

Racek, Jan

## Vladimír Helfert and the Brno school of musicology

*Sborník prací Filozofické fakulty brněnské univerzity. H, Řada hudebněvědná.* 1969, vol. 18, iss. H4, pp. 29-47

Stable URL (handle): <https://hdl.handle.net/11222.digilib/111967>

Access Date: 16. 02. 2024

Version: 20220831

Terms of use: Digital Library of the Faculty of Arts, Masaryk University provides access to digitized documents strictly for personal use, unless otherwise specified.

JAN RACEK

VLADIMÍR HELFERT AND THE BRNO SCHOOL  
OF MUSICOLOGY

If we wish to comprehend and define objectively, and thus at the same time correctly, the concept and scientific implications of the Brno school of musicology, it is essential first of all to pay attention to the personality of the founder of that school, Professor Vladimír Helfert, Ph.D. (1886–1945). In the first place we must ascertain what were the scientific and methodological premises on which this school based its origin and development, on what its existence was founded, and finally what its intellectual and methodological system consist of. We must realize that it developed on a dual specialist basis: historical, or rather art-historical, and aesthetic. Both these disciplines became from the outset of Helfert's scientific growth the fundamental pattern on which his scientific system, his research process and his conception of musical history in the narrower sense of the word, and musicology in the widest sense of the word were based. Let us first seek to throw light on the historical foundation of Helfert's working method and then look more closely at his aesthetic-critical system, for it is in the latter that the most clearly-defined intellectual essence of Helfert's life work consists, as well as the methodological conception and substance of the Brno school of musicology.<sup>1</sup> Further I shall

<sup>1</sup> A synthetic view of the life and work of Vladimír Helfert along with a bibliography of his writings is given by these monographs and studies: Jan Racek, *Vědec a člověk (Scholar and Man)*, Index, VIII, 1936, no. 3, 26 ff.), Bohumír Štědrý, *Dr. Vladimír Helfert. Přehled práce českého učenice (Review of the Work of a Czech Scholar)*, Hudební věstník – Musical Bulletin, XXXIII, 1940, also separately in Knihovna Unie českých hudebníků z povolání – Library of the Union of Czech Professional Musicians, vol. 20, Prague, 1940), the same, *Vladimír Helfert (Naše věda – Our Science)*, XXIV, 1946, no. 5–7, 198 ff.), Gracian Černušák, *Vladimír Helfert* (Tempo, XVIII, 1946, 5). On Helfert's Brno school of musicology see Jan Racek, *Organisace hudebně vědeckého bádání na Moravě. K padesátinám prof. dra Vladimíra Helferta (The Organization of Musical Research in Moravia. For the Fiftieth Birthday of Professor Vladimír Helfert)*, Tempo, XV, 1935–1936, no. 11, p. 112 ff.). With reference to the Brno school of musicology see also the following studies and articles: Rudolf Pečman - Ivo Krsek, *Katedra dějin umění (The Department of the History of Art)*, in the Miscellany Vám poděkování a lásku Vám, Prague 1960, pp. 264–270, Jiří Vysloužil, *Katedra hudební vědy a výchovy (The Department of Musicology and Music Education)*, in the Yearbook Ročenka University J. E. Purkyně v Brně 1964, Brno 1965, pp. 81–85, Rudolf Pečman, *Musicoologie* (French Text), in Universitas Brunensis 1919–1969, editors Otakar Borůvka, František Hejl, Josef Macůrek, Josef Sajner, Brno 1969, pp. 143–151, the same author, *Katedra muzikologie (The Department of Musicology)*, in the Yearbook Ročenka brněnské university 1964–1968, ed. František Hejl, Brno 1969, pp. 432–440.

try to reconstruct Helfert's scientific and methodological system and work it out to an independent conclusion in conformity with my present views of the problems involved.

The Brno school of musicology is closely bound up, through the personality of its founder, with the famous Prague historical school of Jaroslav Goll. At the University of Prague Helfert studied the historical disciplines in Goll's history seminar and continued his studies under Goll's pupils Josef Pekař and Josef Šusta. In the school of Goll he learned a strict historical scientific exactitude and a delicate and minute criticism of source material.<sup>2</sup> He studied musical history and the aesthetics of music at Prague under Otakar Hostinský and later too under Zdeněk Nejedlý. He became an enlightened disciple of the school of Hostinský, above all in the system of musical aesthetics and methodology, while later he completely disagreed with Zdeněk Nejedlý, both in method and in the system of musicological work, not however as regards his cultural-political activity.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Jaroslav Goll (1846–1929), a pupil of Tomek and Höfler at the University of Prague, later a student of the German historian Georg Waitz at Göttingen. His stay in the great centres of European cultures gained him a broad view of world historiography. He was one of the first Czech historians who brought Czech historiography out of the narrow confines of domesticity towards the broader contexts of the historical development of Western Europe. With his delicate artistic sense and strict scientific exactitude, which appeared in the method of his historical works and in his criticism of sources, he became the founder of modern Czech historiography and of the modern Czech school of history, to which almost all the prominent figures of Czech historical research belonged. The unifying characteristic of this school were Goll's methodological criteria. This school laid its main emphasis on the objective scientific interpretation of sources and rejected any kind of subjective motivation in the conception of historical development. It expressed considerable scepticism towards the sociological and philosophical interpretation of history and towards the noetic problems of historical research. In this it departed from the school of Masaryk and in many ways also from the art-history school of Max Dvořák. See the following basic literature: Kamil Krouta, *Masaryk, Goll a české dějepisectví (Masaryk, Goll and Czech Historiography, Přehled – Survey, Prague, 1912)*, Jan Herben, *Masarykova sekta a Gollova škola (The Sect of Masaryk and the School of Goll, Prague, 1912)*, Zdeněk Nejedlý, *Spor o smysl českých dějin. Pokus o filosofii českých dějin (The Dispute on the Meaning of Czech History. An Attempt at a Philosophy of Czech History, Knihovna Pokrokové revue – Library of the Progressive Review, II, Prague, 1914)*, Josef Pekař, *Masarykova česká filosofie (The Czech Philosophy of Masaryk, Prague, 1927<sup>a</sup>)* and Jan Slavík, *Pekař contra Masaryk. Ke sporu o smyslu českých dějin (On the Dispute Regarding the Meaning of Czech History, Prague, 1929)*.

