

MUSICAL CULTURE IN SLOVENIA REVISITED: THE CASE OF THE “GERMAN” PHILHARMONIC SOCIETY

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Abstract: *The Philharmonic Society in Ljubljana was the successor to one of the oldest philharmonic societies in Europe, the Academia Philharmonicorum Labacensis, established in 1701. Because of the growing national tensions among the German- and Slovenian-speaking populations of the Slovenian lands in the 1860s, a certain degree of competition between domestic and foreign, more precisely, between the so-called German and Slovenian music societies, appeared in the musical life of Slovenia. But many distinguished Slovenian musicians even later remained members of the so-called German Philharmonic Society. It was therefore not until the end of World War I that nationalism became the prevailing way of thinking in Slovenia. Afterwards, it became necessary to break with everything from the past (especially with the “German” Philharmonic Society and the “German” Opera in Ljubljana), and to rely solely on Slovenian achievements. Slovenian music and later on, unfortunately, also a part of Slovenian musicology thus made an exceptionally dangerous step backward and suppressed a very important part of its musical culture.*

There are not many institutions or individuals in Slovenian musical history with such a rich tradition as the Academia Philharmonicorum Labacensis. The Academia, which followed the model of similar societies in Italy, was established in 1701 and was one of the oldest philharmonic societies in Central Europe.¹ As a meeting place of Ljubljana’s rich bourgeoisie, it significantly enriched musical life in Ljubljana through the organization of concerts and, above all, laid new foundations for its development. Even when the supporting pillars of the Academia Philharmonicorum disappeared in the 1770s, its memory lived on. Without the Academy’s example, the new Philharmonic Society (Philharmonische Gesellschaft) could not have been founded in 1794.² This, too, was one of the first associations of its kind in Europe.³

1 Metoda Kokole: “Academia Philharmonicorum Labacensium v evropskem okviru”, in: *300 let / years Academia Philharmonicorum Labacensium 1701–2001*. Ljubljana: Muzikološki inštitut ZRC SAZU, 2004, p. 34.

2 Primož Kuret: *Ljubljanska filharmonična družba 1794–1919: kronika ljubljanskega glasbenega življenja v stoletju meščanov in revolucij*. Ljubljana: Nova revija, 2005, p. 17.

3 Ibidem, p. 18.



Ill. 1: The old building of the Philharmonic Society in Ljubljana, which was destroyed in 1887 by fire. Jernej Weiss: *Hans Gerstner (1851–1939): življenje za glasbo*. Maribor: Litera & Univerza v Mariboru, 2010, p. 83.

The Society accepted into its membership anyone who was willing to assist in the realization of its goals irrespective of his national origin. For a new member to be admitted, a two-thirds majority was needed. Famous foreign musicians who could benefit the Society “with their brilliant musical talents and merits” became honorary members.⁴ Among the most important honorary members of the Ljubljana Philharmonic Society, Josef Haydn (1800), Ludwig van Beethoven

4 Ibidem, p. 24.

(1819),⁵ Nicoló Paganini (1824), Johannes Brahms (1885), and Eduard Hanslick (1891) should be mentioned.

The Philharmonic Society began its significant rise in 1856 with the arrival of an exceptional Czech musician, Anton Nedvĕd,⁶ who just two years later became musical director of the Society. Nedvĕd managed to attract young musicians to the Society, and included more demanding works in the concert programmes. Another key figure in the history of the Society was a Viennese musician, Josef Zöhrer,⁷ who succeeded Nedvĕd in 1883. Under Zöhrer, the Society made continuous progress and enhanced its reputation. Appearances by well-known foreign artists became even more frequent. Amongst them were Austrian conductor of the Vienna Philharmonic Felix Weingartner, violin virtuosos Joseph Joachim and Pablo de Sarasate, violin pedagogues Otakar Ševčík and Antonín Bennewitz, famous pianists Alfred Grünfeld, Eugen d'Albert, and Leopold Godowsky, singers such as famous Moravian tenor Leo Slezak, numerous string quartets, and many others, to name just a few.⁸

In his statements Zöhrer supported a policy oriented towards the Austrian cultural environment, which is why the Philharmonic Society began to be looked upon as a “German” institution in the 1880s, when Ljubljana (Laibach) at the time was still an extremely ethno-nationally mixed city with a majority Slovenian-speaking population.⁹ After a brief directorship by Rudolf von Weiss-Ostborn,¹⁰

5 As gratitude for membership Beethoven dedicated to the Philharmonic Society in Ljubljana a transcript of his Pastoral Symphony that is kept in the Music Collection of the Narodna in univerzitetna knjižnica Slovenije (National and University Library of Slovenia).

