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The editorial board thanks Katarzyna Murawska-Muthesius for guest-editing this issue.

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## Bohemianism outside Paris. Central Europe and Beyond

Katarzyna MURAWSKA-MUTHESIUS

The term “bohemian”, as well as the geography and history of bohemianism are ambiguous and infinitely expandable. Bohemia, first of all, refers to the lands of the Czechs. Since the 15<sup>th</sup> century, however, the French term *bobémiens* was used also as a synonym for Gypsies, commonly believed to have lived in this area of Central Europe.<sup>1</sup> From the end of the eighteenth century, in French, the term was applied to “drifters living by their wits”<sup>2</sup> and members of the criminal underclass, to be associated by the 1830s with informal communities of artists, poets, musicians, philosophers and journalists, living on the fringes of the urban economy. The disappearance of the old forms of patronage in the nineteenth century, as well as the ensuing commodification of culture in a society dominated by the bourgeoisie brought about the loss of the immediate social function of the cultural producer, and, in turn, the emergence of the bohemian artist who, liberated from the imperative to glorify the patron, had turned the condition of alienation into that of an autonomy and rebellion

against the existing social norms and aesthetic rules. The emerging attitude of bohemianism, linked to the notion of exceptional creativity, dissidence, eccentricity and sexual outrage, has become a shorthand for transgression, for the defiance of authority and power, as well as a synecdoche for modern art and modern identities. Although the “historical” capital of *la bohème* was the Quartier Latin of pre-Haussmann Paris, as immortalised by Murger and Puccini, since the later nineteenth century, bohemian communities and districts have kept emerging in further parts of Paris, as well as in other major cities of Europe and America, such as in London’s Soho, Munich’s Schwabing, New York’s Greenwich Village, Venice Beach in California, but also in Eastern Europe, Latin America, Asia, and in many other places all over the world.

The centrality of the bohemian counterculture for the emergence of modernist aesthetic autonomy and the avant-garde spirit of non-conformity and revolt<sup>3</sup> attracted a number of scholars, who ap-

<sup>1</sup> I would like to thank the Editor-in-Chief of *ARS*, Prof. Ján Bakoš, for inviting me to edit an issue of this journal on the topic of my choice and for his unfaltering approval of the topic of bohemianism. My sincere thanks are also due to the *ARS* Editor Miroslav Hrdina for his continuous support during all stages of this project. On the history of the term, and on the relationship between bohemians and Tsiganes, see TREPS, M.: Comment on nomme le Bohémiens et les Tsiganes. In: MOUSSA, S. (ed.): *Le mythe des Bobémiens dans la littérature et les arts en Europe*. Paris 2008, pp. 21-38. See also RYKWERT, J.: The Constitution of Bohemia. In: *Res: Anthropology and Aesthetics*, 1997, No. 31 (The Abject), pp. 109-127; and KLEINERMAN, S.: Cyganerja i cyganowanie. Próba charakterystyki i definicji [Bohemia and Bohemianism.

Towards Analysis and Definition]. In: *Pamiętnik Literacki* [Literary Journal], 29, 1932, pp. 75-93.

<sup>2</sup> DARNTON, R.: *Bobemians before Bobemianism*. Den Haag 2006, available online at <http://www.nias.knaw.nl/Content/NIAS/Publicaties/KB%20Lectures/kb3.pdf>. The text has also been published as DARNTON, R.: Introduction. In: *The Bobemians (1790), a novel by Anne Gédéon Lafitte, Marquis de Pelleport*. Philadelphia 2010.

<sup>3</sup> On this particular issue, see COTTINGTON, D.: The Formation of the Avant-Garde in Paris and London, c. 1880 – 1915. In: *Art History*, 35, 2012, No. 3, pp. 596-621, esp. pp. 601-610.

proached the phenomenon of bohemianism from a variety of perspectives, often interdisciplinary, combining literary studies, visual arts, popular culture, film studies, as well as music, and, not unfrequently, arriving at conflicting conclusions. If for Arnold Hauser, writing about Courbet, “*bohemianism is and remains an heir of aestheticizing romanticism*”, for T. J. Clark, “*Bohemia in mid-nineteenth-century Paris was a real social class, a locus of dissent*”, while for Jerrold Seigel, bohemianism is inseparable from the ideology of the bourgeoisie.<sup>4</sup> Recently, Lisa Tickner looked at bohemianism through the prism of Bourdieu’s theory of the cultural field, addressing also the much neglected issue of gender.<sup>5</sup> Marilyn Brown and Sandra Moussa investigated the affinities of the nomadic bohemian artist with Gypsies, while Mary Gluck pointed to its engagement with popular culture and commercial entertainment.<sup>6</sup> Stepping outside the magic circle of Paris and the long nineteenth century, Elizabeth Wilson explored the patterns of discursive construction of the bohemian myth, upholding again the belief in its social and political intransigence, transnational adoptions and contemporary endurance.<sup>7</sup> Mike Sell, writing about film, raised the long-avoided issue of the racial underpinning of bohemianism, while Daniel Hurewitz, by contrast, acknowledged its concurrence with the gay liberation movement in Los Angeles of the first half of the twentieth century.<sup>8</sup> But even those studies which expand the geography of bohemianism beyond Paris hardly venture beyond Western Europe and Northern America.

If the foundation script of the bohemian culture is the myth of freedom and rebellion attributed to

the Gypsy nomadic life, the naming error, which identified the Gypsies with the inhabitants of the territory of Bohemia, begs further questions about both the metaphorical and the real geography of bohemianism. It suggests an inquiry into the latent Central/Eastern European connotations of Parisian bohemianism, which are inherent in the association of the cradle of bohemianism with Bohemia, the exotic and remote land on the margins of Europe, inhabited by strangers. Seen in this light, the bohemian myth lends itself to further investigation as a very specific manifestation of Orientalism (the issue addressed in Marc Smith’s text below), the one which – analogous to Primitivism – is propelled by desire rather than disgust, and which, accordingly, appropriates the constructed markers of cultural alterity as the imagined subject position for the new rebellious Self. Inevitably, the arbitrary appropriation of the term “Bohemian” is followed by its transcription into “bohemian”, which transposes the geographical identity with a socio-cultural one, attributed to Gypsies and vagabonds, thus displacing the territory with the nomadic body and relocating both of them to Paris. But even if the “original” (albeit erroneous) spatial identification of the signifier “Bohemian” has been rendered invisible in the process, with the new breed of bohemian vagabonds now firmly settled in Paris, did such a linguistic shift have any bearing on the cultural associations of the historical and geographical term “Bohemia”, which was used contemporaneously throughout the nineteenth century? Was the historical Bohemia, incorporated into the Austrian Habsburg Empire, and deprived of political sovereignty, in any way implicated, affected, or influ-

<sup>4</sup> HAUSER, A.: *Social History of Art. Vol. 4: Realism, Naturalism, The Film Age* [1951]. London – New York 1999, p. 39; CLARK, T. J.: *Image of the People. Gustave Courbet and the 1848 Revolution*. London – New York 1973, p. 33; SEIGEL, J.: *Bohemian Paris. Culture, Politics and the Boundaries of Bourgeois Life, 1830 – 1930*. New York 1986.

<sup>5</sup> TICKNER, L.: Bohemianism and the Cultural Field: *Trilby and Tarr*. In: *Art History*, 34, 2011, No. 5, pp. 978-1011.

<sup>6</sup> BROWN, M.: *Gypsies and Other Bohemians. The Myth of the Artist in Nineteenth-Century France*. Ann Arbor (MI) 1985; GLUCK, M.: *Popular Bohemia. Modernism and Urban Culture in Nineteenth-Century Paris*. Cambridge (MA) 2005; MOUSSA 2008 (see in note 1).

<sup>7</sup> WILSON, E.: *Bohemians. The Glamorous Outcasts*. London – New York 2000.

<sup>8</sup> SELL, M.: Bohemianism, the Cultural Turn of the Avant-Garde, and Forgetting the Roma. In: *TDR*, 51, 2007, No. 2, pp. 41-59; HUREVITZ, D.: *Bohemian Los Angeles and the Making of Modern Politics*. Berkeley – Los Angeles – London 2008. On bohemianism and xenophobia, see also McWILLIAM, N.: Avant-Garde Anti-Modernism: Caricature and Cabaret Culture in Fin-de-Siècle Montmartre. In: LE MEN, S. (ed.): *L’art de la caricature*. Paris 2011, pp. 251-261. See also the catalogue of the recent exhibition at the Grand Palais – AMIC, S. (ed.): *Bobèmes. De Léonard da Vinci à Picasso*. Paris 2012.

enced by the construction of the Parisian bohemia? How far was Bohemia from *la bohème*?

Such a question points to a whole area of research on the ways in which bohemian life-styles coined in Paris in the 1830s were adopted by the “real” nineteenth-century Bohemians, the Czechs and possibly the Moravians next door, but also by the inhabitants of the neighbouring lands, sharing with the Bohemians the lack of political freedom, such as the Slovaks, Hungarians, Poles, as well as the Romanians, Slovenians, Croats and Serbs. To what extent was the condition of political captivity an underlying and homogenising factor, obstructing the strife for freedom from social norms, and, further, pre-empting or slowing down the struggle for the aesthetic autonomy in the whole area of Central Europe and Eastern Europe? Was the presence of the bourgeoisie the constitutive condition for the emergence of bohemianism as its Other and as its defining counterpart? The questions multiply: Who was the Other of Central European bohemians? What was the relationship between the discovery of Slavic identities at the time of the Herderian national revivals and the fascination with Gypsy life-styles and identities,<sup>9</sup> and further, how does this interest in ethnicities compare with the contempt for the growing Jewish minority in Eastern Europe, which was also entering the ranks of bohemian communities? To what extent were the bohemian life styles, adopted in mid-nineteenth-century Central Europe, originating in Paris? When and by whom were the unconventional attitudes identified as bohemian? How was the term “bohemian” translated into local languages? Is bohemianism in Central Europe identifiable with modernity, or modern art?

This issue of *Arx* marks the beginning of the much overdue investigation of the Central European variants of bohemianism, as seen in relation to Paris, but also to other centres, which adopted the French bohemian life styles, such as New York. Surprisingly, what initially appeared to be a somewhat marginal issue, of interest mainly to the local researchers aiming to complete the archives of the transnational bohemianism, did, in fact, attract contributors from

very diverse disciplines and from a plethora of academic centres worldwide, reaching from California and Colorado to New Zealand, not omitting the United Kingdom and France, as well as, of course, Hungary, Czech Republic and Poland. Indeed, the Central European perspective seemed to have proven fruitful for re-aligning the field of bohemian studies, not just by the virtue of its spatial expansion, and by adding new names of eccentric artists and their favourite cafés, but also by provoking a new set of questions of political autonomy and social concerns, as well as the troubling affinity between bohemians and Gypsies, thus opening the hardly explored issue of bohemianism and racial prejudice for further investigation.

The first two texts take us to Paris, and focus on the centrality of the Gypsy myth for bohemian identities, as explored in literature, music, dance, spectacle, as well as visual arts. Karen Turman sets the scene, by comparing the image of the Gypsy in French Romantic literature with the self-fashioning of the bohemian artist. Her probing analysis of the literary representation of the dancing Esmeralda in Hugo’s *Notre-Dame de Paris* as a model for with the “performance-driven” acts of the early bohemians from the circle of Théophile Gautier, “privileging the process over the product”, leads her to emphasising the primary significance of spectacle for bohemian identities and the constructed nature of their Gypsy prototype which, fabricated by the youthful counterculture, was projected back onto the Gypsy figures. The issue of performance and improvisation are also discussed in Campbell Ewing’s text, which analyses Manet’s representations of Gypsy musicians, made in the early 1860s. He argues persuasively that Manet’s formal innovations in his prints and paintings was inspired by Franz Liszt’s passionate appraisal of Gypsy music, which, published in 1859 as *Des Bohémiens et de leur musique en Hongrie*, emphasised the spontaneity and improvisatory skills of Gypsy musicians as central for the rejuvenation of western music, and its new focus on performance and individual expressiveness. Ewing’s attentive analysis of Manet’s prints and his major painting *The Old Musician* (1862) brings at-

<sup>9</sup> On the representation of Gypsies in the Czech nineteenth-century literature, see SERVANT, C.: Deux existences inconciliables? Représentations des Tsiganes dans l’histoire

et la littérature tchèques du XIXe siècle. In: MOUSSA 2008 (see in note 1), pp. 163-197.

tention to the remarkably sketchy technique of his first etching on the theme, *The Little Gypsies* (1861 – 1862), as well as to his visual equivalent of musical improvisation in *The Old Musician*, in which figures borrowed from Ary Scheffer and from his own paintings are reworked and retuned in this major composition, resembling “*improvisatory performances of borrowed music*”, as practiced by Gypsy bands.

Stefan Muthesius’s text moves from Paris to Munich, initiating a broad survey of bohemian, or quasi bohemian coteries in a range of cities of Central Europe, while also signalling the grave problems with the term, which, “*never clearly defined even in the place of its origin*”, becomes even more blurred and problematic when applied to the art worlds beyond Paris, and especially in Central Europe. As he stresses, for most of the nineteenth century, the notion of bohemianism, identified with poverty, lack of patronage and isolation from society, does not fit the art world in Munich, Germany’s principal *Kunststadt*, in which artists, often dubbed as *Künstler-Fürsten*, were revered by their patrons, from King Ludwig I of Bavaria down to the numerous bourgeois patrons of *Kunstverein*. The text discusses various constituents of the “self-satisfied” art world in Munich, including the Royal Academy of Art, painters’ ateliers, luxury illustrated journals, and a general convivial atmosphere of the city, extolling the virtues of “*die Kunst der Freude*”. It ends with the introduction of the Munich “proper” bohemian community in the early 1900s which, concentrated in Schwabing, the affluent part of the city, now promoted the novel modern codes of self-fashioning, favouring decadence, sexual licence and moral transgression.

Throughout the nineteenth century, the Munich Academy of Art, widely reputed for its teaching practices, attracted students from all over Europe and America, disseminating the skills of solid academic painting all over the lands of Central Europe. However, after a year or two spent in Munich, either in the Academy, or in its numerous private schools, the majority of the students returning to Prague, Budapest, Warsaw or Krakow would have to face a grim reality far removed from that of the affluent Munich: an acute lack of commissions and buying public, the scarcity of exhibiting venues, and the absence of art institutions which would protect the artists’ professional interests. If there was no reason for

manifesting the bohemian contempt for the society in Munich, Prague or Warsaw of mid-nineteenth century would provide ideal conditions for parading the bohemian doom, poverty and, soon, the concept of the “neglected genius”. Roman Prahl’s text provides an overview of the complex art world in nineteenth-century Prague, which could be seen as emblematic for Central European bohemianism, that was emerging in the condition of political submission, the lack of patrons, and the institutions mediating between artists and their new bourgeois audiences. Presenting the shifting generations of Bohemian artists, Prahl discusses various strategies to boycott the Austrian art establishment, by setting up informal venues at Prague cafés and pubs, by forming their own informal groups and semi clandestine Artists’ Union, by liaising with the Czech National Revival, and later with the Slavic Revival movements, as well as by exploiting the new channels of communication with the public offered by Czech-language satirical journals and illustrated magazines, such as *Volné směry*. Set up in 1896, the magazine proved instrumental for introducing the fashion for modern art. Presenting the activity of a the major individual artists, such as Mikoláš Aleš, Viktor Oliva, and František Kupka, Prahl demonstrates both the relationship between radical bohemianism, anarchism and the bourgeois patronage, as well as the gradual assimilation between the cultural phenomenon of bohemianism and the aesthetic practice of modernism. Ellie Moseman’s text revisits Prague at the time at which Prahl has left, at the beginning of the twentieth century, and it investigates the issue of the social engagement and radical critique which, for many authors, ranks as one of the primary features of bohemianism. She presents the silhouette of Bohumil Kubišta, the painter and an art critic, who, as a Paris-trained and Paris-inspired bohemian, on his return to Prague in 1910 transferred the Parisian critique of the bourgeoisie onto the class and ethnic tensions of Prague and its peripheries. Analysing in detail eight paintings by Kubišta, which depict passengers of the third-class carriage, humble working class interiors, urban labour, cafés and the artist atelier, Moseman argues that at the turn of the century Prague, dominated by Austrian and German minorities, and in which “*language and ethnicity could often be mapped onto social class*”, Kubišta ignored the expectations of his

potential bourgeois audiences, focusing his art and writings on the painful impact of modernity on the “*stratified social dynamics*” of his Czech *Heimat*.

György Szücs takes us into Hungary, and introduces the first Hungarian artists’ colony, a “*plein air camp*” in Nagybánya (today Baia Roma in Romania), which was established by István Réti in 1896. Demonstrating cogently the strong French inspirations of the Hungarian bohemians, who were studying in the Academy Julian in Paris, and considered Murger’s *Scenes de la vie de bohème* as their “Bible”, Szücs’s text bears also testimony to the enduring importance of Munich for the region. Half-way to Paris, what Munich was offering to adepts, flocking in from the provinces, was not just the opportunity to learn the tricks of the painter’s trade, but also to encounter the newest French fashions, as well as to learn the new codes and lifestyles of the bohemian artist. Szücs’s emphasis on the social potential of ephemeral caricatures, drawn at the coffee-tables in Munich’s Café Lohengrin and Budapest’s Café Japan, consolidating transnational communities of artists, finds interesting parallels in other texts in this volume: in Prahl’s discussion of the liberating force of caricatures, which were produced by artists meeting at the Lorenz Café in Prague, as well as in Kozakowska-Zauchka’s article on Krakow and in mine on Warsaw, both stressing the importance of the medium of caricature, executed on all possible surfaces, as critical for the status and the notion of the exceptionality of the artist. Finally, Szücs’s emphasis on a synaesthetic relationship between Gypsy music and painting ties in with the argument proposed by Campbell Ewing.

My own text goes back in time to the period around mid-nineteenth century and relocates the arena of bohemianism to Warsaw, at that time in the grip of persecution by the Tsarist apparatus. It compares two artistic communities, which were dubbed as bohemian by later critics, a coterie of poets and a group of visual artists, looking at the political aspects of bohemianism in the city deprived of political autonomy. It focuses on the striking collection of drawings, caricatures and photographs preserved in private albums, and it argues that they provide a unique insight into the multiple ways in which artists sought to establish their professional identities, and a range of positions *vis-à-vis* other social groups at

the time of the major socio-cultural transition from the noble to bourgeois patronage and during the formation of Warsaw’s urban intelligentsia. If the mid-nineteenth-century “bohemian” artists in Warsaw could not yet be counted as full-blown modernists, the encounter between bohemianism and modern art in Polish lands took place in Krakow which, as argued by Ula Kozakowska-Zauchka, held a privileged position among the bohemian capitals of *fin-de-siècle* Europe. Having undergone a miraculous transformation from a provincial town on the outskirts of the Austrian Empire, the end-of-the-nineteenth-century Krakow turned into a ravishing artistic capital of the partitioned Poland, in which many major cultural posts were held by the self-conscious bohemians and the self-declared decadent modernists, such as Stanisław Przybyszewski, the editor of the major cultural journal *Życie*. Kozakowska-Zauchka, presenting the city’s major bohemian venues and cafés, emphasises the specificity of Krakow’s bohemianism which, belonging to the mainstream of Polish Art Nouveau, enjoyed both noble and bourgeois patronage, and, let us add, forcefully advocated the autonomy art, liberating it from any political imperatives.

Marc Smith’s text, finally, by taking us out of Europe to America, provides yet another perspective on the geography of bohemianism, which flourished in New York from 1860s to 1890s. Imported from Paris by expatriate American artists, it found a fertile ground in New York, the artistic capital of the United States, due to the similarity of socio-economic conditions: an expanding population of writers and artists, a competitive art market and the resulting poverty of many young artists. Smith traces the conflicting reputation of bohemianism represented through novels (such as George Du Maurier’s *Trilby*) and the booming bohemian imagery in the American press, where its condemnation as a world of vice and deprivation was accompanied by its identification with radicalism, independence and creativity. Paradoxically, in spite of the geographical distance, and the seemingly different social and economic circumstances in New York and the Central European capitals, there are many parallels. Smith’s text brings attention to the issues rarely discussed in the context of French bohemianism, such as the perceived overlap between bohemianism and Orientalism. His emphasis on the crafty and performative

nature of bohemianism, which would be turned into a script, a part to play in front of other artists, but abandoned for the sake of a businessman's suit outside the studio, helps to see the phenomenon of bohemianism worldwide as a constantly rewritten

set of rules, shifting codes of behaviour, which, somewhat in a manner comparable to the obliging force of Baldassare Castiglione's *Courtier*, had to be internalised by those who have chosen the careers of artists in the world of the market.

## Bohéma mimo Paríža. Stredná Európa a ďalej

### Resumé

Pojem „bohém“, ako aj geografické a historické súvislosti bohémy sú nejednoznačné. „Bohemia“ je predovšetkým latinské pomenovanie Čiech, prevzaté do ďalších jazykov. Od 15. storočia boli vo Francúzsku slovom *bohémiens* označovaní Cigáni, o ktorých sa predpokladalo, že žili v tejto časti strednej Európy. Od konca 18. storočia bol pojem používaný na pomenovanie „tulákov“ a príslušníkov kriminálneho podsvetia, a od 30. rokov 19. storočia na označenie neformálnych skupín výtvarníkov, básnikov, hudobníkov, filozofov a novinárov, žijúcich na okraji spoločnosti. Zánik starých foriem mecenátu v 19. storočí a následná komercializácia kultúry v spoločnosti ovládanej buržoáziou mali za následok stratu jasne definovanej spoločenskej funkcie tvorca kultúrnych hodnôt a naopak nástup umelca-bohéma, ktorý, zbavený povinnosti oslavovať mecena, pretavil odcudzenie na svojbytnosť a odpor voči existujúcim spoločenským normám a estetickým pravidlám. Nastupujúca bohéma, charakteristická výnimočnou tvorivosťou, rebelantstvom, excentrickosťou a sexuálnou neviazanosťou, sa stala zosobnením odmietania autority a moci, ako aj synekdochou moderného umenia a modernej identity. Hoci „historickým“ hlavným mestom *la bohème* bola Murgerom a Puccinim zvečnená Latinská štvrť v Paríži pred jej prestavbou barónom Hausmannom, od neskorého 19. storočia vznikali bohémske komunity aj vo vzdialenejších parížskych štvrtiach a vo štvrtiach vý-

znamných európskych a amerických miest, napríklad v londýnskom Soho, mníchovskom Schwabingu, v Greenwich Village v New Yorku či vo Venice Beach v Kalifornii, a tiež vo východnej Európe, Latinskej Amerike, Ázii a v ďalších častiach sveta.

Kľúčový význam bohémskej protikultúry pre vznik modernistickej estetickej autonómie a avantgardnej nonkonformnosti a revolty pritiahol pozornosť veľkého počtu odborníkov, ktorí fenomén bohémy skúmali z rôznych uhlov pohľadu, často interdisciplinárne, kombinujúc literatúru, vizuálne umenie, populárnu kultúru, filmy a hudbu, pričom nezriedka prišli k protichodným záverom. Pre Arnolda Hausera, písuceho o Courbetovi, „*bohéma je a ostáva dedičkou estetizujúceho romantizmu*“, pre T. J. Clarka „*bohéma v Paríži okolo polovice 19. storočia bola skutočnou spoločenskou vrstvou, centrom disentu*“, kým pre Jerrolda Seigela je bohéma neoddeliteľná od buržoáznej ideológie. Lisa Tickner sa na bohému nedávno pozrela prizmou Bourdieuovej teórie kultúrneho poľa, pričom sa dotkla doteraz obchádzaných rodových otázok. Marilyn Brown a Sarga Moussa skúmali podobnosť tuláckych umelcov-bohémov s Cigánmi; Mary Gluck poukázala na angažovanie sa bohémy v populárnej kultúre a komerčnej zábave. Elizabeth Wilson, vykročiac mimo magický kruh Paríža a dlhého 19. storočia, preskúmala vzorce diskurzívnej konštrukcie mýtu bohémy, pričom opäť vyzdvihla presvedčenie o jeho spoločenskej a politickej ne-

kompromisnosti a nadnárodnom vplyve. Mike Sell, píšuci o filme, nastolil dlho obchádzaný problém rasového podtextu bohémy, kým Daniel Hurewitz naopak poukázal na jej súbežnosť s hnutím za práva homosexuálov v Los Angeles v prvej polovici 20. storočia. No aj tie štúdie, ktoré rozširujú geografiu bohémy za hranice Paríža, sa len vo veľmi malej miere dotýkajú problematik mimo západnej Európy a Severnej Ameriky.

Ak je základným kameňom bohémskej kultúry mýtus slobody a rebelantstva, pripisovaný tuláckemu životu Cigánov, potom zmätenie pojmov, ktoré stotožnilo Cigánov s obyvateľmi Čiech, nastoľuje ďalšie otázky o metaforickej a skutočnej geografii bohémy. Predpokladá skúmanie latentných stredo/východoeurópskych konotácií parížskej bohémy, ktoré sú prítomné v asociácii rodiska bohémy s „Bohemiou“ – Českom, vzdialenou, exotickou krajinou na okraji Európy. Mýtus bohémy možno v tejto súvislosti skúmať ako špecifický prejav orientalizmu (viď štúdiá Marca Smitha nižšie), ktorý je – podobne ako primitivizmus – poháňaný skôr túžbami než odporom, a ktorý využíva konštruované znaky kultúrnej inakosti ako subjektívny postoj nového rebelského Ja. Svojoľná apropriácia pojmu „Bohémsky“ je nevyhnutne nasledovaná jeho prepisom na „bohémsky“, čím sa geografická identita nahrádza identitou sociokultúrnou, pripisovanou Cigánom a tulákom. Teritórium je zamenené za nomádsku masu, usídľujúcu sa v Paríži. „Pôvodné“ (hoci chybné) priestorové ukotvenie pojmu „bohémsky“ sa s novou generáciou parížskych bohémov postupne stratilo. Mal tento lingvistický posun nejaký dopad na kultúrne asociácie historického a geografického pojmu „Bohemia“, používaného počas 19. storočia? Bola historická Bohemia, začlenená do habsburskej monarchie a zbavená politickej suverenity, prítomná pri vzniku či ovplyvnená vznikom parížskej bohémy? Ako ďaleko bola Bohemia od *la bohème*?

Uvedené otázky odkazujú na osobitý súbor výskumných projektov zameraných na spôsoby prijímania bohémских životných štýlov, sformovaných v Paríži v 30. rokoch 19. storočia, „skutočnými“ Bohémami – Čechmi a možno aj susednými Moravanmi, ako aj obyvateľmi okolitých krajín, ktorí s vyššie menovanými zdieľali osud národov bez po-

litických slobôd, teda Slováckmi, Maďarmi, Poliakmi, tiež Rumunmi, Slovincami, Chorvátmi a Srbmi. Do akej miery bola politická nesloboda jednotiacim faktorom, sťažujúcim oslobodzovanie sa od spoločenských noriem a tiež spomaľujúcim snahy o estetickú autonómiu v oblasti strednej a východnej Európy? Bola prítomnosť buržoázie kľúčovou podmienkou nástupu bohémy ako jej náprotivku? Otázky pribúdajú: Kto bol protivníkom stredo- a východoeurópskej bohémy? Aký bol vzťah medzi konštituovaním slovanských identít v dobe herderiánskych národných obrození a fascináciou cigánskym životným štýlom a identitou? A ďalej, aký bol vzťah medzi týmto záujmom o etnickosť a odporom voči rastúcej východoeurópskej židovskej menšine, ktorá mala tiež svoje miesto v rámci bohémских komunít? Do akej miery vychádzali bohémские životné štýly, prijaté v polovici 19. storočia v strednej Európe, z parížskeho centra? Kedy a kým boli tieto nekonvenčné postoje identifikované ako bohémские? Ako bol pojem „bohémsky“ preložený do miestnych jazykov? Je stredo- a východoeurópska bohéma stotožniteľná s modernosťou či moderným umením?

Toto číslo časopisu *Ars* znamená začiatok dlho očakávaného skúmania stredo- a východoeurópskych variantov bohémy, a to vo vzťahu k Paríži, ako aj ďalším centrá, ktoré prijali francúzsky bohémsky životný štýl, ako napríklad New York. Hoci sa pôvodne zdalo, že táto pomerne marginálna problematika priláka predovšetkým miestnych odborníkov, snažiacich sa doplniť pramene nadnárodnej bohémy, nakoniec téma prekvapivo pritiahla pozornosť autorov z mnohých vedných disciplín a svetových akademických centier, od Kalifornie až po Nový Zéland, nevynechajúc Spojené kráľovstvo a Francúzsko, a prirodzene ani Maďarsko, Českú republiku a Poľsko. Stredo- a východoeurópska perspektíva sa ukázala ako ideálna pre revíziu bohémских štúdií, a to nielen vďaka rozšíreniu priestorového záberu či pridaniu nových mien excentrických umelcov a ich obľúbených kaviarní, ale aj vďaka nastoleniu nových politických a sociálnych otázok a tiež problému znepokojujúcej podobnosti bohémov a Cigánov, čím sa pre ďalšie skúmanie otvorila takmer neprebádaná oblasť vzťahu bohémy a rasovej predpojatosti.

*Preklad z angličtiny M. Hrdina*

## Bohemian Artists and “Real Bohemians”. Life as Spectacle in Hugo’s *Notre-Dame de Paris* and Gautier’s *Les Jeunes-France*

Karen TURMAN

In the nineteenth century, the bohemian artist became a recognized figure representing a counterculture of artists, musicians, poets and writers, as well as a literary archetype objectified in art and literature. This figure defied categorical definition by refusing to subscribe to the mainstream norms of the bourgeois-ruled society in nineteenth-century Paris. However, the very notion of escaping any categorical definition contradicts the design of this new counterculture. The members of this culture did in fact define themselves rather specifically: many critics argue that these bohemian artists originally modeled their own lifestyle after that of the Gypsy, or Tsigane. The term “bohemian”<sup>1</sup> was an erroneous label for these nomadic outsiders who were originally believed by the French to have arrived from the territory then known as Bohemia.<sup>2</sup> The name was in turn adopted by this youthful artistic counterculture, its members typically originating from a bourgeois upbringing. The bohemian artists aspired to appropriate the performance-driven, nomadic, and exotic lifestyle of the Gypsy as they interpreted it: they idealized the mysticism surrounding this poetic figure, a seemingly free spirit wandering along the outskirts of modern society, yet part of his or her own social structure and tradition. Why was the Gypsy thus mythologized

during the nineteenth century, and to what extent does this poetic description of the “real” bohemian hold true?

The Gypsy’s lifestyle became sensationalized during the nineteenth century as a symbol of independence from the constraints of society as asserted by eminent gypsiologist François de Vaux de Foletier in his 1981 study, *Les Bobémiens en France au XIXème siècle*: “Le mythe de la liberté. Le Bobémien paraît échapper à toute contrainte: il erre sans but apparent, sans autre souci, dirait-on, que de se divertir lui-même en divertissant les autres. Il jouit d’un prestige: la musique. Il attire et il inquiète. Dans le livre ou dans la presse, il figure couramment sous des épithètes qui ont un grand pouvoir sur le public: ‘étrange’, ‘mystérieux’, ‘secret’, ‘énigmatique’, ‘ésotérique’, ‘ténébreux’, ‘insolite’. Il ne cesse pas d’exercer sur le monde qui l’environne une singulière fascination. Le Tsigane le sait, et paradoxalement, si on l’interroge, il se pare volontiers de cette auréole de mystère.”<sup>3</sup>

Vaux de Foletier outlines the various pieces that together construct the mythologized image of the Gypsy figure by focusing on a curiosity inspired by the enigma of this nomadic character: one who appears to act as he pleases, entertaining himself and others as he seems to wander aimlessly from place to place. According to Vaux de Foletier, the Gypsy’s

<sup>1</sup> For an in depth analysis of the etymological history of the term “bohemian” as referring to the nineteenth-century French artist, see RYKWERT, J.: The Constitution of Bohemia. In: *Res: Anthropology and Aesthetics*, 1997, No. 31 (The Abject), pp. 112-113.

<sup>2</sup> WILSON, E.: *Bobemians, the Glamorous Outcasts*. London 2002, p. 21.

<sup>3</sup> VAUX DE FOLETIER, F.: *Les Bobémiens en France au XIXème siècle*. Paris 1981, p. 229.

main artistic value is found in his music, which he uses to create both a fascinating and disquieting persona for outside observers. It is no wonder that the new generation of artists in Paris emerging in the 1830s subscribed to this myth: the enigma, danger, and indefinability of the Gypsy figure were clearly attractive to this ephemerally sensitive artistic counterculture. However, what historical truth can be discovered behind this glorified façade of the wandering enigma and how far did the bohemian artist succeed in the appropriation of the Gypsy figure's lifestyle?

During the nineteenth century there existed over one million Gypsies worldwide and roughly between 2.000 – 6.000 living in France.<sup>4</sup> Whether or not the bohemian artist observed these “real bohemians”, or merely glorified the idea of the image of their ostensibly “adventurous” and “carefree” lifestyle, and how they seemed to live “*simply, and wholly for the moment*”,<sup>5</sup> scholars of both Bohemian Paris and Gypsy cultures tend to agree that there exist undeniable parallels between the “*real bohemian*”, art historian Marilyn Brown's label for the Gypsy figure, and the bohemian artist figure. In his book, *Les Tsiganes* (1962), a study of the Gypsy culture in France based on archival research and personal experience, Jean-Paul Clébert interprets the seductive qualities of the Gypsy myth for the often solitary writer, trapped in his tiny top floor apartment seeking artistic inspiration: “*Sédentaires avant tout, pour ne pas dire casaniers, les poètes du romantisme ont chanté les nostalgies que la présence de ces nomades éveillait au cœur de leur univers enclos. L'amour et la liberté, la réaction contre la monotonie et la routine, le goût de la nouveauté, de l'imprévu, du risque ont entraîné non seulement d'authentiques vagabonds intellectuels, mais la plupart des écrivains de cabinet à la quête d'un nouveau monde intérieur.*”<sup>6</sup>

While the acts of writing and painting tend to be quite sedentary, it is only natural that these artists and poets latched on to the wanderlust ideal, dreaming of the possible poetic inspiration that could be found

while traveling to new and exotic places. It was the risk of living without a daily routine, of regularly discovering new and unfamiliar places, of answering to the spontaneity and unexpected that can only come to those true vagabonds. Yet, as the bohemian artists' work did not require a truly itinerant lifestyle, in order to appropriate this freedom of mobility, they interpreted the nomadism in other ways.

In her book, *Bohemians, the Glamorous Outcasts*, Elizabeth Wilson describes the obsession of young artists desiring to live outside of mainstream society, isolated from the constraints of the world they knew that rejected their new unconventional customs. Wilson mentions several ways in which the bohemian artist appropriated his interpretation of the Gypsy's lifestyle to better cultivate his own artistic identity: “*They were a new race of nomads, whose wandering life from attic to attic, and moonlight flits to avoid paying rent, made them seem like the popular stereotype of gypsies. Like gypsies they moved outside the normal restrictions of society; like gypsies they dressed with ragged flamboyance; like gypsies they rejected honest toil and thrift, preferring to live on their wits; and, just as the gypsies scraped a living by the exploitation of their suspect skills as fortune-tellers, confidence-tricksters, entertainers and even magicians, so new bands of writers and painters produced artefacts that seemed incomprehensible and therefore alarming, often immoral and sometimes disturbingly magical. The vocation of artist became tainted with the social and moral ambiguity formerly attached to performers, wanderers and mountebanks, an association that further increased the ambiguity of the bohemian role.*”<sup>7</sup>

In this concise yet comprehensive comparison of the Gypsy to the bohemian artist, Wilson outlines the parallels of entertainment, poetry and art, nomadic wanderings and a marginalized existence. Even the bohemian artist's appearance was modeled after the Gypsy's with its “*ragged flamboyance*”. While this claim fits with the discourse of Bohemian Paris, I aim to further investigate the various characteristics of the Gypsy female figure, both literal and metaphoric, that the bohemian artist allegedly borrowed for the

<sup>4</sup> Statistics cited from nineteenth-century historian and gypsiologist Paul Bataillard's article, BATAILLARD, P.: Les Bohémiens ou Tsiganes à Paris. In: *Paris Guide par les principaux écrivains et artistes de la France: Deuxième Partie*. Paris 1867, p. 1110.

<sup>5</sup> SEIGEL, J.: *Bohemian Paris. Culture, Politics, and the Boundaries of Bourgeois Life, 1930 – 1930*. New York 1986, p. 24.

