surprised the *cimbál* player Mikeska in Košatka, and he promised me that he will “often recall” and prepare some old dances and songs for my next visit. In Sedliště, I want to observe and record the “*cupak*” and “*šmihák*” dances. I am particularly concerned with the harmonies heard in the *cimbál* playing. I have a few trips to south Moravia thought up as well, in the surroundings of Velká. I have earlier noted the above-mentioned *danaj* dance with the accompaniment of two violins and bass with a bagpiper. What of the previously unsuspected harmonic, contrapuntal, and rhythmic forms of Czech folk music [contained] here!

I remember how these fiddlers sat next to me in their simple tunics. The little violin held carelessly in hand, its strings tuned up. But with what sympathy the decorated, varied melody was sounded in the setting; with what stress the second violin marked the



quadruple motion against the quarter note triplets that the dancer sang with admirable lightness! — I also want to musically take notice of this technical folk expression.

*In Brno, 17 November 1891*

*Leoš Janáček*

## APPENDIX 4

### ŠTRUNC AND LAPČÍKOVÁ DISCOGRAPHIES

#### **Dalibor Štrunc and *Cimbal Classic* (<http://www.cimbaleclassic.net/>)**

*Cimbal Classic* first performed in 1991. Since 1996, the band has released many albums. The group is organized by cimbalom player Dalibor Štrunc (born 1966) and his wife Kateřina Štruncová. *Cimbal Classic*'s repertory includes Moravian songs, particularly from north Moravia (*Valašsko*), as well as many songs by leader Dalibor Štrunc. The group is modeled after a traditional *cimbálovka*. Its style runs the gamut from folklore to jazz to folk and country. The group is discussed in detail in Chapter 6. The band has released the following recordings:

*Čichám člověčinu* / I Sense a Human (Barny, 1996)

*Vánoce v Rožnově* / Christmas in Rožnov (Barny, 1996; re-released 2005 on the Indies label)

*Jaro* / Easter (Barny 003, 1998)

*Vrávorám* / Reeling (Barny 004, 1999; re-released 2007)

*Prameny* / Sources (Brno: Gnosis, G-Music 017, 2000)

*Bylo a není* / What There Was and Is No More (Indies Records, MAM 248-2, 2004)

*Blízká krajina* / Close Country (independently produced, distributed by Indies Records, 2006)

*Gazdina roba* (2007)

#### **Zuzana Lapčíková (<http://www.zuzanalapcikova.com/>)**

Lapčíková (born 1968) graduated from the *cimbál* studio at the Brno conservatory, and she also holds a degree in ethnomusicology from Masaryk University in Brno. As a native of Zlín, Moravia, she has been the participant in and director of many folklore ensembles, including the ensemble *Včelaran* in Bílovice. Her major musical activities have been as a performer on the *cimbál* and a singer. She has collaborated with many musicians and artists, most notably the pianist Emil Viklický, bassist George Mraz, and bassist Josef Fečo. She has recorded jazz albums, composed folk ballets, and participated in other fusion work. Her major albums include:

*Moravské písně milostné* / Moravian Love Songs; with Emil Viklický and the Prague Chamber Orchestra (Lotos, 1999).

*Uspávančky* / Lullabies; with Emil Viklický (2000).

*Morava* / Moravia; with bassist George Mraz (Milestone, 2001).

*Strom života: Moravské lidové písně o stromech* / Tree of Life: Moravian Folk Songs about Trees; with Emil Viklický and Mirek Minks (2002)

*Černobílá* / Black and White; with Josef Fečo (2006)

## APPENDIX 5

### ANNOTATED RECORDING AND RESOURCE LIST

The following annotated appendix compiles a list of notable Websites and recordings that I drew upon in this study of Moravian traditional music. While URLs are frustratingly temporary, I am providing the most current Web addresses for all of the sites listed (as of May 2008). While I provide the primary URL for the sites below, which typically open in Czech, many of the sites provide some level of English translation that may be accessed by clicking on the British or American flag icons.

