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## Professional Theatre in Brno between 1668 and 1733

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## Summary

### Professional Theatre in Brno between 1668 and 1733

This paper offers a survey of the history of the professional theatre in Brno during the baroque historical period. Its focus lies between the end of the Thirty Years' War and the foundation of town opera house *Theatre in the Tavern* in 1733. The survey begins in 1668, the first year for which there is a record of ambulatory actors performing in Brno. From this date on, there is an almost uninterrupted line of professional theatrical performances taking place in Brno. In such way, theatre became an inseparable part of lives of the royal town of Brno's citizens. The first part of the study focuses on migrating theatre companies, which staged their plays in the Moravian capital during the second half of the seventeenth century. The aim of this segment is to provide an exhaustive list of such companies; because this area of Brno's theatrical history has never been treated in its complexity so far. The study goes on to describe the following historical period (covering most of the first third of the eighteenth century) and focuses on introducing a selected group of prominent historical figures of the Middle European theatre, who also performed in Brno. These are Balthasar Brumbach, Heinrich Rademin, Joseph Anton Stranitzky, Frantz Albert Defraigne, Carl Joseph Nachtigall, Joseph Anton Geißler, Gottfried Prehauser and Ludwig Steinmetz. Theatre manager Felix Kurz is mentioned only briefly. Even though his life and work are closely tied to Brno, they surpass the historical focus of this work. The next chapter, which is something like an extract of the previous one, treats theatrical topography of the royal town of Brno. It also serves as a bridge towards the second part of the entire paper, which deals exhaustively with the circumstances of the foundation of the opera house *Theatre in the Tavern*. The erection of this establishment was financed from the town funds; that makes this Brno theatre the first public opera house (a so-called *teatro impresariale*) build outside Italy. Archive records confirm that there were two Italian artists playing a major role in this event – Angelo Mingotti, an impresario and Federico Zanoia, a theatre architect and scenographer. The final chapter of the paper is dedicated to the architectural development of the town tavern (present day *Reduta*) between 1600 and 1733. The history of this building is quite inseparable from the history of the professional theatre in Brno.

All the findings contained in this paper are based on a study of sources deposited mostly in the Brno city archive, or, in a smaller proportion, in the Moravian land archive. One of the most important points to which the paper wants to draw attention of the educated public, is the fact that there is a vast heuristic foundation available to provide sources for the study of history of older professional theatre in Brno. Apart from this goal, the paper also aims at introducing the Brno theatre as a distinctive phenomenon with its own peculiar structure and important interconnections to a wider context of the baroque Central European professional theatre.