<sup>6</sup> CLEBERT, J.-P.: *Les Tsiganes*. Paris 1976, p. 117.

<sup>7</sup> WILSON 2002 (see in note 2), p. 21.

construction of his own identity. Wilson asserts the choice of the bohemian artist to adopt the lifestyle of performer and entertainer, a trait commonly associated with Gypsies and other marginalized characters associated with a morally ambiguous existence in the streets. While she argues that the Gypsies themselves “*rejected honest toil and thrift, preferring to live on their wits*”, and therefore exploited their skills such as the women’s practice of magic and dance performances for profit in the streets, how exactly does this translate to the bohemian artist’s lifestyle? The bohemian artists were often depicted as writers, painters, musicians and sculptors, however, in what way can these seemingly solitary and private vocations be interpreted as “entertainment” or “performance”? While Wilson focuses on the often controversial subject matter of these new bands of artists and writers, whose “*artefacts... seemed incomprehensible and therefore alarming, often immoral and sometimes disturbingly magical*”, this statement still does not address the possible connection between the Gypsy’s public exploitation of her skills to the conceptualization of the artist’s life as a public spectacle which he equally utilizes for his artistic purposes. As Henri Murger states in the preface to *Scènes de la vie de bohème* (1851), “*leur existence de chaque jour est une œuvre de génie*”,<sup>8</sup> art for the bohemian artists was not merely a product, but a process involving one’s entire daily existence. Was this also a trait appropriated from the “real bohemians”? Or was it rather the product of the constructed myth surrounding the Gypsy figure, projected onto the Gypsy in order to create and justify a modern artistic identity? I will explore these questions by analogizing the Gypsy figure of La Esmeralda in Victor Hugo’s *Notre-Dame de Paris* with Théophile Gautier’s *Les Jeunes-France*, analyzing the myth of the female Gypsy as public entertainer and spectacular object through historical accounts from the nineteenth century. Born in an era of revolutions, this first phase of Bohemianism during the July Monarchy was arguably the turning point of the identity of the artist, whether or not its participants were conscious of becoming what would later be known as Bohemian Paris. Lead primarily

by Gautier, this artistic counterculture practiced subversiveness through spectacle, appearance, and a dramatized lifestyle in public.

The Gypsy culture has been on public display for the French since its first entry into Paris in the fifteenth century. In *De l’apparition et de la dispersion des Bohémiens en Europe* (1844), Paul Bataillard describes the Gypsies as a curious public spectacle from this first moment: “*Ceux qui parurent à Paris, en 1427, et qui, logés à La Chapelle, excitèrent si vivement la curiosité publique, n’étaient guère plus nombreux.*”<sup>9</sup> While Bataillard’s ground-breaking study tends to focus mainly on dates and statistics, his mention of the Gypsies exciting “*si vivement la curiosité publique*” indicates the extent to which the public was taken in by this unfamiliar culture. The key words “*curiosity*” and “*public*” are used in the *Oxford English Dictionary*’s definition of spectacle: “*A person or thing exhibited to, or set before, the public gaze as an object either (a) of curiosity or contempt, or (b) of marvel or admiration.*”<sup>10</sup> In addition to denoting an entertaining show set in a public arena, the word “*spectacle*” implies a garnering of public interest, whether contemptuous or admiring, a combination thereof derived from inquisitiveness. Either way, the Gypsies created an impact in the public eye of France as object of the spectator’s “curious” gaze. Two years after Bataillard’s text was printed, Englishman George Borrow published his account of living among the Gypsies in Spain in his book, *Zincali*, a subsequent text to the best-selling travel journal describing his missionary endeavors on the Iberian Peninsula entitled *The Bible in Spain* (1843). Although he chooses to focus primarily on the Gitanos, or Gypsy culture in Spain, which comprised the greatest population of Gypsies in Europe, Borrow does mention the “real bohemians” of France. Nineteenth-century research reveals that the Gypsies of Spain most likely entered through France and therefore exhibit a similar culture. According to Borrow, upon this first entry in 1427: “*They took up their quarters in La Chapelle, whither the people flocked in crowds to visit them. They had their ears pierced, from which depended a ring of silver; their hair was black and crispy, and*

<sup>8</sup> MURGER, H.: *Scènes de la vie de bohème*. Paris 1998 (1<sup>st</sup> ed. 1851), p. 41.

<sup>9</sup> BATAILLARD, P.: *De l’apparition et de la dispersion des Bohémiens en Europe*. Paris 1844, p. 36.

<sup>10</sup> *Oxford English Dictionary*. Oxford 2011, www.oed.com.

their women were filthy to a degree, and were sorceresses who told fortunes.”<sup>11</sup> It is this first glimpse of the Gypsies’ outlandish appearance to the French that attracts their attention, thus creating a spectacle enhanced by “flocking crowds” coming to visit them. At this point, their appearance alone is enough to constitute a show for the Parisians: pierced ears, dark flowing hair, and unkempt women resembling sorceresses to the French observers. These physical attributes attracted the crowd to the Gypsies who in turn entertained their visitors with fortune-telling, according to Borrow.

While clothing and appearance merely designate a superficial aspect of one’s identity, it is often the easiest and most instantaneous way to make a statement. The first generation of bohemian artists also used their appearance, albeit in a self-conscious way, to create a theatrical expression in public. Many scholars recognize the bohemian artist’s identity as beginning to solidify during the 1830s, with the opening night of Victor Hugo’s *Hernani*, February 25, 1830, as the symbolic moment of precipitation. In an effort to defend his Romantic play against the Classicist audience, Hugo enlisted his friends to attend the opening, assigning each specific reactionary roles to execute during the performance in an effort to combat the anticipated disgust of the conservative public. This crowd of supporters, or the “Romantic Army”, went above and beyond merely supporting Hugo’s romantic ideals by presenting themselves in an anti-fashion conglomeration of looks and styles from all eras, composed of vivid mismatching colors and outdated cuts, topped off with long hair and beards. Théophile Gautier’s ostentatious crimson coat was perhaps the most legendary and symbolic of these outlandish costumes donned by the burgeoning bohemian artists that night. The appearance of the “Romantic Army”, and their subsequent gestures and actions throughout the performance of *Hernani* made more of an impact than the actual theatrical performance itself: Gautier’s red coat exemplified a *mise en abyme*, a drama in real life as a theatrical per-

formance in the context of a theatrical performance. In her book, *Popular Bohemia. Modernism and Urban Culture in Nineteenth-Century Paris* (2005), Mary Gluck views this moment of the opening of *Hernani* as defining this first generation of bohemian artists, known as “Les Jeunes France”: she emphasizes the influence of Gautier on the event, his presence in the audience and his showy appearance, rather than the play itself. She describes this new generation of artists as differing from the older generation of Romanticists primarily in that their appearance and lifestyle were more significant and identifying than their actual work: “They performed their identities through outrageous gestures, eccentric clothes, and subversive lifestyles that came to be associated with a distinctive phenomenon: the artist’s life.”<sup>12</sup> While Hugo’s play in itself was a significant statement of the assertion of Romanticism as literary movement, the conclusion of the opening night’s more memorable aspect as attributed to the surrounding spectacle of the spectators themselves reveals the symbolic transition of the “artist’s life” as producing greater effect than the product itself.

At this point in time for the bohemian artist culture the process of artistic production was indeed more acutely emphasized than the product of the art. In his seminal book, *Bohemian Paris* (1986), Jerrold Seigel summarizes radical political journalist and statesman Félix Pyat’s critique:<sup>13</sup> “A crowd of young men made themselves up in outlandish costumes, adopted medieval dress and speech in the hope of being recognized as artists. But, in fact, they were only copying some common model and their antics therefore proclaimed their lack of art’s essential quality: originality. Their mania for living out of their own time, with other ideas and other behavior, isolates them from the world, makes them alien and bizarre, puts them outside the law, beyond the reaches of society. They are the Bohemians of today.”<sup>14</sup>

It is the mirroring of another model that Pyat describes as the key element in the bohemian artist’s identity. This figure is in fact subscribing to a chosen ideal whether an outlandish form of dress reminiscent of medieval fashion, or a varied type of speech

<sup>11</sup> BORROW, G.: *The Zincali; or, an Account of the Gypsies of Spain*. London 1846, p. 30.

<sup>12</sup> GLUCK, M.: *Popular Bohemia. Modernism and Urban Culture in Nineteenth-Century Paris*. Cambridge (MA) 2005, p. 27.

<sup>13</sup> PYAT, F.: Les artistes. In: *Nouveau tableau de Paris au XIXème siècle*. Vol. IV. Paris 1834, pp. 1-21.

<sup>14</sup> SEIGEL 1986 (see in note 5), p. 17.

or other superficial quality that could designate him as an artist. Pyat declares these new artists the “*Bohemians of today*”, a statement privileging the idea of the Gypsy culture as their initial primary model: these figures are known for living outside of dominant society, and as historians have concurred, the cultural traditions, livelihood, and appearance of the Gypsies in general have not altered significantly over time and across borders. The bohemian artists aspired to this marginality that the Gypsies inherently possessed which in turn shaped their cultural identity. By beginning with the most visibly and easily attainable aspect of this identity – physical appearance –, the bohemian artists began their appropriation of this spectacular lifestyle in order to establish a continuity with the newly important artistic process superficially surrounding the actual production of art.

This stereotypical predilection for medieval dress and mannerisms by the bohemian artists was parodied by Gautier himself in “*Élias Wildmanstadius, ou l’homme au moyen âge*”, one of the short stories compiling his infamous *Les Jeunes-France* of 1833. These quirky vignettes were written as a rebuttal to a series of articles anonymously published in *Le Figaro* in 1831. The articles derided this new artistic identity, depicting the “*Jeunes-France*” as superficial proprietors of exotic tastes in food and interior decoration, bizarre apparel, and, most importantly, unfounded artistic pretensions. The success of Gautier’s response to *Le Figaro*’s “*Jeunes-France*” was in the self-consciously ironic tone he used while employing the same tactics as the anonymous authors of the attacks in order to exploit the naïveté and self-importance behind this outsider’s critique on Bohemia.

“*Élias Wildmanstadius*” is an exaggeration of the image of the bohemian artist exhibiting a “*mania for living out of [his] own time*”, as Seigel states. This “*pauvre*” character, “*avec cette âme du XV<sup>e</sup> siècle au XIX<sup>e</sup>, ces croyances et ces sympathies d’un autre âge au milieu d’une civilisation égoïste et prosaïque, se trouvait aussi dépaycé qu’un sauvage des bordes de l’Orénoque dans un cercle de fashionables parisiens*”.<sup>15</sup> Wildmanstadius chooses to marginalize himself, isolating his life completely from the modern world by building a medieval fortress complete with tapestries depicting chivalrous adventures, dining

on “*chevaleresque viandes*” such as roasted peacock, donning an entire suit of armor and pointy shoes, reading only books hand-written in gothic lettering (he hated Gutenberg’s invention of the printing press), and contemplating the gothic Notre-Dame de Paris cathedral. The majority of Gautier’s text is dedicated to the minute details of Wildmanstadius’s self-conscious construction of his isolated medievalized existence, yet the actual art that this “*Jeunes-France*” creates is mentioned only in passing in the brief penultimate paragraph: “*Pour tromper son ennui, le bon Elias Wildmanstadius sculptait, avec un canif, de petites cathédrales de liège, peignait des miniatures à la manière gothique, transcrivait de vieilles chroniques, et faisait des portraits de vierges avec des auréoles et des nimbes d’or.*”<sup>16</sup> Here, Wildmanstadius’s artistic production is characterized as a past-time to combat his boredom and assist in his escape from reality, a mere addendum to the artistic lifestyle that takes center stage in this text. Gautier has highlighted a superficially physical trait of the bohemian artist’s glorified image, a taste for medieval dress or ostentatious clothing in general, and extended its meaning to encompass all other artificial aspects related to the theme while simultaneously eclipsing the actual artistic desire and passion behind this gaudy costume.

In light of this fetishizing of medieval culture by *Les Jeunes-France*, Victor Hugo’s *Notre-Dame de Paris* (1831) exemplifies a synthesis of these themes of spectacle, appearance, and medieval culture as related to the bohemian artist’s appropriation of the Gypsy figure’s mythologized lifestyle in the nineteenth century. During the first public spectacle in which the reader discovers La Esmeralda, she is performing her traditional Gypsy dance to the crowd at the Cour des Miracles. While appearance was an essential piece to attracting the curiosity of the public, the Gypsy culture’s traditional activities maintained the public’s interest: according to the historical accounts, the nature of the Gypsy’s street spectacles is often centered on music and dancing. In his book, *Les Tsiganes dans l’Ancienne France* (1961), François de Vaux de Foletier outlines the appeal of the *danse tsigane* to the crowd: “*La danse a toujours été l’une des principales activités tsiganes, et sans doute celle qui plaisait le plus aux publics les plus*

<sup>15</sup> GAUTIER, T.: *Œuvres complètes*. Vol. VII. Genève 1978, p. 202.

<sup>16</sup> Ibidem, p. 209.

divers. *Les petites danseuses agiles, au tintement des grelots cousus à leurs ceintures ou tenus à leurs doigts, enchantaient les spectateurs.*<sup>17</sup> According to Vaux de Foletier, this dancing tends to please a wide variety of spectators, each drawn to the agile movement accentuated by the bells the dancers wore on their belts and fingers. The combination of the colorful and loose flowing costumes as discussed above along with the sparkling bells emphasizes the mesmerizing visual aspect of the dance while the “*tintement*” of the bells with the music completes the multi-sensorial experience for the spectator. Borrow also asserts that “*the girls might be seen bounding in lascivious dance in the streets of many a town*”,<sup>18</sup> adding a lustful and lewd connotation to the English spectator’s perspective of the dance. While this ostensibly “lascivious” nature to the dance would indeed attract the public’s curiosity, Clébert’s analysis of the *danse tsigane* focuses more on the ritualistic origins, most likely connected to the sacred dance practices of India, from where the Gypsy tribes were said to have originated: “*Avec la musique, la danse est une des premières activités attribuées aux Tsiganes et elle n’a cessé d’avoir chez eux une importance considérable. Il est... probable que l’origine des danses tsiganes soit également rituelle, qu’elles représentent, en quelque sorte, une canalisation des danses sacrées de l’Inde védique. On retrouve, dans le temps et dans l’espace, des traces de danse à fonction non religieuse mais magique.*”<sup>19</sup>

Clébert’s statement that, although ritualistic, the dance is less a function of religious purposes than magic relates back to the prevailing idea in the nineteenth century that Gypsies maintain a connectivity with witchcraft and sorcery. This concept of ritual and magic also connotes a deeper intention behind the act of dancing for the Gypsy women: although perceived as a spectacle for entertainment purposes, the execution of the dance is primarily an ingrained tradition cultivated by the Gypsy culture before constituting a spectacle for the public curiosity. As we shall see in Hugo’s *Notre-Dame de Paris*, the organically spiritual aspect of the dance influences the spectacu-

lar execution, revealing an “honest” and engaging artistic product for the audience to behold.

Hugo emphasizes the significance of generating a spectacle through music and dance in the Gypsy culture with the introduction of La Esmeralda, the mythologized Tsigane character whose inspired performance provides a critical model for the bohemian artist figure’s artistic values. “*Dans un vaste espace laissé libre entre la foule et le feu, une jeune fille dansait. Si cette jeune fille était un être humain, ou une fée, ou un ange, c’est ce que Gringoire, tout philosophe sceptique, tout poète ironique qu’il était, ne put décider dans le premier moment, tant il fut fasciné par cette éblouissante vision... Elle dansait, elle tournait, elle tourbillonnait sur un vieux tapis de Perse, jeté négligemment sous ses pieds; et chaque fois qu’en tournoyant sa rayonnante figure passait devant vous, ses grands yeux noirs vous jetaient un éclair. Autour d’elle tous les regards étaient fixés, toutes les bouches ouvertes; et en effet, tandis qu’elle dansait ainsi, au bourdonnement du tambour de basque que ses deux bras ronds et purs élevaient au-dessus de sa tête, mince, frêle et vive comme une guêpe, avec son corsage d’or sans pli, sa robe bariolée qui se gonflait, avec ses épaules nues, ses jambes fines que sa jupe découvrait par moments, ses cheveux noirs, ses yeux de flamme, c’était une surnaturelle créature.*”<sup>20</sup>

Captivated by this spectacle, the anonymous crowd comprises “*un kaléidoscope humain*”,<sup>21</sup> a complex collection of diverse observers each reacting to and engaging with the Gypsy’s show. La Esmeralda’s seemingly exotic appearance entices the crowd, with her “*tapis de Perse*”, her “*tambour de Basque*”, her “*yeux noirs*” that match her “*cheveux noirs*”, and her colorful dress that falls off of her slight body, providing glimpses of bare shoulders and legs to further sensualize her dance performance. While these physical attributes enhance the mesmerizing quality of the spectacle, La Esmeralda’s dancing is the most intriguing aspect of the performance: her dancing dominates this “*vaste espace*” in the middle of the crowd, taking ownership of this public stage with its constant turning and swirling movement, allowing her gaze to connect briefly with each specta-

<sup>17</sup> VAUX DE FOLETIER, F.: *Les Tsiganes dans l’ancienne France*. Paris 1961, p. 107.

<sup>18</sup> BORROW 1846 (see in note 11), p. 33.

<sup>19</sup> CLEBERT 1976 (see in note 6), p. 146.

<sup>20</sup> HUGO, V.: *Notre Dame de Paris, 1482 et Les Travailleurs de la mer*. Paris 1975, pp. 62-63.

<sup>21</sup> Ibidem, p. 49.

tor in this anonymous crowd. Her “*rayonnante figure*” and gaze that “*vous [jetait] un éclair*” mark an image of brilliance: it is as though her own organically performative expression were engendering the illuminating spotlight for the theatrical stage, creating a show out of nothing by engaging with the crowd’s energy and the rhythms of the “*tambour de Basque*”. La Esmeralda’s magnetic performance enraptures her audience, rendering them unflinchingly attentive: “*tous les regards étaient fixes*” and “*toutes les bouches ouvertes*”. The Gypsy figure in this scene holds an almost bewitching power over the crowd through her movement, specifically through the eyes of Pierre Gringoire, the artist figure of Hugo’s novel.

This description of La Esmeralda’s dance performance is situated within the context of the crowd observing Gringoire’s *mystère*, a juxtaposition that highlights the contrasting performative qualities of the mythologized “real bohemian” and the bohemian artist figure.<sup>22</sup> The Gypsy’s success at captivating the crowd eclipses the failure of Gringoire’s art in this public arena: La Esmeralda simply executes her organically traditional dance to enthrall her audience while Gringoire finds himself the only attentive member of his play’s audience. It is Gringoire’s fascination with La Esmeralda’s subsequent performance that magnifies this relationship between the bohemian artist figure and the Gypsy figure. He is held spellbound by her even before acknowledging that she is in fact a Gypsy: “*C’est une salamandre, c’est une nymphe, c’est une déesse, c’est une bacchante du mont Ménaléen!*”<sup>23</sup> Her image evolves inside the poet’s mind, embodying the ideals of the bohemian artist figure who is constantly redefining his art and therefore identity. Although later Gringoire seems to prefer La Esmeralda’s pet goat, Djali, he still admits to a certain curiosity about her charm and disposi-

tion: “[*C’était*] une créature inoffensive et charmante, jolie, ... naïve et passionnée, ignorante de tout, et enthousiaste de tout; folle surtout de danse, de bruit, de grand air; ... elle devait cette nature à la vie errante qu’elle avait toujours menée.”<sup>24</sup>

In Hugo’s text, we see the artist figure’s fascination with the Gypsy figure, viewed as passionate about art, unattached and attracted to the open road, and above all naïve and innocent of the constraints of dominant society. She charms the artist with this perceived purity of devotion to her art and lifestyle, living outside of mainstream culture and seemingly unaware of the torments of societal obligation and responsibility. Zealously devoted to art and the freedom and vivacity of the outside world, La Esmeralda is the ultimate model performer that Gringoire studies and reveres.

Although Hugo’s first description of La Esmeralda is derived from the context of a conventional spectacle, throughout the text the Gypsy figure is continuously on a metaphorical stage. Seldom is she mentioned without constituting the focus of an audience, whether it be Quasimodo watching her while she is sleeping in a corner of the cathedral, “*Cela ne vous fait pas de mal, n’est-ce pas, que je vienne vous voir dormir?*”<sup>25</sup> or Phoebus Châteaupers and his fellow aristocratic friends who invite “*la jolie danseuse qui danse là sur le pavé, et qui tambourine au milieu des bourgeois manants!*”<sup>26</sup> up to their domestic space for a private show. During the trial scenes, La Esmeralda and her goat, Djali, are again on public display, forming a spectacle with a captive audience in the courtroom. The reactive shoutings of the crowd in this scene are reminiscent of the vocalizations which occurred in the opening scene of La Esmeralda’s introduction during the “Fête des Fous”: “*Les sarcasmes pleuvaient sur l’Égyptienne, et la bienveillance hautaine, et les regards méchants*”, “*une misérable danseuse de place publique!*”, “*sa*

<sup>22</sup> Rachel Killick analyzes the larger concept of “The Novel as Drama” in *Notre-Dame de Paris*, exploring each theatrical element of the narrative while examining La Esmeralda’s theatrical presence within the context of the whole novel: “*Notre-Dame de Paris opens with a play, has a dramatist as anchor-man for a large part of the opening narrative and a dancer/singer as its heroine, and contains numerous scenes where one character spies on or observes another in a mise en abyme of the whole technique of theatre. Significantly, though, the formal play, elevated literally and metaphorically above the heads of the mass audience, is a failure, whereas private dramas and the informal entertainment of the streets are*

*endlessly gripping.*” – KILLICK, R.: *Victor Hugo: Notre-Dame de Paris*. Glasgow 1994, p. 71.

<sup>23</sup> HUGO 1975 (see in note 20), p. 63.

<sup>24</sup> Ibidem, p. 255.

<sup>25</sup> Ibidem, p. 366.

<sup>26</sup> Ibidem, p. 240.

*chèvre fait des momeries très miraculeuses*”, “*charmeresse*”, and “*bohémienne de l’enfer!*”<sup>27</sup> These acerbic accusatory statements rely on assumptions of the Gypsy myth such as witchcraft and a lack of morals, echoed from La Esmeralda’s aforementioned introductory scene: “*Il y a de la sorcellerie là-dessous, dit une voix sinistre dans la foule.*”<sup>28</sup> The parallels of these two scenes further extend to a spontaneous dance performance in the tribunal: “*La bohémienne dansait. Elle faisait tourner son tambourin à la pointe de son doigt, et le jetait en l’air en dansant des sarabandes provençales; agile, légère, joyeuse et ne sentant pas le poids du regard redoutable qui tombait à plomb sur sa tête.*”<sup>29</sup> Thus the Gypsy performer is required to act as spectacle to an attentive audience that is all too ready to condemn her to death. Although the context of performance is completely different in this passage, La Esmeralda’s devotion to her art is unflinching: she presents her dance evenly with the subtle nuances and joyful energy that she projects regularly in the public square, completely absorbed in the temporality of her art to the point that she is able to ignore the heavy condemnation of the spectators.

Even private moments in La Esmeralda’s life form part of the spectacle, providing a multi-dimensional moral aspect to her otherwise bewitching public demeanor. In the course of the trial, for instance, the public glimpses an intimate moment of La Esmeralda offering the hunchback a drink of water, to which he reacts by shedding a single tear: “*C’eût été partout un spectacle touchant que cette belle fille, fraîche, pure, charmante, et si faible en même temps, ainsi pieusement accourue au secours de tant de misère, de difformité et de méchanceté. Sur un pilori, ce spectacle était sublime.*”<sup>30</sup> This tender and sympathetic gesture towards the

deformed outcast, yet another marginalized character in the text, obliges the audience to doubt its preconceived ideas about the Gypsy character. The audience’s curiosity for this multi-faceted heroine is thus heightened as this scene contradicts the generally perceived lack of morality among “real bohemians”. Quasimodo is not the only character in *Notre-Dame de Paris* to benefit from the Gypsy’s benevolence: the poet, Gringoire, is saved from *les truands* by La Esmeralda and in turn proselytizes her altruistic qualities: “*Ce que c’est que la Esmeralda? Une céleste créature! Une danseuse des rues! Tant et si peu! C’est elle qui a donné le coup de grâce à mon mystère ce matin, c’est elle qui me sauve la vie ce soir. Mon mauvais génie! Mon bon ange!*”<sup>31</sup> Gringoire discovers the intimation of depth behind the street dancer’s façade acknowledging her kindness as equally powerful as her performative abilities. La Esmeralda reveals her fundamental generosity towards other poor individuals, perhaps out of compassion for fellow marginalized figures, or merely as pure goodwill towards humankind, a clear contradiction to the lack of morality used in the traditional definition of the real bohemian.<sup>32</sup>

According to nineteenth-century historians, the morality of the real bohemian culture was considered suspect, and therefore the representation of La Esmeralda’s benevolence in *Notre-Dame de Paris* is a break from the prevailing views on the Gypsy culture. “*Gypsies are not a Christian people, and... their morality is of a peculiar kind, not calculated to afford much edification to what is generally termed the respectable portion of society,*” states Borrow in *Zincali*.<sup>33</sup> Although in *The Bible in Spain* Borrow claims to have successfully promoted his Bible translated into the Romany language to many Gypsy tribes throughout Spain, historical ac-

<sup>27</sup> Ibidem, pp. 246-249.

<sup>28</sup> Ibidem, p. 64.

<sup>29</sup> Ibidem, p. 251.

<sup>30</sup> Ibidem, p. 233.

<sup>31</sup> Ibidem, p. 97.

<sup>32</sup> Rachel Killick further develops this idea, synthesizing the ways in which both La Esmeralda’s dance performance, her physical beauty, and her benevolent actions act as a spiritual beacon in a dark world dominated by corruption and devoid

of religion: “*Esmeralda is not merely an example of persecuted virginity, but the embodiment of the sublime, of a perfect beauty and goodness which cannot long survive the encounter with the realities of a fallen world. Gringoire sees her first as a shining vision, moving in a space separated from the crowd, whom she holds under her spell... Her physical beauty signifies spiritual election. Her dancing and singing have the power to make her audience forget their troubles... Her acts of altruistic kindness, the rescue of Gringoire from the truands, the succour extended to Quasimodo on the pillory, provide a rare gleam of light in a world of cruelty and indifference, and she is venerated first by the truands and subsequently by Quasimodo for her qualities of gentleness and compassion.*” – KILLICK 1994 (see in note 22), p. 49.

<sup>33</sup> BORROW 1846 (see in note 11), p. ix.

counts have established that most Gypsies were not of the Christian faith, but rather followed a religion comprised of astrological elements and their own mythology.<sup>34</sup> In a largely Catholic country like France or Spain, it is no surprise that these clans were often considered immoral, and their perceived tendencies towards certain crimes further supported this stereotype: “*The crimes of which these people were originally accused were various, but the principal were theft, sorcery, and causing disease among the cattle; and there is every reason for supposing that in none of these points they were altogether guiltless.*”<sup>35</sup> Some went as far as to believe that the crimes of the Gypsies included stealing children: “*Their wickedness ascending to such a pitch, that they steal children, and carry them for sale to Barbary.*”<sup>36</sup> Although to support this stereotype in my research I have only found this one statement by Borrow, citing a discourse addressed by Doctor Sancho de Moncada to Philip III, the myth prevailed widely enough to provide the climactic twist in Hugo’s story of La Esmeralda.

In Book 11, Chapter 1 (“Le Petit Soulier”), La Esmeralda learns her true identity: she is Agnès, La Sachette’s daughter who was stolen by the Gypsies sixteen years previous. This discovery that La Esmeralda was not a Gypsy by birth indicates that she was artificially cultivated in this culture in order to exemplify the identity of the Gypsy street performer in the novel. This confusion of race and origin puts into question the validity of the myth of the Gypsy figure: the use of a French citizen turned *bohémienne* to exemplify the ideals of the Gypsy culture as aspiration for the bohemian artist figure is a hopeful statement for the artistic counterculture. This construction of the Gypsy figure as originally of French descent functions as the ultimate appropriation of the myth of the Gypsy figure for the identity of the bohemian artist figure. La Esmeralda is a bohemian artist herself, with such a mastery of the artificially attained Gypsy lifestyle that she unconsciously fools all of the characters in the novel until the great reveal of her true identity in “Le Petit Soulier”. Her appropriation is indeed so complete that she believes this alternative identity herself, never questioning her

bohemian roots until this moment with La Sachette. This creates a *mise en abyme* of the bohemian poet figure in the text: first through Gringoire who idealizes La Esmeralda’s art and in turn the Gypsy figure herself who embodies the perfect stolen image of the Tsigane culture. This conceptualization speaks to the projected ideal (La Esmeralda) and the execution in practice (Gringoire) of the bohemian artist ideal. Gringoire, with his failed play and incomplete passions (he relinquishes the idea of consummating his marriage with La Esmeralda and focuses instead on his affection for her pet goat), represents the affected bohemian artist, unsuccessful in his artistic endeavors yet bolstering a quirky lifestyle. Conversely, La Esmeralda is a successful bohemian artist because she lives her entire life, public and private, as a spectacle that captivates her various audiences, never wavering from her complete devotion to her art, even when under pressure at the tribunal, which constitutes another type of performance with a tragic outcome. As an idealized bohemian artist figure, she both lives and dies on the metaphorical stage: she is condemned to death due to her projected public image as a seductive Gypsy, hanging dramatically in the public square as her last performance.

As La Esmeralda embodies the bohemian artist’s ideal of the ubiquitously spectacularized character, living her life organically as if on a stage at each moment and truly fulfilling her “everyday life” as a “work of genius”, the artificial appropriation and potentially subsequent failure of this concept by the bohemian artist figure is exemplified in another of Gautier’s short stories from *Les Jeunes-France*: “Celle-ci et Celle-là”. This parody of a parody is an exaggeration of the desire for this idealization of life as spectacle, both public and private. Rodolphe, Gautier’s poet hero, discovers that while he is well equipped with the necessary superficial qualities of a true poet, he still lacks passion behind his work and thus decides to seek an ideal mistress for this purpose. He attempts to artificially stage drama in his life in order to find this artistic inspiration, yet fails at each step in the process. It is the calculated scripting of his life, a self-conscious aspiration to

<sup>34</sup> CLEBERT 1976 (see in note 6), pp. 165-173.

<sup>35</sup> BORROW 1846 (see in note 11), p. 11.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 100.

create the passion believed necessary to produce valid art, that exemplifies the bohemian artist's exploitation of the artistic process and surrounding lifestyle as privileged over the artistic product. "*Il pensait qu'il était beau garçon, majeur et poète, et, de ces trois pensées, une pensée unique surgit victorieusement comme une conséquence forcée, c'est qu'il lui fallait une passion, non une passion épicière et bourgeoise, mais une passion d'artiste, une passion volcanique et échevelée, qu'il ne lui manquait que cela pour compléter sa tournure; et le poser dans le monde sur un pied convenable.*"<sup>37</sup>

Rodolphe is quite aware of his physical charms (or at least has inflated them), which one can assume he has cultivated to represent the proper image of a bohemian artist at this point. With appearance, it is relatively simple to construct an appropriate look, however Rodolphe's issue is the lack of an intangible trait: passion. Just as he is able to construct his look "*de jeune premier byronien*",<sup>38</sup> and thus ironically transform himself into an original by copying a pre-existing model, Rodolphe assumes he can just as easily construct poetic inspiration through a passionate love affair, the specific criteria consisting of the descriptions, "*wild*" and "*volcanic*". He describes it pedantically as if he comprehends the prescribed formula he must follow to become a true poet, this piece representing the final stage of completion for his poetic training. This contradicts the idea that the new generation of artists was against training; they were thought to represent an artistic culture of freedom, rebelling against the institutionalization of art. However, they subscribed to their own set of norms and regulations amongst themselves, just as the Gypsies did not abide by the morals of dominant society but rather their own strict code within their clans. It is thus in conscientiously adhering to the codes of the bohemian artist culture that Rodolphe devises his plan to find poetic passion by creating a spectacle of his own life.

As he proceeds to script his passionate love affair, Rodolphe's self-prescribed life drama resembles a comedy of errors. He projects his ardor onto

Mme. de M\*\*\* because she appears to be of Italian or Spanish descent, both "*fiery*" and exotic yet safe cultures, according to the aspiring poet. The further Rodolphe progresses along his prescribed path of seduction, the more frustrated he is as he realizes that his love interest is in fact not what he had imagined. He is appalled to discover that she is not Italian, as he had assumed, but from Château-Thierry, and thus an ordinary French woman: "*Je ne puis pourtant avoir une passion née à Château-Thierry: cela n'a aucune tournure, et ne convient nullement à un artiste.*"<sup>39</sup> Without the exotic element of his mistress's identity, he will not be guaranteed the perfect artistic passion he desires, and thus fears that his choice of leading actress for this personal drama might be lacking. He experiences yet another upset when he runs into Mme. de M\*\*\* in the street while he is wearing a cotton cap: "*Un bonnet de coton, le mythe de l'épicier, le symbole du bourgeois! Horror! horror! horror!*"<sup>40</sup> He is indeed horrified to give the wrong impression, purely based on vestimentary codes and a mistake in the costuming for his spectacle. Each theatrical element must be carefully chosen or Rodolphe's personal spectacle will fail.

In spite of these initial first obstacles to his spectacle, he does not abandon his project and determinedly continues his quest for drama, attempting to force the passion at each step along the way. Eventually he finds himself alone with Mme. de M\*\*\*, ready to attempt his operation of seduction, yet at each advancement she yields too quickly and comfortably, leaving the poet bereft of the passion-inducing game of chase that his satisfaction necessitates. When he recites the mediocre poem he has prepared for her, he is disappointed to find that she takes it literally, ignoring the cliché metaphor: "*... il n'y a qu'une seule chose que vous devriez bien changer, c'est l'endroit où vous dites que ma peau est couleur d'orange, ce serait fort vilain si c'était vrai; heureusement que cela n'est pas.*"<sup>41</sup> With this blow to his poetic ego, Rodolphe passes on to other poets' work to seduce Mme. de M\*\*\*, such as running his fingers through her hair (inspired by "*les Contes d'Espagne et d'Italie*"),<sup>42</sup> and

<sup>37</sup> GAUTIER 1978 (see in note 15), p. 98.

<sup>38</sup> Ibidem, p. 97.

<sup>39</sup> Ibidem, pp. 113-114.

<sup>40</sup> Ibidem, p. 117.

<sup>41</sup> Ibidem, p. 134.

<sup>42</sup> Ibidem, pp. 149-150.

even attempting to persuade her to bite him (echoing the romantic lovers in the “Ballade de Barcelone”, by Albertus).<sup>43</sup> However, both of these strategies of inspiring passion fail miserably: Mme. de M\*\*\*’s elegant hair-comb spoils the mood when it falls and breaks during the disheveling and she later refuses to bite him for fear of inflicting pain. Even her name is too easy to rhyme, “*Cyprienne*”, the discovery of which originally delighted Rodolphe, but later proves emblematic of his all around frustration of the too simple seduction/poetic production process, void of passion, instability, danger, and, of course, depth.

Rodolphe’s personal spectacle takes a new, more self-conscious turn when he realizes that there is absolutely no danger of upsetting the cuckolded husband, M. de M\*\*\*. During the aforementioned comedic scene of seduction, the two lovers are surprised by the return of M. de M\*\*\* and Rodolphe again wishes to stage a dramatic scene: “*Y a-t-il moyen de sauter par la fenêtre? Si j’avais ma bonne dague... Ab! parbleu, la voilà! je vais le tuer, votre mari.*”<sup>44</sup> Even this melodramatic effort to dramatize the otherwise dull love-making scene is thwarted when Mme. de M\*\*\* reacts with an intolerable coolness, smoothing her hair, calmly pulling her dress back over her shoulders, and expertly dictating the strategy to Rodolphe, in the manner of an experienced adulteress: “*Asseyez-vous là, devant moi, sur ce fauteuil, et tâchez d’avoir l’air un peu moins effarouché. Vous me disiez donc que la pièce nouvelle était mauvaise.*”<sup>45</sup> Hence, Mme. de M\*\*\* takes control of the situation, emasculating both her lover and her cuckolded husband in addition to ironically playing the role of director at this point, forcing Rodolphe to act as though he didn’t enjoy the Romantic play, and thus play the role of a Classicist. While this arrangement should still appear suspicious to the husband, he enters the room completely unaware and greets Rodolphe with genuine enthusiasm. Because the poet’s goal of seducing Mme. de M\*\*\* was to animate his inner poet, the lack of danger regarding the cuckolded husband’s expected reaction makes the

affair even less satisfying to Rodolphe. In an effort to remedy this, he later writes an anonymous letter to M. de M\*\*\* denouncing himself and his dishonorable intentions with the recipient’s wife. Of course, as all of his other efforts at inducing danger and emotion in the affair have heretofore failed, this letter is greeted by ridicule and incredulity, and thus yet another failure in the artistic process. The cuckold emasculates Rodolphe by laughing in his face and denying any possibility that his wife could ever cheat on him with such a young innocent poet: “*Hi! Hi! Ho! Ho! Ab! Ab! Mais c’est qu’il a un air d’innocence, ce jeune scélérat!*”<sup>46</sup> M. de M\*\*\* further deflates Rodolphe’s masculinity by critiquing the anonymous letter, imagining the “*médiocrement curieux*” piece of writing to have been penned by “*quelque cuisinière renvoyée*” and utterly lacking in style with “*une platitude*”.<sup>47</sup> Thus Rodolphe’s efforts to stage a passionate spectacle are denied, leaving his virility and poetic abilities metaphorically castrated by the ironically cuckolded M. de M\*\*\*.