6 Anton Nedvĕd (Hořovice, August 19, 1829–Ljubljana, June 16, 1896), conductor, composer, and teacher. He studied at the Music Conservatory in Prague and worked as music teacher and opera singer in Prague and Brno. From 1856 onward he lived in Ljubljana. He was director of the Philharmonic Society (1858–1883), from 1859 onward he was a teacher at the original name in Slovenian (Public Music School), and he also taught at a secondary school and a seminary. Within the scope of the Philharmonic Society, he established a mixed choir and a male choir. He was one of the founders of the Glasbena matica (Music society) and its committee member until 1880. Primož Kuret: “Nedvĕd, Anton”, in: *Enciklopedija Slovenije*, ed. Marjan Javornik. Ljubljana: Mladinska knjiga, 1993, p. 349.

7 Josef Zöhrer (Vienna, February 5, 1841–Ljubljana, November 20, 1916), conductor, teacher and composer. In 1860 he finished at the Music Conservatory in Vienna and started to perform as a pianist. From 1865 he was a teacher on the Music School of the *Philharmonic Society* in Ljubljana. Later he was Director of the Philharmonic Society (1883–1912). He became also an honorary member of the Ljubljana Philharmonic Society. Primož Kuret: “Zöhrer, Josef”, in: *Enciklopedija Slovenije*, ed. Dušan Voglar. Ljubljana: Mladinska knjiga, 2000, p. 215.

8 Kuret: *Ljubljanska filharmonična družba 1794–1919*, pp. 348–360.

9 Fran Zwitter: *Nacionalni problemi v habsburški monarhiji*. Ljubljana: Slovenska matica, 1962, pp. 22–24.

10 Rudolf von Weiss-Ostborn (Graz, November 8, 1876–Graz, December 18, 1962), composer and conductor. After his study at the Philosophical Faculty in Graz (finished in 1900) he played viola

Zöhrer was succeeded by the last – one could say “wartime” – musical director of the Ljubljana Philharmonic Society, Hans Gerstner¹¹, one of the most influential personalities of Ljubljana’s musical culture in the second half of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.¹²

Gerstner came to Ljubljana in 1871 and began to work at the Philharmonic Society, initially as a concert master, solo violinist, and a conductor of philharmonic and chamber concerts. He is among those who contributed the most to enriching the society’s programme of philharmonic concerts by including works that were practically unknown to the Ljubljana public until then. Among these are also some excerpts from Wagner’s operas.¹³ On the other hand, it is also interesting to note that he was the first in Slovenia to premiere almost the entire opus of Brahms.¹⁴ Gerstner’s extensive legacy, today held in the Viennese archive of the Gesellschaft der Musikfreunde, also includes, among others, a postcard from Brahms in which this famous Viennese master responds to Gerstner’s request for the performance of his *Clarinet Quintet*. Brahms’s reply to Gerstner was as follows: “Sehr geehrter Herr. Das Quintett habe ich nicht mehr in Händen, es, erscheint bereits allernächsten bei Simrock in Berlin. Ihr hochachtungsvoll ergebener Johannes Brahms.”¹⁵

in the orchestra of the Music Society of Styria in Graz. From 1902 he was a musical director in Knittelfeld. In 1912 he was a short term musical director of the Philharmonic Society in Ljubljana. Kuret: *Ljubljanska filharmonična družba 1794–1919*, p. 397.