<sup>3</sup> Otakar Hostinský (1847–1910), the creator of modern Czech musicology, aesthetics and criticism. Pioneer of the analytical experimental method in musical aesthetics and of the comparative method in musical historiography. He was a critical adherent of Herbart's abstract formalism, on the basis of which he worked out his thoughtful and individually conceived concretely formal aesthetic system. He was an enlightened fighter for the recognition of the works of Bedřich Smetana. The work of Hostinský was the starting-point for his pupil Zdeněk Nejedlý (1878–1962) especially for his intensive interest in the work of Smetana. In musical aesthetics Nejedlý became the antithesis of Hostinský as an enlightened supporter of the so-called expressive hermeneutic aesthetics, and so gradually found himself in sharp antagonism to Hostinský's concrete formalism. See Jan Racek, *Otakar Hostinský, tvůrce a zakladatel české hudební vědy (Otakar Hostinský, Creator and Founder of Czech Musicology, Musikologie, II, 1949, 38 ff.)* and Mirko Očadlík, *Zdeněk Nejedlý, zakladatel české hudební vědy (Zdeněk Nejedlý, a Founder of Czech Musicology, Sborník prací filosofické fakulty brněnské university – Journal*

At the University of Prague another distinctive influence on Helfert was that of T. G. Masaryk, whose humanitarian philosophy and ethico-intellectual principle considerably influenced the moral and philosophical basis of Helfert's scientific work.<sup>4</sup> It is not impossible that Helfert learned from Masaryk how to understand the historical part through the medium of the present and to understand again the present through the prism of the past. Yet one other great personality attracted Helfert's attention during his Prague university studies. This was F. X. Šalda. From him Helfert learned his critical boldness, lack of compromise and piercing insight into the structural organism of the work of art, even although — as we shall see later, he could take up a critical attitude towards Šalda's inspirational and essayistic critical interpretation of literary works.<sup>5</sup>

Helfert supplemented his studies at home by study at the Humboldt University in Berlin, where he worked in 1906–1907 under the well-known medievalist Johann Wolf, Hermann Kretschmar and Carl Stumpf. In Wolf's seminar at Berlin he laid a still deeper basis for his critical work and precise expertise in research by the study of medieval sources. Under Kretschmar, again, he became familiar with methods of musical-psychological analysis and with the principles of an expressive, hermeneutic musical aesthetics and criticism. Later he completely departed from Kretschmar's opinions and became a strong opponent of subjective expressive aesthetics. He acquired very solid foundations under Carl Stumpf, especially in the field of musical psychology, acoustics and phonetics.<sup>6</sup> The Viennese Czech

---

of Studies of the Philosophical Faculty of the Brno University, II, no. 2–4, 1953). On the opinions of Helfert and the Brno school of musicology on the method of work and aesthetic system of Nejedlý see the following two studies: Jan Racek, *O hudebně-vědecké metodě Zdeňka Nejedlého* (On the musicological method of Z. Nejedlý, Index, I, 1929, no. 6–7, 6 ff.) and Vladimír Helfert, *Bojovník. Skizza literární osobnosti* (A Fighter. The Sketch of a Literary Character, Stati a projevy k šedesátým narozeninám Zdeňka Nejedlého — Papers and Speeches for the Sixtieth Birthday of Z. Nejedlý, Prague, 1938, p. 8 ad.).

<sup>4</sup> Tomáš Garrigue Masaryk (1850–1937) always sought for a balance between the historical aspect and the currently topical. He based his philosophy of the present on history, so as to find in it a parallel to the historic past. In this way he introduced a dynamic activity into his positivistic and realistic philosophy of history. He rendered more actual not only the great historic events, but also the great individuals of past times (Hume, Pascal, Dostoevski, Tolstoy or, for instance, the Czech humanistic reformation of the 16th and 17th centuries with the Czech national rebirth of the 19th century). He was also concerned for the historic continuity of Czech philosophical thought with the thought of Europe.

<sup>5</sup> František Xaver Šalda (1867–1937), Czech poet, literary historian, creator of the modern Czech literary essay and criticism, whose intellectually inspiring life-work touched on almost every burning question of Czech artistic and cultural life.

<sup>6</sup> Johannes Wolf (1869–1947), outstanding German musicologist, representative of the Berlin school of musical medievalists. He devoted himself to the study of European medieval music and problems of notation of the 13th to 15th centuries. See Otto Kinkeldey, *Johannes Wolf* (Journal of the American Musicological Society, I, 1948), J. Gombosi, *Johannes Wolf* (Musical Quarterly, XXXIV, 1948) and W. Osthoff, *Johannes Wolf zum Gedächtnis* (Musikforschung, I, 1948). Hermann Kretschmar (1848–1924), alongside Hugo Riemann, an outstanding representative of German musicology. His works deal both with musical history and with expressive musical aesthetics and criticism. It is naturally impossible to identify Kretschmar's musical aesthetic of Expression (Ausdrucksaesthetik) with the philo-

art historian, Max Dvořák, indirectly formed Helfert's characteristic relationship to the history of art, especially with his humanistic conception of history, and by no means last, the French writer and musical historian Romain Rolland with his heroic and pathetic conception of the great creative personalities.<sup>7</sup>

Vladimír Helfert was capable of organically combining all the powerful impulses given by his great teachers with their sharply defined opinions and reevaluate them intellectually in his own individual system of historical aesthetics and criticism. He combined ingeniously and thoughtfully the realistically objective basis of the historical school of Goll with the humanitarian-philosophical and ethico-intellectual principle of Masaryk and with his philosophy of history. In his musical-aesthetic system again he took as his starting-point the concretely formalistic and experimentally objective system of Otakar Hostinský. In his critical activity he found a great model in F. X. Salda, above all in his intuitively inspirational and emotional aesthetic-critical conception. And on the other hand, a profound influence on his philosophy of art history was had by the art historian Max Dvořák, especially as regards his spiritually intellectual conception of the historical development of the great stylistic epochs in art.

Having thus ascertained and explained the sources of Helfert's historical, art-historical and aesthetic education, which determined his character as scientist and creative thinker, let us first of all examine rather more in detail Helfert's musical-historical conception of the personalities of the great composers and of the individual stylistic epochs in the historical development of music.

Helfert as a historian of music realized very well that no phenomenon in history and perhaps even less any phenomenon in art-history, can be explained well and with the greatest objectivity, if we do not devote also considerable attention to the study of the time, circumstances and

---

sophical and philological interpretation of hermeneutics. Cf. Hans Georg Gadamer, *Wahrheit und Methode* (Tübingen 1965<sup>2</sup>). See also Hermann Abert, *Zum Gedächtnis H. Kretzschmars* (Jahrbuch Peters, XXXI, 1924), Friedrich Blume, *Gesammelte Schriften und Vorträge* (Halle, 1929) and F. M. Gatz, *Musik-Aesthetic in ihren Hauptrichtungen* (Stuttgart, 1929). Carl Stumpf (1848–1936), German musical psychologist and expert in acoustics, author of pioneering works in the field of the psychology of music. See Curt Sachs, *Zu Stumpfs 80. Geburtstag* (Zeitschrift für Musikwissenschaft, X, 1927–1928).

<sup>7</sup> Max Dvořák (1874–1921), originally a pupil of Goll's, became one of the foremost leading figures of modern art history at the University of Vienna. On the basis of the comparative method he introduced into the history of the fine arts new stylistic critical aspects and aspects of developing pragmatism. For him the history of art became the history of the spirit. A collection of papers by Dvořák was published by Jaromír Pečírka in the book *Umění jako projev ducha* (*Art as the Expression of the Spirit*, Prague, 1936).