While this disappointing scenario does not succeed in changing Rodolphe’s mind about the affair with Mme. de M\*\*\*, it is finally the emotional declaration of love by his servant, Mariette, that opens his eyes to the true passion that already existed in his life. Rodolphe reacts to this passionate display by renouncing his pursuit of Mme. de M\*\*\*: “*Je romps avec elle... Il y a plus de passion véritable dans cette pauvre fille que dans vingt mijaurées de cette espèce, et d’ailleurs elle est plus jolie.*”<sup>48</sup> Although this love between Rodolphe and Mariette is neither wild nor volcanic, he does recognize at long last that his pursuit of a mythical poetic construct eclipsed the true passion in his daily life: “*Au diable la passion! Je courais après elle, elle est venue chez moi.*”<sup>49</sup> In discussing this transformation with his friend, Albert, the *raisonneur* further explains Gautier’s metaphor of passion in art: “*La poésie n’est pas plus ici que là, elle est en nous. Il y en a qui vont demander des inspirations à tous les sites de la terre, et qui n’aperçoivent pas qu’ils ont à dix lieues de Paris ce qu’ils vont chercher au bout du monde.*”<sup>50</sup> In this statement, Albert tries to explain

<sup>43</sup> Ibidem, p. 152.

<sup>44</sup> Ibidem, p. 154.

<sup>45</sup> Ibidem, p. 155.

<sup>46</sup> Ibidem, p. 173.

<sup>47</sup> Ibidem, p. 176.

<sup>48</sup> Ibidem, pp. 192-193.

<sup>49</sup> Ibidem, p. 193.

<sup>50</sup> Ibidem, p. 194.

to Rodolphe, the young naïve poet, the concept of art in life: while Rodolphe is putting forth unrequited effort to establish his identity as poet, he ignores that his own daily life has inherent artistic potential. This idea of forcing a spectacle in order to obtain artistic inspiration is the reversal of the Gypsy's "spectacular lifestyle" as read through La Esmeralda's dancing as well as the spectacle of the Gypsy tribes entering France and immediately constituting a curiosity of sorts. While Rodolphe's vision was to construct theater out of his private life, albeit within the privacy of the bourgeois home of M. and Mme. de M\*\*\*, the idea of constructing drama to obtain an artistic lifestyle and thus produce inspired art is a failed imitation of the organic performance created by the Gypsy figure who is perpetually on the literal and metaphoric stage.

Does Gautier's tale represent the failure of the bohemian artist's lifestyle? Is Gautier himself critiquing the bohemian artist's mentality of "living the artist's life", stating that, after all, there must be a division between art and life? He himself went on to accept a post as permanent collaborator at Emile de Girardin's *La Presse* in 1836, therefore definitively separating work from his personal life, according to Mary Gluck.<sup>51</sup> She believes that this tale depicts the denial of the fusion of art and life in this first "prehistory" of bohemians: "*The ultimate implication of Gautier's observation was the acceptance of the nonidentity between life and art. It meant the final rupture with the totalizing impulses of Romanticism and the melodrama, which had hoped to heal the fragmentation of modernity through aesthetics.*"<sup>52</sup> In spite of Gluck's analysis, I interpret this story as even more indicative of the interdependence of lifestyle and art. While it is admittedly ridiculous to contrive a romantic play out of one's own love life and to attempt to cultivate a passion out of nothing, Rodolphe does in fact find love in the most everyday part of his life: his servant. She is present throughout,

and when she finally admits her passion to him in an organically dramatic gesture (threatening to quit her job), he realizes that passion can be found right in one's own home without wandering in search of an exotic manifestation of imaginary passion. This idea continues into the next generation, that which even further glorified the bohemian artist myth: Murger pronounced that "*everyday was a work of art*", creating a bittersweet world of joyful bohemians who lived each day as if it were their art.<sup>53</sup>

By highlighting the spectacular aspect of the Gypsy culture as inspiration to the bohemian artist figure, it is evident that the literary Gypsy, while based on reality and historical accounts, has undergone much mythologization. Through various stages of interpretation, reproduction, and appropriation, the Gypsy's myth has indeed evolved to embody the bohemian artist's lifestyle as he himself desires it. To the extent that La Esmeralda believes she is a proper Gypsy, the bohemian artist has found a way to justify his appropriation of her identity, attempting to claim it on a spectacular level. However, in both examples of the bohemian artist's appropriation of the Gypsy's spectacular lifestyle, we find failure in the execution. Gringoire is inspired by the Gypsy figure, acknowledges her spectacular worth, but renounces its appropriation for his own lifestyle in light of her idealization as a non-Gypsy in the end. Rodolphe aspires to create a spectacle out of his life and after this miserable failure he finds the true poetic passion in his regular daily life. Rodolphe did not necessarily fail in poetry, but rather in his calculated attempt to artificially produce drama, while Gringoire does indeed fail, preferring the goat to real women and satisfactorily producing mediocre work. While the myth is constructed based on the "real bohemians", the bohemian-Gypsy figure in the texts is also a poetic construct herself, fictionalized to represent the ultimate artistic aspiration for the bohemian artist figure.

<sup>51</sup> GLUCK 2005 (see in note 12), p. 57.

<sup>52</sup> Ibidem, p. 57.

<sup>53</sup> Murger's chapter entitled "Romeo et Juliette" presents a similar story to "Celle-ci et celle-là" in that Murger's Rodolphe, inspired by the name of his new mistress, Juliette, attempts to act out Shakespeare's famous balcony scene in his regular life.

He changes his name to Romeo, sports more Renaissance-inspired clothing, and even insists that a domestic pigeon is the romantic *rossignol* in the garden in order to properly stage this private moment of his life. In the end, the two lovers once again renounce "art" for the sake of practicality, their hunger too pronounced for them to concentrate on the courtship scene and thus devour the poor pigeon "songbird".

In light of the spectacle, we can interpret the notion of performance for the bohemian artist figure as a means of identity construction. Erving Goffman sees the individual's identity as formed according to a theatricalized context of everyday life, or rather, the "*presentation of self*" as constituting a series of unique performances. This creation of identity, found at its most poignant in the inherent formation of countercultures which, by definition, are superficially self-structured communities based on rebellion against dominant society, demands one foundational difference from its inspirational model of the "real bohemian": choice. While the "real bohemian" lives in the margins of society as a result of a long history of expulsion and nomadism, the bohemian artist intentionally chooses to interpret and reconstruct the marginalized path of the "real bohemian" – in this case through the glorification of her spectacularized lifestyle. Goffman justifies this social construct, asserting that the self-conscious application of a prescribed mode of conduct is indeed natural and common among all individuals: "*A status, a position, a social place is not a material thing, to be possessed*

*and then displayed; it is a pattern of appropriate conduct, coherent, embellished, and well articulated. Performed with ease or clumsiness, awareness or not, guile or good faith, it is none the less something that must be enacted and portrayed, something that must be realized.*"<sup>54</sup> The phenomenon of identity performance is magnified in Bohemian Paris's youthful radicals, however, this self-conscious construction of the self, interpretation of myth and reconstruction of ideals represent a universal desire to constantly define ourselves based on our social surroundings. Just as Bohemia poses its originality on a previously established model, the recycling and appropriation of identity is exemplified throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries in a continuous parade of reincarnated countercultures in Western society, each compromising the aesthetics of the previous generation while reinstating its ideals in a fresh format. As will be later demonstrated through the Beat generation of the 1950s, followed by the Hippies of the 1960s and Hipsters of today, identity construction based on a mythologized set of ideals proves as ephemerally constant as the nomadic Gypsy figure's spectacular lifestyle.

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<sup>54</sup> GOFFMAN, E.: *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*. Garden City (NY) 1959, p. 75.

## Bohémski umelci a „skutoční bohémi“. Život ako divadlo v Hugovom románe *Notre-Dame de Paris* a Gautierovej zbierke poviedok *Les Jeunes-France*

### Resumé

V 19. storočí sa bohém stal charakteristickým reprezentantom protikultúry umelcov, hudobníkov, básnikov a spisovateľov. Uniknal kategorizovaniu – odmietal sa podriaadiť normám buržoáziou ovládanej parížskej spoločnosti 19. storočia. Mnohí kritici argumentujú, že bohémski umelci svoj životný štýl pôvodne odvodili zo životného štýlu cigánskej komunity. Pojem „bohém“ bol nesprávnym pomenovaním týchto kočovníkov, o ktorých si Francúzi mysleli, že prišli práve z územia Čiech, lat. Bohemia. Pomenovanie bolo prevzaté príslušníkmi mladej umeleckej protikultúry, snažiacej sa viesť teatrálny, kočovný a exotický život, prisudzovaný Cigánom.

V predslove k svojej knihe *Scènes de la vie de bohème* Henri Murger píše, že „*ich každodenný život bol dielom génia*“: umenie bolo pre bohémskeho umelca viac než len produktom, bolo procesom zahŕňajúcim umelcovu celodennú existenciu. Bol tento životný štýl prevzatý od „skutočných bohémov“ – Cigánov? Alebo to bol skôr produkt vykonštruovaného mýtu postavy Cigána, prenesený na Cigánov za účelom vytvorenia a obhájenia modernej umeleckej identity? Odpovede na tieto otázky hľadám prostredníctvom porovnania postavy Cigánky Esmeraldy z Hugovho románu *Notre-Dame de Paris* s postavami bohémskych umelcov v Gautierovej zbierke poviedok *Les Jeunes-France*. Dekonstruujem mýtus Cigána ako postavy verejného zabávača a objektu diváckeho záujmu, zachytený v historických prácach 19. storočia, ako boli denníky Angličana Georga Borrowa či práce o cigánskej kultúre od Paula Bataillarda. Tieto faktické záznamy o Cigánoch vo Francúzsku 19. storočia podporujú analýzu postavy Cigána ako literárneho mýtu a ako konštruktu vytvoreného za účelom stelesniť ideály bohémy a poskytnúť lákavý vzor pre bohémskeho umelca. Koncentrujem sa na definovanie „spektáklu“ ako kuriozity prít'azlivej pre verejnosť v kontexte cigánskeho výzoru, tanca

a každodennej teatrálnosti, ako boli zobrazené v literárnych a dokumentárnych textoch.

Pre pochopenie procesu, akým mohli byť tieto teatrálne prvky preberané do bohémskeho životného štýlu, uvádzam historické príklady z bohémskeho Paríža, napríklad spektakel pri príležitosti uvedenia Hugovej divadelnej hry *Hernani*, s vyzdvihnutím významu diváckej kulisy oproti významu samotnej hry. Prostredníctvom Gautierovej paródie „*Elias Wildmunstadius ou l'homme au moyen âge*“, v ktorej autor zveličuje nostalgickú túžbu bohémov po prostom živote, poukazujem na skutočnosť, že bohémski umelci často uprednostňovali životný štýl pred umeleckou produkciou. Posadnutosť stredovekom, charakteristickú pre bohémov 19. storočia, reflektujem aj v analýze Esmeraldinho výstupu v Hugovom románe *Notre-Dame de Paris*. Na základe Esmeraldinho úvodného tanca na námestí, jej následného vystúpenia počas procesu a dramatických scén s Quasimodom analyzujem vplyv „skutočného bohéma“ (Esmeralda) na postavu umelca-bohéma (Gringoire) a ako sa tento vzťah mení pri odhalení, že Esmeralda je Francúzka. Ako ďalší príklad pokusu bohémskeho umelca dramatizovať svoj život kvôli dosiahnutiu dokonalejšej umeleckej identity uvádzam ukážky z Gautierovej poviedky „*Celle-ci et Celle-là*“. Nenaplnená umelá milenecká aféra ako prameň básnickej inšpirácie tu poskytuje východisko pre komparatívne skúmanie bohémskeho umelca ako subjektu drámy za účelom kontextualizácie uprednostňovania procesu pred výsledkom v rámci začiatkových fáz tejto protikultúry. V závere napokon dekonštruujem literárnu postavu Cigána ako poetický konštrukt pre projekciu kultúrnych ideálov bohémskeho umelca a tiež kladiem otázky o povahe procesu vytvárania identity a o efemérnej nemennosti mladých protikultúr.

*Preklad z angličtiny M. Hrdina*

## Liszt's Involvement in Manet's Gypsy Images

Campbell EWING

Edouard Manet, the greatest of the mid-nineteenth-century precursors of modernism, some would say its founder, began his professional career with works that attest to his interest in bohemian street life in Paris and music. To be sure at this time he also produced paintings and prints drawing upon his family life and shortly thereafter he gained notoriety with two works commenting on the situation of women in modern society: *Le Déjeuner sur l'herbe* (1863) and *Olympia* (1865). While his interest in representing bohemianism receded during the sixties, paintings with musical subject-matter preoccupied him for the rest of his life; but at this juncture music and bohemianism came together in some compelling images. The most intriguing of these feature, either explicitly or impliedly, “Gypsy” subjects.<sup>1</sup> He shared this interest with a number of his contemporaries, Charles Baudelaire notably. In this paper I will demonstrate that he drew upon discourses initiated by Franz Liszt in *Des Bohémiens et de leur musique en Hongrie*, first published in Paris in 1859.<sup>2</sup> A number of the painter's innovations resemble the revolutionary approach to music-making Liszt describes in that book, posing the question whether these innovations were in response to it.

As early as 1861, Manet was documenting, in drawings and prints, street performers and itinerant musicians. His major work of that year, *The Spanish*

*Singer*, which won an “Honourable Mention” at the 1861 Salon, presented a professional model, posed as a tavern singer dressed in a characteristically Spanish outfit and accompanied by Spanish props. In 1862, he created numerous works depicting Spanish performers, seeking to establish himself as the pre-eminent interpreter of Spanish culture in Paris. These works highlight cultural difference while usually placing their protagonists within a Parisian “Bohemian” milieu. Prior to that 1861 Salon success, Manet had already pursued other topics featuring exotic protagonists however; in particular the “Gypsy” motif first emerges in a rare, unpublished print version of *The Gypsies* [Fig. 1]. Dubbed, with hindsight, *The Little Gypsies* (*Les petits Gitanos*) both on account of its size and its difference from the later more conventional plate of that name, Manet created this first version when he was experimenting with new media as a tyro printmaker. This work is thought to be one of his first prints. As such its “infelicities” are often sheeted home to the artist's inexperience. In this article I am challenging that idea. I will be suggesting this early work looks the way it does not because he was too unskilled to do any better. Rather he was experimenting with embodying Gypsy approaches to the act of creation, in his technique as much as in his subject-matter.

A second, larger and more slickly executed etching repeated the subject, while reversing the placement of

<sup>1</sup> I am borrowing Paloma Gay Y Blasco's use of the politically fraught terms “Gypsy” and “Roma”. I apply the first in contexts referring “to exoticising and orientalisating representations, and ‘Roma’ to refer to the conglomerate of populations that would identify themselves as Gypsy, Roma, Gitano, Tsigane and so on”. – GAY Y BLASCO, P.: Picturing ‘Gypsies’: Interdisciplinary Approaches to Roma Representation. In: *Third Text*, 22, 2008, No. 3, p. 298.

<sup>2</sup> I have chosen the 1999 reprint of the 1859 Paris version for references to this work. It omits material written by Liszt's mistress the Princess Carolyne von Sayn-Wittgenstein for the later 1881 edition. – LISZT, F.: *Des Bohémiens et de leur musique en Hongrie*. Paris 1999 (1<sup>st</sup> ed. 1859).

the figures. This version was made sometime before September 1862 because it then was included in the first publication of the newly created *Société des Aquafortistes*, along with etchings by Félix Bracquemond, Charles Daubigny, Alphonse Legros and Théodule Ribot. At some point in this sequence he also created a painting with the same subject. The “evidence” for positioning it last in the sequence is that it was not exhibited until 1863 when Manet displayed fourteen of his works at the private gallery run by Louis Martinet in a massive group exhibition, involving at least fifty artists and over one hundred works.

This painting had a short lifespan in its original form. It was dismembered after its second airing at Manet’s one-man show in 1867. Traces have survived; recently the principal figure was bought for the Louvre at Abu Dhabi, along with another fragment showing a detail of the straw basket and garlic cloves originally placed at the feet of the seated woman with child. This detail occurs in the second print version (it is not present in *The Little Gypsies*). The painted work in its original form is also recorded in a parody created by Gilbert Randon in a newspaper report on the 1867 show [Fig. 2]. These establish that the painting, when it was entire, resembled the second print version more closely than the first.

*The Little Gypsies* establishes the basic composition. Despite numerous changes in detail and a reversal of the entire configuration it remains constant throughout the three versions, prior to dismemberment. This consists of a standing figure, carrying a guitar strapped to his back, who dominates the composition by his central placement. Behind him and to his side are a seated mother and child. A third half-figure is standing behind her, drinking from a water-bottle. In this first version, the short rotund figure of the central musician is decidedly unheroic. He has a large-brimmed hat of a type commonly worn by characters in commedia dell arte representations. His other characteristics include large flat feet and a vacant expression reminiscent of Watteau’s *Pierrot*. Nothing about his clothing associates the figure with distinctive national characteristics. Juxtaposed with this dominant figure are three subordinated and linked individuals, seemingly drawn



1. Edouard Manet: *The Little Gypsies*, ca. 1860, etching. Repr.: FISHER, J.: *The Prints of Edouard Manet*. Washington 1985, p. 31, fig. 1.

from a different iconographic tradition, although Manet goes to some lengths to disguise this fact. The most likely source for these images is to be found in Christian imagery in which Mary, the Christ child and Joseph are linked together. The drinking figure in the background narrows the iconographic options here. They most commonly occur in images depicting the rest on the flight into Egypt. This iconographic tradition is flexible enough to accommodate all the figures Manet assembles here. Even the presence of the musician is not unprecedented. In the sixteenth century, in particular, musicians were often represented accompanying the Holy Family on their flight. This pictorial tradition is known to have persisted into the nineteenth century.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>3</sup> SLIM, H. C.: Music in and out of Egypt. A Little-Studied Iconographical Tradition. In: *Musica disciplina*, 37, 1983, pp.

289-326. Manet may have been inspired to adapt religious iconography by his knowledge of Ary Scheffer’s *The Three*



2. Gilbert Randon: *Les Gitanos ou L'Amour paternel*, 1867, woodcut. Repro: TINTEROW, G. – LACAMBRE, G.: Manet/Velázquez: the French Taste for Spanish Painting. *New York – New Haven – London* 2003, p. 215, fig. 9.19.

Manet appears to have adapted imagery from an apocryphal religious theme historically linked to early myths about the origins of Gypsies. He uses this imagery to illustrate three of the elements that commonly arose in the Gypsy-Bohemian discourses current in Paris. The minimalist setting signals poverty; the water-drinker could be a member of Henri

*Magi* (1844) which also “transformed and modernized” an ancient formula. See KOVÁCS, I.: The Portrait of Liszt as an Allegory of the Artist in Ary Scheffer’s *Three Magi*. In: *Studia musicologica*, 49, 2008, p. 97. I discuss Manet’s knowledge of this painting passim.

<sup>4</sup> MURGER, H.: *Les buveurs d'eau*. Paris 1855. In Antonin Proust’s biography there are three references to Manet know-

Murger’s Society of Water-Drinkers, bohemians too poor to afford one of France’s abundant *vins ordinaires*. He also brings to the picture unconventional familial associations; while a commitment to the arts is typified by the central figure carrying a guitar.<sup>4</sup>

Why did Manet make a work depicting a Gypsy guitarist as one of his first etchings? The principal figure changes so markedly from the first etching to the second that the same person cannot have modelled both. It is reasonable therefore to conclude that this is not the portrait of a musician known to the artist. In fact there is no evidence Manet had any personal knowledge of or interaction with musicians who could be construed as Gypsy at this point in his life. The situation was different by the middle of the decade. Then Manet knew and was friendly with the Catalan composer and guitar player Jaime Bosch (1826 – 1895). In 1866, he made a lithograph of the guitarist playing his instrument, used as the cover for Bosch’s composition *Moorish Lament*. Nonetheless, in these earlier works he displays a commitment to the notion of Gypsies’ creative musical flair, a flair he both portrays and indexes. The central position given to the guitar reflects the relevance of Gypsy music to Manet’s ideas about his artistic practice. Moreover, the first of the series captures a feeling of spontaneity and improvisation in its loose facture and careless execution. In his disregard for academically correct drawing and indifference to traditional perspective, Manet is undertaking here the most radical rejection of the conventions for fine drawing in his early artistic output. So radical, in fact, that the print was never published.

The role given to music in these early images no doubt also grew out of Manet’s covert relationship with Suzanne Leenhoff, a young unmarried mother he was shortly to marry. Numerous anecdotes testify she was an exceptional pianist. That mixture of art and biography is a recognised aspect of these Gypsy images.<sup>5</sup> More importantly, however, these works

ing Murger. – PROUST, A.: *Edouard Manet souvenirs*. Paris 1996, pp. 13-15.

<sup>5</sup> In his cartoon satirizing Manet’s painting, Randon notes the art/life balance being overturned by the woman’s crying baby. His caption below the image begins with the name *Les Gitanos*, to which he adds a sub-title “(or) Paternal love”. Then, with further text, he puts the following (translated) words in the

exemplify Manet's commitment to expanding the boundaries of his medium that he was to pursue throughout his career. These artworks refer to experiences which are unseen yet available to the senses, steering the viewer's attention away from ostensible subject-matter toward things and actions that are hidden, implicit or somehow not visually present.<sup>6</sup> It was in pursuit of such goals that Manet was to devote a great deal of effort throughout his life to transposing music or literary art-forms into his paintings and prints. Through the evocation of sound, music and other non-visual experiences he was pointing the way to a redefinition of art's referential function. That this was an interest from the beginning is attested by five major paintings from 1862 featuring music in their subject matter as well as by a number of etchings.<sup>7</sup> In all of these works his representations of music are located in populist or exotic contexts. At the time music from such sources was seen to be contributing to the regeneration of the arts. Manet's choice to represent the contexts associated with it reflects his ambition to invest his images with some of that music's admired qualities.

This begins early in Manet's artistic output. He was already representing musicians in copies made during his study tour of Italy in 1857. He began his imaginative images in the medium of etching (those not directly related to his family) by concentrating on the musical prowess of Gypsies. Undoubtedly his exposure to music was significant irrespective of its exotic connotations. But his equation of the topic with Gypsy subjects is less easily explained. He knew Baudelaire's famous poem on the subject, the 1852 *Bobémiens en voyage*.<sup>8</sup> An etching *The Travellers*, created at the same time as the later Gypsy print,

was responding to it. Baudelaire describes a travelling group as they move through the landscape, oblivious of any external spectator. Manet's image *The Little Gypsies* shows them when they have come to a stop and his figures are aware they are on display. Nor can it be argued they are related to works of art from the previous decade. Gypsies had provided the subject-matter for significant Salon entries in the late 1850s and early 1860s. The most striking is probably Jean Pierre Joseph Bellet du Poisat's grand (208 × 251 cm) work entitled *Three Bohemians* exhibited in the 1859 Salon (Musée de Grenoble). It depicts Gypsies, accompanied by their musical instruments, resting on their travels. The artist acknowledged using a poem by Nikolaus Lenau, *The Three Gypsies*, as the inspiration for his subject-matter. But nothing about it could have inspired Manet. This painting's subject-matter showed an attachment to the romantic myth of the noble savage at peace with his place in the world that is no part of Manet's image. Its technique is equally unadventurous; its conventional use of perspective and paint application is the very approach Manet was in the course of rejecting.

The poet and critic Théophile Gautier, himself an enthusiast for the romantic view of Gypsies as a "race" apart, escaping the control of modern states, championed images of Gypsies by the ethnologically-inspired painter Théodore Valerio.<sup>9</sup> Both were significant figures in such discourses and Manet would certainly have been aware of their contributions. But Valerio's images, reflecting the artist's travels in Eastern Europe and Russia, focussed on establishing his exotic identities in a milieu appropriate to their origins. However much Manet embraced the exotic, he presents these outcasts in

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mouth of the principal figure: "Who will free me of all this. I will give him the buzzing gnat and my blessing to boot." – RANDON, G.: L'Exposition d'Edouard Manet. In: *Le Journal Amusant*, June 29, 1867. In a corresponding interpretation, James Rubin proposes "references to the artist's family situation seem inevitable... his personal experiences provided the authentic foundation for far broader and unsettling expressions of the modern human condition". – RUBIN, J.: *Manet*. Paris 2010, p. 32.

<sup>6</sup> Gregory Galligan makes a similar point: "An apparent paradox of my reading is that I am suggesting that figurative passages may serve to reference disfigurative aspects of the picture. Indeed, I submit that this is an important conceptual complexity of Manet's work."

– GALLIGAN, G.: The Self Pictured: Manet, the Mirror, and the Occupation of Realist Painting. In: *The Art Bulletin*, 80, 1998. No. 1, p. 169, n. 78.

<sup>7</sup> The paintings are *Hat and Guitar*, *The Old Musician*, *The Street Singer*, *Music in the Tuileries Gardens*, *Spanish Ballet*.

<sup>8</sup> BAUDELAIRE, C.: *Œuvres complètes. Texte établi, présenté et annoté par Claude Pichois*. Paris 1976, Vol. 1, p. 864.

<sup>9</sup> GAUTIER, T.: *Exposition de 1859*. Eds. W. DROST – U. HENNIGES. Heidelberg 1992, p. 55.

an undistinguished locale devoid of references to a foreign context.

Casting back into French literary history, discourses about Gypsies were central to the writings of Victor Hugo, George Sand and Prosper Mérimée. But their literary works cannot be shown to have influenced Manet's other artworks at this time nor do they provide a direct link to Manet's Gypsy images.<sup>10</sup> In the absence of any other significant source, the most likely influence on Manet's choice of this subject is Franz Liszt. The subject-matter of these works demonstrates that Manet must have shared with Baudelaire the urge to "glorify vagabondage and what one can call bohemianism". He was evidently equally committed to what Baudelaire described as the "cult of the sensation multiplied and expressed in music. Refer to Liszt."<sup>11</sup>

When Liszt published *Des Bohémiens et de leur musique en Hongrie*, it generated controversy in both Budapest and Paris. Its errors severely dented the composer's reputation in his home country while in France it was sceptically received by one of the foremost music critics of the day, who damned it for "attacking the most basic principles of art".<sup>12</sup> Yet Baudelaire was a sympathetic audience. The poet had received *Des Bohémiens* from Liszt with a dedication: "To Charles Baudelaire with appreciative and wholehearted fellow feeling." And Barbara Bohac has recently argued Baudelaire's prose poems *Les Vocations* and *Le Thyrses*, written between 1862 and 1863, are responding to it.<sup>13</sup> The book continues to exercise music scholars as well as historians recounting the history of western responses to the incursion of the Romani into

Europe.<sup>14</sup> Until now there has been no attempt to describe the book's influence on visual artists. This article will present new evidence that Manet specifically drew upon it in the construction of his 1862 painting *The Old Musician*.

Liszt stressed the contribution of Gypsy musician's to the rejuvenation of western music. He drew attention to their virtuosic, improvisatory skills in appropriating and reconstituting music from the past. This focus on performance as a measure of artistic worth equates with Manet's practice of transcribing other artists' works in undisguised redactions. The first version of *The Gypsies* demonstrates his commitment to putting such ideas into practice. That work's technique duplicates what Liszt had praised as the Gypsy musician's spontaneity and inspired naivety. Manet sought to index with his etching style the "inner glow" that, according to Liszt, these artists displayed and transmitted in their live performances of music. Although in his representation of the world of Gypsy music the instrument is not being played and the presence of music is not overtly manifested, sound is impliedly present. It is reflected in the way of life of the Gypsy subject and is embodied in the presence of the instrument and in the image of the boy drinking and the baby crying (possibly even more strongly expressed in the painted image, if Randon's parody is as accurate as it seems). Manet's visual equivalent for Gypsies and their music in these images emerges from the details of their everyday life, as if their musicianship was as intrinsic to their existence as food and water.

<sup>10</sup> Therese Dolan makes the most convincing case for Manet's knowledge of Victor Hugo's drawings in DOLAN, T.: Manet, Baudelaire and Hugo in 1862. In: *Word and Image*, 16, 2000, No. 2, pp. 145-162.

<sup>11</sup> BAUDELAIRE 1976 (see in note 8), "Mon cœur mis à nu", p. 701. In "Richard Wagner et *Tannhäuser* à Paris" he had drawn attention to Liszt's written output describing him as "an artist and a philosopher". – Ibidem, p. 783.

<sup>12</sup> HAMBURGER, K.: Understanding the Hungarian Reception of Liszt's *Des Bohémiens et de leur musique en Hongrie* (1859/1881). In: *The Journal of the American Liszt Society*, 54, 2003, pp. 75-84; SCUDO, P.: La musique des Bohémiens, par M. Franz Liszt. In: *Revue des Deux Mondes*, 2, 1859, No. 22, p. 763.

<sup>13</sup> BOHAC, B.: Baudelaire et Liszt: le génie de la rhapsodie. In: *Romantisme*, 151, 2011, No. 1, p. 96. Furthermore she reports that in May 1865 the poet wrote to Manet from Belgium asking his help in obtaining the score of Liszt's *Hungarian Rhapsodies* to give to Madame Charles Hugo. The possibility that Manet not only knew Liszt's book but was also conversant with his music – and discussed it with Baudelaire – is raised by this letter.

<sup>14</sup> See MALVINNI, D.: *The Gypsy Caravan. From Real Roma to Imaginary Gypsies in Western Music*. London 2004; SAUL, N.: *Gypsies and Orientalism in German Literature and Anthropology of the Long Nineteenth Century*. London 2007; MOUSSA, S. (ed.): *Le mythe des Bohémiens dans la littérature et les arts en Europe*. Paris 2008; LOYA, S.: *Liszt's Transcultural Modernism and the Hungarian-Gypsy Tradition*. Rochester 2011.



3. Edouard Manet: *The Travellers*, 1860 – 1861, etching. Repr.: LOCKE, N.: *Manet and the Family Romance*. Princeton 2001, p. 66, fig. 29.

The second print to exemplify this approach is another unpublished work *The Travellers*, provisionally dated to 1861 – 1862 [Fig. 3].<sup>15</sup> Here the landscape is the principal element and the figures travelling through it are shadowy and ill-defined. Landscape had a richly metaphoric role amongst Manet's artistic colleagues. In a period of widespread attempts to transpose elements from one art form to another, the metaphor of distance played an important role and the traveller in the landscape was the usual way distance was envisaged.<sup>16</sup> Travelling stood for finding a way forward across unknown territory and

it acknowledged the processes by which an artist elucidates an elusive and difficult to attain goal. No other artist was more aware of the implications of that than Charles Baudelaire. It is the subject of his poem *Bobémiens en voyage*. This is the poem by Baudelaire most comprehensively parsed by Manet – in this etching.

The series of prints known as the *Aegyptiens* (1621) by Jacques Callot (1592 – 1635) also provided source material for both Baudelaire, and Manet [Fig. 4]. Marilyn Brown, in drawing attention to “the detail of the child with the cauldron” which Manet adopts

<sup>15</sup> Only one copy survives in the New York Public Library. Its dating is assumed from affinities of style and subject-matter with other works. – FISHER, J.: *The Prints of Edouard Manet*. Washington 1985, p. 38.

<sup>16</sup> This discussion is indebted to MINER, M.: *Resonant Gaps between Baudelaire and Wagner*. Athens 1995.



4. Jacques Callot: *Bobémiens en marche*, ca. 1621, etching. Photo: <http://destinationterre2.files.wordpress.com/2010/03/callot19.jpg>.

from Callot's print, asserted "*the general conception of the composition*" is derived from Callot.<sup>17</sup> This is correct, as far as it goes, but there are too many differences between Callot's image and that by Manet to rest content with the notion he was simply giving that earlier image a landscape context. The print has instead an equally significant relation not just to Baudelaire's poem but also to Liszt's descriptions. These radically affect its visual appearance. Manet is transposing what had already undergone transposition from Callot's image in Baudelaire's poem. In the process it accretes not just visual but also literary and auditory associations.<sup>18</sup>

<sup>17</sup> BROWN, M.: *Gypsies and Other Bohemians. The Myth of the Artist in Nineteenth-Century France*. Ann Arbor (MI) 1985, p. 78.

<sup>18</sup> Henry Majewski defines a transposition from painting to literature: "*A 'transposition d'art' is therefore at the same time a description, a poetic re-creation, and a symbolic interpretation of the painting observed or imagined. The painting's function is to be a point of departure or impetus for the poetic impulse, and ultimately a source of signification in the text. The painting-in-the-poem provides a presence or spiritual essence that gives the work its center, its ideal value.*" – MAJEWSKI, H.: *Transposing Art into Texts in French*

In critical literary studies it has long been acknowledged that Baudelaire transposed Callot's images in the formulation of his poem.<sup>19</sup> Paul de Man, for one, makes a point of aligning Baudelaire's practice in his poem with the Romantic poets' interest in transposing visual imagery. He takes issue with Michael Riffaterre's analysis of the poem arguing Baudelaire's transpositional ambitions give the etching more than an "*allusive*" significance. He describes a "*genetic*" link to Baudelaire's poem. This "*genetic*" link juxtaposes the poem, by "*delicate and complex*" means, with its source.<sup>20</sup>

In view of Manet's known friendship with the poet it is inconceivable that he would not have been

*Romantic Literature*. Chapel Hill 2002, p. 43. Manet reverses the direction, but not the effect.

<sup>19</sup> It was noted as early as 1917 in an article by BERNARD, É.: *Esthétique de Baudelaire* In: *Mercur de France*, October 16, 1917. It is examined in MENEMENCIOGLU, M.: *Le thème des Bohémiens en voyage dans la peinture et la poésie de Cervantès à Baudelaire*. In: *Cahiers de l'Association des études françaises*, 18, 1966, pp. 227-238.

<sup>20</sup> DE MAN, P.: *Literature and Language: A Commentary*. In: *New Literary History*, 4, 1972, No. 1, p. 185.

aware of the poem. Moreover, the ideas it treats are recognizably shared by Manet. In the process of developing his motif, the artist was creating “genetic” links with not one but two previous works of art from different disciplines. In fact, given the mystery surrounding Manet’s intentions for this unpublished print, its transpositional strategy is perhaps the one thing it is possible to be certain about, regarding it.

Callot’s images bring the Gypsies vividly close to us. Their presence, piled up on the frontal picture plane, implies a connection with the viewer. We are invited to share ideas about the destination of their journey by the pointing figure at the head of the column in the first of Callot’s series. By contrast, Manet’s image shows some figures in the middle distance, immersed in abundant natural surroundings. They amble aimlessly across our field of vision passing between trees that stretch diagonally from the right foreground to the left background, without acknowledging their existence. Nothing in their posture or position on the picture plane suggests their travelling has a determined bearing. They convey a sense of detachment from the measures of civilized life; their vagabondage is signified by their lack of connection with the church spire in the distance, almost at right angles to the line of their procession. Nor do they seem to have any connections with the housing, roughly indicated at the top left and bottom right part of the print. As in Baudelaire’s poem where the Gypsies are “*casting upon the heavens a glance weighed down by mournful regrets for long-departed chimeras*”, Manet’s figures, too, appear to be cast adrift from the “*chimerical*” consolations of home or religion. They are immersed in “*an open-ended, unceasing movement, with unending variations and mutations in time*”. Their lifestyle is a metonymy for music, which of all the arts “*articulates the de-territorial principle to a higher degree than the other arts*”.<sup>21</sup>

In both poem and print the Gypsies are surrounded by abundant fertility. But again, in the two works, neither artist provides anything to suggest

the Gypsies are responsive to this. Rather this detail gives rise in both works to overt metaphors for music. When Baudelaire wrote about the impact on the environment generated by his travellers as they were passing through it, he referred to the cricket: from the depths of his sandy lair it redoubles his song. This chance association of vagabondage and natural music is also explicitly evoked by Liszt in his book. In conjuring the sounds made by a travelling troupe, Liszt through his use of language provides a synecdoche for the *musique concrète* composed of the passing horse-drawn transport and company, noise which he said resembled a “*formidable octave engaging all our aural perceptions*”.<sup>22</sup> According to Sarga Moussa, Liszt’s writing “*manifestly searches to reproduce, stylistically, the ‘exuberant hubbub’ characteristic of Gypsy music*”.<sup>23</sup> Manet’s interpretation of this inadvertent aspect of Gypsy music-making takes the form of a boy dragging a branch as the troupe passes through the landscape. The sound of their passage is founded in an image emphasizing the Gypsies physical connectedness to the environment is merely a matter of the moment. At most, it evokes the artist inadvertently creating “music” by scraping the wax of the copper plate with his etching tool.