- 11 Hans (Johann) Gerstner (Luditz, 17 August 1851–Ljubljana, January 9, 1939), violinist, conductor, and teacher. After childhood, which he spent in Luditz, today known as Žlutice, he studied (1864–1871) at the National Conservatory in Prague. In 1871 he came to Ljubljana where he worked as a violinist and teacher until the end of World War I. As a performer, as well as concertmaster of the Ljubljana Philharmonic Society, as a soloist and conductor of philharmonic and chamber concerts, as well as of various charity events, he performed at twelve to fifteen concerts yearly, hence in his entire, more than forty-year career as a music reproducer in Ljubljana, at a total of almost six hundred concerts. It was Gerstner who from 1883/84 season began to organize chamber concerts within the framework of Ljubljana’s Philharmonic Society. As one of the main protagonists of musical developments in Slovenia in the second half of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries through his music reproduction, music education and, ultimately, his music organization activities in the period between 1871 and 1939 within the framework of the Philharmonic Society and some other central musical institutions in Ljubljana at the time, Gerstner contributed immensely, irrespective of nationality, to the transition from more or less gifted dilettantism to a gradual, qualitative rise of musical works in Slovenia. Jernej Weiss: *Hans Gerstner (1851–1939): življenje za glasbo*. Maribor: Litera & Univerza v Mariboru, 2010.
- 12 Ibidem.
- 13 Ibidem, pp. 42–43.
- 14 Hans Gerstner: “Johannes Brahms: Aufführungen seiner Werke in Laibach (1875–1918)”, in: *Archiv Gesellschaft der Musikfreunde in Wien*, 15968/168.
- 15 ‘Dear Sir, The Quintet is no longer in my hands. It appears that it was recently released by Simrock in Berlin. Respectfully yours, Johannes Brahms.’ Johannes Brahms: *Archiv Gesellschaft der Musikfreunde in Wien*.



Ill. 2: Hans (Johann) Gerstner. Weiss: *Hans Gerstner (1851–1939)*, front page.

Johannes Brahms

II. Hertzgasse 4.

Sehr geehrter Herr.
Das Quintett habe ich
auch wohl in Gmünd, ob-
wohl nicht in Wien,
aufgeführt. Ich bin
in Wien. Ihr ergebener
Diener Johannes Brahms

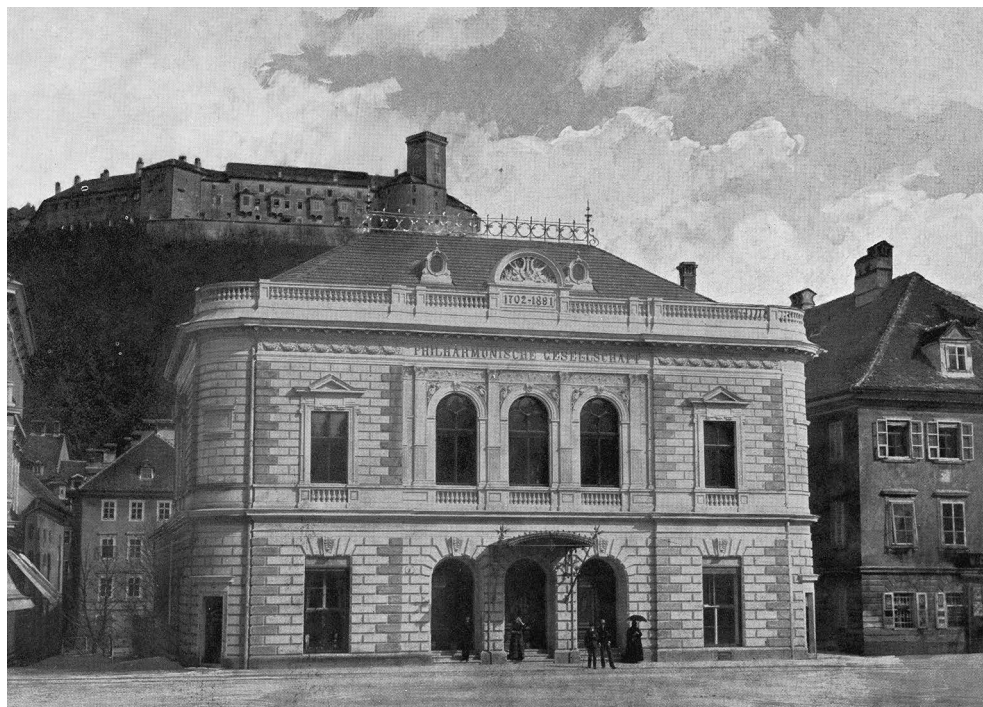
Ill. 3: The back side of Brahms's answer to Gerstner. Weiss: *Hans Gerstner (1851–1939)*, p. 85.