Romain Rolland (1866–1944) French humanistic thinker and writer, pacifist and fighter for a new European man. Author of the cyclical novel *Jean-Christophe* (10 vols., 1904–1912, definitive edition 1948) and of monographs on Beethoven, Michelangelo, Tolstoy and Gandhi. He affected the history of music with his writings on the history of the European opera and on leading figures of the musical romanticism of the 19th century. See Stefan Zweig, *Romain Rolland, sa vie, son oeuvre* (Paris, 1929) and J. B. Barrère, *Romain Rolland, L'âme et l'art* (Paris, 1966).

situation in which it developed and expanded. He was convinced that the mere ascertainment of historical facts cannot give and never has given anything fruitful or of value. It is thus necessary continually to pose questions as to the sociological origin and essence of works of art. At the same time Helfert was conscious of the encouraging and warning reminder of the French historian Charles Seignobos to the effect that while it is necessary and essential to pose these questions, nevertheless it is at the same time very difficult and dangerous to give serious answers to them.<sup>8</sup> Hence it is constantly necessary and fruitful for every historian to preserve a considerable degree of scepticism as regards source material and its interpretation for different periods.<sup>9</sup>

For this reason Helfert was able to regard the process of musical-historical research complexly as an entire and organic context and always in combination with general history, sociology, aesthetics, criticism, comparative ethno-musicology, musical folk studies and the psychology of creative composition. He tried out this artistic-historical method of his successfully in his basic works of musical history (*Hudební barok na českých zámcích – Baroque Music in Czech Country Seats*, Prague, 1916; *Hudba na jaroměřickém zámku – Music at the Mansion of Jaroměřice*, Prague, 1924; *Jiří Benda, I and II*, Brno, 1929 and 1933; *Česká moderní hudba – Modern Czech Music*, Olomouc, 1936 and *Leoš Janáček, I*, Brno, 1939). He created for himself a kind of historical monism, in which he demonstrated that while the individual figures of composers and their works are as regards their nature different, yet at the same time they are the expression of that same human creative potentiality which is bound by the common, unifying laws of development. In this direction he progressed from the philosophical-historical conception of such great historians of the spirit as were Burckhardt, Dilthey, Eucken, Troeltsch and Benedetto Croce. For this reason we can say that Helfert's opinion of the process of musical-historical research was in all aspects exceedingly modern and stimulating for its time. He was not concerned with static factological musical history, isolated in a single narrow view, but with a multivalent and always dynamically developing art-historical discipline, which would arrange the individual historical and stylistic epochs of music as historical wholes, organically taking shape.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>8</sup> These problems are dealt with very suggestively and encouragingly by the French historian Marc Bloch in his paper *Apologie pour l'Histoire où Métier d'historien* (Paris, 1967<sup>6</sup>, Czech translation by Alena Ondrušková, *Obrana historie aneb Historik a jeho řemeslo*, Prague, 1967).

<sup>9</sup> Helfert not only taught us to preserve scepticism with regard to sources, but also that it is necessary to deal with facts, even when obtained with great difficulty, very cautiously and economically. Not only must facts be critically treated, they must also be classified. It is necessary to eliminate from them everything non-essential, which in any way might render more difficult or more obscure the logical progress of our interpretation.

<sup>10</sup> I have already indicated Helfert's method as a historian of music in my two reviews of his monograph on Jiří Benda: *Georges Benda. Au problème de l'émigration musicale tchèque* (La Revue Musicale, X, 1929, no. 10, p. 81 ff.) and *Georg Benda. Ein Beitrag zum Problem der böhmischen Musiker-Emigration* (Zeitschrift für Musikwissenschaft, XVII, 1935, vol. 8, p. 363 ff.). See also my two further

That is why Helfert, in his periodization and arrangement of European music does not set out from static criteria, but from the criteria of dynamic development, in which to a considerable extent he carried further and made more profound the periodization criteria of the Prague school of Goll.<sup>11</sup> Helfert, in his intellectually penetrating and not yet sufficiently appreciated study, *Periodisace dějin hudby (The Periodization of the History of Music, Musikologie, I, p. 138, 7 ff.)*, in which above all he considers the logic of the development of style in European musical thought, arrived at the conclusion that the development of art, and thus too the development of musical art, is uninterrupted and freely flowing. The history of music is formed by a connected, organic and unified line of musical thought developing according to certain laws. All the epochs of musical development are equally valid and equally vital. So we cannot speak in art in our case in music – of stylistic retardation behind the other artistic expressions of the human soul, of course in comparison with Europe and the rest of the world. This working slogan and method then led in Helfert to a higher, more profound, dynamic conception of musical history and by no means to a merely descriptive or statically chronicling one. He always endeavoured to reveal in the development of musical thought the higher laws and relevancies of genetic progress. By means of this new, modern, and largely comparative historical method, which raised the artistic object and its compositional structure to the level of the primary factor of scientific analysis, he attained a more profound explanation and illumination of the development of Czech music in relation to European stylistic contexts. In this way he succeeded in inserting the history of Czech music into its proper position in the context of European development and gave it not only a new content, but also a remarkable developmental gradation.

Helfert as the pupil of Goll took namely as his basic assumption that the history of Czech music cannot be explained of itself or only from a narrowly national or regional approach, but always in connection with the development of the great stylistic epochs of European and world music. The historically isolated interpretation of the history of music without this wider comparative process is for him entirely questionable and impossible from the point of view of method. In this conception of Czech musical history, too, the thought out further the main principles of the historical school of Goll, which in the formulation of Kamil Krofta can be summed up in the basic precept: *“Not to shut oneself off from progress abroad, to master all the advances of international learning in the historical field, not to forget*

---

studies: *Vladimír Helfert. Nekrolog (Časopis Matice moravské – Periodical of the Matice moravská Society, 66, 1946, no. 2, p. 198 ff.)* and *Odkaz Vladimíra Helferta dnešku. K nedožitým pětasedmdesátinám (The Legacy of V. Helfert for Today. For His Posthumous Seventy-fifth Anniversary, Sborník prací filosof. fakulty brněnské university – Journal of Studies of the Brno Philosophical Faculty, 1962, F 6, p. 71 ff.)*.

<sup>11</sup> I am thinking here in the first place of the pioneering study by Josef Pekař, *O periodisaci českých dějin (On the Periodation of Czech History, Prague, 1931)*. In this study Pekař divides Czech history according to the laws and criteria of cultural style and way of life, which showed themselves most fully in art and in intellectual creative activity in general.

that Czech history forms only a part of world history and not to succumb to any tendentiousness at the expense of historical truth."<sup>12</sup>

Helfert in his entire life-work fulfilled the great legacy of his outstanding teacher, as did another pupil of Goll's, the art historian Max Dvořák, who set out upon a road in the field of art history similar to Helfert's in the field of musical history and musicology. Thus Helfert demonstrated that he was not concerned about the extent of the task undertaken, but above all about its supple interpretive intensity; for him, profundity in the conception of musical history was much more important than breadth. These principles, too, he was capable of proclaiming as a manifesto. He raised the complexity of the creative process and its scientific interpretation above all else, above static description or expressive journalism, which had been often dominant and decisive in Czech art theory up to that time. For him the musical thought of the different epochs of style was not the expression of an isolated autonomous process, but the integrated result of the entire world outlook of the time and thus of the philosophical, social and political forces. With this conception of the development of musical history Helfert got even further than his great models or his elder colleague Max Dvořák. Hence his interpretation of musical history as the genetic development of musical-stylistic problems touches on the profoundest questions of their causal interrelations. For him they are the result of the entire intellectual life of the epoch of human culture in question raised to a higher power. To him as to Max Dvořák the history of music appears as the history of the abstract thought of the human spirit.

From what has been said here it follows that the material and the object of musical history is man the composer, or men the composers, and their musical works in the course of their development and duration, conditioned by their position in space and time. Time and its duration in space must be taken into account by every investigator who concerns himself with any kind of historical events, taking place in time and space. Especially the historian must avoid ever working outside time, since of necessity he is constantly oscillating within it.<sup>13</sup>

Helfert was well aware of the fact that the great creative personalities, whether in art or science, are co-creators of history. I would add that even the great personalities in the field of general history and the history of art have been participating through their powerfully subjective treatment of the given material in the formation of the spiritual character of their time. Surely for example Burckhardt, Riemann, Einstein, Troeltsch, Dilthey,

<sup>12</sup> I quote Jaromír Pečírka in the necrology on Max Dvořák (*Český časopis historický* — Czech Historical Periodical, XXVII, 1921, no. 1–2, p. 1 ff.).