That the imagery Manet inherited from Callot came to be changed as a result of his sensitivity to ideas embodied in Baudelaire’s transposition is further seen in the way both artists address the absence of a discernible sense or direction in the sauntering outlaw band. Baudelaire begins his poem by describing the Gypsies as “*the prophetic tribe with impassioned pupils*” as if their stare embodied a special kind of vision, one that can be identified with the ancient theory of extramission. These eyes provide the only source of light in Baudelaire’s poem; nothing suggests their vision has any relation to either religion or immutable laws. Oblivious to the natural miracles taking place around them (miracles whose imagery is suggestive of the experiences of the ancient Jews in the desert), the Gypsies can do no

<sup>21</sup> MALVINNI 2004 (see in note 14), p. 68. He continues with an observation drawn from Deleuze and Guattari’s theory of the nomad: “... both music and nomadism contain the same essential element, that of movement through time; whereas sedentary culture manipulates space and landscape, nomadic culture is a temporal happening like music.” – Ibidem, p. 68.

<sup>22</sup> LISZT 1999 (see in note 2), p. 117.

<sup>23</sup> MOUSSA 2008 (see in note 14), p. 238.

more than foreshadow the “*familiar domain of shadowy futures*” opening before them in the poem’s last line. Baudelaire equates his eyes with those eyes of the Gypsy outcasts; both survey a thoroughly personal world deprived of sense. Only in this negative sense are the Gypsies a “*prophetic tribe*” capable of providing illumination to others.<sup>24</sup>

Manet’s recreation of this aspect of the poem sets up a contrast with the mundane but colourful reality suggested by Callot’s imagery. All Manet’s figures, swathed in enveloping vestments disguising their real form, are absorbed in a world of their own making. Uncharacteristically for Manet, nobody in this print is making eye-contact with the viewer. The only figure looking out of the picture-space, the boy with the cauldron, is cast so thoroughly into shadow we cannot identify where he is looking or what he is seeing. Baudelaire has referred to the “*cult of the image*”; what makes the image cultic is the particular vision which illuminates it, one that cult-like is only available to the privileged initiate. Manet likewise creates an image in which the viewer is excluded from the point of view of its figures. Their cultic response to what they see is not available to anyone outside the surface of the picture.

Manet’s print-making, in the early 1860s, was a site for significant experimentation in the visual arts. He grappled with the contradictions generated by his commitment to spontaneity and improvisation in a medium which, by its nature, imposed disciplined work procedures. In devising techniques to resolve this dichotomy Manet initiated stylistic approaches which later emerged in the painting of the Impressionists. Artists henceforth would concentrate on registering in paint a subjective experience as it un-

folded. These developments were first modelled in a visual field – that of print-making – facing questions about its function in the 1850s and ‘60s in Paris. Etchers, already committed to distinguishing their product from that of reproductive engravers, were also seeking ways to outmanoeuvre photography, the medium which was taking an increasing share of the market for cheap images. Manet, at their vanguard, adopts the idea that etching should be a virtuoso performance simulating techniques of improvisation and spontaneity. This approach had the support of contemporary commentators.<sup>25</sup> However, his innovations predate their commentaries and it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that he derived his radical approach to etching by imitating the improvisatory techniques that had their most vivid realization in Gypsy music. These had been hailed by Liszt. He wrote: “*The bohemian artist takes a theme from a song or a dance as a pretext for discourse, like an epigraph in a poem. This idea, which he never completely loses sight of, is blurred and modulated through perpetual improvisations.*”<sup>26</sup> Furthermore, Manet’s print-making re-conceived ideas about reproduction and repetition as valid artistic processes. His work-practice generated significant and meaningful aesthetic productions out of a bold re-use of previously created artworks – works that had their origins not merely in the sister discipline of painting but also in more removed media. Drawing upon not just the techniques but also the subject-matter of non-visual media, he was experimenting with fusing disparate sources.

Manet’s prints in their improvisatory aspect, multiple states and abbreviated drawing testify to his allegiance to the event of creation rather than the fixity of the singular image, emerging from his

<sup>24</sup> My analysis of this poem is indebted to BRAGUE, R.: *Image vagabonde. Essai sur l’imaginaire baudelairien*. Paris 2008, pp. 13-20.

<sup>25</sup> Philippe Burty in his 1873 article recounting the history of the medium in France in the nineteenth century summarised contemporary developments as allowing the expression of a “*free and spontaneous*” spirit. – BURTY, P.: *L’Eau-forte moderne en France*. In: *La Renaissance littéraire et artistique*, 41, 1873, p. 331. In the advertisement for the *Société des Aquafortistes*, for which Manet was a founder-member, published in 1862 etching is described as “*a matter of caprice and fantasy, the swiftest way to express thought*”. – Archives Nationales, F 21 123. Repu-

blished in BAILLY-HERZBERG, J.: *L’eau-forte de peintre au dix-neuvième siècle; la Société des aquafortistes, 1862 – 1867*. Paris 1972, Vol. 1, n.p. In his introduction to the first volume of the *Société*, published in 1862, Théophile Gautier highlighted what he saw in contemporary etching as “*a free caprice... spontaneity... impulsive movements*”. – BAILLY-HERZBERG 1972 (see in this note), p. 266. Baudelaire was the only critic to acknowledge the contribution Manet made to the movement in these early years, without however, going further than commending his modern realistic imagination. – BAUDELAIRE 1976 (see in note 8), “*Peintres et aquafortistes*”, Vol. 2, p. 738.

<sup>26</sup> LISZT 1999 (see in note 2), pp. 149-50.

appreciation of the value of improvisatory practices in Gypsy music. He endorsed Liszt's admiration for their approach to art-making. Franz Liszt had trumpeted the achievements of Gypsy performers. Their ability to turn performances of unremarkable music into events which united musician and audience in a common ecstatic experience established new criteria for the valuation of an artwork. No longer deprecated for their unreadiness to extend the reach of classical composition, the Gypsy model described, and exemplified, by Liszt demonstrated the value of the one-off, unrepeatable performance. European music could be productively enhanced by valuing a player's manner, rather than in the content of the work he was playing. What counted for quality was the performer's individual expressiveness.

The Gypsy musician was a powerful model. In the majority of the prints Manet created at this juncture of his career, the artist committed himself to a corresponding approach in print-making. He was recreating in a suitably individual and affective way standard modes of expression from the history of the visual arts. By giving them a focus that emanated from contemporary contexts, he, like the Gypsy musician, became a beacon for change, leading the way to new dimensions of visual experience. The efflorescence of musical subjects in his works of the early 1860s is evidence of his participation in an international movement towards the integration of the arts. Without intending to diminish the importance of visual media, Manet, and his contemporaries in literature and music, saw in the accommodation of experiences taken from other media a way of expanding art's range and accessibility.

The most vivid realisation of these ideas in Manet's early painted works occurs in 1862 when he created *The Old Musician* [Fig. 5]. Made famous for its barely disguised use of art historical quotations, its subject-matter is equally noteworthy.<sup>27</sup> It is the

visual consummation of the "Gypsy" themed works Manet had been producing at this time. Amongst Manet's largest, the painting was first exhibited in March 1863 at the private art gallery run by Louis Martinet. The only other lifetime showing was at the retrospective exhibition the artist mounted after he had been denied participation at the Universal Exposition of 1867. At this show it was hung beside the as-yet uncut smaller painting *The Gypsies*. For all the internal differences between the two, they shared the same height and their juxtaposition must have suggested they were linked. To this day the view persists; as Carol Armstrong observes: "*The Gitanos and The Old Musician together make a good example of Manet's often repeated habit of painting pairs of similar subjects in contrasting manners.*"<sup>28</sup>

The work reprises that combination of a female figure holding a baby that had featured in *The Gypsies*. In this second version of the theme this figure plays a more complex role. She appears as a young mother but her size and placement suggests she participates with the two boys in the music evoked by the seated violinist. This mother and child pair gives expression to the same interaction of music and maternity found in *The Gypsies*. It occurs in a context which incorporates a parallel focus on the nomadic and the family. Despite her pivotal role in the scenario the painting is once again centred on the figure of the musician. Manet's model was Jean Lagrène, a well-known identity whose credentials were attested at the time by one of France's most eminent gypsiologists.<sup>29</sup> The painter bestows upon him what would have been seen as authentic Gypsy physiognomic features. In particular darkened skin tones, especially on the hands, are accentuated to such a degree that the colour of the violin and the colour of the man's hands are nearly indistinguishable. By this device Manet made Lagrène's connection with the violin, which he is depicted playing

<sup>27</sup> Alain de Leiris commented: "*The Old Musician is the first large scale 'manifesto' in which Manet uncompromisingly tests the strength of his own vision in a direct confrontation with historical prototypes.*" – DE LEIRIS, A.: Manet, Guérout and Chryssippos. In: *The Art Bulletin*, 46, 1964, No. 3, p. 404. FRIED, M.: Manet's Sources: Aspects of His Art, 1859 – 1865. In: *Artforum*, 7, 1969, pp. 28-82, developed this insight. He revisited the argument in his book *Manet's Modernism, or, The Face of Painting in the 1860s*. Chicago 1996.

<sup>28</sup> ARMSTRONG, C.: *Manet Manette*. New Haven 2002, p. 17.

<sup>29</sup> BROWN, M.: Manet's Old Musician: Portrait of a Gypsy and Naturalist Allegory. In: *Studies in the History of Art*, 8, 1978, pp. 77-87. She identified Manet's model "*now playing on the barrel organ in the city or in the suburbs during the off season in the studios.*" – BATAILLARD, P.: *Les Bohémiens ou Tsiganes en Paris*. In: VERDET, C. (ed.): *Paris guide par les principaux écrivains et artistes de la France*. Paris 1983 (1<sup>st</sup> ed. 1867), p. 1117.



5. Edouard Manet: *The Old Musician*, 1862, oil on canvas. Washington, National Gallery of Art. Photo: Archive of the gallery.

pizzicato, one generating both ethnic and musical resonance.<sup>30</sup>

When Manet made this painting, Gypsies, in popular French mythology, were identified as either Spanish or Eastern European. It is therefore significant that, despite references to Velázquez's *The Drinker* in the foliage to the left of the figures and elsewhere in the disposition of the figures in the composition, Spanish signifiers have no discernible part to play in Manet's narrative intentions. This group is displayed as a loose arrangement of associated individuals in a rural landscape that, like the landscape in *The Gypsies*, makes no concessions to any specific location. The painting evokes Gypsy nomads brought together through their commitment to music.

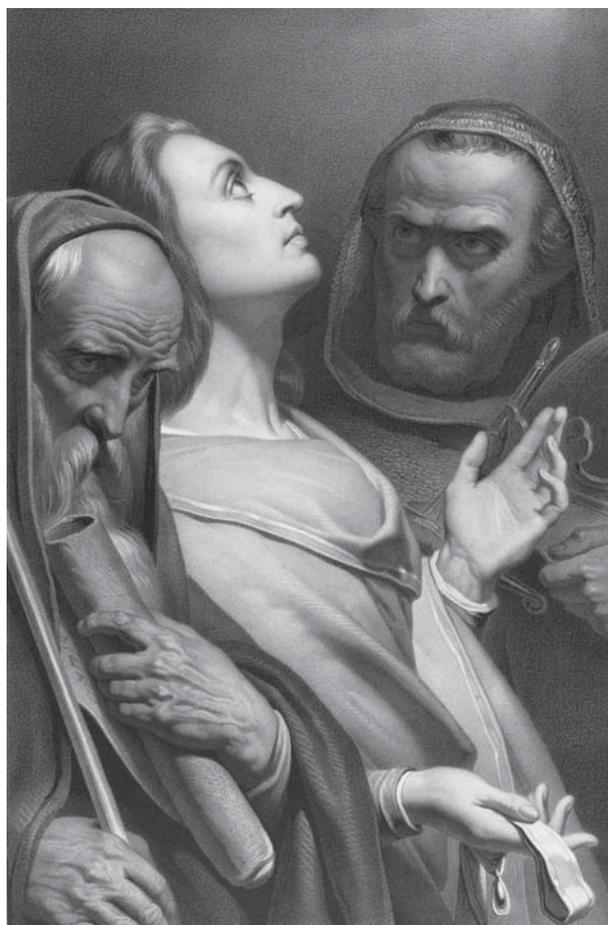
I have already suggested that autobiography plays its part in *The Gypsies* series of prints. It cannot be overlooked in this work either. Manet's relationship with Suzanne Leenhoff, an immigrant and a single mother for twelve years prior to their marriage, provides the personal dimension to Manet's musical understanding. Through her the music of the Gypsies intersects with his private life. Her input in his representations of music is demonstrated by two unrelated but significant biographical details, suggesting she is a vital link between Manet and Liszt.

<sup>30</sup> "One of the most common style hongrois fiddle techniques is *pizzicato*." – BELLMAN, J.: *The Style Hongrois in the Music of Western Europe*. Boston 1993, p. 98.

The first is an account by Anton van Anrooy in which the author claims Suzanne came to Paris on Liszt's urging after he heard her piano playing during his fleeting visit to her village. Anrooy's story makes it likely she was responsible for Manet becoming acquainted with Liszt's book about Gypsies.<sup>31</sup> Manet also attended the marriage in 1857 in Florence of the composer's daughter, Blandine Liszt, to Émile Ollivier. This contact extended at least until 1860, for the artist knew the politician well enough then to publish a caricature of him.<sup>32</sup>

Suzanne Leenhoff was also involved with expatriate Dutch circles in Paris, which connect her and by implication connect Manet with the Dutch artist Ary Scheffer (1795 – 1858). This is significant because Scheffer was a staunch friend of Franz Liszt and in 1844 painted a portrait of the composer in the guise of one of the three wise men. Since I am proposing that this work, *The Three Magi* [Fig. 6], provided the model for the figure on the right-hand edge of Manet's *The Old Musician*, it is important to demonstrate how Manet would have been conversant with this now-obscure artist's work.

Manet made connections with Suzanne's siblings, who lived nearby. He was well acquainted with her brother Ferdinand, one of the models used for his painting *Déjeuner sur l'herbe*. This supports the suggestion he would also have known Suzanne's sister. She was married to the sculptor Joseph Mezzara who had been commissioned by Cornelia Scheffer to make the 1861 sculpture of her father, Ary Scheffer, now in the town square at Dordrecht, Scheffer's birthplace. Finally, Adolphe Tabarant, an early Manet biographer, claims Cornelia Scheffer worked with Manet in the 1860s on joint artistic projects, the artist providing designs for her pottery.<sup>33</sup> These family



6. Waanders, after Ary Scheffer: *The Three Magi*, 1844, lithographic reproduction. Dordrecht, Dordrechts Museum. Photo: Archive of the museum.

links support the view that Manet knew Scheffer's artworks well.<sup>34</sup> Moreover, he had the opportunity to make his excerpt from that 1844 painting when it

<sup>31</sup> ANROOY, A. van: *Impromptu. Une page d'amour d'Edouard Manet*. Genève 1950 (1<sup>st</sup> ed. 1939). The author's grandfather was doctor in the village at the time of the alleged meeting. Independent research has established that Liszt could have been there in 1842. The authenticity of Anrooy's account is argued in the *Liszt Bulletin*, [http://www.lisztkring.nl/download/archief/LK\\_Bulletin\\_09\\_2010.pdf](http://www.lisztkring.nl/download/archief/LK_Bulletin_09_2010.pdf) pp. 2-8.

<sup>32</sup> Thérèse Dolan describes his attendance at the marriage in Florence in DOLAN, T.: Manet's Portrait-Charge of Emile Ollivier. In: *Print Quarterly*, 17, 2000, pp. 17-26. HAMBURGER, K.: Liszt and Émile Ollivier. In: *Studia Musicologica*

*Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae*, 28, 1986, pp. 65-77, discusses the close familial relations between Ollivier, his wife Blandine and Liszt.

<sup>33</sup> TABARANT, A.: *Manet et ses œuvres*. Paris 1947, p. 102. Nothing survives from this collaboration.

<sup>34</sup> M. ZIMMERMANN argues Manet drew upon an 1851 image of Scheffer's, *Le couper de nappe*, for his 1868 painting *Luncheon in the Studio*. See MICHEL R. (ed.): *Où en est l'interprétation de l'œuvre d'art*. Paris 2000, pp. 157-204. BANN, S.: *Ways around Modernism*. New York 2007, endorses this argument on p. 65.

was on show at the immensely popular posthumous retrospective exhibition of the artist's work at the Martinet gallery in 1859.<sup>35</sup> Alternatively he could have used one of the prints of the work then in circulation. By re-examining the context for Manet's painting and by describing the implications of the innovative approach he took in treating his theme, these seemingly unrelated facts come together.

At a time when painted images of Gypsies envisaged them in exotic contexts, relying on the myth of the noble savage at peace with his place in the world, Manet's grandest treatment of this theme was nothing like that. His visual equivalent for a description in Liszt's book of innovations in western music inaugurated by a group of Gypsy musicians in the eighteenth century was a total contrivance. He made use of quotations from the works of other artists, as if envisaging an historical scenario first encountered in a book was only possible by these indirect means. Figures from art's history stand in for each character in Manet's painting *The Old Musician*, bearing in mind that two of them, the young woman and the dancing figure, both disguised family portraits, are at one step removed from their original sources, being adapted from Manet's earlier works.<sup>36</sup> The protagonists in his historic scenario are not mere travesties picturing unknown musicians. Rather they are invested with all the weight accruing from his artistic precursors. His reinscription of past works of art resembles procedures adopted by Gypsy bands. Their improvisatory performances of borrowed music became an opportunity for virtuosic display. Manet does something similar by putting together his different sources in a *tour de force* display. And he acknowledges

what has inspired this by including the two figures on the extreme right of the canvas.

These figures cannot readily be reconciled with the others in the painting. The quartet on the left is enclosed within the twin poles of the seated musician and the mother with child, they make up a tight group open only to the viewer. By contrast the two on the right, facing the old musician's back, are oddly separated. The two sides of the painting appear uneasily juxtaposed and these two figures look like outsiders. Evidence uncovered during the latest cleaning of the painting supports this conclusion. The two figures on the right-hand side were painted using zinc white while lead white occurs in all the figures on the left, with the exception of the mother with the baby. In their article in the National Gallery of Art *Bulletin* the conservators point out the significance of this change in paint type: "The alterations to the girl were made at the same time as the two men were included."<sup>37</sup> Manet's original idea for the entire composition consisted of four figures on the left-hand side of the painting. At that point the woman's height more closely matched that of the old musician. Later, when Manet added the two figures to the right, he reduced it so that she more closely matched the two boys in height. Furthermore, the two figures on the right were added progressively; the last stage being the insertion of the figure cut by the edge of the painting, the Scheffer quotation. Theodore Reff describes his sleeve overlapping the contiguous figure's cloak; it can still be seen in outline beneath it.<sup>38</sup>

These changes had the effect of aligning this painting more closely with two other paintings from this period, *Music in the Tuileries Gardens* and *Fishing*. In all

<sup>35</sup> *Catalogue des œuvres de Ary Scheffer exposées au profit de la caisse de secours de l'association des artistes, peintres, sculpteurs, architectes et dessinateurs*. Paris 1859, Cat. No. 53. The exhibition is said to have attracted over 2000 visitors each day it was open. – PERRIN, É.: Ary Scheffer: Exposition de ses œuvres. In: *Revue européenne*, 3, 1859, p. 191. The painting was recently brought in contention as a source for Manet's figure by an article by KOVÁCS 2008 (see in note 3).

<sup>36</sup> My thesis (published on the University of Auckland library website) discusses the chronology of the images representing the young woman holding the baby. I provide reasons for assuming that Manet's print treatment of the motif came first. I also propose the dancing figure, derived from the 1859 painting *The Absinthe Drinker*, was originally three-qu-

arter length. My argument, that Manet added dancing feet when he created *The Old Musician*, reverts to the view once supported by most art historians. It has been questioned in FONSMARK, A.-B.: Absinthdrikken. In: *Meddelelser fra Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek*, 41, 1985, pp. 5-32. This article draws on research at the Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek, where the painting resides. My doubts about her conclusions are in my thesis.

<sup>37</sup> JONES, K. – HOENIGSWALD, A.: Shedding New Light on *The Old Musician*. In: *Bulletin/National Gallery of Art*, 41, 2009, pp. 2-6, 8-13, figs. 1, 6-11, esp. p. 12.

<sup>38</sup> REFF, T.: *Manet and Modern Paris. One Hundred Paintings, Drawings, Prints, and Photographs by Manet and His Contemporaries*. Washington (DC) 1982, p. 190.

three the artist depicts himself at the side of the painting. He is shown as both author of the scene and, at the same time, a participant in it. And in all three the artist is accompanied by a significant other, suggesting that the figure half-in and half-out of the painting is not mere staffage, the “Wandering Jew” proposed in numerous commentaries. He is rather someone whose presence has a specific resonance despite his position on the periphery. Yet there is a significant change to Manet’s treatment of the onlooker theme in this painting. Compared with the other two works, where Manet and his companion appear undisguised, both figures in this painting are surrogates. In conformity with the rest of the painting where historical figures are represented by stand-ins sourced from other artworks, the artist does not represent himself directly. Rather he uses an image of the rag-picker, a synecdoche for the artist in his 1859 painting.<sup>39</sup> The other figure is likewise not a direct portrait. From the painting containing the portrait of Liszt, Manet adopts the figure half-in and half-out of that work for his, similarly situated. Given these origins it is not unlikely the figure refers to the composer. For all these changes Manet reprises the role they have in the other two equivalent paintings. They are not just participants in the unfolding scene, they also register and comment on the origins of scene being depicted.

Manet had founded that quartet of figures not just in the disguised dynamics of his family situation but also in Liszt’s description of an historical Gypsy band of musicians from the eighteenth century. They were one of the first named groups of Gypsy musicians. During the nineteenth century they were celebrated for breaking through the ethnic boundaries heretofore keeping the distinctive art-form, Gypsy Music, from a wider audience. Liszt described a young woman Csinka Panna, another Gypsy musician who was her husband, and his two brothers. Her principal role in the quartet was the focus of Liszt’s

description: “*She began at a young age to play brilliantly on this instrument and married, at fourteen, another Gypsy who along with his two brothers was a musician as well, which made it possible for him to promptly bring together a little family orchestra, which soon became renowned.*”<sup>40</sup> The story could have resonated with Manet because it presented an alternative outcome to the frustrated musical ambitions of Suzanne Leenhoff, whom he was soon to marry. Beyond the purely biographical, it foreshadowed his ambition to cast his own work onto the international stage. Manet’s innovative treatment of sources, technique and subject-matter in this painting is identified with the influential avant-garde composer’s ideas about what will constitute the music of the future. In Liszt’s writing that historical Gypsy band represented the vanguard, signalling the way forward for a national school of music independent of western music’s established canon. Manet’s painting is their equivalent, overturning the shibboleths of tradition and setting the visual arts on a new course.

By the time Liszt had written his book the Roma had been shown, through language research, to have originated from India. The original discovery was made by Johann Rüdiger in 1782 and was followed up by August Pott who in 1844 – 1845 had published “*a comparative grammar and a comparative lexicon of two dozen Romani dialects*”.<sup>41</sup> The information was widely available, Liszt cites Pott’s work and suggests that music research should attempt to find similarities between Indian and Gypsy music just as earlier researchers had done with their discovery of the Sanskrit origins of the Romanichel language.<sup>42</sup> Liszt’s subscription to the claim that the Roma originated in “*regions neighbouring the banks of the Ganges*” could also have contributed to Manet’s choice of his half-figure’s apparel in this painting. His decision to substitute the robe covering the head on Scheffer’s original figure with a turban marks a significant point in the painting’s construction. It signals the importance to the artist

<sup>39</sup> BIELECKI, E.: “Un artiste en matière de chiffons”: The Rag-Picker as a Figure for the Artist in Champfleury’s *La mascarade de la vie parisienne*. In: *Nineteenth-Century French Studies*, 37, 2009, No. 3. She describes “*the lowly figure of the rag-picker who collects mass-produced, anonymous images that Champfleury found an appropriate image of the artist*” (p. 273). Manet and Champfleury were united in using this analogy.

<sup>40</sup> LISZT 1999 (see in note 2), p. 187.

<sup>41</sup> MATRAS, Y.: The Role of Language in Mystifying and Demystifying Gypsy Identity. In: SAUL, N. – TEBBUTT, S. (eds.): *The Role of the Romanies. Images and Counter-Images of “Gypsies”/Romanies in European Cultures*. Liverpool 2004, pp. 54–78, esp. p. 61.

<sup>42</sup> LISZT 1999 (see in note 2), p. 171.

of an exotic presence for his imagined scenario. It foreshadows Manet's later interest in reflecting in his paintings and prints what he could learn from other exotic sources, Japanese art in particular.

I have already described how Manet's compatriots subscribed to the idea that an artist could take a work of art originating in one medium and translate it into another. The idea arose out of a general belief that the arts were inter-related. It informed the poetry and essays of Baudelaire as well as polemical articles by Richard Wagner widely circulated in Paris in association with his staging of *Tannhäuser* in that city in 1861. It is also practised in Liszt's transcriptions which at times draw inspiration from poetry and the visual arts.<sup>43</sup> I will conclude this essay with a discussion of the mechanisms Manet used to evoke the sound of music's presence in this painting.

No other work investigates music's implicit presence on the canvas with quite the concentration of *The Old Musician*. Everybody can be construed responding to it. Overtly figured by the old musician's plucked note, these figures are subjugated by music's power; united in their attentive listening they are represented by a combination of abstracted and focused gazes. I agree with Marilyn Brown when she claims these "*bohemian wanderers are brought together formally and thematically... by listening to the sounds of the violin strings being plucked by the gypsy musician in their midst... This subtle indication of the active power of the gypsy's art serves to energize an otherwise static world...*" (p. 85). These nomads are caught up in the moment when the plucked violin string rings out; their future, as much as their past is, meanwhile, as tenebrous as that depicted in Manet's print *The Travellers*. It cannot be doubted that Manet used this device elsewhere in a variety of contexts, not all of them musical, throughout his career. A number of critics have drawn attention to the instantaneity of action in his 1867 painting *The Execution of Maximilian*.<sup>44</sup> This early work, which focuses on their attention to an inward state brought on by music originates the

practice. As might be expected in the representation of an audience's experience of inwardness, Manet acknowledges variety in their responses.

The challenge was to make a naturalistic scene in which it becomes obvious that all the figures in it are sharing the same aural experience. It would not work if each of the figures looked fixedly either at the source of the sound or away out of the picture space. Too much of either mechanism would create an unnatural ambience, alienating the viewer and diminishing the painting's impact. Nevertheless to have some of the figures in either of these positions is intrinsic to creating this experience of inner attentiveness. In this respect, the disjunctive gazes of the two boys are extremely effective. They are close enough together to suggest that what attracts the attention of one should have drawn the other's attention as well. Only an explanation that can account for their differing gazes, as attentive listening does, overcomes the strange effect of their physical togetherness being matched by their psychic separation. Manet reinforces this sense of their being distracted by the music by the way he treats the eyes of the boy in white; his look is oriented outside the picture space but otherwise it is undirected. This is not a gaze and it is in stark contrast to his companion's fixed stare at the old musician.

Beyond this central group Manet takes advantage of the young woman's lost profile and the elderly bearded figure's downward gaze to give expression to the experience of being overwhelmed by the impact of the musical experience. Listening without looking is how a visual artist is able to represent the figure engrossed in an inner experience which has primacy. Visually linked with music making they are overshadowed by it. The final figure not accounted for in this compendium of absorbed listening is the stand-in for Manet, the one-time absinthe drinker. The "*odd, almost dancelike formality*" of this figure's pose suggests he is aware of and responding to a musical experience.<sup>45</sup> His ambivalent gaze deflects

<sup>43</sup> On Liszt's transcriptions, see KREGOR, J.: *Liszt as Transcriber*. Cambridge 2010.

<sup>44</sup> BÄTSCHMANN, O.: *Edouard Manet, Der Tod des Maximilian. Eine Kunst-Monographie*. Frankfurt a. M. 1993 (not seen); FRIED 1996 (see in note 27), p. 356 and n. 231; GEIMER,

P.: *Picturing the Black Box: On Blanks in Nineteenth Century Paintings and Photographs*. In: *Science in Context*, 17, 2004, No. 4, pp. 467-501.

<sup>45</sup> FRIED 1996 (see in note 27), p. 34.

attention from his face to his legs, in this context invested with a musical supplement.

I have directed attention in this article onto Manet's interest in representing Gypsy musicians, arguing that his works in this genre reflect his knowledge of and response to Franz Liszt's book *Des Bobémiens et de leur musique en Hongrie*. His first artwork of this type was the unpublished print known as *The Little Gypsies*. This important print was created well before the motif was converted into a painting and as I have shown it was the first place for experiments with innovatory stylistic features which later were taken up in his painting. As early as 1925, Léon Rosenthal argued Manet felt free to develop the implications of innovative subject matter in his printmaking. The allusion to art being made in the open air and to sensations captured in the moment first occurs in this print. As Rosenthal says, "*the graphic composition and its*

*execution are all determined by the desire to give an impression of 'instantaneity'".*<sup>46</sup> Rosenthal acknowledges here the priority of Manet's print-making in the development of the aesthetic goals of Impressionist painting. It continues to be voiced by print scholars despite being largely ignored in the major retrospective accounts of that movement. For instance Jean Leymarie and Michel Melot claim "*a significant correlation between the renewal of the original print and the birth of the modern vision, of the impressionist vision. All stylistic aspects right up to the vibration of colour can be transferred or discerned, specifically at the intimate level of the printed plate, sometimes earlier and in a more decisive fashion than in painting.*"<sup>47</sup> Manet's first tentative steps in that direction can be seen in this print. The artist thought through issues about the relation of drawing to painting in a print that demonstrates his ability to transpose ideas about music propounded by Liszt.

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<sup>46</sup> ROSENTHAL, L.: *Manet, aquafortiste et lithographe*. Paris 1925, p. 148.

<sup>47</sup> LEYMARIE, J. – MELOT, M.: *Les gravures des impressionnistes: Manet, Pissarro, Renoir, Cézanne, Sisley*. Paris 1971, p. VI.

## Lisztova účasť na Manetových obrazoch Cigánov

### Resumé

Edouard Manet začal svoju profesionálnu kariéru dielami, ktoré zachytávajú bohémsky pouličný život v Paríži a hudbu. Najzaujímavejšie z nich predstavujú „cigánske“ námety. V týchto dielach sa opierať predovšetkým o diskurzy podnietené Franzom Lisztom v knihe *Des Bohémiens et de leur musique en Hongrie*, uverejnenej v Paríži v roku 1859. Rad maliarových inovácií sa podobá na revolučný prístup Liszta k hudobnej tvorbe popísaný v tejto knihe. Umelec priznáva svoju zaviazanosť Lisztovi v obraze *Starý hudobník*.

„Cigánsky“ motív sa po prvý raz objavuje v zriedkavom a neuvěřiteľnom leptu, rannej verzii *Cigánov* prezývanej *Malí Cigáni*. Manet ho vytvoril, keď ako začínajúci grafik experimentoval s novými médiami. Napriek početným zmenám v detaile a obráteniu celej konfigurácie v neskoršom leptu a maľbe, základná kompozícia zostáva konštantná vo všetkých troch verziách. Stojaca figúra nesúca gitaru zavesenú na chrbte dominuje v kompozícii svojim centrálnym umiestnením. Za ňou a po jej boku sedí matka a dieťa. Tretia polofigúra stojí za ňou pijúc z fľaše vody.

Niet dôkazu, že by Manet mal nejakú osobnú skúsenosť alebo vzťah s hudobníkmi, ktorých mohol konštruovať ako Cigánov v tomto bode svojho života. Avšak centrálna pozícia gitary vo všetkých obrazoch tejto série prezrádza dôležitosť cigánskej hudby pre Manetove predstavy o umeleckej praxi. Prvá zo sérií zachytáva pocit spontánnosti a škicovitosti demonštrovaný voľným spôsobom podania a bezstarostným prevedením. Ignorovaním akademicky správnej kresby a ľahostajnosťou voči tradičnej perspektíve tu Manet podnikol najradikálnejšie odmietnutie konvencií výtvarnej kresby vo svojej rannej umeleckej tvorbe. Natoľko radikálne, že tento grafický list nebol nikdy uverejnený.

Tieto hudobné obrazy sú príkladom Manetovej veľkej umeleckej ambície rozšíriť hranice média, ambície, ktorú zdieľal s významnými súčasníkmi, Baudelaïrom, Lisztom a Wagnerom. V takých ume-

leckých dielach ako tieto odkazuje na skúsenosti, ktoré nie sú viditeľné, ale prítomné zmyslom, vedúc divákovu pozornosť preč od očividného námety smerom k veciam a činnostiam, ktoré sú skryté, implicitné či vizuálne neprítomné. Evokovaním zvuku, hudby a iných nevizuálnych skúseností zdôraznil cestu k novému definovaniu referenčnej, odkazovej funkcie umenia. Že ho to zaujímalo od začiatku kariéry, dokladá päť veľkých malieb z roku 1862, ktoré znázorňujú hudobné námety, rovnako ako celý rad leptov. Vo všetkých týchto dielach sú jeho zobrazenia hudby začlenené do ľudových či exotických prostredí. V tej dobe hudba, ktorá pochádzala z takýchto prameňov, prispievala k regenerácii umení. Manetova voľba znázorňovať prostredia, ktoré sú s nimi späté, prezrádza jeho ambíciu dať svojim obrazom aspoň niektoré obdivované kvality tejto hudby.

V *Des Bohémiens et de leur musique en Hongrie* Liszt zdôraznil príspevok cigánskych hudobníkov k oživeniu západnej hudby. Upriamil pozornosť na ich virtuózne, improvizované schopnosti osvojovať si a reorganizovať hudbu minulosti. Tento dôraz na prevedenie ako merítko umeleckej hodnoty sa zhoduje s Manetovou praxou celkom otvorene transkribovať diela iných umelcov. Asi sa oboznámil s Lisztovou knihou prostredníctvom osobných kontaktov, ktoré ho spájali s komponistom, a prvou verziou *Cigánov* demonštroval svoju zaviazanosť Lisztovi tým, že jeho myšlienky previedol do praxe. Technika tohto diela opakuje to, čo Liszt oceňoval ako cigánsku hudobnú spontánnosť a inšpirovanú naivnosť. Manetova obdoba Cigánov a ich hudby si za námet berie ich každodenný život, akoby ich muzikálnosť bola takou vnútornou súčasťou ich existencie ako jedlo a voda.

Manetov lept *Pútnici* je ďalším dielom, ktoré má dôležitý vzťah k súdobým diskurzom, tak k Baudelaïrovi, ako aj k Lisztovi. Báseň Charlesa Baudelaïra *Bohémiens en voyage* bola napísaná skôr ako Lisztova kniha, ale následné Baudelaïrove úvahy o danej

téme sa zdajú prezrádzať vplyv Lisztovej knihy. Pri rozvíjaní svojej interpretácie motívu Manet vytvoril „genetické“ spojivo s oboma predchádzajúcimi umeleckými dielami z odlišných disciplín.