Gerstner then wrote directly to Simrock and, four days later, received Brahms's *Quintet in h-moll*, still “damp from fresh paint”, as Gerstner wrote.¹⁶ On March 1893 he and his colleagues performed the Clarinet Quintet in Ljubljana as one of the very first international performances, just few months after its Berlin premiere.¹⁷ This demonstrates Gerstner's effort to familiarize the Ljubljana public with the most recent creative achievements of some of the leading composers of that time. With this and similar performances, it seems that at the turn of the nineteenth century, Ljubljana was not much behind the much richer cultural cities, such as Vienna and Berlin, as far as chamber and orchestra music was concerned.

This was more than evident in the guest appearances of some of the leading foreign orchestras in 1891 in the newly constructed Ljubljana Philharmonic Hall, named Tonhalle (Music Hall).

16 Weiss: *Hans Gerstner (1851–1939)*, p. 51.

17 Ibidem.



Ill. 4: The new building of the Philharmonic Society in Ljubljana, 1891. Weiss: *Hans Gerstner (1851–1939)*, p. 83.

Among the most important concerts of that time was by all means the performance on April 28, 1900, of the Berliner Philharmoniker under the leadership of the famous Austrian–Hungarian orchestral and operatic conductor, Hans Richter.¹⁸ Richter was reputed as one of the greatest interpreters of Wagner in his time, and had participated as assistant conductor in the premiering of Wagner’s *Meistersinger* as early as 1868, and more than three decades later presented an overture of this work to the Ljubljana public.¹⁹

Another first-class event in the exceptionally rich history of philharmonic concerts was also the guest performance on March 8, 1903 of the Berliner Tonkünstler Orchester under the conduction of Richard Strauss.²⁰ At this concert

18 Ibidem, pp. 53–54.

19 The Berliner Philharmoniker under conduction of Hans Richter performed Wagner’s *Mastersingers*, Liszt’s *Rhapsodie hongroise*, Richard Strauss’s *Don Juan*, and Ludwig van Beethoven’s *Eroica*. Kuret: *Ljubljanska filharmonična družba 1794–1919*, p. 706.

20 Gerstner had after the concert a more than hour-long discussion with Richard Strauss in the Tonhalle. Weiss: *Hans Gerstner (1851–1939)*, p. 55.

Strauss performed his symphonic fantasy, *Aus Italien* (From Italy), which he had written in 1886.²¹



Ill. 5: A poster from Strauss's concert in Ljubljana. Kuret: *Ljubljanska filharmonična družba 1794–1919*, p. 320.

21 Kuret: *Ljubljanska filharmonična družba 1794–1919*, p. 718.

Many other first-class foreign artists and orchestras also performed in Ljubljana. Among them the guest appearance of Wiener Konzert-Vereins Orchester under the conduction of renowned Austrian conductor Ferdinand Löwe should be mentioned. As Bruckner's pupil he wanted to present in Ljubljana his teacher's Ninth Symphony.²² It is interesting to note that all the mentioned musicians had stayed in room number eight of what was then one of Ljubljana's major hotels, Hotel Elefant (Hotel Elephant), today known as Hotel Slon, for which Gerstner himself, or his father-in-law, Gnesda, was to blame. As the owner of Hotel Slon at the time, Gnesda was obviously well aware of the excellent promotional opportunity and offered these musicians free accommodation in his hotel.²³

Gerstner was constantly endeavouring to bring as many high-quality foreign performers as possible to Ljubljana. Understandably, most of them were his fellow countrymen from the Czech lands, with whom he had become acquainted during his studies at the Prague Conservatory and afterwards. One of them was also twenty-one-year-old Gustav Mahler, who came to Ljubljana as a performer in the 1881/82 season. Mahler was employed as conductor at the Ljubljana Provincial Theatre, and even performed in a number of chamber concerts in the last few months before his departure from Ljubljana. As a pianist he did not particularly impress Gerstner who played violin with him in a duet,²⁴ but as a conductor he attracted considerable attention at the theatre, especially with the performance of Mozart's *Die Zauberflöte*. Gerstner evidently had a better opinion of Mahler the conductor than of Mahler the pianist.²⁵