<sup>13</sup> The following literature deals with the problem of time and space as shaping factors in art and the problem of temporally limited principles of assessment in scientific thinking and evaluation: A. Görland, *Die Modi der Zeit als bildende Faktoren* (*Zeitschrift für Ästhetik und allgemeine Kunstwissenschaft*, vol. 25, 1923, p. 36 ff.), W. Hoffmann, *Von der Geschichtlichkeit des Denkens* (Berlin—Hannover, 1948), H. Sedlmayr, *Das Problem der Zeit* (Kunst und Wahrheit. Zur Theorie und Methode der Kunstgeschichte, Hamburg, 1958, p. 140 ff.) and Walter Wiora, *Musikwissenschaft und Universalgeschichte* (*Acta Musicologica*, XXXIII, 1961, p. 84 ff.)



Croce and in this country Masaryk or Šalda played a profound part with their life-work in the intellectual and social structure of their time, re-moulding it and intellectually organizing it. These strong individuals are both the product and the factor in the historical process, and at the same time creators of the social forces which change the face of the world and of human thought.<sup>14</sup>

On this I should like to remark that history and the history of art as a science is necessarily subjective, since man here is largely observing himself. The historian is interested in what is general in the unique, and constantly generalizes. The interpretation of history is nearly always bound up with value judgments, which are always more or less subjective. Thus it is evident that the problem of exact objectivity is debatable in the historical disciplines, even although we endeavour to our utmost to attain this objectivity of historical knowledge.<sup>15</sup> History is a science which is in constant movement, since it reflects past, present and future, mutually bound together. At the same time it is necessary to realize the unique character of all historical events, but at the same time, too, their constantly changing character in the conception of the individual historical epochs or periods. This is given not only by changes in the philosophical outlook, but also by changing attitudes to the way of life. Just like the development of general history, so too the development of musical history and its interpretation are subject to the rhythm of the generations in life and style.<sup>16</sup> This process of development can best be seen in the fact of constant procedure from previous historical traditions. It is true that this process has continuity, but is itself constantly changing and remoulding the previous traditional values. From this it is clear that scientific knowledge is not inborn, but conditioned historically by the period. We must also realize that each period sees the same work of art with different eyes; in short has a different emotional and aesthetic approach given by the intellectual atmosphere of the time.

<sup>14</sup> It was very well put by the English historian Edward Hallett Carr: "*The thought of historians, as of other human beings, is moulded by the environment of the time and place*". And elsewhere he says: "*What seems to me essential is to recognize in the great man an outstanding individual who is at once a product and an agent of the historical process, at once the representative and the creator of social forces which change the shape of the world and the thoughts of men*" (E. H. Carr, *What is history?*, London, 1961, p. 45 and 55; Czech translation by Jaroslav Strnad, *Co je historie?*, Prague, 1967).

<sup>15</sup> Again E. H. Carr has remarked very aptly of the subjectivity of historical knowledge: "*The facts of history cannot be purely objective, since they become facts of history only in virtue of the significance attached to them by the historian. Objectivity in history — if we are still to use the conventional term — cannot be an objectivity of fact, but only of relation, of the relation between fact and interpretation, between past, present and future*" (E. H. Carr, l. c., p. 120). My Leipzig colleague Hellmuth Christian Wolff has expressed the opinion, that "*keine objektive, für alle Zeiten gültige Geschichtsschreibung gibt und daß man sich deswegen der neuen Wertideen unserer Zeit bewußt werden sollte, um die Wertperspektiven unserer Zeit zu erkennen*" (H. C. Wolff, *Grenzen der Musikwissenschaft* (Festschrift Walter Wiora, Kassel, 1967, p. 66 ff.).

<sup>16</sup> See the suggestive book by A. Lorenz, *Abendländische Musikgeschichte im Rhythmus der Generationen. Eine Anregung* (Berlin, 1928).

After all that has been said here, let us ask the question as to whether history is science or art? Benedetto Croce was of the opinion that history is not an exact science, but has a place between science and art. This assessment of history is perhaps even more true of art history, in our case of musical history, which, like every discipline of art history, works with material of a more or less abstract character. The very interpretation of historical facts is an essentially subjective one. And the more highly individualized and magnanimous is the personality of the historian, the more subjective he is in the interpretation of historical facts. The interpretation of factological material is uninterruptedly exposed to the subjective attitude of the historian if only for the fact that it is an integral part of his mental character and intellect. Even although he does his best to think himself into the intellectual process of days long past, and thus experience and evaluate the events or artistic artefacts with the strictest objectivity, nevertheless it is not possible to ignore him as the creative subject, if his work is to be more than a mere compilation of historical facts without evaluation.<sup>17</sup> For this reason we speak of J. S. Bach as conceived by Philippe Spitta, of Mozart as conceived by Hermann Abert or Alfred Einstein, of Beethoven as conceived by A. W. Thayer or by Romain Rolland, of Smetana as conceived by Zdeněk Nejedlý, or Janáček as conceived by Vladimír Helfert, etc. This also holds good of the conception of entire epochs of history. The artistically inclined Ernest Denis, the historian of "*great conceptions and deep lungs*" as Julius Glücklich put it happily in his remarkable portrait of Jaroslav Goll (in Lidové noviny — People's News, XXXVII, no. 340, 9. 7. 1929), drew for us a large section of Czech history with an artistically conceived master craftsmanship, transforming facts by his subjectively creative view of historical events. While it is true that it is not possible in the process of evaluating history to actualize and literally modernize, and thus of course to treat historical fact non-historically, yet even given the entirely conscious endeavour to avoid this, nevertheless the personality of the historian and his intellectually sharply defined creative individuality take the foremost place. It is true that Jaroslav Goll taught his pupils that "*every historical phenomenon, as far as possible, should be explained only through itself, through its period, and tendencies; endeavours and ideas foreign to previous ages should not be introduced into the past,*" but nevertheless not even he, nor his great pupils such as for example Josef Pekař, Josef Šusta, Kamil Krofta and others avoided this subjective attitude in the interpretation of the Czech historic past. These modern historians achieved a higher goal than that of positivistic and static factology with their modern philosophical-historical conception of history in their higher dynamic view of the process of Czech historical development within the framework of European and world history. The noetics of historical knowledge is promoted here to philosophically evaluating aspects, often after the model of modern art history, whose brilliant

---

<sup>17</sup> Well put by E. H. Carr: "*My first answer therefore to the question 'What is history?' is that it is a continuous process of interaction between the historian and his facts, an unending dialogue between the present and the past*" (E. H. Carr, 1. c., p. 30).

forerunner, as has already been said above, was the historian Max Dvořák. It has been shown that modern historiography cannot fully assume the place of the method of the natural sciences, even if it were based on the most positivistic and objective foundation. But even in modern natural science the subject, the scientist's personality, cannot by a long way be eliminated. An excellent example of this could be the work of the great physicist and mathematician Albert Einstein. For his life-work, conceived exactly according to natural science, is also raised to a higher power by his profoundly substantiated philosophy of life. At the same time it is still difficult to find a place for the historical disciplines among the exact disciplines of natural science.<sup>18</sup>