Manetova grafická tvorba ranných 60. rokov 19. storočia bola dejiskom významného experimentovania. Zápasil s rozpormi, ktoré plynuli z jeho zaujatosti spontánnosťou a improvizáciou v médiu, ktoré svojou povahou vyžadovalo disciplinované pracovné postupy. Vymýšľajúc techniky ako vyriešiť túto dichotómiu Manet sa upriamil na myšlienku virtuózneho predvedenia. Jeho ranný lept skupiny Cigánov simuluje improvizované techniky, ktorých najživším uskutočnením bola cigánska hudba. Umelec prispôboval hudobnej tvorbe svoj prístup ku grafike. Navyše, včleňovaním skúseností odvodených z iných médií do svojho umenia, dával najavo svoju účasť na medzinárodnom hnutí, ktoré sa usilovalo o integráciu umení. V tom istom čase rozširoval rozsah a prístupnosť vizuálnych médií. Tieto štylistické prístupy neskôr rozkvitali v maľbe impresionistov.

*Starý hudobník* je vizuálnym zúročením Manetových diel s cigánskou tematikou z ranných 60. rokov. Maľba evokuje cigánskych nomádov, ktorých spojila oddanosť hudbe. Obraz *Traja králi* od Ary Scheffera z roku 1845, v ktorom je aj Lisztov portrét, poskytol model pre figúru, ktorú Manet pridal na ľavý okraj maľby. Napoly v obraze, napoly mimo neho a pritísnuté k tancujúcej postave, prevzatej z Manetovho obrazu *Pijan absintu* z roku 1859, sú tieto dve figúry podivne oddelené od kvarteta naľavo. Obe strany maľby sa zdajú namáhavo postavené vedľa seba a obe tieto figúry vyzerajú ako outsideri.

Kvartet na ľavej strane pripomína Manetovu rodnú situáciu. Ale súvisí tiež s popisom historickej skupiny cigánskych hudobníkov z Lisztovej knihy. Umelec to dáva najavo citáciou zo Scheffera. Manet stotožňuje inovatívne podanie prameňov, techniky a námetu svojho obrazu s vplyvnými myšlienkami avantgardného komponistu o tom, čo bude tvoriť hudbu budúcnosti. Liszt píše, že historická cigánska skupina predstavuje predvoj signalizujúci cestu vpred k národnej hudobnej škole nezávislej na zavedenom kánone západnej hudby. Manetova maľba je toho obdobia, prevracajúc otrepané pravdy tradície a privádzajúc výtvarné umenie na nový kurz.

Manetovo prvé umelecké dielo vytvorené v štýle, ktorý bol symetrický s námetom – neuvverejnený grafický list známy ako *Malé Cigáni*, iniciovalo jeho experimenty s inovačnými štylistickými rysmi, ktoré boli neskôr prevzaté do jeho maľby. Léon Rosenthal už v roku 1925 argumentoval, že Manetovi nič nebránilo, aby vo svojej grafike rozvíjal dôsledky inovatívnych námetov. Narážka na umenie tvorené v plenéri a na momentálne vnemy sa prvý raz objavuje v tomto grafickom liste. Ako hovorí Rosenthal, „grafická kompozícia a jej prevedenie sú určované želaním podať dojem ‚okamihovosti‘“. Rosenthal potvrdzuje prioritu Manetovej grafiky vo vývoji estetických cieľov impresionistického maliarstva. Je to téma, ktorá stále zaznieva u bádateľov grafiky napriek tomu, že je celkom ignorovaná veľkými retrospektívnymi prehľadmi tohto umeleckého hnutia.

*Preklad z angličtiny J. Bakoš*

## The Rule of Art. A Short Introduction to the Munich Art World in the Nineteenth Century

Stefan MUTHESIUS

### Introduction

If the term *bohème* was never very clearly defined even in the place of its origin, the matter became still more complex when it wandered eastwards into the German-speaking countries. Murger's book of 1851 was translated as *Pariser Zigeunerleben*, the German term for a Gypsy, or Roma.<sup>1</sup> But by the end of the nineteenth century that German term fell completely out of use and it was replaced by the original French, and by then, Western term. The task of drawing comprehensive parallels between the art worlds of Paris and all the major German centres during the nineteenth century cannot be undertaken here. In any case, the notion of a bohemian artist appears, at least initially, rather as a literary and musical construct. Thereafter, however, much the best known German chapter in the history of the "mature" *bohème's* was located in Munich, the Munich-Schwabing Bohème in the decade before World War I, which will be briefly recorded at the end of this article. In this account of the nineteenth-century Munich art world, the notion of *bohème* is kept as a loose kind of background context only.

If bohemianism refers to an artist who asserts himself or herself as being independent of the com-

mon class definitions, or to somebody who acts indifferently towards the established frames of life, living carelessly, even as an outcast, or as somebody who is suffering acute poverty, or, more simply, if it is just a matter of being an artistic novice, or even just a "bad" artist, or, worst of all, a "failed" artist<sup>2</sup> – then the term bohemian hardly fits the art world of Munich in the nineteenth century. The term should likewise not be considered if it implies that artists never need institutions, nor if it suggests a pervasive philistinism on the part of the non-artistic majority.

If, on the other hand, we refer to practitioners who are eager to establish for themselves an identity as "artists" and who therefore see themselves as occupying a special position in society, visible to all, which leads to a high degree of esteem, meaning self-esteem as well as esteem received from others, all of which is owed to a perceived possession of exceptional talent, or "genius", in short if a bohemian is somebody who pursues a *freie Kunst* – in that case the term may readily be applied to the Munich art scene almost from the beginning of the nineteenth century onwards. If "bohemian", furthermore, implies the gregariousness of all like-minded and the accompanying excesses, then the beer-swilling metropolis may well take top rank.

<sup>1</sup> MURGER, H.: *Scènes de la vie de bohème*. Paris 1851; *Pariser Zigeunerleben. Bilder aus dem französischen Literaten-und Künstlerleben*. Grimma – Leipzig 1851; later German editions added *bohème* to the title. The well-known painting by the Munich artist Carl Spitzweg *Der arme Poet* of 1839 could be cited here, but it appears that at that time it was to be rated essentially as a joking picture which did not entail a definition of an

"*état social*". Cf. Ibidem, p. vi; RAUPP, H. J.: Carl Spitzweg's der Arme Poet. In: *Wallraff Richartz Jahrbuch*, 46, 1985, pp. 253-271.

<sup>2</sup> KREUZER, H.: *Die Bohème. Beiträge zu ihrer Beschreibung*. Stuttgart 1968, p. 9 ff. N.B. *Bobeme* in German comes with and without the *accent grave*.

Those artists may well want to appear to be disinterested in some of the material aspects of life but the fraternity also included many wealthy members who managed their material affairs carefully.<sup>3</sup> Once again, what needs to be stressed is that one crucial element of the “classic” definition of bohemianism, the artists’ parading a disregard for the patron, did not apply to Munich at all. The “art life” of Munich comprised all practitioners, as well as critics, all patrons, from the upper classes and the established or moneyed middle classes, down to even, as it was sometimes claimed, to the city’s population as a whole.<sup>4</sup>

The explanation for the way in which, from the 1820s until about 1914, Munich could style itself as a place where “art” was treated as a kind of mission, lies partly with the specifics of Central European political, social and cultural geography. Instead of one metropolis that holds masses of members of every class and every kind of profession, or non-profession, there was a polycentric set up within which regional centres competed with each other through declared specialisations. The support for art in nineteenth-century Munich came “before” the modern developments of trade and industry.<sup>5</sup> In terms of the production of high quality works of the visual arts, Munich was recognised to be ahead in the German-speaking world, ahead of Berlin or Vienna. By the later nineteenth-century Berlin, in its new role of the Capital of the new German Empire with an image of a brash secular modernity, ruled by a perceived all-pervading “Prussian” discipline, helped Munich even more to fore-ground itself as the capital of art, which also stressed more leisurely ways of life that were seen to go with it.

### The *Künstlerfürsten*

First of all, the reputation of the *Kunststadt* hinged around the prestige of the individual practitioners. When the principal painter of the 1820s to 1830s, Peter von Cornelius, hero of the grandest public commissions and Director of the Academy of Arts, transferred from Munich to Berlin, in 1841, he was received there, as well as everywhere on the way, like a *Fürst*. This term is usually translated as “prince”, though this is misleading, as in Central Europe a *Fürst* is a sovereign of a middling position between count and duke.<sup>6</sup> During the next fifty years Munich’s painter-*Fürsten*, as they were frequently called, went through a process of further emancipation. The principal placeholder of the 1850s to 1870s, Carl Theodor von Piloty, was head of an immense national and international “Piloty Class”, again at the Academy. After that, from the 1880s into the early 1900s, the great Munich *Künstlerfürsten* hardly needed institutional affiliations any more. Franz von Lenbach, by far the most renowned member of the group, was just the painter Lenbach, though he had gained his spectacularly high social standing partly from being the portraitist of the German and even the European artistic and political elite.<sup>7</sup> By that time, the list of painter-*Fürsten* could be extended by at least another 235 names, judging from their opulent studio interiors as they were recorded by the photographer Carl Teufel around 1890 [Fig. 1].<sup>8</sup> Finally, by 1910 one may see the process of emancipation as having come to an end: in the case of Kandinsky, Marc and Münter; the most celebrated artists of the period, at least from a later perspective, did not appear to have needed social status labels of any kind.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>3</sup> RUPPERT, W.: *Der moderne Künstler. Zur Sozial- und Kulturgeschichte der kreativen Individualität in der kulturellen Moderne im 19. Und 20. Jahrhundert*. Frankfurt a. M. 1998, pp. 14, 150, 187-188, 577-579 etc., almost exclusively on Munich.

<sup>4</sup> PECHT, F.: *Geschichte der Münchner Kunst im 19. Jahrhundert*. München 1888.

<sup>5</sup> RIEHL, W. H.: Über die Kunststadt München. In: *Zeitschrift des Kunstgewerbevereins München*, 20, 1869, Nos. 7-8, p. 16; SCHRICK, K. G.: *München als Kunststadt. Dokumentation einer kulturhistorischen Debatte*. Wien 1994; HUSE, N.: *Kleine Kunst-*

*geschichte Münchens*. München 2009 (4<sup>th</sup> ed.).

<sup>6</sup> PECHT, F.: Peter von Cornelius. In: *Allgemeine Deutsche Biographie (ADB)*. Vol. 4. Leipzig 1876, pp. 484-497.

<sup>7</sup> RANKE, W.: *Franz von Lenbach, der Münchner Malerfürst*. Köln 1986.

<sup>8</sup> LANGER, B.: *Das Münchner Künstleratelier des Historismus*. Dachau 1992.

<sup>9</sup> RUPPERT 1998 (see in note 3), pt. 2, ch. 5.



1. *Atelier of the Hungarian painter Otto von Baditz, Munich, 1889, photo Carl Teufel. Repro: LANGER 1992 (see in note 8).*

However, while one insists on the distinctiveness, the singularity of the individual artist as an agent, concentrating on their personalities, or, for that matter, on a bohemian loneliness, their artistic activity must also be understood as being tied in with numerous institutions. During most of the nineteenth-century artistic activity still needed the “critical mass” of a capital city; only from the very end of the century did significant art begin to be produced in remote locations. Munich’s nineteenth-century art infrastructure appeared huge and it has been extraordinarily well documented in every one of its aspects. Already in the 1850s it received a public

visual presentation in the large images painted on the outside of Ludwig I’s last major museum building, the Neue Pinakothek by Wilhelm von Kaulbach [Fig. 2].<sup>10</sup>

As already mentioned, bohemianism meant a disregard for, or an indifference towards the patron. By the late nineteenth-century Munich critics indeed emphasised that the city’s art was now generated “*aus eigener Kraft*” (out of its own resourcefulness) while, by contrast, its beginnings in the earlier nineteenth century resulted from “*des König’s Befehl*” (the orders of the King).<sup>11</sup> Indeed, a much repeated remark of Ludwig I, King of Bavaria, from 1825, was:

<sup>10</sup> BÜTTNER, F. – GLASER, H.: *Ludwig I. und die Neue Pinakothek*. Köln 2003.

<sup>11</sup> BRAUN, A.: Rudolf von Seitz. In: *Münchner Silhouetten nach dem Leben. Blätter zu Münchens Kunst- und Kulturgeschichte; mit 40 bisher meist unveröffentlichten Selbstporträts und Bildern erster Meister*. München 1918, p. 35.



2. Wilhelm von Kaulbach: *Die Bekämpfung des Zopfes durch Künstler und Gelehrte unter dem Schutz der Minerva* (The Fight against the Pigtail [ie. Old Pedantry] by Artists and Learned Men under the Protection of Minerva), ca. 1851, bozzetto for the wall painting on the outside of the Neue Pinakothek, Munich. Repro: BÜTTNER – GLASER 2003 (see in note 10).

“Die Münchner Kunst, das bin ich” (Munich art, that’s me).<sup>12</sup> The visual arts and architecture formed part of Ludwig’s state policy, whereby he combined the older kind of absolutist self-glorification with new concepts of educating the public. In effect, he spent millions from his own purse to bring the programme into reality. The principal manifestation was a series of grandiose public buildings, notably museums, decorated with “monumental” painting and sculpture. The patronage of his successor, Maximilian II, was almost equally powerful, though handled less flamboyantly. In a class of its own was King Ludwig II’s patronage, perhaps the most lavish of any single ruler of the later nineteenth century. But although his creations, his castles and palaces provided work for innumerable artists and manufactures, all this did not really count in the art world of the city because they only served the patron’s whims and was in no way meant to be accessible for the general visitor. Ludwig II’s successor, *Prinzregent* Luitpold, was benevolence personified, but he hardly rated as a major patron.

But then it was already Ludwig’s I’s kind of patronage which took on new characteristics in the patron’s attitude towards the artist. From the start the King (until 1825 as Crown Prince) tried to further each artist’s self-esteem. In this respect the beginnings of the new Munich art life may actually be located in Rome [Fig. 3]. From the later eighteenth century onwards an increasing number of Northern artists were gathering in the Eternal City. Here they also kept close contacts with present and future patrons who were likewise visiting the City, more than they would have been able to do so in an older absolutist set-up at home. Ludwig frequently gathered with the German and other Northern European artists in festivities and drinking parties. The often reproduced painting by Franz Ludwig Catel, of 1824, [*Kronprinz*] *Ludwig in der Spanischen Weinschänke*, shows one of the Northerners’ favourite Roman *Kneipe*, or watering hole, where Ludwig is content to appear as just one of this informal group, enjoying himself like the others.<sup>13</sup> Soon, as the ruler in Munich, Ludwig

<sup>12</sup> STIELER, E.: *Die Königliche Akademie der bildenden Künste zu München 1808 – 1858. Festschrift zur Hundertjahrfeier*. München 1909, p. 130; cf. BÜTTNER, F.: Ludwig I., Kunstförderung und Kunstpolitik. In: SCHMIDT, A. – WIEGAND, K. (eds.): *Die Herrscher Bayerns*. München 2001, pp. 310-329.

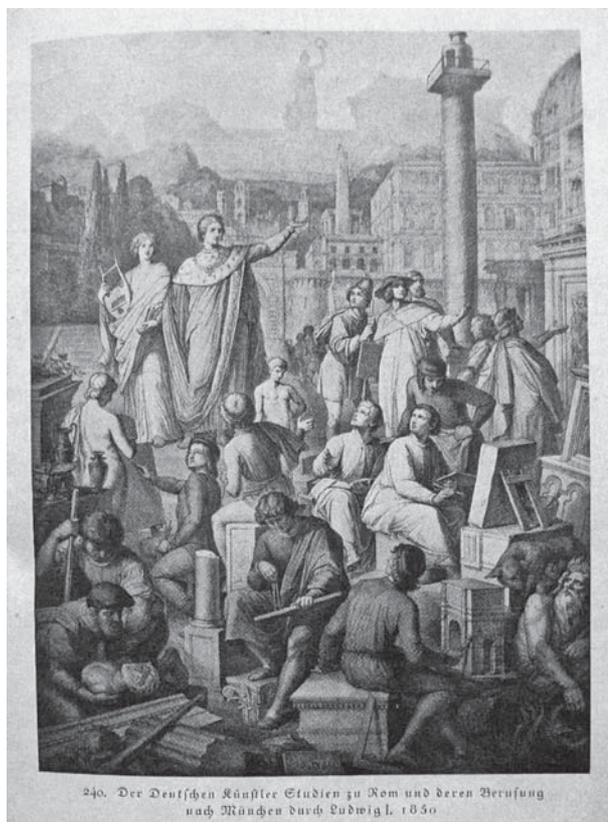
<sup>13</sup> BOTT, G. – SPIELAMNN, H. (eds.): *Künstlerleben in Rom. Bertel Thorvaldsen (1770 – 1844). Der dänische Bildbauer und seine deutschen Freunde*. [Exhib. Cat.] Nürnberg, Germanisches Nationalmuseum, 22 March – 21 June 1992. Nürnberg 1991.

made it his habit to visit artists in their ateliers and to actively support any of the growing number of institutions serving art.<sup>14</sup> The Munich art world began to grow rapidly. “Hundreds of artists came to live in the city.”<sup>15</sup> By the 1880s membership of the *Kunstverein* comprised 800 practising local artists.<sup>16</sup>

### The Artists and Their Institutions

The spectrum of institutions may be divided into those founded and supported directly by the state, and those of a corporate nature devised by the community of the artists themselves and their patrons. They can also be divided into those that appeared absolutely necessary in a purely economic sense and those voluntary ones which existed mainly for the entertainment of the participants. The principal ones of the first category were the Academy and the *Kunstverein* which were present from the beginning of Ludwig’s reign.

The Munich *Akademie der Künste* had been founded in 1808 and grew steadily in size and in national and international importance, at least until the 1890s. Its ethos was underpinned by a constellation of both doubt and confidence. The question: is it possible to teach art at all was balanced by a belief that the answer is yes with regard to at least some basic elements.<sup>17</sup> Up to the 1880s most of the major painters also acted as major teachers. Amongst them Carl Theodor von Piloty, doyen of realist history painting, was specially renowned for combining “immense power” and fame with great patience and tolerance towards each student’s individual needs.<sup>18</sup> Apart from the Academy there was a certain amount of privately organised teaching, including opportunities for women who were not admitted to the Academy.<sup>19</sup> A Munich characteristic was a strong



3. Julius Schnorr von Carolsfeld: *Der deutschen Künstler Studien zu Rom und deren Berufung nach München durch Ludwig I. (Studies of the German Artists in Rome and Their Call to Munich by Ludwig I), 1850, drawing, Munich, Staatliche Graphische Sammlung. Repro: BÜTTNER – GLASER 2003 (see in note 10).*

division into various genres, i.e. the specialisation into peasant subjects, animals, portraits and many others. But there were also growing stylistic disputes, e.g. between Piloty’s dramatic tonal manner and Wilhelm Diez’s lighter kind of colourism. Very slowly a notion

<sup>14</sup> PECHT 1888 (see in note 4), p. 91.

<sup>15</sup> FÖRSTER, E.: *München. Ein Handbuch für Fremde und Einheimische mit besonderer Berücksichtigung der Kunstschatze der Residenzstadt*. München 1846, p. 17.

<sup>16</sup> PECHT 1888 (see in note 4), p. 91.

<sup>17</sup> ZACHARIAS, T. (ed.): *Tradition und Widerspruch. 175 Jahre Kunstakademie München*. München 1985, pp. 223-240; RUPPERT 1998 (see in note 3), p. 475.

<sup>18</sup> Cf. BAUMSTARK, R. – BÜTTNER, F.: *Grosser Auftritt. Piloty und die Historienmalerei*. München – Köln 2003, p. 87; GERHARDT, N. – GRASSKAMP, W. (eds.): *200 Jahre Akademie der bildenden Künste in München*. München 2008; HAUSHOFER, M.: *Münchner Maler-Ateliers*. In: *Illustrierte Frauenzeitung* [Berlin], 9, 1882, No. 24, pp. 474-475; M. H. [HOWITT, M.?): *Art and Artists in Munich*. In: *Art Journal* [London], 11 (3<sup>rd</sup> series), 1872, pp. 10-11; HOWITT, M.: *An Art Student in Munich*. London 1853 (2<sup>nd</sup> ed. 1880 by Mrs. Howitt-Watts).

emerged that good or interesting art was that which claimed to be stylistically and technically innovative. For all those who laid a new stress on the modes of painting, the “*Fachmaler*”, the specialisers, in the way they prioritised contents, represented something outdated.<sup>20</sup>

Counterbalancing the hierarchized set-up of the Academy, everybody was equal under the umbrella of the *Kunstverein*. This society of artists and art lovers, founded in 1823, was the first public venue for exhibitions of contemporary art and provided the model for all towns; the English adaptation in the 1830s was called Art Union. It was open to all local bona-fide artists and “*provided exhibitions continuously; for the public this was a hitherto unknown pleasure, while maintaining a continuously lively competition among the artists*”.<sup>21</sup> Here, too, Ludwig had to give his initial blessing.<sup>22</sup> A somewhat different organisation was the (*Münchner*) *Künstlergenossenschaft*, active from 1858, whose principal aim was to stage larger exhibitions. In 1854, Munich opened its Glaspalast, a vast structure – one third of the size of London Crystal Palace – by far the largest of Germany’s exhibition building for a long time. Of great importance were a number of international art exhibitions, e.g. those of 1869 and in 1888, in some ways they competed with the international fairs, of which Germany never staged one.<sup>23</sup> The best known event of Munich’s art life is the split that occurred in 1892 when a number of younger artists became disillusioned with the *Genossenschaft* and founded the *Secession* as a new organisation for the purpose of arranging exhibitions, the first such body carrying this most influential label, fundamental for the perception of the artist as rebel. Here, too, recent research has stressed the

orderly organisational character of these processes in Munich, their embedment in the art life of the city as a whole, rather than placing emphasis on the spontaneity of individual actions.<sup>24</sup>

To comprehend the workings of Munich art life as a whole, one has to cast the net further. The *Kunststadt*’s hallmark was not only the massive production of art but also its conspicuous consumption. The large number of practising artists was matched by the seemingly enormous size of a leisured audience. (A conversation between two Munich citizens: “*We really must recognise how all of us in Munich care so deeply about art.*” “*Yes, every time an exhibition closes, I regret that I didn’t go to see it.*”<sup>25</sup>) By mid-century the upper class and the large number of civil servants and the students together comprised up over 25% of the city’s population of 100.000. One ought to reflect here back to the older kind of Central-European relatively independent kind of *Residenzstadt*, the smallish or medium-sized town where the seat of the ruler, his entourage as well as the state’s administrators tended to comprise a very sizeable part of the population. In Munich an additional 42% comprised the trades, whereby many owners of the workshops or shops were also seen as “*working little*” and spending their lives chiefly “*zum Vergnügen*” (for pleasure). Then there were the 10% *Literaten und Künstler*, constituting in itself an enormous group which must be seen as producers and consumers of art at the same time. These proportions continued more or less throughout the century. By 1900 there were 500.000 inhabitants, of which 20.000 to 30.000 were directly concerned fine art or high class applied art production.<sup>26</sup> From the 1860s the number of tourists increased rapidly as the city served as the

<sup>19</sup> WEEKS, C. J.: Lady Art Student in Munich. In: *Art Journal* [London], 1 (4<sup>th</sup> series), 1881, pp. 343-347; RUPPERT 1998 (see in note 3), p. 587.

<sup>20</sup> BAYERSDORFER, A.: Neue Kunstbestrebungen in München (1874). In: BAYERSDORFER, A.: *Leben und Schaffen*. München 1902.

<sup>21</sup> FÖRSTER 1846 (see in note 15), p. 17; LANGENSTEIN, Y.: *Der Münchner Kunstverein im 19. Jahrhundert* (=Miscellanea Bavarica Monacensia, 122). München 1983; RUPPERT 1998 (see in note 3), pp. 95-99.

<sup>22</sup> PECHT 1888 (see in note 4), pp. 90-91.

<sup>23</sup> GRÖSSLEIN, A.: *Die internationalen Kunstausstellungen der Münchner Künstlergenossenschaft im Glaspalast in München 1869 bis 1888* (=Miscellanea Bavarica Monacensia, 137). München 1987.

<sup>24</sup> MAKELA, M.: *The Munich Secession. Arts and Artists in Turn of the Century Munich*. Princeton (NJ) 1990.

<sup>25</sup> Cartoon *Der Mäzen*, by C. O. Petersen, published in *Simplicissimus*, 19, 1914, No. 9.

<sup>26</sup> Statistics of 1854. – BIRNBAUM, M.: *Das Münchner Handwerk im 19. Jahrhundert*. [PhD. Diss.] München 1984, pp. 30, 121.

departure point for Germany's number one holiday destination, the Bavarian Alps, but Munich art itself was also a major attraction.<sup>27</sup>

Slowly another new institution emerged, art publishing. From the beginning, the *Kunstblatt*, edited from Munich, excelled with detailed information about all of Ludwig's public undertakings.<sup>28</sup> Chief critic, chronicler and art historian from the 1830s onwards was Ernst Förster, who frequently acted as Ludwig's *porte-parole*. From the 1830s onwards Munich excelled in the production of illustrated children's book and in the 1840s it became one of the centres of the new technique of wood engraving. From the late 1870s art publishing grew massively and Munich stood out with its quantity production of plates of an enhanced quality at affordable prices (e.g. the Albertype) – of old and new works of art alike. Editors and publishers – printers now gained a new prominence, such as Georg Hirth and Friedrich Bruckmann.<sup>29</sup> It was at that time that art historical writing finally emancipated itself from other art writing. A high class journal of a new glossy look which was almost exclusively devoted to contemporary art production appeared from 1885; it carried a title which once again demonstrated Munich's ambition to serve as the capital of art: *Die Kunst für Alle*.<sup>30</sup> Its editor was Munich's chief art writer, Friedrich Pecht, who developed a new, a more argumentative and even combative language of art criticism. Munich took part in the rapid rise of wealth of the new German Empire, which Bavaria had joined in 1871. Prices for new art works doubled between 1866 and 1872.<sup>31</sup> By 1880 the *Kunstverein* had spent 5 million Marks in purchases.<sup>32</sup> (As a comparison, Ludwig II's

Neuschwanstein cost just over 6 million Marks, then ca. 1.5 million Dollars). The image of the poor struggling or the estranged artist would hardly have fitted into this picture of general success, though there was, of course, a steep hierarchy, with a notion of a great number of jobbing practitioners at the "bottom", those who kept repeating the same motif or literally kept copying the same picture.<sup>33</sup> But it appears that the principal and seemingly absolute division of art production as we know it today, into that which is recognised by today's art world and the anonymous cheap works displayed in, say, department stores, did not as yet exist.

The notion of the bohemian artist entails two major components: the isolated self and the opposite, gregariousness, amongst his or her peers, that is. In Munich the "class" of artists was well known to hold an abundance of gatherings in diverse venues, though in consonance with the pervasive sense of hospitality and sociability in the city as a whole the artists were never decisively segregated from the rest of urban revellers.

### Artistic Entertainment

The artist's very own venue was his or her atelier. Right from the 1830s these studios could be visited by strangers on a regular basis; they would watch the artist at work, who, on his part, might show them his back and thus pretend not to notice them [Fig. 1].<sup>34</sup> In the context of the new affluence in the later nineteenth century and the ever greater stress on both individuality and rank, the ateliers were fashionably decorated with art works and any kind of

<sup>27</sup> PRINZ, F. – KRAUSS, M. (eds.): *München. Musenstadt mit Hinterhöfen. Die Prinzregentenzeit 1886 – 1912*. München 1988, pp. 9-25.

<sup>28</sup> It formed part of *Morgenblatt für gebildete Stände*. Cf. DRUDE, C. – KOHLE, H.: *200 Jahre Kunstgeschichte in München 1780 – 1980*. München 2003.

<sup>29</sup> FOULON, A.-C.: *De l'art pour tous. Les éditeurs F. Bruckmann et leurs revues d'art dans Munich 'ville d'art' vers 1900*. Frankfurt a. M. 2002, pp. 109, 161; LAUTERBACH, I.: *Die Kunst für alle (1885 – 1944). Zur Kunstpublizistik vom Kaiserreich bis zum Nationalsozialismus* (=Veröffentlichungen des Zentralinstituts für Kunstgeschichte in München). München 2010.

<sup>30</sup> Later title simply *Die Kunst*. The title was borrowed from the Parisian serial collection of old works of the applied arts, *L'Art pour tous*; the real model was the journal *L'art* (Paris).

<sup>31</sup> Aus München. In: *Die Gegenwart. Wochenschrift*, 1, 1868, No. 2, p. 21; cf. DREY, P.: *Die wirtschaftlichen Grundlagen der Malkunst. Versuch einer Kunstökonomie*. Stuttgart 1910; LUDWIG, H.: *Kunst, Geld und Politik um 1900 in München*. Berlin 1986.

<sup>32</sup> PECHT 1888 (see in note 4), pp. 90-91.

<sup>33</sup> RUPPERT 1998 (see in note 3), p. 107.

<sup>34</sup> LANGER 1992 (see in note 8); RUPPERT 1998 (see in note 3), p. 418.

props, while still appearing informal, even disorderly, to underline the practitioner's sense of independence. Unique to Munich was the already mentioned photographic chronicle of 1890, demonstrating this diversity, though it must be remembered that by far the best known and the most grandiose atelier of the period, possibly of all periods, was that of Hans Makart, who trained in Munich but was then lured to Vienna.

Large festivities, including pageants had been a frequent occurrence in all court cities for some centuries. In Munich it was the artists who took over the design and organisation of these events, creating first of all a regular series of *Künstlerfeste* [Fig. 4]. The origin appears again to go back to Rome, especially to the large *Künstlerfest* which Ludwig celebrated with the German artists in 1818.<sup>35</sup> Thereafter such events had to carry detailed historical associations, for which the chief model was the large festivity to commemorate the death of Albrecht Dürer in 1828, held in Nuremberg (now belonging to Bavaria). This was followed by the Munich *Dürerfest* of 1840 and the *Rubensfest* in 1857.<sup>36</sup> The *Festzug Karls V.*, pageant in 1876 which commemorated the quite obscure event of the arrival of the Habsburg Emperor in the Bavarian capital in 1530,<sup>37</sup> probably marked the high point of historical make-belief while also deriving its legitimacy from the very way it was devised by a celebrated artist, decorator and designer, Lorenz Gedon [Fig. 5]. The 1500 participants and the vast crowds who watched it could take it as a serious lesson in history or simply as fun, most likely as both.

There was much truth to the growing perception of Munich as a city dominated by entertainment. In this context another one of Ludwig I's verdicts can be quoted: "... religion should be the basis... but



4. Announcement: Young Munich Entertainment and Dance of the Artists' Society, 1861, drawing by Wilhelm Busch (?). Repro: HAUS, A.: Ernst ist das Leben – Heiter die Kunst. Graphik zu Künstlerfesten des 19. Jahrhunderts. Ausstellung der Kunstbibliothek. Berlin 1971.

*the young should enjoy life.*"<sup>38</sup> Venues for entertainment grew in diversity and here, too, artists often played a decisive role. Increasingly societies and venues were created and used exclusively by fine-art artists and their close friends. A later account of their gatherings referred to a maxim of Goethe's, namely that for the creation of his works the artist needs to be by himself, but when he wants the work discussed and appreciated he "rushes" to the *Verein*.<sup>39</sup> The French do not have a sense for the *Kneipe*, while the English tend to gather in the club where the main purpose is food – at least that was a Bavarian's brief analysis. Munich gatherings were there for the sake of "*warme Herzlichkeit und Humor*" (hearty warmth and humour),<sup>40</sup> and more specifically, for the artists, to

<sup>35</sup> MOISY, S. von: *Von der Aufklärung zur Romantik: geistige Strömungen in München*. [Exhib. Cat.] München, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek. München – Regensburg 1984, p. 21; SCHROTT, L.: *Biedermeier in München*. München 1963, p. 49.

<sup>36</sup> Cf. FÖRSTER, E.: München. Das diesjährige Künstlerfest. In: *Deutsches Kunstblatt*, 4, 1853, No. 8, pp. 70-71; WOLF, G. J.: *Münchner Künstlerfeste. Münchner Künstlerchroniken*. München 1925; HARTMANN, W.: *Der historische Festzug*. München 1976.

<sup>37</sup> Cf. the historical-political interpretation in WIEBER, S.:

Staging the Past: Allotria's "Festzug Karl V" and German National Identity. In: *Retinking History*, 10, 2006, No. 4, pp. 523 – 531; WEBER, Ch.: Das Costümfest der Münchner Künstler. In: *Die Gegenwart. Wochenschrift*, 9, 1876, No. 10, pp. 157-268.

<sup>38</sup> MOISY 1984 (see in note 35), p. 10.

<sup>39</sup> [Anon.]: *Ein halbes Jahrhundert Münchner Kulturgeschichte erlebt mit der Künstlergesellschaft Allotria*. München 1959, p. 5.

<sup>40</sup> Ibidem, p. 25.



5. Festival "Festzug Karls V.", Lorenz Gedon (one of the principal designers of the pageant) as a Herald, 1876, photo Franz von Hanfstaengl. Munich, Stadtmuseum. Repro: GEDON, B. – GEDON, L.: Die Kunst des Schönen. München 1994.

be "sich gegenseitig erbeiternd und anregend" (enlivening and stimulating each other).<sup>41</sup>

<sup>41</sup> FÖRSTER 1853 (see in note 36), pp. 70-71.

<sup>42</sup> OSTINI, F. von: Die Münchner 'Allotria'. In: *Velbagen und Klasings Monatshefte*, 7, 1892–1893, No. 1, pp. 665-680, esp. p. 666; also in *Ein halbes Jahrhundert...* (see in note 39). President was Konrad Hoff.



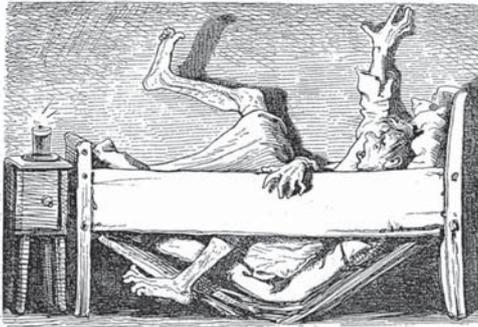
6. Munich, Künstlerhaus, 1893 – 1900, architect Gabriel von Seidl, left in the background the Synagogue (destroyed). Repro: HOFER 2002 (see in note 43).

The best known of these organisations was the *Allotria*. It actually began as a split from the *Künstlergenossenschaft*, where, in 1873, a minority demanded livelier décor in exhibitions; the President, who, as an artist, was little known, refused and warned of "Allotria", meaning irrelevancies, nonsense. For the exuberant Gedon and Lenbach this was just the slogan that suited them for their breakaway group.<sup>42</sup> What is chiefly known about the club is its succession of venues, fitted out in a comfortable folksy Bavarian/Renaissance style, first designed by Gedon and then by the young architect Gabriel von Seidl. It all culminated in the *Künstlerhaus*, built from 1893 to 1900, on a prime spot in the centre of Munich, an extremely lavish building, inside and out, even by the standards of German opulence of 1900 [Fig. 6].<sup>43</sup> It has only one principal purpose – and that is certainly not the display of works of art, which could be done in so many other locations in Munich, but to serve for festivities or just as a restaurant. It all contributed to the "künstlerische Kolorit, die Lust am Mummenschanz, ungebundene Ausgelassenheit" (artistically lively colouring, the pleasure of mummery, the unrestricted liveli-

<sup>43</sup> HOFER, V. (ed.): *Gabriel von Seidl. Architekt und Naturschützer*. Kreuzlingen – München 2002; RAMBERG, B. – GRASSINGER, P.: *100 Jahre Münchner Künstlerhaus*. München 2000.



Nr. 1. Historie.



Nr. 2. Realistisches Genre.



Nr. 3. Materielle Landschaft.



Nr. 4. Tierbild.



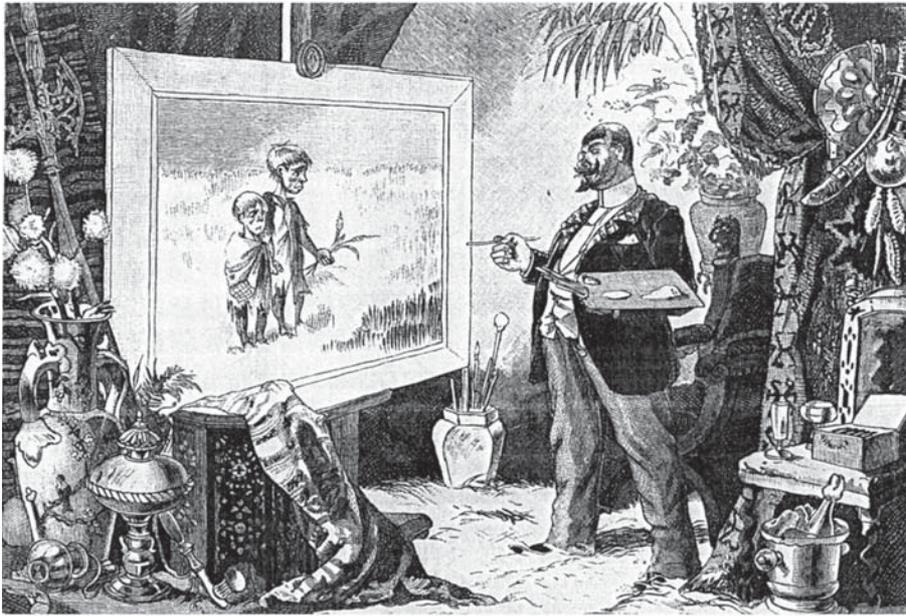
Nr. 5. Idyllisches Genre.