It was in Ljubljana that Mahler took his first decisive steps as a conductor. He achieved both artistic and financial success, as his Ljubljana performances were generally well attended and his reviews were favourable. Very little is known, however, about Mahler's social life in Ljubljana. Since he did not have many friends in Ljubljana, it comes as no surprise that he soon made a friendship with his fellow countryman Gerstner. Every evening, Mahler would set out for the *Zur Blume* on Jüdische (Jewish) Street for a vegetarian meal, after which he would often join Gerstner and his friends for a pint or two of Pilsen beer.

Being one of the most important individuals of the Ljubljana Philharmonic Society, Gerstner naturally did not cooperate only with Mahler, but with practically all musicians in Slovenia regardless of their ideological and political beliefs or

22 Besides Bruckner's Ninth Symphony they performed also Weber's overture *Oberon*, Wolf's symphonic poem *Penthesilea*, and one of the most popular pieces on the Ljubljana symphonic concert programmes, the overture of Wagner's *Mastersinger*. Ibidem, pp. 722–723.

23 Weiss: *Hans Gerstner (1851–1939)*, p. 53.

24 Ibidem, pp. 39–41.

25 Ibidem, p. 40.

their national origins. Among those with whom he most often performed are also some of the most important Slovenian musicians at the turn of the nineteenth century, among them the aforementioned Anton Nedvďd, Anton Foerster,²⁶ and Fran Gerbič.²⁷ Gerstner's diary, which was discovered by the author of the present article in 2002 at the Sudetendeutsches Musikinstitut (Sudeten German music institute) in Regensburg,²⁸ thus offers numerous evidence of excellent cooperation between the Slovene- and German-speaking citizens of Ljubljana.

Even the biggest Slovenian patriots took their children to the music school of the so-called German Philharmonic Society in the morning, sat in the first rows of Slovenian national awakening events called čitalnice (reading halls)²⁹ in

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- 26 Anton Foerster (Osenice, December 20, 1837–Novo Mesto, June 17, 1926), composer, organist and pianist. He studied law (graduated in 1863) and music in Prague; he was *regens chori* of the cathedral in Senj, today Croatia (1865–67), and from 1867 onward worked in Ljubljana. He was choirmaster of the Glasbena matica in Ljubljana and conductor of the *Dramatično društvo* (Dramatical Society), then *regens chori* of the Cathedral (1868–1909) and music teacher in Ljubljana's secondary schools. In 1877 he established the Organist School, was a co-founder and long-time editor (1878–1908) of the magazine *Cerkveni glasbenik* (Church musician). Andrej Rijavec: "Foerster, Anton", in: *Enciklopedija Slovenije*, ed. Vladimir Guzelj. Ljubljana: Mladinska knjiga, 1989, p. 129.
- 27 Fran Gerbič (Cerknica, October 5, 1840–Ljubljana, March 29, 1917), composer and singer. He was taught music by Kamilo Mašek in Ljubljana, and from 1865 to 1867 he attended the Prague Conservatory, studying singing with František Arnold Vogl and composition with Josef Krejčí. From 1882 to 1886 he taught singing at the Lemberg Conservatory. In 1886 he went to Ljubljana and was active there until his death, having connections with various institutions as choral director, conductor, and teacher; he was also director of the music school of the Glasbena matica. He was a very versatile musician, successfully active as singer and teacher, as publisher (of a collection of hymns, *Lira Sionska*, Prague, 1866), and as the director of the periodical *Glasbena zora*. In 1892 he established the first professional opera ensemble in Slovenia. At the same time he made an important contribution to the organization of the music school in Ljubljana and to the general development of Slovenian music at the end of the nineteenth century. Dragotin Cvetko and Zoran Krstulović, "Gerbič, Fran", in: *Grove Music Online*, accessed on May 2, 2013.
- 28 In his diary, which, as a unique document of that time, is a highly valuable source for music culture in Slovenia, Gerstner describes his childhood, which he spent in Luditz, today known as Žlutice. The diary follows his study years at the National Conservatory in Prague and his contacts in that period with Smetana and Dvořák. The most extensive part of the diary comprises a description of Gerstner's life and work in Ljubljana from the beginning of the 1870s until the end of World War I. His diary also reveals a slightly more personal side of this musical artist, who devoted the greater part of his life to music. The reader comes to know Gerstner as an enthusiastic mountaineer, and a no less passionate drinker of Plzen beer at the famous *Zur Blume* in Ljubljana where, among others, he enjoyed a good mug of beer with Mahler. Hans Gerstner: *Ein Leben für die Musik: 17. 8. 1851 Luditz–9. 1. 1939 Laibach*. Regensburg: Sudetendeutsches Musikinstitut, 1935. Cf. also the translation of the diary: Weiss: *Hans Gerstner (1851–1939)*, pp. 89–176.
- 29 These were established in Trieste (January 29, 1861), Maribor (July 17, 1861), Ljubljana (October 20, 1861), and elsewhere on the territory of today's Slovenia. Slovenian patriots found models for them in the Czech Lands. They performed special events called *bésede* (speech) on them. They were used in almost everything that was being created, which strongly expanded the possibilities of