Helfert was one of the convinced defenders of the thesis that a musical-historical fact cannot be interpreted, historically and aesthetically evaluated without a cautious weighing of the factological and ideological synthesis, which would pay equal attention to the source facts, gained with difficulty, and to their sociological and aesthetic, in other words their ideological interpretation. Every neglect of this balance between factology and ideology in the presentation and interpretation of musical-historical phenomena is fundamentally already dubious and cannot well be defended. It is therefore difficult to distinguish where the borderline between ideology and "objective" scientific knowledge lies, knowledge gained on the base of a thorough study of the source material. The boundaries between factology and ideology are fluid and mutually flow into each other, all the more so since all knowing and scientific knowledge is relative.<sup>19</sup>

During World War II and especially after the end of the War in what has been termed the atomic age, when the whole world has been divided into two political, economic and so also into two ideologically different organized spheres (East-West), in the scientific world, too, there have appeared two ideologically and so, of course, also methodologically different systems, which are especially strongly expressed in the field of the social sciences, above all in philosophy, history and the art-historical disciplines. This situation has brought about the fact that in this field there has taken shape that undesirable and scientifically incorrect disjunction between factology and ideology. For today we are witnesses of the strange paradox which is typical for world musicology. While in the countries of the socialist world what mostly prevails is musical historiography with an extremely ideological direction, which makes aesthetic judgments without a profounder and exact study of musical sources, on the other hand Western musicology devotes

<sup>18</sup> Marc Bloch in *Apologie pour l'Histoire* (Paris, 1967<sup>6</sup>) also deals with the question of whether history is a science or an art and forms the opinion that: "Wherever things cannot be expressed in mathematical language, linguistic suggestion is necessary" ("Là où calculer est impossible, suggérer s'impose", Czech translation, p. 32, French original, p. 4).

<sup>19</sup> Karl Jaspers indicated three ways of scientific cognition. First of all "zwingende Gewißheit", then "Allgemeingültigkeit" and finally "die Grenzen des jeweils bestimmten Sinne vom Wissen". See Karl Jaspers, *Die Idee der Universität* (Berlin, 1946, p. 12 ff.), the same, *Vom Ursprung und Ziel der Geschichte* (Frankfurt a. M., 1955). Walter Wiora speaks of this problem in the field of musical historiography in the work *Die vier Weltalter der Musik* (Stuttgart, 1961).

itself for the most part to a factological, static interpretation of the older epochs of musical development without any more detailed evaluation of the social and non-musical factors, which participate in the technical and formal origin and growth of musical works. In this way naturally there has come about, in world musicology, just as in all the disciplines of history and of art theory, an undesirable disjunction of form and content. This has disturbed not only the balance, but also the objectively dynamic view of the structure of the compositional organism of works of music.<sup>20</sup> Neither, in my opinion, is correct. It will be necessary to arrive at a harmonic balance of both these elements: a strict science of facts on the one hand and an aesthetic-philosophical and sociological evaluation on the other. In this case it has been clearly seen how differences in philosophy of life and thus too in the social system affect not only the method of work, but also the evaluatory criteria in the historical and aesthetic evaluation of music.

Vladimir Helfert and his Brno school of musicology realized in time that research into the history of music, that is factological research, cannot be detached from its philosophical-aesthetic and sociological interpretation. So, too, they rejected a merely aesthetic evaluation without a solid basis of exact historical knowledge and critical interpretation of source documents. Without this dual approach to the source material in the first case we are faced with a static discipline hatched out in an uncreative way, of the old chronicle or at the best cultural-historical type. In the second case, again, we have an irresponsible journalistic and ill-conceived essayistic product, even although the essayistic approach, when it is historically and aesthetically correctly based, is a field which in this country at the present time in the art-historical disciplines is all too often forgotten and neglected.

---

<sup>20</sup> The dangers of one-sided presentation of facts in West German Musicology has been pointed out emphatically and admonitorily by Friedrich Blume in his highly stimulating introductory lecture *The State and Tasks of Historical Musicology in 1967* at the Tenth Congress of the International Musicological Society which took place 3-8 September 1967 in Ljubljana. This particularly stimulating lecture has been published by Friedrich Blume under the title of *Historische Musikforschung in der Gegenwart* (in: Acta Musicologica XL, 1968, vol. I, Jan.-March, p. 8 ff.). Blume draws attention above all to the over-abundance of specialization in musicology, founded on a Neo-Positivist basis, which continues more and more to impair the ability of scholars to take a synthetic view of a complete stylistic period of European music. Through this the courage to take bold and stimulating value-judgements-even though often incorrect - is likewise blunted. It prevents scholars from posing intellectually daring questions and renders them incapable of responding to them in a creative and stimulating manner. The most convincing illustration of the state of present-day international musicology is given by two studies on musicology and its method of work, which were written recently and which represent the state and method of work of musicology in the East and in the West. These are: the study by Walter Siegmund - Schultze, *Musikwissenschaft als Gesellschaftswissenschaft* (in: Deutsches Jahrbuch der Musikwissenschaft, II, 1957, p. 7 ff.), which stresses an overwhelming measure of ideological and sociological criteria, and the article by Hans Albrecht and Walter Wiora, *Musikwissenschaft* (in: Die Musik in Geschichte und Gegenwart, vol. 9, Kassel, 1961, p. 1191, ff.) which on the other hand gives the preference to factological exactitude and technico-formal criteria at the expense of the sociological and the social-economic aspects.

We have after all the great figure of Šalda, whom we could take as a predecessor, in a critical and creative way, of course from an entirely new, non-romantic and non-emotional methodological aspect.

In this connection we must also realize that as a result of the all too rank devotion to technology and under the influence of totalitarian dictatorship regimes (though not, surely, because of conceptions of philosophy of life), which were constituted during World War II and immediately after its conclusion, there took place an entirely deliberate demobilization of the intellectual, social sciences (especially of philosophy and history). Every intellectual and non-regimented current was termed a dangerous formalistic experiment. On the other hand, a one-sided favouritism was increasingly put into practice, and with it of course also the mobilization of technology and the technical sciences on a broad experimental basis. This lack of symmetry between the social and the technical sciences dangerously disturbed their mutual balance, which resulted not only in the retarded development of the social sciences, but also deprived mankind of their philosophical and moral certainty and inner spiritual balance.

One of the most significant and still at this day isolated and insufficiently appreciated specific features of the Brno school of musicology is the fact that it succeeded in combining the historical and the contemporary in the process of research. The science of today, and along with it the history of music, cannot be isolated from contemporary life or from the thought of the present time. This demand for the equal right investigate both the music of the past and the music of the present has been motivated by the correctly understood postulate that we cannot, without a thorough knowledge of historical music and its historical epochs understand and objectively and critically evaluate contemporary modern music. On the other hand without a detailed knowledge of the compositional laws of contemporary modern music we cannot successfully evaluate scientifically and critically or classify stylistically the music of past epochs of development. I consider the close union of the music of the past with modern music, from the aspect of method, principle and study in the process of evaluation in historical research and of aesthetic critical evaluation, to be at this very time one of the most important methodological demands of the school of Helfert. Just as in musicology there has arisen all over the world today undesirable disjunction between factology and ideology, form and content, in the same way there has taken place a specialized disjunction in the study of both these great fields of musical history. The musicology of the West is for the most part directed towards historical music, while on the other hand the musicology of the East understandably for ideological reasons very largely interests itself in the music of modern times, not however of avant-garde contemporary music, already condemned for its alleged compositional "formalism". Among the musicologists of the world there are only a very small number who on a basis of scientific knowledge interests themselves in the problems of contemporary music. This field of music is largely left to journalistic essay-writing, which is indeed a perceptible deficiency just at this very time, when experimental music, for example, is the centre of increased attention from the listening public.