The Internet will be a particularly active sphere of activity in Moravian music in the next decade. Some institutions, including the Institute of Folk Culture (NÚLK) and Folklore Association, have already established significant Internet presences. The NÚLK has also begun an Internet publishing initiative. The *Folklorní sdružení České republiky* [Folklore Association of the Czech Republic] (URL listed below) unveiled a new section on its Web portal in early 2008 titled “Folklore on the Internet,” with the goal of centralizing the “extensive amount of current information” available about Moravian folk groups and traditional music online.

#### General Web Resources

*Národní ústav lidové kultury* / The National Institute of Folk Culture:

<http://www.nulk.cz/>. A sponsor of the International folk festival in Strážnice since 1946, the institute has grown into a national center for the preservation of folklore. The center, housed in the chateau at Strážnice, focuses in particular on Moravia. Its activities are centered largely around publishing and organizing international conferences; notable is the Institute’s online “electronic library,” which makes available scanned copies of Czech ethnographic journals (including *Český lid* and *Národopisný aktuality* with relatively complete coverage) and song collections (notably, the publications of František Bartoš). In addition, the Institute houses sound archives that hold recordings from many stations of Czechoslovak Radio, including Brno and Ostrava.

*Akademie věd České republiky* / The Czech Academy of Sciences: <http://www.cas.cz/>.

The Academy of Sciences is broadly organized, but two branches in particular focus specifically on Moravian traditional culture:

Ethnology Institute of the Czech Academy: <http://www.eu.cas.cz/>.

Ethnology Institute, Brno Branch: <http://www.iach.cz/uef/>. The Brno office holds most of Janáček’s folkloric transcriptions and many historical recordings; in addition, it employs folklorists and ethnologists who actively study and preserve

contemporary Moravian folk traditions. The office publishes many significant studies on Moravian folk music.

Czech Music Information Service: <http://www.musica.cz/>. This Web site provides information on many Czech art-music composers and musicians.

### **Musicians and Groups**

*Folklorní sdružení České republiky / Czech Folklore Association:* <http://folklorisdruzeni.cz/>. The association is the central organizing body for over 400 folkloric groups in the Czech Republic, including many Moravian *cimbálovky*. The Association publishes an annual calendar of folkloric events that publicizes concerts and festivals.

*Klub kultury Uherské Hradiště / Hradiště Club of Culture:* <http://www.kkuh.cz/>. Non-profit organization and sponsor of an annual festival of folk music instruments, usually held in October.

Moravian Folklore Web: <http://www.folklorweb.cz/>. A Czech-language site featuring news, articles, schedules, and other information about folklore throughout Moravia.

Dalibor Štrunc and *Cimbal Classic*: <http://www.cimbalclassic.net/>

Brněnský rozhlasový orchestr lidové nástroje / BROLN: <http://www.rozhlas.cz/broln/>

Kašava Friends of Folklore: <http://www.kasava-splk.cz/>. This association is the sponsor of the Kašava folklore group in Zlín.

Biannual cimbalom competition held in Valašské Meziříčí: <http://www.lpt.cz/festival/>. This festival attracts student players from around Moravian and the rest of Europe. It is held within the purview of the World Cimbalom Association.

Brno Philharmonic: <http://filharmonie-brno.cz/>.

*Slovácký krúžek*s in Brno and Prague: <http://www.kruzek.cz/>. The Brno *krúžek* has been active since 1905. The group continues to hold monthly gatherings with live music and dancing in Brno, and information can be found at the Web site. The *cimbálovka* of the Brno *Slovácký krúžek* also maintains a Web site at <http://kruzek.unas.cz/s/vitajte.php/>.

### **Moravian Cimbalom Makers**

Holak (Vladimír Holiš, Kozlovice): <http://www.holak.ostravsko.com/>. The information in this study is based on interviews with and study on instruments built or refurbished in the Holak workshop.

Všianský (Pavel Všianský, Brno): <http://www.cimbaly.cz/> or <http://www.cimbalom.us/>.

### **Selected Compilation Recordings of Moravian Traditional Music**

The following list of compilation recordings, arranged alphabetically by title, feature traditional Moravian music. All are available on compact disc; mp3 downloads, though not unheard of, are rarely of high quality and not consistently available (for free or for pay) from Czech music sites. The recordings below augment the list of Czech recordings published in the *Rough Guide* (Plocek 1999): many of them have been released since the article was compiled, and my focus is specifically on traditional Moravian music that includes the *cimbál*. NÚLK recordings may be obtained from the Institute of Folk Culture ([www.nulk.cz](http://www.nulk.cz)). Many of the others are out of print, but are occasionally available in limited quantity from the publishers. As of 2008, CDMusic shop (located in Prague), which offers a limited selection of traditional recordings and can be searched at <http://www.cdmusic.cz/>, was the only available source for buying compact discs online.