Nr. 6. Unheimliches Genre.



7. Nützliche Verschiedenheit (Useful Diversity). Repro: Fliegende Blätter, 29, 1858, Na. 683, pp. 33-36.



8. *Two Ateliers*. Repro: *Fliegende Blätter*, 93, 1890, No. 2359, p. 133.

ness), and more broadly speaking, “*die Freude an der Kunst im weitesten Sinne – die Kunst der Freude*” (enjoying art in the widest sense – the art of joyousness, of being joyful), so Fritz von Ostini, one of Munich’s principal writers on art around 1900.<sup>44</sup> Even the greatest *Künstlerfürsten* needed their beer and needed to take part in the banter – in which they hardly differed from that of rest of the population.

Indeed, the most enduring contribution of Munich late nineteenth-century culture, or, at any rate, of Munich architecture and interior design, was the *Bierkeller*, at that time also called the *Bierpalast*. It was a reformed kind of establishment which combined modern efficiency and salubrity with homely

<sup>44</sup> OSTINI 1892 – 1893 (see in note 42), p. 666.



9. Friedrich August von Kaulbach: *Members and Guests of the Allotria in Seidl's Bowling Alley, ca. 1880*, painting; among the participants: sitting at the table from the left, Wilhelm Busch, Franz Lenbach, Lorenz Gedon (drawing), in the background, near the column, right, Kaulbach, right Gabriel von Seidl (with hat), the others include patrons, such as bankers and factory owners. Munich, Stadtmuseum. Repro: ZIMMERMANN'S 1980 (see in note 48).

“Bavarian”, folksy décor. The latter had been pioneered, around 1880, by exactly the principals of *Allotria*, by Gedon and Seidl. The model interior was the drinking den created by Gedon for the artists and designers in the new *Kunstgewerbehaus*, the headquarters of the *Kunstgewerbeverein*, the Applied Arts Society, of 1877 – 1878.<sup>45</sup>

### The Artist Caricatured

Lastly, the art world of Munich was closely involved in the enormous volume of caricature, that is, satirical and humorous texts and drawings which were produced in the city, with the art world being itself a frequent subject. Caricature, graphic satire and cartoons were new art forms, at least in the ways

they were institutionalised in the press. Central was the *Fliegende Blätter*, which soon after its first appearance in 1844 developed into the most popular and long-lived German language journal for satire and jokes. It produced an immensely detailed mirror of the city's life [Fig. 7]. A study of the large number of drawings which deal with the fine arts as well as with architecture and, from the later nineteenth century onwards, with design, could produce in itself a thoroughly reliable history of Munich art at each stage, its styles, its institutions and especially the reaction of the public. In addition, from the 1860s and 1870s members of the journal's team, such as Wilhelm Busch, Adolf Oberländer and Lothar Meggendorfer developed a very considerable reputation as graphic artists.<sup>46</sup> By the late 1870s one may note attempts

<sup>45</sup> WALTER, U.: Ein Prost der Gemütlichkeit. Münchner Bierarchitektur um 1900. In: *Architese*, 34, 2004, No. 3, pp. 54-69; cf. MUTHESIUS, S.: Meaningful, Entertaining, “Bavarian?”. Design and Art in 19<sup>th</sup>-Century Munich. Forthcoming article.

<sup>46</sup> There is still no comprehensive work on the history of the *Fliegende Blätter*, perhaps this is partly caused by the fact that it carried so many anti-Judaic cartoons, but see CARTERET, J. G.: *Les mœurs et la caricature en Allemagne – en Autriche – en Suisse*. Paris 1885; HOLLWECK, L.: *Karikaturen von Fliegenden Blättern bis zum Simplicissimus 1994 – 1914*. Herrsching [s.a., ca. 1975].



10. Friedrich August von Kaulbach: *Lenbach Painting Pope Leo XIII*, ca. 1890, drawing. Repro: WOLF 1925 (see in note 36).

at a sociological analysis and at last we witness the occasional comical showing of the impoverished artist [Fig. 8].

Published caricatures showed a public, and thereby depersonalised, generic art scene without names. But at the same time there was a private, or quasi-private sphere of caricature, produced for those who drew them for their own amusement, and for their immediate friends. The early version of this mode of representation, from the 1830s, were the so-called *Leporellos* which the slightly amateurish graphic artist, poet and musician Franz Graf von Pocci took to the

meetings of the clubs, such as *Old England* – long fold-outs of drawings and music which caricatured all members, including the artist, Pocci himself. They usually appeared in jokingly drawn historical dress, which in turn provided a link with the above-mentioned pageants.<sup>47</sup> Later in the century the artists, while clubbing, occupied themselves with drawing likenesses of the members [Fig. 9]. These drawings might then be used for all graphic paraphernalia serving the events, such as invitation cards, as well as the privately printed *Kneipzeitungen*, the humorous information bulletins for the club. In this way series of uglified images of the chief *Kunstlerfürsten* firmly established themselves, most prominently in those done by “Fritz” August von Kaulbach, of Lenbach as well as of himself [Fig. 10].<sup>48</sup> A crucial factor was the mock-amateurishness of the look of almost all these drawings. The great artist can afford to joke about himself and about art in general.

By the mid-1880s the art world of the *Kunststadt* Munich appeared consolidated, its institutions, its imagery, its homogenous art life, its veritable *Kunstatmosphäre*<sup>49</sup> In the 1870s and 1880s it was Friedrich Pecht’s strongly voiced belief that the current art production of his was genuinely popular (*volkstümlich*), that humour was a central element, and that all this was owed to the genius loci and Munich, Bavaria and Germany as a whole.<sup>50</sup> The ever increasing influx of tourists was taken to confirm this, as did the export of paintings worldwide.

It was precisely the factor of overt success that began to be leading to doubts, from the mid-1880s onwards. It all began with the very gradual influx of the new trends of *Naturalismus* and “Modernity”, derived largely from Paris, entailing a new demand for art to show not just a complete and happy world, but also the world with its social and new urban

<sup>47</sup> MOISY, S. von: *Franz Graf Pocci. Schriftsteller, Zeichner und Komponist unter drei Königen 1807 – 1876*. [Exhib. Cat.] München, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek. München 2007; BERNHARD, M.: *Franz Graf von Pocci. Die gesamte Druckgraphik* [selection]. München 1977.

<sup>48</sup> ZIMMERMANN, K.: *Friedrich August von Kaulbach 1850 – 1920*. München 1980.

<sup>49</sup> MANN, N.: *Gabriel Max’ Kunst und seine Werke, eine kunthistorische Skizze*. Leipzig 1888, p. 3; quoted in JOOSS, B.: München

als Anziehungspunkt tschechischer Künstler in der zweiten Hälfte des 19. Jahrhunderts. Eine Betrachtung aus Münchner Sicht. In: MAREK, M. et al. (eds.): *Kultur als Vehikel und als Opponent politischer Absichten. Kulturkontakte zwischen Deutschen und Tschechen und Slowaken von der Mitte des 19. Jahrhunderts bis in die 1980iger Jahre*. Essen 2010, p. 445 ff.

<sup>50</sup> PECHT 1888 (see in note 4); WIEBER, S.: Eduard Grützner’s Munich Villa and the German Renaissance. In: *Intellectual History Review*, 17, 2007, No. 2, pp. 153-174.

problems, to be produced by artists who somehow appeared to practice outside the general nexus of commerce. The founding of the *Secession* in 1892 was taken as the great step of breaking out of the sphere of self-satisfaction. From 1896 the immense publishing success of Georg Hirth's new periodical *Die Jugend* further underlined the attempts to champion the daringly new.<sup>51</sup>

Altogether the *Kunststadt* between the late 1890s and 1914 was a much more complex place. Many rated it as *Münchens grosse Zeit*, comprising Franz Stuck, the *Jugendstil* and the *Blaue Reiter*.<sup>52</sup> At the same time there were those who nervously watched any signs of a “*Niedergang*”, a “decline”, becoming mortally alarmed when an artist left the city, especially when he or she went to the now most feared competitor, Berlin, as did Lovis Corinth during 1900 – 1901. The new freedom and vigour in the criticism of contemporary art had led to a climate of the sharpest adversariality. There was “modernity” and there was the “retrospective *Richtung*”, the backward-looking trend, of those allegedly harking back to the past, who were increasingly chided as lacking in artistic talent as well. The dominance of Lenbach and his coterie began to be strongly resented, while the older critics, especially Friedrich Pecht, condemned the *Naturalisten* as Socialists. A number of artists who were reaching considerable national fame by 1900, such as Hans Thoma or Wilhelm Leibl, kept stressing that during their earlier stays in Munich the city had denied them recognition.<sup>53</sup>

A major new element was the development of an explicit *Bobeme*. It came at a time when the cosy-sized *Residenzstadt* had become a normal large *Grossstadt*. The art world now began to form a detached entity, rather than being tied in with the community as whole – as had been the view until the 1880s. Thus

the new *Bobeme* may be seen, on the one hand, to have served as an updated, Modernist consolidation of the *Kunststadt*, but on the other hand it can be interpreted as the beginning of the end of the strong role of art in Munich's public life.<sup>54</sup> The new coterie was strongly concentrated in one location, around the new building of the *Kunstakademie* and north of it, that is, in the inner suburb of Schwabing. Most of the principal members of this group came from outside Munich or Bavaria and some of them brought with them considerable wealth. They were poets, writers, publishers, theatre directors and creators of a new art form, originating in Paris, the cabaret, as well as philosophers, life-reformers, in short, gurus of many kinds and, most notoriously, those who expanded the boundaries of morality, such as the legendary Franziska Gräfin von Reventlow.

However, the most recognised avant-garde painters, such as Kandinsky, appeared to be rather less involved. This raises the broader question about the relationship between a sociological analysis of the artistic groups and the actual styles of art. One may cite the highly recognisable manner of the principal cartoonists of *Simplicissimus*, especially that of Thomas Theodor Heine. Certainly the acerbic and irreverent messages of Heine's cartoons would be associated with Schwabing's anti-establishment atmosphere; on the other hand one could characterise Heine's immensely disciplined graphic style as strongly “professional” and at odds with the volatile life of the *bohémien*s. One may also postulate that there was a closer correspondence between lifestyle and pictorial style under the earlier Lenbach-regime of the *Künstlerfürsten*, both with their tendency towards loose brush-strokes and in the way they demonstrated their freedom from any rules by indulging in a fake-ama-teurishness in some of their drawings.

<sup>51</sup> MAKELA 1990 (see in note 24); LENMAN, R.: *Artists and Society Germany 1850 – 1914*. Manchester 1997; LEWIS, B. I.: *Art for All? The Collision of Modern Art and the Public in Late-Nineteenth Century Germany*. Princeton (NJ) 2003.

<sup>52</sup> METZGER, R.: *München. Die grosse Zeit um 1900. Kunst, Leben und Kultur 1890 – 1920*. Wien 2008, excellent for pictures; cf. SCHUSTER, P.-K. (ed.): *München leuchtete. Karl Caspar und die Erneuerung christlicher Kunst in München um 1900*. München 1984. *München Leuchtete* was the title of a novella by Thomas Mann (1902).

<sup>53</sup> LEYPOLDT, W.: *Münchens Niedergang als Kunststadt*. [Diss.] München 1987, printed.

<sup>54</sup> WILHELM, H.: *Die Münchner Bobème. Von der Jahrhundertwende zum ersten Weltkrieg*. München 1993; SCHMITZ, W.: *Die Münchner Moderne. Die literarische Szene in der Kunststadt um die Jahrhundertwende*. Stuttgart 1990; CROUVEZIER, V.: *Vom Münchner Bobemien zum Pariser Dandy*. Würzburg 2012 (not seen).

In the end one has to note again the difficulties one meets when tackling *Bobeme* in German-language countries. Undoubtedly it was an important notion from the very late nineteenth century onwards, which posited a more distinct ethos for the art world and its hangers-on than ever before. Even though one kind of actor who belongs to the earlier established notion of *Bobeme*, the impoverished genius, who lives at a distance from the majority, still seems to have occurred very rarely in Munich. Earlier the city had produced the eminent, but at the same time *gemütlicher Künstlerfürst*, who did not distance himself too far from his non-artistic audience; now it added a more assertive free-wheeling world of the most cultured

*haute volée* to the artistic life of the city. Lastly it must be stressed that *haute volée*, *bobème*, *demi-monde*, *fin de siècle*, *belle époque* are all words in the German dictionary, with or without their French accents. Those who want to apply them in Munich may do so; but they ultimately contain an admittance that they always constituted something imported, like the French and pan-European word elegance itself.

After a hiatus in the 1920s when Munich art appeared to make no impact of any kind, by the later 1930s a new *Kunststadt* emerged under Adolf Hitler, but one whose art life marked the opposite to both nineteenth-century and early twentieth-century notions of artistic freedom.<sup>55</sup>

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<sup>55</sup> SCHUSTER, K. D. (ed.): *Die "Kunststadt" München. Nationalsozialismus und "entartete" Kunst*. München 1987; KLAHR, D.:

Munich as *Kunststadt*, 1900–1937: Art, Architecture and Civic Identity. In: *Oxford Art Journal*, 34, 2011, No. 2, pp. 179-201.

**Vláda umenia.**  
**Stručný úvod k problematike mníchovského umeleckého života**  
**v devätnástom storočí**

*Resumé*

Mnohé umelecké centrá v nemecky hovoriacich krajinách si boli dobre vedomé bohémских trendov na parížskej umeleckej scéne v druhej polovici 19. storočia. Vystopovať však tieto prvky v ich vlastných kruhoch jednoduché nebolo. Významnejšia bohém-ska komunita sa v Mníchove etablovala až okolo roku 1900 a aj jej chýbali podstatné charakteristiky originálnej parížskej *bohème*, predovšetkým chudoba. Každé zhrnutie mníchovskej umeleckej produkcie 19. storočia musí v skutočnosti spomenúť skôr prosperitu než jej opak. V Mníchove sa do konca 40. rokov usadili stovky umelcov a počas viacerých desaťročí 19. storočia bolo toto pomerne malé mesto zaradované vo svete maliarstva hneď za Paríž.

Ak však bohém-skosť vzťahujeme všeobecne na umelca, ktorý do popredia kladie svoju „umeleckosť“, aby dosiahol uznanie – vo vlastných očiach, ako aj v očiach druhých ľudí –, ako odraz jeho výnimočného talentu alebo „génia“, v takom prípade možno tento pojem používať vo vzťahu ku mníchovskej umeleckej scéne takmer od začiatku 19. storočia. Na druhej strane, kľúčový prvok „klasickej“ definície bohémy – umelcovo otvorené pohrdanie mecénmi – v Mníchove nenájdeme. Mníchovský „umelecký život“ zahrnul umelcov, kritikov, mecénov – od vyšších a zámožných stredných vrstiev až po, ako sa zdalo, mestskú populáciu ako celok.

Peter von Cornelius, hegemón tých najprominentnejších verejných zákaziek a riaditeľ Akadémie výtvarných umení, bol od 30. rokov 19. storočia titulovaný ako „Fürst“ – knieža. Ďalším v poradí bol Carl Theodor von Piloty, vedúci početnej národnej a medzinárodnej „Pilotyho školy“, pôsobiacej na akadémii. V 90. rokoch 19. storočia už ani nebolo potrebné v ich prípade uvádzať inštitucionálne zakotvenie – Franza Lenbacha, najoslavovanejšieho mníchovského maliara 19. storočia, poznal každý. Zoznam maliarov-kniežat obsahoval v tomto období ešte aspoň ďalších 235 mien, čo je čitateľné z fotodokumentácie ich prepychových ateliérov,

vytvorenej fotografom Carlom Teufelom okolo roku 1890.

Čo sa týka mecenátu, prešiel Mníchov v 19. storočí radikálnou premenou – od grandióznych podujatí kráľa Ľudovíta I. („*Die Münchner Kunst, das bin ich.*“ / „*Mníchovské umenie, to som ja.*“) po umelecký svet čerpajúci z vlastných síl, z podpory mecénov rôzneho spoločenského postavenia, vrátane novej strednej triedy, turistov a nespočetných zahraničných zákazníkov.

Kráľ Ľudovít zaviedol jednu zvyklosť, ktorá sa stala osobitou črtou mníchovského umeleckého života, a to blízky pracovný vzťah mecéna a umelca. Korunný princ a neskorší kráľ položil základy tohto vzťahu už počas svojho pobytu v Ríme, kde sa stretával s početnou skupinou severoeurópskych umelcov, spomedzi ktorých ho viacerí nasledovali do bavorskej metropoly. Za umeleckým úspechom Mníchova možno vidieť dve inštitúcie. Prvou bola akadémia s učiteľmi európskeho renomé, ako bol Carl von Piloty, druhou potom *Kunstverein*, na nižšom stupni umeleckej hierarchie, založený v roku 1823 ako prvý svojho druhu. Bol otvorený pre všetkých miestnych umelcov, ktorým poskytoval priestor pre kontinuálne výstavné aktivity – pre verejnosť dovtedy neznáme potešenie, pre umelcov plodné konkurenčné prostredie. Veľké výstavy boli od roku 1854 usporadúvané predovšetkým v Sklenenom paláci (Glaspalast), tretinovej veľkosti v porovnaní so známym londýnskym Kryštáľovým palácom (Crystal Palace). Organizačne ich zastrešoval *Künstlergenossenschaft*, založený v roku 1858. Najznámejšou udalosťou mníchovského umeleckého života sa stal roztržka z roku 1892, kedy sa skupina mladších umelcov nespokojných s dianím v *Künstlergenossenschaft-e* odtrhla a založila Secesiu ako novú organizáciu pre usporadúvanie výstav, prvé spoločenstvo s touto vplyvnou značkou, kľúčovou pre vyčlenenie sa umelca ako rebela.

Ďalšou dôležitou zložkou umeleckej infraštruktúry bola publicita. Od neskorých 70. rokov 19.

storočia bolo možné pozorovať masívny nárast produkcie kvalitných a dostupných reprodukcí starších aj novších umeleckých diel. V roku 1885 začal vychádzať *Die Kunst für Alle*, špičkový časopis tlačený na kvalitnom papieri, venovaný takmer výlučne súčasnému umeniu. Mníchov profitoval z hospodárskeho rastu nového Nemeckého cisárstva, ku ktorému sa Bavorsko pripojilo v roku 1871. Ceny nových umeleckých diel medzi rokmi 1866 až 1872 vzrástli dvojnásobne.

Mníchovský umelecký život sa koncentroval aj okolo radu osobitých podujatí. *Festzug*, slávnosť, pri ktorej umelecké druhy fúzovali do výpravného historického predstavenia, či prehliadky ateliérov, prístupnújúce počas neskorého 19. storočia bohato zariadené interiéry, manifestujúce umeleckého génia alebo aspoň individualitu umelca či umelkyne prostredníctvom nedbalej prezentácie množstva rôznorodých predmetov.

Rovnako dôležité boli podujatia určené prednostne umelcom samotným. Svet umenia bol pre nich priestorom vzájomných inšpirácií a pestovania osobného šťastia. Najznámejším z voľných združení či zábavných klubov, ktoré pestovali tieto cnosti,

bola Allotria, príležitostne sídliaca v prepychovom *Künstlerhaus-e* v samom centre mesta.

Napokon, mníchovská umelecká scéna bola zaangažovaná v bohatej produkcii karikatúr, t. j. satirických a humorných textov a kresieb. Sama bola často ich námetom, hlavne v časopise *Fliegende Blätter*. Existovala aj súkromná či kvázisúkromná sféra karikatúry, produkovanej umelcami pre ich vlastné potešenie alebo potešenie najbližších priateľov. Počas klubových stretnutí sa mnohí z nich navzájom spodobovali v komických kresbách – veľký umelec znesie žarty na vlastný účet a na účet umenia vo všeobecnosti.

Od polovice 80. rokov 19. storočia, s príchodom parížskeho „naturalizmu“ a „modernity“, sa tento konsenzus začal strácať. Na jednej strane možno neskoré 90. roky a prelom storočí charakterizovať ako „*Münchens grosse Zeit*“, zahŕňajúci Franza Stucka, Jugendstil a skupinu *Blaue Reiter*, na druhej strane však mnohí pocíťovali náznaky úpadku postavenia mesta. Nová bohémska komunita vo štvrti Schwabing sa vyčlenila ako elita predovšetkým prostredníctvom literárnych ambícií a radu guruov; výtvarné umenie tu hralo len veľmi okrajovú úlohu.

*Preklad z angličtiny M. Hrdina*

## Bohemians in Prague in the Latter Half of the Nineteenth Century

Roman PRAHL

Bohemianism among Prague artists has to date been largely unexamined. Czech researchers have paid more attention to bohemianism in literature, especially in the first half of the twentieth century. In the Czech historiography of culture and art, unconventional appearance and lifestyle of the bohemians has tended to be considered as in itself a kind of convention, behind which there is no significant potential for culture and creativity. There are various reasons for the lack of more in-depth analyses of artists' social standing and the multifaceted phenomenon of bohemianism. Moreover, for many years Czech research into such issues was limited by the ideological and political implications of such a debate. Nevertheless, an investigation of bohemianism in nineteenth-century Czech-speaking Prague can take as its starting point the existing studies of what can be called the artists' movement and its relations with the official art institutions of the day.

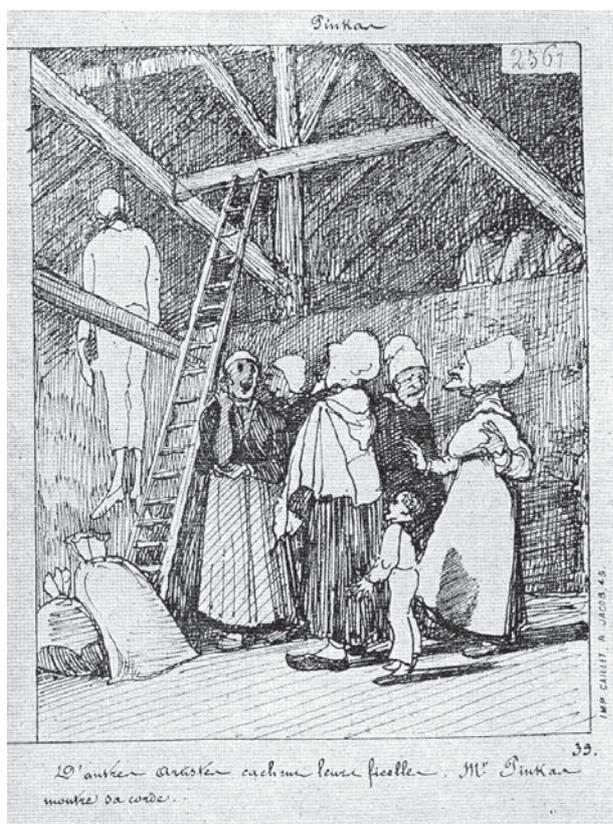
Until the end of World War I Prague was the capital of one of the provinces of the Habsburg Empire, and Bohemia had become an economically important but politically controversial part of the monarchy. For a long time Prague lacked the conditions for artists to compete for success at the same level as metropolises that were major centres for the arts. It is only seemingly a paradox that signs of bohemian revolt began to appear among Prague artists as early as the 1820s. Due to the limited local demand for art there was a persistent surplus of

graduates from the Academy of Art, which had been established in 1799. The majority of Prague's painters, sculptors and graphic artists were frustrated by the lack of buyers and commissions for their work, and from the 1830s onwards they began to voice their opposition to the local arts administration and its institutions.

Throughout the nineteenth century the Society of Patriotic Friends of the Arts served as the administrative authority for the fine arts in Bohemia. The society, established in 1796 by Czech aristocrats professing a conservative and nationally neutral brand of patriotism, founded the Academy of Art and the Art Gallery in Prague. From the 1820s onwards it also held an annual public art exhibition that gradually became the main art market in Prague. This exhibition eventually became the responsibility of the Art Union, an organisation established as part of the Society in 1836. Both the Society and the Art Union preferred artists from the neighbouring German *Länder*. During the 1840s Czech artists joined forces with the movement for democracy and nationhood. For many years, however, the Czech National Revival concentrated on language and its related branches in the arts. Not until the 1870s did the nationally-oriented bourgeoisie represent a significant part of the art-buying public in Prague. The trade in contemporary art did not become a relevant factor on Prague's art scene, despite the existence of private galleries since the 1820s.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> For a more recent overview of the artists' movement in Prague earlier in the nineteenth century, see HOJDA, Z. –PRAHL, R.: „Kunstverein“ nebo/ oder „Künstlerverein“? *Hnutí umělců v Praze*

*let 1830 – 1856 / Die Künstler-Bewegung in Prag 1830 – 1856*. Praha 2004. For a more concise discussion of this topic, see PRAHL, R.: *The Union of Artists 1848 – 1856* and the



1. Galetti: *L'oraison funèbre d'un pendu*. Caricature of Soběslav Pinkas's painting exhibited at the 1861 Salon in Paris. Repr.: GALETTI: Album caricatural. Paris 1861.

The relatively slow acceptance of bohemianism by the Prague public is symbolised by the fact that a Czech translation of the famous literary apotheosis of this phenomenon, Henri Murger's novel *Scènes de la vie de bohème* (1851), was not published here until

1893, by which time bohemianism had become an international cult. In the interim, however, since the 1850s Czech artists and intellectuals had maintained relations with France, motivated by both cultural and political interests. Among Czech painters Soběslav Pinkas embodied the gradual linking of Prague with French bohemians and a general opposition to the official scene. From 1854 to 1871 he was part of the community of French artists and writers, and, reportedly, he regularly met with Murger. He was one of the initiators of Czech-French relations who cultivated the association of “bohemia” with “Bohemia”.<sup>2</sup>

Pinkas's work was often at the very limits of what was acceptable for the official art scenes in Prague and Paris, and it was shown at the famous *Salon des refusés*. In one painting Pinkas depicted a scene in which his neighbour, a painter, had hanged himself. This implicit protest against the conditions in which artists struggled to survive was accepted by the official Salon, as it belonged to a genre of paintings of scenes from the lives of broader sections of society, as well as being a small-format work. The painting found its way into an album of sketches of the works shown at the official Salon; the sketches often clandestinely promoted unconventional work among the public [Fig. 1].<sup>3</sup> In Prague too it was a public secret that bohemian artists were in a difficult position. Many would-be artists with poorer artistic and social skills saw their professional ambitions collapse. They could easily end up joining the proletariat, earning a living in photographers' studios for instance, where they would retouch photographs by hand. Or they might be entirely without gainful employment and forced to rely on the solidarity displayed by their fellow artists, as well as facing the disfavour of the

Tradition of *Künstlerschaft*. In: *Niedziąca Seminars V. Polish – Czech – Slovak – Hungarian Artistic Connections*. Kraków 1991, pp. 101-106.

<sup>2</sup> In France Czechs were seen as one of the oppressed civilised nations whose country had lost its independence. See e.g. FRITZ, J. – LEGER, L.: *La Bohème historique, pittoresque et littéraire*. Paris 1867. For basic information on Pinkas's activities in France, see JIŘÍK, F. X.: *Soběslav Pinkas*. Praha 1925. For the most recent monograph on the artist, see BROŽOVÁ, K.: *Soběslav Pinkas, český malíř (1827 – 1901)* [Soběslav Pinkas, Czech Painter (1827 – 1901)]. [Thes.] Charles University, Faculty of Arts. Praha 2012.

<sup>3</sup> For a more detailed commentary on Pinkas's painting and the canon of depictions of death in Czech art, and on how suicide was depicted, see PRAHL, R.: „Vražda v domě“ jako prohrěšek. Jakub Schikaneder, kritika umění a širší i kupující publikum [“Murder in the House” as an Offence. Jakub Schikaneder, Art Criticism and the Broader and Art-Buying Public]. In: PEISERTOVÁ, L. – PETRBOK, V. – RANDÁK, J. (eds.): *Zločin a trest v české kultuře 19. století. Sborník příspěvků mezinárodního sympozia k problematice 19. století* [Crime and Punishment in 19<sup>th</sup>-Century Czech Culture. Proceedings from an Interdisciplinary Symposium on the 19<sup>th</sup> Century]. Praha 2011, pp. 333-348.

authorities. There is a well-documented case of a young artist from Czech intellectual circles who threatened to commit suicide.<sup>4</sup>

In Prague the conditions for the artists' movement and the emergence of bohemia were created by the nationalist and democratic revolution of 1848, and the repression that followed its defeat. For a time the city's art institutions were in crisis, and their opponents from the ranks of Czech artists founded a formal association, the Artists' Union (*Jednota výtvarných umělců*), which operated for several years under the neo-absolutist regime of the Austrian Empire despite coming under surveillance by the secret police. The Artists' Union had an informal counterpart in a group of older students and graduates from the Academy of Art in Prague, who met in the 1850s at a café owned by Ludwig Paul Lorenz, where they conversed and amused themselves, in part by parodying the official art scene.

Cafés began opening in Prague during the 1850s in line with the fashion for drinking coffee. They became the habitat of a certain type of bohemian, although as a rule artists and bohemians preferred stronger drinks. The circle of artists who met at Lorenz's café followed the Czech custom of drinking beer as a form of alcohol that was affordable for a broad cross-section of society. This can be seen in one of two drawings portraying this group, which looks like a depiction of a meeting of mature men with reading materials and glasses of beer. The cult of beer also dictated one of the notable examples of work improvised in the café, which verges on ridiculing the official art of Prague [Fig. 2]. The drawing parodies the most important monument in Prague in the neo-absolutist era, and it is either a humorous take on the contemporary issue of design in the applied arts, presenting a design for a beer jug, or an expression of bohemia's opposition to official art and its standards.<sup>5</sup>



2. Karel Purkyně: *Caricature of the Monument to Field Marshal Radezky (design for a beer jug), 1859. Prague, National Gallery. Photo: Archive of the gallery.*

<sup>4</sup> This concerned the son of the prominent Czech writer Božena Němcová and his art studies in Munich in 1860 – 1861. See PRAHL, R.: *Umělectví a bída u Jaroslava Němce* [Jaroslav Němec: Artistry and Poverty]. In: ADAM, R. (ed.): *Božena Němcová – jazyková a literární komunikace ve středoevropském kontextu* [Božena Němcová – Linguistic and Literary Communication in the Central European Context]. Praha 2007, pp. 41-49.

<sup>5</sup> For the most detailed analysis of the monument, which was designed by the director of the Academy of Art in Prague, and its context and reception, see KONEČNÝ, L. – PRAHL, R.: *Pomník maršála Radeckého a ikonografie hrdiny na štítě* [The

The surviving drawings and writings by the artists who met at Lorenz's café give the impression that they were compiled on a regular basis. Most of them were later included, along with drawings from a number of other artist-dominated societies in Prague, in a publication known as *Knihla svatolukášská* (Saint Luke Book), which serves as a chronicle of the life of Prague artists from the 1850s to the 1870s.<sup>6</sup> The "book", or rather an album of drawings and writings, was intended to document the continuity of the lives of local artists in an informal way. At the same time it was a sign of the increasing acclaim for the existence of a community of Czech artists who were independent of the official authorities. The relatively brief interval covered by the book indicates the profound changes that took place on Prague's art scene.

After the fall of neo-absolutism, the founding of the Art Society (Umělecká beseda) in 1861 held out one of the hopes for utopian fellowship among artists. The Art Society brought together writers, musicians and artists who supported the Czech national revival movement. Nevertheless, the founders' original idealistic ambitions were soon paralysed by disputes among Czech politicians, the prevailing influence of writers over other branches of the arts in the Art Society, and arguments between artists.<sup>7</sup> Regardless of this, however, the spread of Czech-language newspapers and illustrated magazines, including humorous and satirical publications, resulted in the Czech public paying more systematic attention to art.

From the 1840s onwards the man who personified the continuity of Czech artists' struggle for their

rights was Josef Mánes, who was honoured well into the twentieth century as the founder of modern Czech painting. In some respects he can also be considered a bohemian. Artistically the most important member of the second generation of a family of painters in Prague, Mánes was among those who were opposed to the leadership of the Academy of Art. In 1848 he became active in the Czech nationalist movement and he subsequently faced discrimination on the official art scene. Interestingly, Mánes had great problems with completing projects, which sometimes fell through entirely. This was later interpreted as his quest for perfection, or a precondition for achieving perfection by means of extensive preparatory studies for a final work, yet his clients may have regarded Mánes's inability to complete commissions on time as a consequence of his capricious and bohemian lifestyle.

Few Czech artists wished to be considered lazy or disorganised bohemians, especially when communicating with potential patrons. An example of a defence is the self-portrait Mánes included with a written request to Adalbert Lanna, his patron, for support for a journey to Italy. Here the artist related his exhausting struggles with commissions, using an iconography taken from traditional romanticism. For his patron Mánes used the motif of the artist inspired by a dream to interpret the onset of his mental illness.<sup>8</sup> Mánes's admirers then presented his psychological abnormalities as a consequence of the greatness of his role in art, and of society's failure to appreciate his talent. The elevation of Josef Mánes to a hero made use of the increasing references to the link between madness and

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monument to Field Marshal Radetzky and the Iconography of the Hero on the Shield]. In: *Umění*, 55, 2007, No. 1, pp. 45-68. Like Soběslav Pinkas, the caricature's author, Karel Purkyně, came from a well-to-do Czech family. After the fall of neo-absolutism he had the courage and the opportunity to express artists' more radical opinions in public. He even attacked visitors to the Prague art exhibition and readers of illustrated magazines.

<sup>6</sup> On the improvised work of this original circle of artists, see MATĚJČEK, A.: Josef a Quido Mánesové v knize umělecké společnosti v kavárně Lorenzově [Josef and Quido Mánes in the Book of the Artists' Society at Lorenz's Café]. In: *Sborník k 70. narozeninám K. B. Mádl* [An Anthology for the 70<sup>th</sup> Birthday of K. B. Mádl]. Praha 1929, pp. 179-208. Recently

Zdeněk Hojda and the author of this article announced their intention to publish a critical edition of drawings and writings from the *Saint Luke Book*.

<sup>7</sup> PRAHL, R.: Kvetoucí varyto. K rétorice a emblematické rané Umělecké besedy [The Flowering Harp. On the Rhetoric and Emblems of the Early Art Society]. In: BLÁHOVÁ, K. – PETRBOK, V. (eds.): *Vzdělání a osvěta v české kultuře 19. století* [Education and Edification in 19<sup>th</sup>-Century Czech Culture]. Praha 2004, pp. 275-286.

<sup>8</sup> PRAHL, R.: Josef Mánes – Umělcův sen [Josef Mánes – The Artist's Dream]. In: OTTLOVÁ, M. (ed.): *Proudý český umělecký tvorby 19. století. Sen a ideál* [Trends in 19<sup>th</sup>-Century Czech Art. Dream and Ideal]. Praha 1990, pp. 90-99.

genius, and followed the artist's own interpretation of himself as a Czech variation on the archetype of the suffering artist. There are signs, however, that Mánes's mental illness towards the end of his life was the result of syphilis, a disease that often accompanied a life of dissipation. Nevertheless, for his admirers from the younger generation of Czech painters Mánes was the role model for the new Czech art. An outstandingly talented figure on the Prague art scene, Mikoláš Aleš, turned the defence of Mánes into a rebuke to society for failing to understand him, portraying Mánes as a superhuman genius amidst a crowd in an image that alluded to the story of Diogenes carrying a lamp in the daytime, looking for an attentive listener [Fig. 3]. In contrast, in a private caricature the "cosmopolitan" Václav Brožík portrayed the aging Mánes more realistically as a physical wreck.