And so I arrive at the analysis and interpretation of the work of music

as such. Helfert's analysis and interpretation of the work of music was also not at all statically descriptive, but always dynamic and analytic. He approached the artistic object, the musical composition, not only as a highly erudite historian, who was fully conscious of the importance of the source document, but also as a fully-equipped musicologist, who was at the same time entirely conscious of its complex inner compositional structure. In this approach to the musical composition he could also display his delicate and keenly refined feeling and sense for artistic taste and style. As can be seen, his rational, intellectual approach to the work of art at the same time found support in intuition and emotive sensibility, in the background of which we can still find traces of the emotive element of late-romantic artistic opinion, undoubtedly increased by the influence of Romain Rolland and F. X. Salda. At the same time this intuitive and emotional approach to the work of art was always in Helfert disciplined by his great energy for work and thorough study of the sources as a binding historical document.

The scientific interpretation of the work of art, just like its artistic interpretation, is subject to the changes of period, which are conditioned on the one hand by the personality of the interpreter, on the other by the style of life and art of the period, and not least, too, by the taste of the time. From this forming atmosphere of the time not with even the greatest attempt at attaining objectivity can either the artistic, or the scientific interpreter escape. Every new performance and so, too, every new perception and evaluation of the work of art is irrepeatable, ever forming itself anew, finding a rebirth and conditioned by the age. For the interpretation of the work of music entails an ever new acoustic, structural-conceptive and contentual-formal explanation of its musically expressive capacity. Even during this evaluation we must realize that every really great work of art which brings us something valuable in style, and so, too, every such work of music, stands with its intellectual content between the past, the present and the future with a multitude of interpretational, mutually related transitions, which form its inner compositional structure. Therefore every such work is capable of various interpretational conceptions and possibilities. This plurality of interpretational conception relates to art of all the epochs of development. After all, we have been witnesses of how not only the works of great artistic personalities, but also of entire artistic epochs and stylistic periods can be brought to life, or again, of how they can be, of course only temporarily, neglected or even become completely forgotten. Let us call to mind for example the revival of the Gothic Middle Ages and its art in the period of romanticism, the renaissance of the works of J. S. Bach in the period influenced by Zelter and Mendelssohn, or the re-discovery of Baroque music in the twenties of the present century, etc. It was precisely at that time that the tone colour and sensuous element of baroque music was vitally near to the impressionistic and post-impressionistic epoch of European music and the fine arts (especially painting). In the same way the exchange of the harmonic system of Viennese classical and romantic music for the new dodecaphonic harmonic system of the avant-garde music of the 20<sup>th</sup> century or the increasing interest in Gothic or Renaissance music, above all in the period of what was termed the

archaic-loving neo-classicism in music in the twenties of the present century, are indubitable proofs of this.

Therefore we can say that every work of art, and so too the work of music, has many levels and many meanings. Hence its inner compositional structure is capable of over new, often subjective interpretations and thus also of continual regeneration. The changing character of interpretations appears in the regenerated conception of reproduction, ever different and ever new, not only with the single works of the great composers, but also in the case of the individual stylistic epochs of European music. For this reason I am of the opinion that what has been called the "immortality" and the constant contemporary expressiveness of the music of the past is above all conditioned and adapted by its ever-renewed and newly revealing musical interpretation.<sup>21</sup>)

In analysing and evaluating works of music as continually living artistic organisms it is thus not possible to employ the static, descriptive, and rigidly enumerative methods of natural science, nor the strictly positivistic approach to the given musical object as such. Every approach to the work of music is thus creative, since what cannot be eliminated from this process of evaluation is the subject, the human investigator or the human interpreter of music with his personal conception of interpretation, determined by the period in which the researcher or the interpreter lives, and carries out his scientific or artistic creative work.<sup>22</sup>) Therefore it would be more appropriate to speak of „supra-temporal“ rather than of „absolute“ values of musical works.

It arises from this that dynamic evaluation and scientific interpretation of works of music, without which modern musical historiography cannot get along, is guided not only by the subjective opinions and conception of the artistic or scientific interpreter, no matter what degree of scientific care and exactitude is devoted to its scientific analytic cognition, but is also guided by exterior non-artistic factors, among which the foremost, again, is the artistic style of the time, while by no means the least important is the fashion and taste of the moment. These changes in the evalua-

<sup>21</sup> Perhaps we can best study this phenomenon when interpreting the great musical-dramatic compositions. In this case with the changing approach to interpretation not only does the musical element change, finding new light and explanation, but also all the other elements which form the basis of the musical drama as such. I have in mind here the literary element (the libretto), the scenic décor, the choreographic, the dance and movement element and the aspect of production. I have indicated this problem in my study *Interpret nebo autor* (Interpreter or Author, Tempo, XVI, 1936–1937, no. 9, p. 116 ff.). See also P. Gülke, *Die Verjährung der Meisterwerke. Überlegungen zu einer Theorie der musikalischen Interpretation* (Neue Zeitschrift für Musik, 1966, p. 6 ff.). Of course it is impossible to agree with Gülke, for he has gone too far as regards the interpretational liberty of the work of music.

<sup>22</sup> Against what was termed "musical-history Darwinism", which endeavoured to fit all the phenomena of musical history into a unified descriptive natural-science system and principle, Hans Joachim Moser already protested in his study *Zur Methodik der musikalischen Geschichtsschreibung* (Zeitschrift für Ästhetik und allgemeine Kunstwissenschaft, vol. 14, 1919, p. 130 ff.). Moser tried to replace the static and descriptive, natural-science principle of interpretation by a principle which would evaluate style.

tion of works of music are conditioned also by the factors arising from the succession of the generations, which again are the product of social epochs in the process of formation. Under their pressure the perceiver as well as the evaluator of works of music is also subject to change, and so also changes his critical attitude to the individual artistic artefacts, in our case to musical compositions. Let us in this connection call to mind Janáček and his works. It is not long since the compositions of Janáček were taken for incomprehensible musical experiments. For example, his *Sinfonietta*, on its first performance in 1926, had a truly revolutionary effect and its performance in Berlin (1927) awoke a storm of protest because of its novelty. Today this work affects the listener as a work of almost classical restraint! The same could be said of almost all the later works of Janáček, which today no longer call up resistance in the listeners, but are accepted as non-problematical, typical stylistically well-defined culminating works of Janáček's last creative period.<sup>23</sup>)

We have now reached our final conclusion, that the value and intellectual content of a work of music is not absolutely constant. It changes in quality according to the change in musical factors and the subjective attitude of the artistic or scientific interpreter. At the same time we are fully aware that in the course of interpretation it is absolutely necessary for us to respect the authentic reading of the musical text as a binding document and the historically conditioned stylistic canon of the work. The endeavour to attain an objective stylistic interpretation, however subjective may be the approach, must never be lost sight of by either the artistic or the scientific interpreter of the work of music. For this reason one of the main requirements and injunctions which Helfert inculcated into his pupils, was the demand for a strict scientific exactitude in the process of editing and interpreting the original musical material whether written or in staff notation. Since Helfert combined the aspect of scientific exactitude in editing and interpreting with that of the practical bringing to life of musical compositions, for this reason he was not a friend of the exaggerated editorial technique of form for form's sake in issuing the musical works of the past. These editorial principles of his, combining the scientific and the practical aspects, he endeavoured to apply in his source edition of the Czech music of the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries, *Musica Antiqua Bohemica*, which he founded and for which he laid down this theoretical and practical editorial basis.