the afternoon, and in the evening escorted their wives to the opera performance of the so-called “Deutsches” Landstheater (German Provincial Theatre). A music culture marked with nationalist tendencies was namely unimaginable to the then still mostly bilingual Slovenian bourgeoisie. Despite being aware of the need for the performances of Slovenian music within some newly established Slovenian institutions, the bourgeoisie found it difficult to accept the idea that the Slovenian side had to compete by all means with the ancient Philharmonic Society.

Slovenian societies did not pose any serious threat to the functioning of the Philharmonic Society in the period before the establishment of main Slovenian concert institution, the new Slovenian Philharmonic, in 1908 under the conduction of the famous Czech conductor Václav Talich.³⁰ During the first years of their existence, Slovenian societies had more of a side than a central role in the Slovenian musical life. In the second half of the nineteenth and the early twentieth century, the so-called German music institutions, or even more, the music institutions oriented towards the German-speaking cultural environment, such as the Provincial Theatre and the Philharmonic Society, still played a central role in the musical life.

This type of division between Slovenian institutions and individuals on the one side and German or Austrian institutions and individuals on the other side is thus not so much an expression of the actual situation, but more the consequence of the so-called divisional concept devised soon after the end of World War I. Namely, at the beginning of the twentieth century, a group of Slovenian composers led by Anton Lajovic³¹ tried to lean just on Slovenian achievements and thus partly transformed the musical-historical memory in order to create a pure, Slovenian music culture.³²

performing Slovenian compositions and directly stimulated more intensified musical creativity. Manica Špental: “Prispevek k verodostojnosti podatkov o ustanovitvi čitalnic na Slovenskem”, in: *Muzikološki zbornik* 43 (2007) 1, pp. 107–110.

30 Jernej Weiss: *Češki glasbeniki v 19. in na začetku 20. stoletja na Slovenskem*. Maribor: Litera & Univerza v Mariboru, 2012, pp. 234–244.

31 Anton Lajovic (Vače, December 19, 1878–Ljubljana, August 28, 1960), composer. After studies at the Ljubljana Glasbena matica music school, he was a composition pupil of Robert Fuchs at the Vienna Conservatory (1897–1902), concurrently completing his training in law at the university. While practising law in Slovenia and Croatia he composed and published articles on music. Influenced by late Romanticism and, particularly after World War I, Impressionism, he became a champion of new developments in Slovenian music. His greatest contribution was in his songs and choruses. He was a member of the Slovenian Academy of Sciences and Arts. Ivan Klemenčič and Andrej Rijavec, “Lajovic, Anton”, in: *Grove Music Online*, accessed on April 8, 2013.

32 Anton Lajovic: “O večnih krasotah in o strupu Beethovnovih, Bachovih in Wagnerjevih del”, in: *Slovenec*, Ljubljana, 6 April 1924.

If such a negative attitude towards everything German or Austrian of some Slovenian musicians can be considered from the purely existential point of view as more or less understandable after World War I, one would have more difficulty understanding some later interpretations given by some of the leading Slovenian musicologists. In the new cultural-political reality of the post-war period, it seems that even some of our musicologists were strongly under the impression of the divisional concept. Some individuals were thus omitted, not surprisingly above all those who were linked to the so-called German cultural milieu.