*Edice tradiční lidové hudby: Ústav lidového umění ve Strážnici / Edition of Traditional Folk Music: Institute of Folk Art in Strážnice.* 4 volumes (Strážnice: NÚLK, 2002). These include Czech and English notes. The recordings are from the Strážnice folk festival between the years 1972 and 1986.

*Hradištan Jaroslava Staňka / Hradištan and Jaroslav Staněk.* Compiled by Jaromír Nečas (Prague: Supraphon, SU 5713-2, 2006). Historical recordings of the band from 1962 to 1972.

*Mezinárodní folklorní festival ve Strážnici, 1995–2000 / International Folk Festival in Strážnice, 1995–2000.* Includes English commentary (Strážnice: NÚLK, 2000). Compilation of recordings from performances at the annual Strážnice festival from 1995 to 2000.

*Modloslužebníci: Nahrávky z let 1936–1998 a vzpomínky pamětníků / Worshippers: Recordings from 1936–1998 and Recollections of Those Who Remember.* Issued for the Slováký krúžek in Brno (Brno: Český Rozhlas Brno, 2003). Features recordings of various musicians active with the *krúžek* in Brno, ranging from Jaromír Běhúnek playing *cimbál* in 1949 to 1998.

*Nejstarší zvukové záznamy moravského a slovenského lidového zpěvu (z folkloristické činnosti Leoše Janáčka a jeho spolupracovníků) / The Oldest Sound Recordings of Moravian and Slovakian Folk Song (On the Folkloric Activities of Leoš Janáček and His Collaborators).* Includes Czech and English notes edited by Jiří Plocek and Jaromír Nečas (Brno: Gnosis, G-Music 010, 1998). This re-mastered compilation features recordings by Leoš Janáček and his team of fieldworkers (dating from 1909 to 1912) as well as spoken reminiscences and interviews with active folklorists from Moravia dating from the 1950s. Transcriptions of all of the songs featured are included. The notes are in both Czech and English and include essays by Jarmila Procházková, Miloš Štědroň, Marta Toncrová, and Jiří Plocek.

*Primášské legendy / Primáš Legends*. Compiled by Jaromír Nečas and Jiří Pavlica (Brno: Gnosis, G-Music 025, 2002). Historical recordings of the CMs of Slávek Volavý, Jura Petřů, and Jaroslav Staněk (Hradišťan) from 1965 to 1984; most of the selections are taken from the archives of radio Brno.

*Proměny v čase: Tradiční lidová hudba na Moravě ve 20. století / Transitions in Time: Traditional Folk Music in Moravia in the 20th Century*. Includes bilingual notes, edited by J. Plocek (Brno: Gnosis, G-Music 020, 2002). Two compact discs. This exemplary compilation collection contains historical and recent recordings from a range of areas in Moravia. An eighty-one page booklet (available in Czech and English) provides comprehensive notes as well as photographic documentation.

*The Gnosis label (<http://www.gnosis.cz/>)*. Headquartered in Brno and founded by Jiří Plocek, Gnosis has published many wonderful collections from subregions of Slovácko (South-East Moravia). As of 2004, the label has been inactive aside from limited releases. Notable regional compilations from the Gnosis discography include (listed alphabetically by region):

Hornácko. *Hornácký hudec Martin Hrbáč / Fiddler Martin Hrbáč* from Hornácko (Brno: Gnosis, G-Music 003, 1995).

Kyjovsko. *Varmužova Cimbálová Muzika: Na kyjovsku / The Varmuž CM: Around Kyjov* (Brno: Gnosis, G-Music 008, 1997).

Uherskobrodsko. *Kytice z Uherskobrodská / Flowers from Uherskobrodská* (Brno: Gnosis, G-Music 012, 1998).

Uherskohradištsko. *Karel Rajmic a Cimbálová Muzika Jaroslava Čecha* (Brno: Gnosis, G-Music 006, 1996).

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