Perhaps the most profound effect of Helfert on the development of modern Czech musicology was by means of his thoroughly thought out musical-aesthetic system, which he built up by the synthesis of the concrete formalism of Otakar Hostinský with the phenomenological aesthetic principle of Otakar Zich and Hans Mersmann.<sup>24</sup> What perhaps most expressively characterizes Helfert and his Brno school of musicology

<sup>23</sup> On this problem see the study by Heinrich Bessler, *Der Ausdruck der Individualität* (Festschrift Walter Vetter 1961, Leipzig, 1967; also in *Beiträge zur Musikwissenschaft*, V, 1963, p. 161 ff.).

<sup>24</sup> The main source of Helfert's teaching on the aesthetics of music must be sought in Hostinský's *Esthetika* (Prague 1921, in the edition by Z. Nejedlý), in Zich's treatise *Estetické vnímání hudby* (*The Aesthetic Perception of Music*, Prague, 1910) and in Mersmann's book *Angewandte Musik-Aesthetik* (Berlin, 1926).



are the sharp and uncompromising principles underlying his rejection of what has been termed hermeneutic aesthetics, as formulated by Hausegger, Kretzschmar and in this country Nejedlý. Thus in music, according to him, it is not possible to speak of conceptually logical or artistically-pictorial concrete entities. Music works by means of abstract, non-concrete material, whose essence resists the expressive means of communication of fine art or of literature, even although it is often capable of awakening in the listener very keenly emotional pictorial ideas. The aesthetics of music for him is unthinkable without thorough historical knowledge and consistent experimental research on the material in question. Therefore it is impossible to arrive at a musical-aesthetic criterion "from above" but in the first place "from below". Otherwise the aesthetics of music would be nothing more than a mere non-serious journalistic and essayistic play with words and concepts. An essential part of Helfert's musical-aesthetic system was his teaching on the regularly specific character of musical thought. The concept "*musical thought*" became for him synonymous with the process of understanding life and the world through music. Musical thought has its own specific musical logic. Whatever is not transmitted by this musical thought and musical imagination does not, as it were, exist for music. It is a process which takes place in time and space according to a regular compositional system. In musical thought we have to do with the organic unity of material and form, law and standard. Although in the theoretical analysis of the compositional musical organism we give way despite ourselves to the tendency to produce the separation of content and form, law and standard, nevertheless in the creative musical process itself this disjunction does not exist, for the process in question is essentially synthetic. Musical thought is a specific creative faculty which is musically remoulded and brought to a higher power of expression by the reality and experience of life. Towards the end of his scientific activity Helfert matured from musical-aesthetic phenomenology almost to the functional aesthetic structuralism of Jan Mukařovský, ingeniously combining it with the criteria of sociology and psychology of music.<sup>25</sup>

Helfert's musical critical activity is also bound up closely with his musical aesthetic system. In musical criticism Helfert in the first place took up the Czech tradition of art criticism of Otakar Hostinský and F. X. Šalda. Especially Šalda, the critic of pathos and inspiration, was close to him "*with his passionate feeling for and relationship to art, a personal relationship which had been fully experienced.*"<sup>26</sup> That was exactly like

<sup>25</sup> On the aesthetic structuralism of Jan Mukařovský cf. his work *Estetická funkce, norma a hodnota jako sociální fakty (Aesthetic Function, Norm and Value as Social Facts*, Prague, 1936) and *Kapitoly z české poetiky I a II (Chapters from Czech Poetics*, I and II, Prague, 1948). Helfert's views on the aesthetics of music were not published in book form. They remain scattered throughout his works on the history of music on the one hand, on the other hand they exist so far in the manuscripts of his university lectures. See Ivan Poleďňák, *K estetickým názorům Vladimíra Helferta (On the Aesthetic Opinions of Vladimír Helfert*, diploma thesis, Brno 1956, typescript).

<sup>26</sup> See Šalda's essay *Kritika pathosem a inspirací (Criticism by means of Pathos and Inspiration*, in *Boje o zítřek — Struggles for Tomorrow*, Prague, 1908) and his

Vladimír Helfert! I can almost see him today in his enthusiastic and passionately experienced amazement at the compositional structure of some great work of music. At the same time critical activity was for Helfert a method, a process of the will and intellect, a sharply-defined scientific musicological discipline. In this again he differed from the intuitive and emotional, for the most part artistically inclined Šalda. Helfert always considered that certainty of opinion in critical activity, gained by an intellectual analysis of the musical organism, is higher and more valuable than the critical judgment which results from a momentary emotional and intuitive observation. So in his activity as a critic of music Helfert also stood on the firm ground of the scientific analytical cognition of the compositional structure of the work of music.<sup>27</sup>

The musical criticism of today lacks not only a solid historical and aesthetic basis, but also the boldness to make a free critical judgment which bows to nobody. The principle of Goll, that in historical criticism there must be strict objectivity and no respecting of persons should remain valid (see the masterly study by Goll in *Dějiny a dějepis — History and Historical Writing*, Athenaeum, VI, 1889); a principle which he himself put into practice with distinguished refinement and critical magnanimity, has for long ceased to be the motto of our musical criticism, lacking as it does firm and free opinions, and so too lacking objectivity.

In the aesthetic-critical evaluation of musical works we do not realize or do not want to realize that in most cases these works are an expression of creative defiance. They are mostly compositions which are pioneering new intellectual and technical-formal values. We can say that almost every great artist revolts with his work against something. The concept of creative freedom is so wide and unlimited in art that the artist revolts against any regime whatever, for always and under every circumstances in some way a regime limits the flight of free imagination in the artist's creative work. The classical example in this sense is Beethoven and in this country once more Janáček! For even the most liberal regime enslaves the artist in his continually expressed and continually unappeased longing for creative freedom. Therefore defiance is a necessary and indispensable accompanying phenomenon and attribute of every really great and pioneering creative work. It is often in fact its motive power, the motor of its inspiration. As

---

study *Něco o moderní kritice* (*Something about Modern Criticism*, in Šaldův zápisník — Šalda's Diary, V, 1933, p. 251 ff.).

<sup>27</sup> Helfert lectured on musical criticism at the Philosophical Faculty of the Masaryk University of Brno in the Session 1924–1925 (lecture manuscripts). He expounded his principles of musical aesthetics in the study *Epistola o hudební kritice* (*Epistle on Musical Criticism*, Index, II, 1931, vol. 1, p. 5 ff.) and in the Introduction to the book *Česká moderní hudba* (*Modern Czech Music*, Olomouc, 1936). See also Jan Raček, *Úkoly a poslání soudobé hudební kritiky* (*Tasks and Purpose of Contemporary Musical Criticism*, Index, IV, 1932, vol. 1, p. 10 ff.), the same, *Několik poznámek o významu a poslání soudobé hudební kritiky* (*Some Notes on the Significance and Purpose of Contemporary Musical Criticism*, Divadelní ročenka — Theatrical Year-Book, Brno, 1941, p. 3 ff.) and the same, *Hudební kritika, její úkoly a poslání* (*Musical Criticism, its Aims and Purpose*, Blok, II, 1948, no. 7, p. 209 ff.).

can be seen, in the field of musical criticism much is still owing in the contemporary science of music, before we can become the rightful heirs of the critical tradition of Šalda and Helfert.