Soon thereafter the figural painter Mikoláš Aleš and the landscape artist Antonín Chittussi came to personify bohemianism in their work and lifestyle. In the first half of the 1870s, the two artists visited the Hungarian Puszta. Before and after their visit this arid and sparsely populated plain was known as somewhere to study nature directly, independently of the academic conventions in art. The Puszta was also a region of wandering people with a talent for spontaneous music. The Hungarian Gypsies were an inspiration for Chittussi and especially Aleš, who in a sense modelled themselves after them. By 1880, both painters were admired for the immediacy of their art, but they continued to be criticised on the grounds that their finished works fell short of academic standards.

In 1875 Aleš and Chittussi led students in an attack on a professor at the Academy of Art, motivated by an argument over the national character of art. Both were expelled and imprisoned. This was an incident without precedent on the Prague art scene. Another similarly unusual case was when in 1878 the jury for the annual exhibition here refused to display a large painting that Aleš painted at the close of his studies at the Academy of Art. This set-back meant that rather than pursuing a career as an academic painter, Aleš became an illustrator and draughtsman for humorous and satirical magazines. It was here that he published his drawings on the theme of the failure of art critics and the public to



3. Mikoláš Aleš: *Josef Mánes in Search of a Patron*, 1880. Repr.: Šotek, 1, 1880.

understand art and creative originality, in a series that glorified more recent figures in Czech literature and art whose greatness had not been recognised by their fellow Czechs: the poet Karel Hynek Mácha, the writer Karel Jaromír Erben, and Josef Mánes. Prior to this, Aleš had painted for his own purposes a triptych where he depicted himself, the romantic poet Mácha and a Gypsy musician [Fig. 4]. These three solitary figures in a landscape were meant to personify Painting, Poetry and Music.

Mikoláš Aleš's ambivalent position in the first half of the 1880s was reflected in his conflicts over official art commissions, a dispute over his contribution to a work produced by two painters, and his defence of the importance of spontaneity and originality in art. These public disputes were also related to issues of nationhood, and for Czechs they confirmed Aleš's assumption of the role of the suffering artist. In the



4. Mikoláš Aleš: *Music/Gypsy Musician (Part III from the triptych Poetry – Painting – Music), 1878. Prague, Museum of Czech Literature. Photo: Archive of the museum.*

last of these disputes Aleš argued in a minority Czech periodical against the largest Czech daily newspaper, voicing his support for a society of Czech art students. This society, founded in Munich in 1885 and named Škréta after the Czech baroque painter Karel Škréta, made Aleš an honorary member. Following on from the Munich society, in 1887 the Mánes Association of Fine Artists (Spolek výtvarných umělců Mánes) was founded in Prague, appointing Aleš its honorary chairman. Until his death Czech artists from the next two generations, although they had very different ideas on art, venerated Aleš above all other living Czech artists.<sup>9</sup>

The diploma appointing Aleš an honorary member of Škréta is a milestone in the history of the debate between artists and the Czech public in Prague. The society's chairman, Alfons Mucha, worked on the diploma's calligraphy and the talented draughtsman Luděk Marold supplied the picture [Fig. 5]. The motif in the lower right part of the drawing explains the scene: a crayfish, symbolising reactionary tendencies, is attacking the traditional emblem of the free



5. Luděk Marold: *Drawing for Škréta's Diploma for Mikoláš Aleš, 1886. Repr.: Ruch, 8, 1886.*

<sup>9</sup> For Aleš's self-stylisation and his image in the art that followed, see PRAHL, R.: *Věk u umělce – případ Mikoláše Aleše* [Age and the Artist – the Case of Mikoláš Aleš]. In: PRAHL, R. – HOJDA, Z. – OTTLOVÁ, M. (eds.): *Vetché stáří, nebo zralý věk moudrosti?* [Decrepit Old Age, or the Mature Age of Wisdom?]. Praha 2009, pp. 21-38.

arts. This is reversed in the main part of the drawing where a woman, evidently of ill repute, has pushed an old man to the ground and is snapping his cane. The old man's wig, a symbol of conservatism, is a reference to a motif in paintings and drawings by artists at the time of the bourgeois revolution of 1848. Nevertheless this explicit aggression directed against a particular element in Prague by bohemian artists had no predecessor, and for a long time afterwards no successor. While the Czech public was generally sympathetic to young artists, seeing them as a hope for the nation's future, from the end of the 1880s to the mid-1890s the views of young artists did not take such radical form in public as in 1886, owing to unusually complicated developments in art and politics in the city at this time.

A crucial factor in the expansion of the new art on the public scene in Prague was its connection with Czech journalism and literature. The publishers of newspapers, magazines and books, together with journalists and writers, became the main channels for art in the Czech-speaking middle classes. Related informal societies in Prague in the 1880s and 1890s included a group of writers, artists and theatre people who called themselves Mahabharata, in what may have been an ironic reference to the fragmentation of Czech magazines and writers into rival factions. In addition the word was difficult to pronounce and served as an analogy for incomprehensible drunken babbling. The group, which had around eighty members, was based in a pub in the brewery of an Augustinian monastery in Prague's Lesser Town.

Mahabharata was the leading information platform for an alliance of artists, writers, musicians and theatre people. As a lobby it helped artists from the younger generation to become established in fashionable Prague. Noted Mahabharata artists included Mikoláš Aleš, the younger Viktor Oliva, and other draughtsmen who worked as illustrators for a satiri-

cal Prague magazine. Mahabharata's commemorative albums featured their drawings and are among the most interesting visual documents of artistic Prague at this time.<sup>10</sup> The albums poked good-natured fun at almost anything, including Mahabharata's own members and their bouts of delirium and inspiration. The drawings contain a mixture of these and other scenes from Prague life. Period documentation is lacking for a more detailed decoding of the meaning of these often brilliant drawings, which are typified by exaggeration and metamorphoses of reality.

During the 1880s, the aforementioned Viktor Oliva became a protagonist in communications between the art that came out of the bohemian milieu and Prague's public. He combined the usual bohemian outlook of a young artist with an exceptional talent as a draughtsman and designer, which had been evident during his time in Munich where he, Alfons Mucha and Luděk Marold were outstandingly gifted. With his work for magazines, books and advertising posters he became a Prague version of these "Czech Parisians", and he also designed theatre sets and costumes. His work on the décor of prominent cafés and social venues from the mid-1880s to the beginning of the twentieth century is evidence of his standing as a versatile creator of the visual backdrop for fashionable middle-class Prague.<sup>11</sup>

In 1897 Oliva became the art editor of one of the two main Czech-language illustrated magazines, *Zlatá Praha* (Golden Prague), where he was able to satisfy the requirements of his publishers and other customers as well as readers' expectations. Among the public there came to be an acceptance of values that had previously been opposed: liberally-minded members of the Czech middle classes sought to reconcile their nationalism and patriotism with international current affairs and fashion, which entailed a certain acceptance of bohemia.

Viktor Oliva also produced a set of paintings for the Café Slavia, which opened in 1884 just over the

<sup>10</sup> See PRAHL, R.: *Kronika umění i města. Alba Mahabharaty a „časopisu“ raného SVU Mánes* [A Chronicle of Art and the City. The Mahabharata Albums and the "Magazine" of the Early Mánes Association]. In: *Pražský sborník historický* [The Prague Historical Proceedings], 23, 1990, pp. 50-71.

<sup>11</sup> Oliva's most ambitious large-scale work was the ornamentation of the façade of the Café Corso, sometimes considered

the first art nouveau building in Prague. More recent art-historical discussions of Oliva and his work currently only exist as university theses. See NECHVÁTALOVÁ, M.: *Viktor Oliva, český malíř a designér 90. let 19. století* [Viktor Oliva, Czech Painter and Designer of the 1890s]. [Diss.] Charles University, Faculty of Arts. Praha 2012, in digital format; ŽÍŽKOVÁ, T.: *Viktor Oliva. Ilustrace a plakáty* [Viktor Oliva. Illustrations and Posters]. [Thes.] Charles University, Faculty of Arts. Praha 1979.



6. Viktor Oliva: *The Absinthe Drinker*, after 1895. Whereabouts unknown.



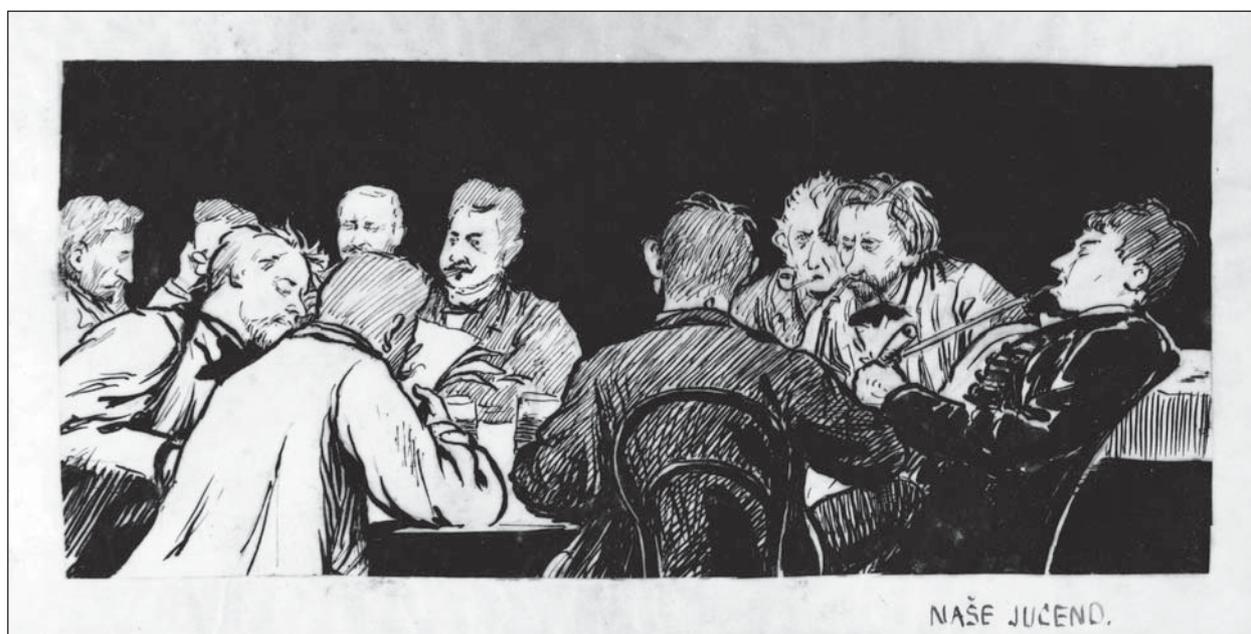
7. Anonymous: *Photographic Portrait of Viktor Oliva*, before 1896. Repr.: *Květy*, 18, 1896.

road from the recently completed Czech National Theatre, which by now was holding regular performances. One of these paintings, *The Absinthe Drinker*, is well-known today [Fig. 6]. The famous drink had been popular with bohemians in Paris since the mid-nineteenth century, and was later identified as one of the common causes of degeneracy among the lower classes. Czech absinthe began to be produced in the 1880s, approximately at the same time the Café Slavia opened. However, Oliva probably painted *The Absinthe Drinker* long after he returned from Paris to Prague in 1889. He painted a large triptych, *An Homage to Slavia*, for the main room in the Café Slavia in 1895, depicting different Slavonic nations accompanied by musicians. Most visitors to this middle-class café would not have ordered absinthe, preferring coffee with a bread roll. *The Absinthe Drinker* was one of a series of five paintings whose whereabouts today are unknown, and we can only speculate over what these paintings depicted and where they hung in the individual parts of the café.

Oliva's painting depicts a solitary man in the café, before whom there appears a petite, phantasmic woman the colour of absinthe, as a waiter approaches at closing time. The way the man is dressed and the state he is in recalls some of the hallucinating figures Oliva portrayed in the aforementioned Mahabharata album. A personal dimension to *The Absinthe Drinker* can be found in photographs of the painter himself. A rather formal portrait pho-

tograph presents Oliva as an acclaimed fine artist, a role he aspired to but never really achieved. A less formal albeit carefully arranged portrait shows him resting his head on his hand in reflection or melancholy, in line with traditional depictions of the inspired artist [Fig. 7]. Here, however, Oliva exaggerates the pose in parody, or perhaps to emphasise how weary he is of editing the book or magazine in front of him. As in *The Absinthe Drinker*, here too there is reading matter on the table, and the glass to Oliva's left looks very much like the glass in the painting.

Viktor Oliva's work represents an important compromise between bohemia and bourgeois society in the visual culture of Prague. In the mid-1890s, however, artistic and intellectual circles began increasingly to criticise this compromise. A generalised radicalism and criticism mounted, especially in smaller periodicals. Oliva and the Czechs who were successful in Paris, Mucha and Marold, were also criticised by the more radical Czech writers and artists. Some degree of animosity towards these brilliant draughtsmen and designers and their popularity among the fashionable Czech middle classes can also be found in the magazine published by the Mánes Association of Fine Artists, *Volné směry* (Free Currents). Originally the magazine had combined a respect for the habits of the educated middle-class magazine reader with discussion of whatever was happening in culture and the arts in Prague. Shortly thereafter it became



8. Anonymous: *The Volné směry Editorial Board, Špachtle, 1896. Prague, National Gallery. Photo: Archive of the gallery.*

the main tribune in Prague for modern Czech and international visual art.<sup>12</sup>

As the monthly magazine for Czech modernists, published since autumn 1896, *Volné směry* had a precursor in the “one-copy magazine” produced by Škréta, the society founded by Czech art students in Munich. This private periodical continued in Prague as a platform for the Mánes Association of Fine Artists, and included drawings, photographs and texts, both serious work and subversive bohemian humour.<sup>13</sup> The magazine continued to operate alongside *Volné směry* for many years, serving as its counterpart: it allowed experiments that would be unacceptable on the public art scene. Being published for a small community of young artists, it even included some opinions that ran contrary to the

Mánes Association’s official line. Many such works had, however, ambiguous meanings. For instance, a collective portrait of representatives of Mánes and the editorial board of *Volné směry*, entitled *Our Youth*, caricatures men who had grown old in their role of promising young artists, because the Czech national scene only paid lip service to youth and progress [Fig. 8].

Mánes used the ideology of youth – an ideology shared by the liberal element in the middle classes – to present itself to the public, and at the association’s first exhibition in spring 1898 it demonstrated its opposition to the established order. The association’s subsequent exhibitions and other activities played a large role in the gradual acceptance of Czech and international modernism in Prague. The poster

<sup>12</sup> PRAHL, R. – BYDŽOVSKÁ, L.: *Freie Richtungen. Die Zeitschrift der Prager Secession und Moderne*. Praha 1994; published in Czech as *Volné směry. Časopis pražské secese a moderny* [Free Currents. The Magazine of Prague Art Nouveau and Modernism]. For the sole monograph to date on the first phase of the history of the Mánes Association, see BYDŽOVSKÁ, L.: *Spolek výtvarných umělců Mánes v letech 1887 – 1907* [The Mánes Association of Fine Artists 1887 – 1907]. [Diss.] Charles University, Faculty of Arts. Praha 1989.

<sup>13</sup> For more on this private periodical produced by Škréta and Mánes, see PRAHL, R.: *Paleta – Špachtle. Idea a praxe časopisu české výtvarné moderny* [Paleta – Špachtle. The Idea and Practice of a Czech Modern Art Magazine]. In: KRÁL, O. – SVADBOVÁ, B. – VAŠÁK, P. (eds.): *Prameny české moderní kultury* [Origins of Modern Czech Culture]. Vol. 2. Praha 1988, pp. 217-240.



9. Arnošt Hofbauer: Poster for the First Mánes Exhibition, 1898. Prague, Museum of Decorative Arts. Photo: Archive of the museum.

for the first Mánes exhibition is a superb example of deliberately shocking advertising, something that has been used many times since the mid-nineteenth century to promote contemporary art [Fig. 9]. Unlike most posters for exhibitions by independent artists and art nouveau groups in Munich, Vienna and Berlin, the Mánes poster did not try to dignify the modernists by means of references to art's traditional iconography. It presented the obligatory conjunction of muse and male protagonist rather differently than Oliva had in *The Absinthe Drinker*. The association

meant the poster to be – and the public understood it as – a provocative attack on the Czech nouveaux riches, who neglected the role of patrons for their nation's artists.<sup>14</sup>

By the turn of the century, the position of this association of modern Czech artists had become a complicated one. Some of the association's leaders forged links with the Czech bourgeoisie and Czech and Austro-Hungarian politicians, and worked with similar art associations in Vienna and Krakow. However, among the leadership of Mánes and *Volné směry* there was also a non-conformist element that came out of bohemia's radicalism. The generation of artists who appeared in Prague around the beginning of the twentieth century had a particularly confrontational attitude to the establishment. This generation followed the example set in the world of literature, and especially by the anarchist movement. While the Austro-Hungarian monarchy did not accept anarchism as a political movement, it tolerated it as a marginal utopian standpoint in the arts. Anarchism, when understood as a rejection of the obstacles presented by class society's power system to the development of universal creativity, coincided with some of bohemia's ambitions, and brought to a culmination the long-standing arguments between Czech artists and the Prague scene.

Among the older Czech painters, František Kupka's affinities lay with bohemianism and anarchism. At the beginning of the twentieth century he was working in Paris as an illustrator of satirical periodicals that were critical of society, as well as luxurious books.<sup>15</sup> In Prague he became known for his cycles of lithographs vilifying clericalism, militarism and the supreme power of capital. One example of his work published in Prague featured a striking variation on the motif of a swollen belly, familiar from caricatures of the bourgeoisie since the times of Honoré Daumier and featured in the poster for the first Mánes exhibition [Fig. 10]. Like other pioneers of avant-garde art, for Kupka the revolutionary

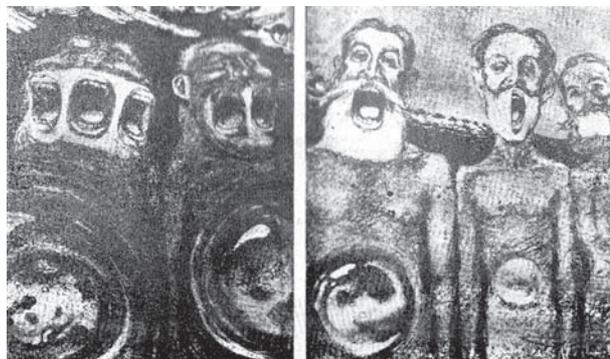
<sup>14</sup> For more information on the poster and the contemporary artistic and social context, and the debate over the exhibition's commercial failure, see PRAHL, R.: Plakát první výstavy SVU Mánes. Provokace mezi revoltou a utopií [The Poster for the First Mánes Association Exhibition. Provocation between Revolt and Utopia]. In: *Umění*, 40, 1992, No. 1, pp. 23-36.

<sup>15</sup> For a more recent in-depth study of Kupka's work as a satirist and illustrator, see THEINHARDT, M. – BRULLÉ, P. – WITTLICH, P.: *Vers des temps nouveaux. Kupka, œuvres graphiques 1894 – 1912*. Paris 2002.

changes in art, science and technology were to extend to a transformation of society.

František Kupka can be seen as an example of the compromise, albeit a precarious one, reached between the avant-garde and the bourgeoisie in the twentieth century, which applied in Prague too. Kupka, the co-founder of abstract art, had a patron in the industrialist Jindřich Waldes.<sup>16</sup> A businessman of Czech Jewish origins, Waldes collected Kupka's art for many years, and in 1912 Kupka designed the logo for his company Koh-i-noor, helping it achieve international success.

Kupka had grown up during the last thirty years of the nineteenth century, when Czech artists had only limited and generally negative experience of the art market, and so rather than the anonymity of the market they often preferred a traditional relationship with a particular art lover or patron. The examples presented above indicate the changeability of individual artists' opinions and their ability to operate in various codes of communication. They demonstrate the complicated concurrence of the emancipation



10. František Kupka: *Voting Rights (Part I)*, before 1905. Repr.: Rudé květy, 5, 1905 – 1906.

of art from traditional norms and the expansion of middle-class society in one of the nationalities of the time. For Czech society in the latter half of the nineteenth century it is impossible to say anything more definite than that “bohemian” art and “bourgeois” society needed one another, in ways that were both positive and negative.

*English translation by A. Dean*

<sup>16</sup> For a detailed account of the relationship between the two, see ŠIMON, P.: *Kupka – Waldes. Malíř a jeho sběratel* [Kupka – Waldes. The Painter and His Collector]. Praha 2001.

## Bohémí v Praze ve druhé polovině devatenáctého století

### *Resumé*

S rozvojem mnohostranného fenoménu bohémy v Praze úzce souviselo hnutí domácích výtvarných umělců. Článek nabízí stručný přehled hnutí domácích výtvarných umělců v jejich vztahu k oficiálním institucím umění, tradičním standardům umění a k publiku kupujícímu umění. Základem tohoto hnutí byla už od 30. let 19. století tísnivá hospodářská situace, v níž se trvale ocitala většina absolventů pražské Akademie umění.

Článek sleduje změny pozice výtvarných umělců mezi českým národním obrozením a mezinárodními trendy v kultuře. V Praze bylo ustavení bohémy zpožděné z politických i ekonomických důvodů. Hlavní protějšek bohémy, buržoazní společnost 19. století, se utvářela v česky mluvícím prostředí pomalu. Toto prostředí si nicméně bylo vědomo francouzských kulturních vzorů, včetně bohémství. Úzké spojení mezi literáty a výtvarnými umělci rychle rostlo po roce 1860. Opozice českých periodik vůči standardům na kulturní scéně byla zaměřena vůči německy mluvícím institucím umění. Hlavní důvod shody domácích umělců s českým národním obrozením byla přednost dvanácti institucemi umění cizím umělcům pocházejícím zejména z německy mluvících zemí.

Snahy místních umělců ze 30. let 19. století a z roku 1848 ustavit jejich formální spolek jako alternativu vůči vládnoucím institucím umění neuspěly. Během 50. let 19. století sledoval neformální kroužek výtvar-

ných umělců koncepty bohémství. To bylo základem pro veřejnou kritiku standardů umělecké scény v 60. letech 19. století. V 70. letech české politické a ekonomické elity začaly výtvarné umění uznávat jako důležitou součást národní sebe prezentace. Od 80. let pomáhalo rozvoji pluralismu na scéně umění v Praze prostředí literátů, žurnalistů a nakladatelů. Formální spolek českých studentů v Mnichově a jeho pokračování v Praze ve 2. polovině 80. let znamenalo další krok ve veřejné akceptaci vážných konceptů bohémství.

Hlavní část článku se soustředí na vliv bohémství a modernismu na pražskou kulturní scénu před rokem 1900 a po něm. Nejlepším příkladem bohémství byla stolní společnost vlivných literátů a malířů činná v 80. a 90. letech. Její členové přenesli prvky bohémství do českých ilustrovaných časopisů určených českým středním vrstvám. Od poloviny 90. let debata v češtině vedla k mnohostranné kritice měnící pražské kulturní standardy. V Praze hlavně spolek Mánes koncem 90. let kritizoval české buržoazní publikum ne-kupující umění.

Počátkem 20. století spolek nacházel spojence na mezinárodní scéně. Začal být také uznáván za partnera jak politickými reprezentacemi, tak českou buržoazní elitou. Nicméně tradice trvale kritického konceptu bohémy se obnovovala. Byla dále rozvinuta v kontextu českého anarchismu, zvláště generací básníků a kreslířů, kteří přišli na scénu kolem roku 1905.

## The “Bohemian” in Prague. Bohumil Kubišta as Social Critic

Eleanor F. MOSEMAN

The Czech artist Bohumil Kubišta (1884–1918) offers an example of the Parisian “bohemian” type transposed into the tensions of class stratification in Habsburg Prague. Early in his artistic development he acquired an affinity for the late nineteenth-century Impressionists, Post-Impressionists and Symbolists, especially Edgar Degas, Paul Cézanne, Georges Seurat, Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec, Vincent van Gogh, and Edvard Munch. Kubišta recognized the social messages inherent in these artists’ paintings and early in his artistic development he adopted them as models to emulate in his own art, in terms of both form and content. During two residencies in Paris between 1909 and 1910 Kubišta internalized the social envisioning of landscape and metropolis characteristic of much French modernist art. While in Paris, Kubišta – like his nineteenth-century idols – sketched scenes of bustling street life, working-class entertainments, and urban labor indicative of the bohemian outlook described in Honoré Balzac’s *Illusions perdues* (1837) and Henri Murger’s *Scènes de la vie de bohème* (1851). Even before Balzac and Murger, however, the Marquis de Pelleport’s *The Bohemians* (1790), written in the Bastille but published after literary taste shifted toward revolutionary subjects, already shed light on artists and writers living “down and out in Paris, surviving as best they could” and forecasting the celebrated drifters of the second half of the nineteenth century who empathized with the challenges faced by the working classes and lower fringe of the bourgeoisie.<sup>1</sup>

Like the socially ambiguous characters described by Pelleport, Balzac and Murger, Kubišta transferred a roving eye for metropolitan social dynamics to local

subjects in Prague and the surrounding countryside. Not satisfied to represent the merely beautiful, he strived to provoke his bourgeois viewer to contemplate the realities of class-based social dynamics in a political and social setting. In Habsburg Prague, these images were received as an affront to the elitist ideals of the late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century middle-class urbanite. An agenda of provocation is laid bare in Kubišta’s writings, which make evident that he regarded himself as the Czech equivalent to the Parisian *bohème*, focused on challenging bourgeois expectations and recording the outward manifestations of internal life and social upheaval. His essays detail his engagement with the impact of modernity on social structure and the utopian view of art’s role in social progress. This socially motivated content can be deciphered in his paintings and works on paper from his student years to the end of his short career.

Calling upon a set of case studies, I argue here that Kubišta’s social acumen flavored by a bohemian worldview can be read in the structure and symbolism he deployed as an organizing principle for modern art. These eight paintings provide an anchor for interpreting Kubišta’s renderings of an urban social landscape in a Prague divided along class lines and ethnic categories. Due in part to Kubišta’s family background rooted in a rural, agricultural context and because he grew up as a bilingual Czech with German heritage, from an early stage he recognized social differences. His sensitivity to class division,

<sup>1</sup> DARNTON, R.: Introduction. In: *The Bohemians (1790), a novel by Anne Gédéon Lafitte, Marquis de Pelleport*. Philadelphia 2010, pp. ix-x, xv-xvi.

predominantly based on ethnicity in provincial Habsburg society, caused him to seek out subject matter that spoke to the interests of the rural population and the laboring urban classes. He does not always depict labor, but he often refers obliquely to it by means of components in a still life, choice of vista for a landscape, or discrete backdrop for his narratives. In this manner he subtly brings attention to the settings of work and life in the rural and urban working class.

A brief survey of Kubišta's paintings and works on paper reveals his tendency toward a bohemian social outlook.<sup>2</sup> His early works depicting rural life in Habsburg Bohemia set him on a trajectory that is deepened in Paris and that becomes sublimated into the Cubist works after his return to Prague. The pre-Parisian and Parisian works indicate that Kubišta was primed as a social critic along the lines of the bohemian artists of Second Empire France. Beginning in his student years he produced scenes of domestic labor or soldier's intellectual preparations in pen and ink studies as well as in the labor-intensive technique of etching. The act of making images in a fixed form that can be multiplied is a difference in degree of engagement with a given subject compared to drawing or sketching, and it also entails a degree of physical and mental intensity that is parallel to the act of oil painting. For this reason it is noteworthy that he designed etchings for a number of scenes of urban and domestic labor even before his time in Paris. Agricultural scenes and images of domestic labor, especially women's work (laundry, needlework, cooking), predominate in the years before his travels to Paris. Very early, in his student years (1903–1904) and in his time studying in Florence (1907), he took up subjects of domestic labor, especially women's work in contexts both rural and urban. Kubišta's depiction of tavern scenes and figures that appear characteristically bohemian (e.g. *Kuřák* [*The Smoker*];

Nešlehová, Cat. No. 34) also emerge early in his career (by 1907) and continue into the early years of his Cubo-Expressionist phase. He also exhibits sympathy for beasts of burden (e.g. a pathos-inducing horse and cart in Nešlehová, Cat. No. 32; horses juxtaposed with ships in Pula in Nešlehová, Cat. No. 18). Kubišta's time in Paris reinforced the already socially oriented work of his youth. His bohemian awakening in Paris in turn catalyzes his work after he returns from his French sojourns. Still lifes come into play in 1909, likely under the influence of Kubišta's study of Cézanne, and often incorporate objects or settings associated with agricultural or intellectual labor. Scenes with factories can be found early in his oeuvre and continue in his later Cubo-Expressionist works.<sup>3</sup> After his return from Paris, images of labor and class or ethnic disparities may not dominate his subject matter, but his conviction regarding the unity of art and life that was fed in the bohemian garrets of prewar Paris indeed shapes his artistic enterprise.

It is telling that Kubišta chose to live on the edge of Montmartre in 1909 and in the Latin Quarter in 1910, the dual epicenters of bohemianism in Paris. While Montmartre was the seat of Picasso and Braque's experiments, it is more likely that Kubišta was drawn there initially by the fame of the district's bohemian nightlife, which reached a fevered pitch in the last quarter of the nineteenth century.<sup>4</sup> In a letter datable between 14 April and 30 April 1909, Kubišta gave his uncle his address as "B.K., *peintre, Paris 10, rue de Petits-Hôtels 32, près des Gares du Nord et de l'Est*".<sup>5</sup> This placed him in the area along the southeast perimeter of Montmartre, in reasonable walking distance to the heart of the quarter. Shortly thereafter he changed flats and in a letter to his uncle datable between 17 May and 18 June 1909 he reported his new address as "*rue de Trévisse 44, Paris 10*",<sup>6</sup> on the south edge of Montmartre and in the same street as the Folies-Bergère infamous for its

<sup>2</sup> The following overview is based on my analysis of works illustrated in the catalogue raisonné featured in NEŠLEHOVÁ, M.: *Bobumil Kubišta 1884 – 1918*. Praha 1993.

<sup>3</sup> For discussion of the spiritual role of the factory and labor in modern life, as theorized by Kubišta in 1912 and 1914, see MOSEMAN, E.: At the Intersection: Kirchner, Kubišta and "Modern Morality," 1911 – 1914. In: *The Art Bulletin*, 93, 2011, No. 1, pp. 79-100.

<sup>4</sup> SEIGEL, J.: *Bohemian Paris. Culture, Politics, and the Boundaries of Bourgeois Life, 1830 – 1930*. New York 1986.

<sup>5</sup> ČEŘOVSKÝ, F. – KUBIŠTA, F.: *Bobumil Kubišta. Korespondence a úvahy*. Praha 1960, pp. 80-81.

<sup>6</sup> Ibidem, p. 84. Kubišta mistakenly noted the wrong district; technically his new flat was in Paris 9, just where the two districts meet.

performances after 1894 featuring nude females. Kubišta's aversion to depicting nudes in his œuvre may have led him to avoid the Folies-Bergère itself, and the teeming nightlife possibly drove him to seek a flat for his second tenure in Paris in the storied Latin Quarter, the birthplace of bohemianism, rather than the pulsing Montmartre nightlife. His letter dated 4 June 1910 gave his residence as “*Paris V, Rue Gay-Lussac 50*”,<sup>7</sup> in the south portion of the Latin Quarter adjacent to the École Normale Supérieure, and in walking distance to the Sorbonne and the Luxembourg Gardens.

Jerrold Seigel's comprehensive account of the bohemian indicates that the meaning of bohemianism shifted across time during the century of its existence as a Parisian phenomenon.<sup>8</sup> One of the aspects inherent in bohemianism, as Seigel makes evident, is an unflinching dedication of life to art and art to life, such that lifestyle affectations became important markers of a bohemian existence on the outer fringes of bourgeois society. Sometimes these affectations took on the excesses of the desperate: personal eccentricities, irregular sleep habits, a refusal to “work” at any job other than that of making art, even petty crime. These habits and behaviors led to the further separation of bohemians from membership in the bourgeoisie, a status that many coveted even if from behind a veneer of repulsion and critical assault. With the exception of petty crime, Kubišta's life bore out some of these bohemian characteristics, especially during his time in Paris. His letters to his friends and his uncle, who supported him financially during his time in Paris, reveal an artist obsessed with merging life and art to the point that he reportedly went for days only eating bread and drinking water in order to survive on meager means while dedicating his life to art in Paris.<sup>9</sup>

Not surprisingly, Kubišta fits with certain aspects of the different eras Seigel explores, from the time of

Balzac and Murger to the cabarets haunted by Seurat and Toulouse-Lautrec, but Kubišta does not neatly replicate his Parisian counterparts in any given era. His writings reveal him as a bohemian in the sense of the way Seigel identifies the figures at the end of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth century, namely as embracing anarchism, skepticism, and anti-authoritarian attitudes toward hierarchical organizations and social structures.<sup>10</sup> The 1830s bohemian, by contrast, was a peripheral member of the bourgeoisie, who inwardly longed for the stable and predictable life of the middle class but, for various reasons related to individual circumstance, found himself outside the lower edge of that social class. This outsider status led many who identified with or otherwise found themselves in “Bohemia” to adopt a critical stance toward the bourgeoisie and their manners, attitudes, expectations, and customs. It could be a matter of envy and desire to join that class which caused the critical element to be so pronounced in the early days of bohemianism. Kubišta fits this aspect of early bohemianism in that he came from a rural land-holding family but evidently did not feel himself to be part of mainstream bourgeois life in Prague. His sympathy for rural life and skepticism toward urban bourgeois values led him in his early years as a painter to emphasize subject matter that highlights rural labor. His genre scenes, landscapes, and still lifes take up domestic labor and agricultural labor perhaps as a reaction to the outward signs of an easy bourgeois existence.

Like Honoré Daumier's iconic scene of early rail travel in *The Third-Class Carriage* of ca. 1863–1865, Kubišta depicts train travelers in a public conveyance in his 1908 painting *Ve vlaku (Cestující III. třídy) (In the Train [Travelers in the Third Class])*, oil on canvas, 64 × 76 cm. Brno, Moravská galerie; Nešlehová, Cat. No. 100) [Fig. 1]. Daumier made multiple versions of the same subject<sup>11</sup> conceived as one part of a

<sup>7</sup> Ibidem, pp. 88-89.

<sup>8</sup> SEIGEL 1986 (see in note 4). An aspect of Parisian bohemianism, however, that does not apply to Kubišta is the prevalent association with artistic amateurism.

<sup>9</sup> MATĚJČEK, A.: Bohumil Kubišta v Paříži. In: *Život a osobnost Bohumila Kubišty ve vzpomínkách současníků*. Ed. F. ČEŘOVSKÝ. Praha 1949, p. 95.

<sup>10</sup> SEIGEL 1986 (see in note 4), pp. 310-313.

<sup>11</sup> Primacy of the Ottawa version (*The Third-Class Carriage*, ca. 1863–1865, oil on canvas, 65.4 × 90.2 cm. Ottawa, National Gallery of Canada, Inv. No. 4633, purchased 1946) and New York version (*The Third-Class Carriage*, ca. 1862–1864, oil on canvas, 65.4 × 90.2 cm. New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art, H. O. Havemeyer Collection, Inv. No. 29.100.129, bequest of Mrs. H. O. Havemeyer, 1929) of Daumier's paintings



1. Bohumil Kubišta: *Ve vlaku (Cestující III. třídy)* (In the Train [Travelers in the Third Class]), 1908, oil on canvas, 64 × 76 cm. Brno, Moravská galerie. Photo: Archive of the gallery.

series depicting modern travel in compartments reserved for first-, second-, and third-class rail travelers. Kubišta, however, focuses exclusively on the lowliest of passengers, indicating his intensive attention to working-class life. Whereas Daumier's series highlights differences between social classes, Kubišta concentrates here on the spiritual integrity of working class figures. He transfers the weariness of Daumier's travelers into his own composition but with the addition of expressive color laden with symbolism echoing Munch. As with Daumier's anonymous third-class passengers, Kubišta does not offer individual descriptive features and instead allows the woman holding a child and the three men to serve as a collective reference to working class dignity. The relationship between the figures

in the train car is ambiguous, and yet the contrast of light and dark implies the companionship of the woman and child with the man across from them who leans forward in a protective gesture. Kubišta utilizes contrasting colors to enhance the explosive effect of the red woman and child set against the yellow carriage wall and opposite the suited man in olive-green.<sup>12</sup> Every color is answered by its complement, intensifying the chiaroscuro effect of bright background and dark foreground. The two men shrouded in greenish-blue and purple in the foreground look on with idle curiosity as the woman and child doze. The scene is quotidian yet Kubišta calculated the symbolic impact of color to approach the transcendental, an issue he expounded in relation to form in his October 1911 essay "On

is disputed in relation to a watercolor sketch of ca. 1862. As Kubišta first travelled to Paris in 1909, when he made this painting, he could only have known Daumier's composition from reproductions in art historical journals and books, including MEIER-GRAEFE, J.: *Entwicklungsgeschichte der modernen*

*Kunst*. Vol. 1. Stuttgart 1904, where the famous painting's colorlessness and colossal objectivity are discussed on p. 97.