So where, for example, in the Slovenian music history is the Sudeten German Hans Gerstner, who at the turn of the nineteenth century was one of those who had contributed the most to the international recognition of Ljubljana's Philharmonic Society? His name is not to be found in the basic post-war Slovenian music-historical literature.³³ Although Gerstner had never defended nationalist orientations, the problem probably lies in the fact that his almost half a century-long artistic activity at the Ljubljana Philharmonic Society was not "Slovenian" enough for the writers of post-war Slovenian musical history.

The main problem lies in fact that after the end of World War II, at least a part of Slovenian music-historical literature seems to have been capable of seeing only the German-Slovenian political battles and not the daily life of the mentioned individuals. The consequence of this was that the creative achievements of some Slovenian individuals were all too often overvalued, while their differently oriented "German" colleagues working in Slovenia were mostly overlooked.

To be concrete, in a new cultural and political situation after World War I and the establishment of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, Gerstner witnessed, as its last musical director, the planned closure of the Philharmonic Society, which he describes in his diary.³⁴ The new post-war Slovenian authorities thus forced him, after forty-eight years of service, to retire and gave him a very modest pension that was barely enough for his survival. This meant that even as a seventy-year-old, he had to support himself by giving private lessons. To make matters worse, during the migration flow that followed World War I, he was abandoned by practically all his friends, and all three children, who went to live in Vienna.

33 As for example: Dragotin Cvetko: *Slovenska glasba v evropskem prostoru*. Ljubljana: Slovenska matica, 1991.

34 Weiss: *Hans Gerstner (1851–1939)*, pp. 67–74. Cf. also: Hans Gerstner: "Philharmonische Gesellschaft in Laibach: Tätigkeit und Ereignisse im Vereinsjahre 1918/1919: vom 15. September 1918 bis Ende September 1919: 217. Vereinsjahr, 104. Schuljahr", in: *Archiv Gesellschaft der Musikfreunde in Wien*. It is necessary to stress that it is still now not clear to where the largest part of funds of the Philharmonic Society disappeared after the World War I.

It is thus a fact that the concept of a more nationally coloured musical culture left a strong impact not only on the music of the second half of the nineteenth and the early twentieth centuries in Slovenia, but also on Slovenian music historiography. It would therefore be necessary to take a critical distance from some of the more explicitly nationally determined interpretations from past Slovenian musical history.

The purpose of such post-war interpretations was primarily to promote the politically correct idealization of Slavic brotherhood that stemmed from the joint struggle against Austro-Hungarian “tyranny”. However, recent research has discovered that the polarization of Slovenian and Slavic cultural efforts on one side and Austrian-German efforts on the other side frequently does not correspond to the actual situation that existed in the musical culture of the second half of the nineteenth and the early twentieth centuries in Slovenia.³⁵

Owing to these and other unjustified national labels which some of Slovenian musicologists granted to certain institutions and individuals, we easily gave up a part of a very important music culture of which we should rightfully be proud. That is not German, Slovenian or Austrian, but above all “transnational” nineteenth-century musical culture of the Ljubljana Philharmonic Society. So it would by all means be necessary to enlighten the activities of certain individuals that have been “forgotten” for too long. One of these exceptional personalities was certainly Hans Gerstner, as well as many others who contributed decisively to the musical culture in Slovenia.

The above-mentioned phenomenon is, of course, the consequence of one of the darkest sides of the concept of national music historiography; and one of the principal reasons for its occurrence is the mechanical transferring of global historical facts to the level of concrete decisions of individuals, which often results from the absence of primary research. It would therefore be necessary to enlighten the role of certain institutions or individuals in the musical culture of Slovenia by including some new sources. Only such an approach would slowly change some truly outdated concepts in Slovenian music history.

35 Jernej Weiss: “Hans Gerstner in koncept nacionalne glasbene kulture”, in: *De musica disserenda* 6 (2010) 2, pp. 55–70. Cf. also: Weiss: *Hans Gerstner (1851–1939)*, pp. 177–188.

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