\*

We have reached the conclusion of our study. I should like once more to emphasise here that for Vladimír Helfert any kind of scientific discipline without a profound feeling for moral responsibility was unthinkable. He always knew how to raise every observed or ascertained fact to the highest possible degree of objective historical knowledge attainable along with the highest degree of desire for a morally binding truthfulness, so far as this is at all possible in scientific disciplines of the kind. Professor Helfert not only taught us love of our native land and of everything great that our culture has given to the world, but also above all to be Europeans, he taught us a European way of thought, far removed from all that is narrowly provincial and statistically uncreative. He taught us to preserve a high standard of scientific character, respect for the dynamic national tradition, and at the same time taught us to be daring in dealing with the new and ever more progressive problems which were leading to new advances in research and to new intellectual horizons. At the same time Professor Helfert hated moralists, for he himself was a person whose morality was great and profound, he hated cowards, for he himself was a brave man, and he hated those who abstained from the delights of life, the fulness and beauty of life, for he himself was a lover of the beauty of life and of all the unknowable secrets of nature. He also rejected eclectics, for he was the creator of new values and pioneer of a new style in life and art. He saw clearly into the future and the brightening horizons of the morrow that was coming. And for this conviction of his he knew how to lay down his own life!<sup>28</sup>

On these scientific bases and moral principles Helfert founded and moulded into shape his Brno school of musicology, which in the end became the living expression of his life's work and of his efforts as a research worker. Thus the life-work of Vladimír Helfert and his personally characterized school signify after Otakar Hostinský a new stage in the modern epoch of Czech musicology, not only in methods of research but also in the conception and interpretation of compositional structure and the intellectual content of Czech and European music. This perhaps does not mean that Helfert's creative and scientific legacy is closed to further development or is intellectually definitive. The strength of his intellectual legacy is so striking, uncircumscribed by time, so constructive and at the same time so dynamic, that it is capable of continual further and newer critical development, of further intellectual exploration and so too of further successful growth.

*Translated by Jessie Kocmanová*

<sup>28</sup> On Helfert's enlightened patriotism and national feeling see the study by Bohumír Štědroň, *Česká hudba za nesvobody* (Czech Music Without its Freedom, Musicologie, II, 1949, p. 106 ff.).

## VLADIMÍR HELFERT A BRNĚNSKÁ MUZIKOLOGICKÁ ŠKOLA

Brněnská muzikologická škola vyrostla na dvojím základě: umělecko-historickém a esteticko-kritickém. Její zakladatel Vladimír Helfert (1886–1945) vyšel z historického kriticismu svého učitele na pražské universitě Jaroslava Golla a hudebně historického a estetického školení u Otakara Hostinského a Zdeňka Nejedlého. Stal se uvědomělým stoupencem Hostinského školy, zatímco jako musikolog se později s názory Zd. Nejedlého rozešel. Vlivem T. G. Masaryka, jehož humanitní filosofii a etický princip přijal za své, se rovněž patrně naučil oceňovat těsnou vazbu minulosti a přítomnosti. U F. X. Šaldy se učil nesmlouvavosti, odvaze a pronikavému pohledu do organismu uměleckého díla. Domácí studia si doplnil v Berlíně, kde byli jeho učiteli Johannes Wolf, Hermann Kretzschmar a Carl Stumpf. Vídeňský historik umění Max Dvořák na něho působil svým duchovědným pojetím historie a Romain Rolland heroickopatetickým pojetím velkých tvůdčích zjevů. Jako hudební historik se vyhýbal statickému pojmání faktů; badatelský proces chápal komplexně ve spojitosti s ostatními vědeckými disciplínami. Proto také periodisaci hudby, jíž věnoval objevnou studii, založil na organickém vývoji společensko-kulturních proudů. Vůbec chápal muzikologii jako významnou součást tvorby lidské kultury. Tak navazoval na velké české historiky (J. Pekař, J. Šusta, K. Krofta), kteří překonávali pozitivistickou faktologii moderním filosoficko-historickým pojetím a postižením dějinného vývojového dynamismu.

Po druhé světové válce došlo k rozdělení světové vědy na dva tábory, což se odrazilo také v muzikologii: západní společenské vědy kladou důraz na faktologii a na témata historická, východní zdůrazňují zase ideologii a současnost (nikoliv ovšem současnost tzv. technický avantgard). Tato skutečnost je odrazem soudobé nevyváženosti faktografie a ideologie, tedy toho nebezpečí, které si již dobře uvědomoval Vl. Helfert. V brněnské muzikologické škole došlo u badatelském procesu k významnému spojení historičnosti a soudobosti. Bez důkladné znalosti historie nelze dokonale poznat soudobou hudbu a naopak — tento postulát se stal východiskem, důležitým pro metodologický postup brněnské muzikologické školy.

Helfertův přístup k rozboru a výkladu hudebního díla byl dynamicko-analytický. Spojoval fundovanost historika s uměním vytržbeného kritického vkusu; šťastně uplatnil dokonce i některé emotivní prvky romantického charakteru.

Jako editor vznesl Vladimír Helfert požadavek přísné akribie se zřeteli praktického uživatelnosti vydávaných skladeb, jak o tom svědčí jím založená a vydávaná *Musica Antiqua Bohemica*, pramenná edice staré české hudby 17. a 18. století.

Snad nejvíce zasáhl Helfert do vývoje české muzikologie svým hudebně estetickým systémem, vybudovaným na syntéze konkrétního formalismu O. Hostinského a fenomenologickém estetickém principu Otakara Zicha a Hanse Mersmanna. Ostře odmítl tzv. hermeneutickou výrazovou estetiku, jak ji formuloval *Hausegger*, *Kretzschmar* a u nás *Zdeněk Nejedlý*. Helfert zastával učení o zákonitě specifičnosti hudebního myšlení, jež má svou vlastní logiku. Jde v něm o organickou jednotu látky a formy, zákona a normy. Na sklonku své činnosti dospěl Vl. Helfert téměř až k funkčnímu estetickému strukturalismu Jana *Mukařovského*.

Jeho hudebně-kritická činnost navazuje jednak na tradici Hostinského, jednak vychází z Šaldy. F. X. Šalda byl Helfertovi blízký svým vášnivým patosem a osobně prožitým poměrem k uměleckému dílu; na rozdíl od jeho intuitivnosti a emočnosti však Helfert chápal kritickou práci jako volní a intelektuální proces.

Nelze přejít Helfertův požadavek mravní zodpovědnosti, bez něhož byla pro něho nemyslitelná jakákoliv vědní disciplína. Byl vzdálen všeho úzce provincionálního a staticky netvůrčího a naopak připraven řešit stále nové, progresivní otázky. Byl průkopníkem nového životního a uměleckého slohu a za své přesvědčení dovedl položit i život.

Brněnská muzikologická škola, k níž položil Vladimír Helfert spolehlivé metodologické základy, je schopna dále kriticky rozvíjet velké dědictví svého učitele a zakladatele.