<sup>12</sup> Note M. Nešlehová's discussion regarding the symbolic meaning of red in NEŠLEHOVÁ 1993 (see in note 2), p. 51.

2. Bobumil Kubišta: *Pradlena s děckem* (*Laundress with a Child*), 1908, oil on canvas, 100 × 120 cm. Karlovy Vary, Galerie umění. Photo: B. Hořínek.



the Prerequisites of Style”.<sup>13</sup> That third-class travelers should bear transcendental capacity indicates Kubišta’s affinity for the bohemian agenda of his nineteenth-century French forbearers.

Kubišta’s woman in red in the third-class train carriage appears in another painting of 1908, *Pradlena s děckem* (*Laundress with a Child*, oil on canvas, 100 × 120 cm. Karlovy Vary, Galerie umění; Nešlehová, Cat. No. 95) [Fig. 2]. Using a color scheme nearly identical to his Munch-like palette in *Ve vlaku*, Kubišta concentrates the viewer’s attention on the nobility of labor in a humble domestic setting. The location of the subject in a visibly Central European household differs from the many treatments of urban day-wage laundresses by Edgar Degas. The heavy wooden furniture with few decorative embellishments and the massive washbasin with its simple framing echo the vernacular and rural sensibility conveyed by the woman’s stout figure. Here the woman’s ruby red

headscarf and dress are set against the olive green kitchen cupboard while the intense yellows and oranges of the washbasin and child standing in the foreground are contrasted with the purple hues of the child standing before a blue curtain in the background. Figures and objects are circumscribed to intensify contours and relationships between forms in a manner recalling both Van Gogh’s cloisonné outlines and Cézanne’s emphasis on relational proximity. Especially noteworthy here is Kubišta’s effort to highlight the woman’s physical and mental labor. Indeed the lightened space encompassing the woman’s head implies a mandorla or spiritual aura emanating from the figure.<sup>14</sup> The contrast of red and green draw the eye directly to the woman’s massive form bent forward over backbreaking work. In a clever move, Kubišta empties out the center point of the composition, effectively making the woman’s own visual and mental focus the centripetal pivot for the painting.

<sup>13</sup> For discussion of Kubišta’s concept of the transcendental, see MOSEMAN 2011 (see in note 3).

<sup>14</sup> This halo effect around the figures is similar to the X-ray vision František Kupka incorporated into his paintings around



3. Bobumil Kubišta: *Periférie (Suburbs)*, 1908, oil on canvas, 65.5 × 84 cm. Liberec, Oblastní galerie. Photo: Archive of the gallery.

It is fair to state that Kubišta was preoccupied with domestic labor.<sup>15</sup> In scores of drawings and a number of early etchings he depicts women knitting, sewing, washing laundry, tending children, and working in the kitchen. Of course, these are subjects that surrounded Kubišta daily in his youth and that he could depict with tender familiarity stemming from his lifelong fondness for his mother expressed in his correspondence. But it is also a deliberate choice on his part to return constantly to these scenes. That this subject of women's domestic labor is worthy of rendering in oil on canvas speaks to Kubišta's bohemian motivations. Indeed this penchant to depict the raw truth of rural and domestic labor elevated by spiritual connotations seasoned his

artistic sensibilities and gave him a taste for realism that guided him during and after his two residencies in Paris. It is remarkable that he took up the subject of the laundress one last time after returning from Paris and monumentalized the theme in his 1911 canvas *Jaro (Koupaní žen) (Spring [Women Bathing])*, oil on canvas, 127.5 × 160 cm. Prague, Národní galerie, Inv. No. O 3326), a painting that was motivated by Kubišta's reflections on modern labor as a new form of prayer.<sup>16</sup> Women's labor, sublimated into a pastoral idyll, models the theory of a new spirituality.

The raw beauty of modern labor serves as the subject in many of Kubišta's landscapes as well. In his 1908 painting *Periférie (Suburbs)*, oil on canvas, 65.5 × 84 cm. Liberec, Oblastní galerie; Nešlehová, Cat.

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the same time, for example a portrait of his wife reclining, her body encased in successive layers of mystically transparent spiritual matter indicated by Fauvist colors – *Planes by Colors, Large Nude (Plans par couleurs, grand nu)*, 1909 – 1910, oil on canvas, 150.2 × 180.7 cm. New York, Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, Inv. No. 68.1860, gift of Mrs. Andrew P. Fuller. See HENDERSON, L. D.: X-Rays and the Quest

for Invisible Reality in the Art of Kupka, Duchamp, and the Cubists. In: *Art Journal*, 47, 1988, No. 4, pp. 329-330.

<sup>15</sup> See also Nešlehová's comments on domestic labor in NEŠLEHOVÁ 1993 (see in note 2), p. 47.

<sup>16</sup> MOSEMAN 2011 (see in note 3).

4. Bobumil Kubišta: *Kavárna (Café d'Harcourt)* (*Café [Café d'Harcourt]*), 1910, oil on canvas, 110 × 138 cm. Hradec Králové, Galerie moderního umění. Photo: Archive of the gallery.



No. 72) [Fig. 3], he relies on contrasting color to set the suburban landscape into relief. Densely packed industrial buildings crowd residential structures, all of which are hemmed in by rail tracks bordering a hayfield in the foreground. Gestural brushwork recalling Kubišta's adaptation of Van Gogh's manner fill the field with yellow, orange, and green. This open space sweeps downward toward the bright yellow, orange, and green walls of the buildings beyond. The bright tonalities of the productive agricultural and factory buildings mark a sharp contrast to the darkened horizon punctuated by the pairing of factory smokestack at the center to the twin spires of a church interrupting the line of the wooded hillside. Although no workers are represented, the products of their labor are palpable in the black smoke rising from the factory chimney high above the distant church. The prominent black of the chimney and smoke is echoed by pure white steam emitting from a smaller tower in the factory compound below.

What might appear to jaded eyes to be suburban sprawl and industrial blight was progress embodied

at the turn of the twentieth century. Kubišta must have recognized the complex social implications involved in depicting industrial landscapes. On the one hand, depicting factories defies picturesque taste for landscape painting as a form of escape from the realities of industrialization, including labor unrest, a marred countryside, and polluted air. James Rubin notes the Impressionists' enthusiasm for industrial landscapes as a marker of modernity: "*Factory chimneys poking up over the horizon would have been unwelcome reminders of workaday life, intrusions upon the meditations and withdrawal from care facilitated by the vicarious retreats to the countryside proposed by landscape painting.*"<sup>17</sup> This repulsive function of industrial landscapes would have appealed to Kubišta's anti-bourgeois tendencies. On the other hand, depicting factories – even if in the Impressionist spirit of heralding modernity in its most palpable form – bears the risk of being misin-

<sup>17</sup> RUBIN, J. H.: *Impressionism and the Modern Landscape. Productivity, Technology, and Urbanization from Manet to Van Gogh*. Berkeley 2008, p. 121.

terpreted as celebrating the capitalist power of the industrialist. Rubin's comments on the wide-ranging impact of distribution hint at the all-encompassing dominance of resource exploitation by the wealthy industrial owner who profits from the productive forces at work in his factory.<sup>18</sup> While *Periférie* marks Kubišta's early enthusiasm for nineteenth-century French painting and his naïve emulation of Impressionist and Post-Impressionist subject matter, he would soon work out the apparent contradictions of depicting factories in this pendant essays "The Intellectual Basis of Modern Time" (October 1912) and "The Spiritual Basis of the Modern Age" (April 1914).<sup>19</sup> These essays indicate an intensification of his interest in the centrality of labor in modern life and his respect for the working class on a par with the industrialists and intellectuals who are most often celebrated as the harbingers of progress. In this life's project he shows his debt to his nineteenth-century bohemian role models, especially Courbet and Van Gogh.

When Kubišta resided in Paris he took up subjects that linked to working class life and entertainments. His studies of construction work along the Seine show attention to complementary forms as well as the raw labor involved in dredging, bridge building, material hauling, digging, etc. He also sketched a number of figural studies in cafés. Studies of heads predominate, giving a sense that he was recording character types as an almost anthropological observation of the Parisian populace. These character studies suggest that Kubišta frequented working-class cafés and taverns in his search for visual material. His attention was also drawn by the famous Café d'Harcourt in the Latin Quarter where he lived in 1910. He produced a number of studies for his large canvas *Kavárna (Café d'Harcourt) (Café [Café d'Harcourt])*, 1910, oil on canvas, 110 × 138 cm. Hradec Králové, Galerie moderního umění; Nešlehová, Cat. No. 123 [Fig. 4]. A 1900 text by the American expatriate artist W. C. Morrow provides an eyewitness account

of the favored haunts of the Parisian bohemian. In this text Morrow heralds Café d'Harcourt as "*the wickedest café in Paris*" and identifies it as a cornerstone of bohemian life.<sup>20</sup> Kubišta captures the café's vibrant nightlife in a composition that subtly references the colors and subjects of the Impressionists and Post-Impressionists. He adapts the nighttime café setting from Toulouse-Lautrec and the palette from Seurat. However, instead of the provocation of class tensions and overt sexual fetishism of his nineteenth-century predecessors, Kubišta shifts the viewer's attention away from the performers and toward the clientele in the café, which drew a blend of working-class patrons and those on the fringe of the bourgeoisie, precisely the crowd described in the nineteenth century as the core of Parisian Bohemia. Using complementary colors Kubišta emphasizes the frieze of figures seated at tables in the foreground. Shades of purple, green, blue, and red dominate and set the drinkers apart from each other and from the musical ensemble on stage in the background. Numerically symmetrical pairs flank a woman in red who takes a drag from a cigarette while meeting the viewer's gaze. This female smoker – an icon of bohemianism<sup>21</sup> – serves as the focal point and pivot for the composition. The pairs seated in the foreground are identified only in general terms, providing enough detail to capture a mood and demeanor. The woman smoking, however, is depicted with relative specificity, her face rendered in flesh tones rather than in the color of her attire. By contrast the other figures' faces bear the purple, green, blue, and mauve of their clothing, a treatment that implies their status as *staffage* instead of individuals. Furthermore while the woman in purple at the far left is accompanied by the top-hatted man in green, the smoker at the center of the composition is seated in isolation. Perhaps she is a *grisette*, one of the famous Latin Quarter girls who came to the city from the countryside to seek their fortune amongst the artists and students of the Parisian *bohème*. Or maybe she

<sup>18</sup> Ibidem, p. 125.

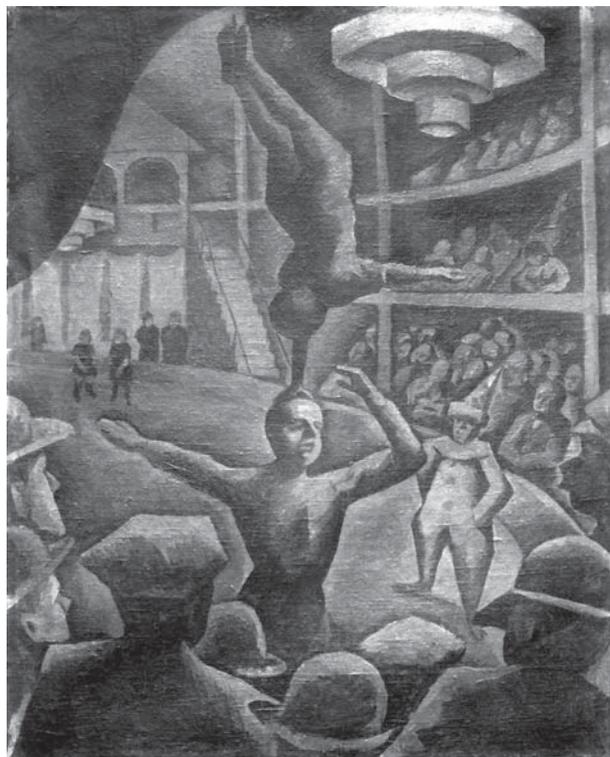
<sup>19</sup> Both essays are discussed in MOSEMAN, E.: *Gravitace, or Gravity in the Social and Artistic Thought of Bohumil Kubišta*. In: EDWARDS, M. D. – BAILEY, E. (eds.): *Gravity in Art. Essays on Weight and Weightlessness in Painting, Sculpture and Photography*. Jefferson (NC) 2012, pp. 212-234.

<sup>20</sup> *Bohemian Paris of Today, written by W. C. Morrow from notes by Edouard Cucuel*. Philadelphia – London 1900 (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.).

<sup>21</sup> BERMAN, P.: Edvard Munch's *Self-Portrait with Cigarette: Smoking and the Bohemian Persona*. In: *The Art Bulletin*, 75, 1993, No. 4, pp. 627-646.

belongs to a *claque* paid by the café owners to fill audience seats and thereby entice patrons into their establishments.<sup>22</sup> Given her relative psychological and proximal distance from the bowler-hatted men at the right, she could even represent a courtesan, her elaborate hat a component of her masquerade as a member of respectable society. Kubišta deliberately leaves the identity of his figures ambiguous, and yet the centrality of this female smoker marks her as a symbol of bohemian life. Immediately following his residency in Paris, he also depicted himself with a cigarette, the calling card of the bohemian, in a self-portrait that signals his foray into Cubist experimentation, namely *Kuřák (Vlastní podobizna) (Self-Portrait as a Smoker, 1910, oil on canvas, 68 × 51 cm. Prague, Národní galerie)*.<sup>23</sup>

Upon returning to Prague, Kubišta continued exploring subjects linked to bohemian forms of Parisian entertainment as well as subjects such as still life that allowed him to infuse a bohemian outlook into seemingly mundane objects. The former can be seen in his painting *Cirkus (Circus, 1911, oil on canvas, 81 × 65.5 cm. Karlovy Vary, Galerie umění; Nešlehová, Cat. No. 200) [Fig. 5]*. *Cirkus* borrows a theme famously explored by Toulouse-Lautrec and Seurat and yet here the focus is on the throngs of working-class spectators, rather than on the spectacle of the performance itself. The palette is reduced to shades of complementary reds and greens, throwing the figures into sharp relief. Although a lone red clown stands in the arena, the main action is conducted by acrobats who are rendered in the same green as the enthralled audience. This assimilation of color by the audience and performers calls attention to the shared class standing of the gathered figures: the circus acrobats are at best working class, if not social outsiders, and are portrayed by means of color, proportion, and reduced detail in a manner identical to Kubišta's treatment of the men in the foreground and in the grandstands beyond. It is noteworthy that only one female, other than the performers at the far left, can be identified clearly; this relative absence of women indicates that the audience is not comprised



5. Bohumil Kubišta: *Cirkus (Circus)*, 1911, oil on canvas, 81 × 65.5 cm. Karlovy Vary, Galerie umění. Photo: B. Hořínek.

of bourgeois viewers, who would more likely appear as fashionably dressed couples. Instead Kubišta has rendered a scene of a popular low-brow escape from the daily grind of working-class life. By equilibrating the depiction of working-class spectators and working-class performers, Kubišta declares his bohemian agenda of tuning into the interests of the lower echelon of society.

This interest in the work-a-day activities of the lower class can be witnessed in still lifes Kubišta produced upon his return from Paris. Kubišta avoided taking up the musical instruments, newspapers, bottles, and glasses that dominate early Cubist still lifes by Picasso and Braque, which Kubišta had access to through magazine reproductions as well as in the collection of Cubist works that Vincenc Kramář

<sup>22</sup> EISENMAN, S. F.: *Nineteenth Century Art. A Critical History* London 2011 (4<sup>th</sup> ed.), chap. 17.

<sup>23</sup> For contextual discussion of the painting, see MOSEMAN, E.: E. L. Kirchner, Czech Cubism and the Representation of the Spirit in Portraiture, 1915 – 1918. In: *The Space Between. Literature and Culture, 1914 – 1945*, 4, 2008, No. 1, pp. 11-38.



6. Bobumil Kubišta: *Zátiší z chlěva* (Still Life in a Barn), 1910, oil on canvas, 69.3 × 52 cm. Plzeň, Západočeská galerie. Photo: K. Kocourek, Západočeská galerie v Plzni.

made available to Prague artists.<sup>24</sup> In early still lifes he preferred arrangements of apples and jugs, skulls and drapery that borrow from Cézanne. However, after his residency in the heart of bohemian Paris, Kubišta produced a number of still lifes featuring implements of labor. For example, *Zátiší s homolí cukru* (Kitchen Still Life With a Cone of Sugar, 1910, oil on canvas) and *Zátiší z chlěva* (Still Life in a Barn, 1910, oil on canvas, 69.3 × 52 cm. Plzeň, Západočeská galerie; Nešlehová, Cat. No. 185) [Fig. 6]. Both still lifes adopt the reduced palette of analytic Cubism and compress the objects and spatial relations through geometric simplification. The objects depicted, how-

ever, relate not to the daily preoccupations of the Parisian avant-garde but instead to the work implements of rural life in Bohemia. *Zátiší s homolí cukru* features the roughly hewn tools of a typical rural kitchen while *Zátiší z chlěva* is set in a humble barn. Buckets surround a stool waiting at the ready for the next milking, the blocky trough behind referencing the simple architecture of a dairy stall. Jaroslav Anděl notes that: “In Kubišta’s still lifes from 1910-11, light seems to emanate from ordinary objects as if they could reveal the truth of existence.”<sup>25</sup> Kubišta intensifies this effect in this still life by means of color: his palette refers, on the one hand, to the darkened interior of the barn with straw decking the floor, but on the other hand his choice to contrast blue against yellow recalls the special attention paid to these two symbolic colors in Goethe’s *Farbenlehre*, a work the Kubišta knew well. The purple shadows relieve the stark pairing of blue and subdued yellow, maintaining a connection to “the truth of existence” inherent in the reality of farm life while simultaneously elevating humble rural labor through the application of spiritually powerful tonalities.

In this still life Kubišta reconfigures a genre favored by artists of the Parisian *bohème* according to the rural realities of Habsburg Bohemia while declaring his allegiance to the lower classes in keeping with a bohemian outlook adopted from his nineteenth-century idols. This transposition is a prime example of a characteristic that Steven Mansbach has identified in the adaptation of western subjects and techniques into an Eastern European context. He states that: “...a wholesale application of the iconographic categories developed to assess Western modern art may be inadequate to explicate the meanings and analyze the themes favored in the East. Even with its superficially identical subject and stylistic rendering, an impressionist painting of the bridge at Mostar made in the early twentieth century did not incarnate the same symbolic content as a slightly earlier impressionist depiction of the bridge at Argenteuil. And despite shared formal attributes, cubist still-life paintings (or sculpture) by Picasso and his Paris-based followers did not carry the intellectual

<sup>24</sup> UHROVÁ, O. – LAHODA, V. (eds.): *Vincenc Kramář. From Old Masters to Picasso*. Prague 2000.

<sup>25</sup> ANDĚL, J.: In Search of Redemption: Visions of Beginning and End. In: ANDĚL, J. – WILKES TUCKER, A. – DE LIMA GREENE, A. – MCKAY, R. – HARTSHORN, W. (eds.): *Czech Modernism 1900 – 1945*. [Exhib. Cat.] Houston, Museum of Fine Arts. Houston 1989, p. 24.

and often political meanings that Czech modernists vested in their unique form of *cubo-expressionism*.<sup>26</sup> The affinity Kubišta felt for Bohemia's rural and working-classes is represented as more than the adoption of convenient subjects and reveals the artist's social outlook amidst the tensions of class stratification.

Kubišta's attention to labor in his compositions motivated by bohemian sympathy for the working class also influences his rendering of scenes involving intellectual work. His 1912 Cubist painting *Hypnotizér* (*Hypnotist*, oil on canvas, 60.5 × 58 cm. Ostrava, Galerie výtvarného umění; Nešlehová, Cat. No. 248) [Fig. 7] illustrates his conception of "*penetrism*" on the example of a hypnotist probing into the psyche of his patient. The hypnotist stands before an elderly man surrounded by books, a globe and a skull, here allusions to spiritual and intellectual strength.<sup>27</sup> As the hypnotist works on his patient his head remains stationary with intense concentration while his arms and body sway with activity, indicated by multiple renderings of the practitioner's hands, arms and shoulders. By contrast, only the patient's head is represented in two views, his body otherwise motionless. Kubišta's adaptation of Italian Futurism's dynamism and Cubism's faceted planes merges in a reduced palette borrowed from Picasso and Braque's analytic phase. Once again Kubišta treats the fulcrum of the composition as the symbolic crux of the painting; here intellectual work is highlighted whereby the physical and psychological labor of the hypnotist is treated as the *raison d'être* for the image. While Kubišta remains dedicated to the representation of labor, his conception of working-class labor as the root of modernity has expanded to include the work of the learned in intellectual pursuits, a shift he lays out in his concept of "*penetrism*" in his 1914 essay.<sup>28</sup> Already in this 1912 painting, however, Kubišta applies his bohemian sympathy for laboring individuals to the subject of intellectual works; even his title points to the worker performing intellectual labor rather than



7. Bohumil Kubišta: *Hypnotizér* (*Hypnotist*), 1912, oil on canvas, 60.5 × 58 cm. Ostrava, Galerie výtvarného umění. Photo: Archive of the gallery.

merely to the act of hypnosis. This versatility signals his own artistic development as well as a maturing that involves a more open perception of labor in its various manifestations as the underpinning of modern society.

This relative freedom in Kubišta's reference to work as a marker of his bohemian outlook reflects Edward Fry's observations regarding the perception of Cubism in Central Europe as exotic and radical, given the rebuke to convention and monarchical tradition signaled by the new art's intellectual freedom.<sup>29</sup> In combination with Kubišta's adaption of the theme of working-class preoccupations to intellectual labor, the perception of Cubism as a radical marker of intellectual freedom helps to interpret the 1912 still life *Ateliér* (*Studio*, oil on canvas, 52 × 43 cm.

<sup>26</sup> MANSBACH, S. A.: *Modern Art in Eastern Europe. From the Baltic to the Balkans, ca. 1890 – 1939*. Cambridge 1999, p. 3.

<sup>27</sup> J. Anděl observes that Kubišta's *Hypnotist* "draws on... dramatic notions such as power, will, and violence. Kubišta compared the interplay of these forces to gravitation and sought to create its equivalent in the internal rhythm of forms and in a geometric structure relying on the symbolism of numbers." – ANDĚL 1989 (see in note 25), p. 24.

<sup>28</sup> MOSEMAN 2012 (see in note 19), pp. 225-228.

<sup>29</sup> FRY, E.: Czech Cubism in the European Context. In: ŠVESTKA, J. – VLČEK, T. – LIŠKA, P. (eds.): *Czech Cubism, 1909 – 1925. Art, Architecture, Design*. Praha 2006, p. 12.



8. Bobumil Kubišta: *Ateliér (Studio)*, 1912, oil on canvas, 52 × 43 cm. Plzeň, Západočeská galerie. Photo: K. Kocourek, Západočeská galerie v Plzni.

Plzeň, Západočeská galerie; Nešlehová, Cat. No. 253) [Fig. 8]. While the composition has all the trappings of a Cubist still life it is noteworthy that this is not simply an arbitrary still life in an artist's studio. Kubišta's inclusion of a clock and an astrolabe signal the deeper focus of the painting. These two objects symbolize intellectual activity and mark the artist's studio as the site of intellectual labor. The tin with a paintbrush beside an easel in the left background underneath the sloping rafters declares the setting as a garret apartment of a typical bohemian artist. Yet these tools of the artist's physical labor are not the focal point. Rather, the clock and astrolabe stand on a table at the visual and ideological fulcrum of the composition. Furthermore, Kubišta surrounds the astrolabe with a mandorla, which is intersected by the

clock. This central motif is framed by an armchair and a potted plant on a stand at the right and the easel and a writing desk behind an upholstered chair at the left. These framing devices flank or even intersect the contours of the mandorla around the clock and astrolabe. The configuration and focus on physical and intellectual references to the artist's labor recall Picasso's oval-format analytic Cubist painting *The Architect's Table* (1910 – 1911). The artist as architect of a painting is parallel to Kubišta reference to time and cosmic order in the clock and astrolabe as the devices of the progressive artist who uses art as a method to move society forward.<sup>30</sup> In this sense, the intellectual labor referenced in this still life of the artist's studio serves as the counterpoint to the manual labor celebrated in *Zátiší z chléva* and in the earlier scenes of domestic and working-class labor and activities such as *Pradlena s děckem* and *Cirkus*. The composition epitomizes Fry's conception of what it meant to be a Cubist in Central Europe, namely "maintaining the past and the present in an alchemic balance that celebrated the freedom of individual thought, emotion, and imagination".<sup>31</sup>

Kubišta's artistic life, subject matter and compositional strategies paralleled some of the most salient characteristics of nineteenth-century Parisian bohemianism. He lived and breathed art, and he came to Paris with a social outlook and left with strengthened dedication to a bohemian perspective shared by his French predecessors. As Mansbach notes, the artists of *Osmá* and their friends "chafed" at "every code of good breeding and religious mores".<sup>32</sup> What Kubišta did not share with the Parisian bohemians was the fringe effect of the amateur artist associated with dilettantism. Kubišta was a serious artist with sound training and an artist's eye for composition, color, and subject matter, as well as a penchant for theory. These elements kept him from being a true bohemian in the Parisian sense. Instead he deployed his theoretical tendencies and eye for social dynamics amidst the acceleration of stimuli and the disparities of privilege in Habsburg society, which often took the form of criticism of hierarchies, ethnic prejudice, and cultural elitism of the "establishment". This vari-

<sup>30</sup> This sentiment is the crux of Kubišta's 1914 essay "The Spiritual Basis of the Modern Age" (April 1914).

<sup>31</sup> FRY 2006 (see in note 29), p. 15.

<sup>32</sup> MANSBACH 1999 (see in note 26), p. 22.

ation on the French bohemian type is not surprising, for, as Seigel points out, foreigners and expatriates in Paris who adopted the trappings of bohemianism often did so only partially because they came from other contexts where the social dimensions and political concerns are often fundamentally different. The Habsburgs' mandated use of German by native Czechs may have loosened with the late nineteenth-century Slavic Renaissance, but ethnic unrest persisted between German- and Czech-speaking segments of society, especially in Prague where language and ethnicity could often be mapped onto social class. Ethnicity-related class stratification in

the Czech lands inflects Kubišta's scenes of labor and working-class life with the particular context of Habsburg hegemony approaching its breaking point in the first decade of the twentieth century. As a Paris-inspired bohemian in Prague, Kubišta rendered these class tensions in scenes that reveal him as a critical observer of modern social life. This bohemian foundation informed the thrust of his theoretical essays and artistic practice at the height of his career (1910 – 1914) and predicted the melancholy and self-scrutiny palpable in his works dating to the war years (1915 – 1918).

## „Bohém“ v Prahe. Bohumil Kubišta ako kritik spoločnosti

### *Resumé*

Český maliar Bohumil Kubišta (1884 – 1918) bol parížskym bohémom, ktorý pôsobil v triednymi a etnickými napätiami poznačenej habsburskej Prahe. Počas dvoch pobytov v Paríži v rokoch 1909 a 1910 dokázal vstrebať sociálne tendencie francúzskeho moderného umenia. Podobne ako mnoho jeho umeleckých idolov z 19. storočia, Kubišta skicoval živý ruch ulice, robotníkov, ich pracovný aj mimopracovný život. Týmto témam ostal verný aj po návrate do Prahy. Svojimi dielami provokoval buržoázných divákov k zamysleniu sa nad triedne podmienenou sociálnou dynamikou v politických a sociálnych súvislostiach habsburskej Prahy. Hoci sa povinnosť používať nemecký jazyk pod vplyvom silnejúceho národného obrodzenia koncom 19. storočia oslabovala, rozpory medzi nemecky a česky hovoriacimi obyvateľmi pretrvávali, a to predovšetkým v Prahe, kde sa jazykové a etnické enklávy často prekrývali s tými sociálnymi. Kubišta ako Parížom inšpirovaný bohém tieto triedne a etnické napätia zobrazoval spôsobom typickým pre kritického pozorovateľa moderného spoločenského života.

Sociálne motivované námety možno v Kubištovom diele nachádzať od študentských čias až po koniec jeho krátkej kariéry. Keďže maliarova rodina mala vidiecke korene a mladý umelec rástol ako bilingválny Čech s nemeckým zázemím, sociálne problémy vnímal už od raného veku. Citlivosť na triedne rozdiely, založené hlavne na etnickom rozčlenení provinčnej habsburskej spoločnosti, ho nútila hľadať námety, pôsobiace v prospech vidieckeho obyvateľstva a mestského proletariátu. Na motív práce často nepriamo odkazuje prostredníctvom výberu prvkov v zátišliach, pozadí v krajinomalbách alebo štafáže v ďalších typoch obrazov. Upozorňuje na prestupovanie práce a bežného života vidieckych a mestských pracujúcich vrstiev. Na základe súboru prípadových štúdií tvrdím, že Kubištov zmysel pre sociálne otázky, poznačený bohémскими životnými postojmi, sa odráža v štruktúre a symbolizme, ktoré aplikoval ako organizačný princíp moderného umenia. Prezentovaných osem malieb tu slúži ako základ interpretácie sociálnej mapy členenej po líniách triednych a etnických rozdielov.

Je príznačné, že Kubišta v Paríži býval na okraji Montmartru (1909) a v Latinskej štvrti (1910), oboch centrách bohémy. Hoci bol Montmartre známy ako miesto experimentov P. Picassa aj G. Braqua, Kubišta si ho vybral skôr pre bohémsky nočný život, ktorý vrcholil v poslednej štvrtine 19. storočia. Počas druhej návštevy Paríža býval v Latinskej štvrti, rodisku bohémy. Osvojil si zodpovedajúcu vizáž, známu z Balzacových *Illusions perdues* (1837) a Murgerových *Scènes de la vie de bohème* (1848) a predpovedanú markízom de Pelleport v knihe *Les Bohémiens* (1790), ktorá približuje umelcov a spisovateľov žijúcich „na dne, prežívajúcich najlepšie, ako len vedeli“. Tento étos niesli ďalej slávni tuláci druhej polovice 19. storočia, ktorí súcítli s pracujúcimi triedami a nižšími vrstvami buržoázie. Rovnako ako spoločensky dvojznačné postavy opísané Pelleportom, Balzacom a Murgerom, aj Kubištove texty a obrazy svedčia o záujme testovať očakávania buržoázie a zaznamenávať vonkajšie prejavy vnútorného života a sociálnych otrasov.

Nie je prekvapením, že Kubišta zapadá do dobových súvislostí, opisovaných Jerroldom Seigelom, od dôb Balzaca a Murgera až po časy kabaretov, navštevovaných Seuratom či Toulouse-Lautrecom. Kubišta však svoje parížske vzory nenapodobňoval. Listy priateľom a strýkovi, ktorý jeho pobyt v zahraničí finančne podporoval, ukazujú umelca posadnutého prepájaním umenia so životom, no odlišného od jeho parížskych kolegov. Seigelov bohém z 30. rokov 19. storočia bol okrajovým členom buržoázie, ktorý v duchu túžil po stabilnom a predvídateľnom živote strednej triedy, no z rôznych osobných príčin stál mimo. To viedlo mnohých, čo sa s bohémou identifikovali alebo sa k nej len pripojili, ku kritike buržoázie a jej postojov, očakávaní a zvykov. V duchu ranej bohémy sa Kubištove sympatie s vidieckym životom a skepsa voči buržoáznym hodnotám prejavili vo výbere tém zdôrazňujúcich vidiecke a mestské pracovné motívy. Jeho žánrové obrazy, krajinomalby a zátišia nesú tieto znaky pravdepodobne ako reakciu na vonkajškovosť a ľahkosť života buržoázie.

Kritika spoločnosti a prienik umenia a života sa preniesli do jeho diel. Obrazom *Vo vlaku (Cestujúci III. triedy)* (1908) nadviazal na ikonické zobrazenie cestovania železnicou – obraz *Vozeň III. triedy* (cca 1863 – 1865) od Honoré Daumiera. Zameriava sa tu na duchovnú integritu postáv z pracujúcich tried. Obvyklý námet je pomocou symbolickej hodnoty

farieb posunutý k transcendentnosti – tento postup rozobral v článku „O predpokladoch štýlu“ (1911). Na obraze *Práčka s dieťaťom* (1908) používa Kubišta takmer rovnakú farebnú kompozíciu, tu so zámerom vyzdvihnúť ušľachtilosť práce v skromných domácich podmienkach. Umiestnenie výjavu do zjavne stredoeurópskej domácnosti odlišuje tento výjav od Degasových riešení rovnakého námetu. Upozorniť tu treba na snahu maliara vyzdvihnúť fyzickú aj mentálnu námahu ženy. Stred kompozície necháva prázdny, čím sa fyzické a mentálne sústredenie práčky stáva dostredivým momentom maľby. Sklon zobrazovať surovú pravdu o vidieckej a mestskej drine v spirituálnych konotáciách obohatil jeho bohémsku umeleckú citlivosť. Skutočnosť, že cestujúci v tretej triede a práčka majú niest' transcendentné odkazy, ukazuje na Kubištovu priazeň bohemskej agende jeho francúzskych predchodcov v 19. storočí.

Surová krása moderných výrobných prostriedkov napĺňa obraz *Periféria* (1908). To, čo na nás dnes pôsobí ako zanedbaná priemyselná štvrť na predmestí, bolo na prelome storočí vrcholom progresu. Kubišta určite rozpoznal komplexné sociálne aspekty zobrazovania priemyselných krajín. Tento trend vzdoruje pitoresknému krajinárstvu ako úniku pred industrializáciou s jej robotníckymi protestmi, zničenou krajinou a znečisteným ovzduším. Na druhej strane však zobrazovanie tovární – a to aj v impresionistickom duchu oslavy modernity v tej najčistejšej podobe – nesie riziko, že maliar bude obvinený z oslavy českých kapitalistov, patriacich zväčša k nemecky hovoriacej elite. Kubišta sa s týmito rozpormi vyrovnal v dvojici článkov – „Intelektuálny základ modernej doby“ (október 1912) a „Spirituálny základ modernej doby“ (apríl 1914). Dokazujú jeho rastúci záujem o význam práce v modernom živote a jeho rešpekt k pracujúcim triedam, ktoré staval na rovnakú úroveň ako priemyselníkov a intelektuálov.

V Paríži si Kubišta osvojil aj bohémске námety z mimopracovného života, zo sféry zábavy, či uvoľnenia. Zaujala ho slávna *Café d'Harcourt* v Latinskej štvrti. Na obraze *Kaviareň (Café d'Harcourt)* (1910) sa namiesto účinkujúcich dostávajú do centra pozornosti diváci, z pracujúcich vrstiev a príslušníci nižšej buržoázie, typická zmeska parížskej bohémy 19. storočia. Stredobodom kompozície je fajčiaca žena, ikona bohémy. Obraz *Cirkus* (1911), využívajúci notorickú tému 19. storočia, dáva opäť dôraz na zástup

divákov – robotníkov a ich rodiny. Rovnaký farebný tón použitý na divákov a účinkujúcich odkazuje na rovnorodosť ich spoločenského postavenia. Kubišta sa výberom témy populárneho úniku z driny pracovného dňa prihlásil k bohémskej agende pôsobiť v prospech nižších vrstiev spoločnosti.

Záujem o bežné pracovné aktivity nižších vrstiev možno sledovať aj v zátišiach, vytvorených po návrate z Paríža. *Zátišie z chlieva* (1910) vymieňa parížske reálie za bežný vidiecky život v Čechách. Fialové tieň kontrastujú s modrými a žltými tónmi, odkazujúc na životné pravdy obsiahnuté v práci s pôdou, no súčasne pozdvihujú skromný vidiecky život prostredníctvom spirituálne silnej farebnej škály. Kubištov záujem o prácu motivovaný bohémskou sympatiou k pracujúcim triedam mal vplyv aj na výber námetov intelektuálnej práce. Použitie hodín a astrolábu ako centrálnych motívov zátišia *Ateliér* (1912) vyzdvihuje jeho vlastný pracovný priestor ako

miesto intelektuálnej činnosti. Na obraze *Hypnotizér* (1912) opäť využíva stred kompozície ako symbolický priestor: tu sústredená fyzická a mentálna práca hypnotizéra je zmyslom výjavu. Rozšírenie bohémskej sympatie pre pracujúce triedy o duševne pracujúcich dokazuje Kubištov vlastný umelecký aj intelektuálny rast.

Kubištov umelecký život, námety a kompozičné stratégie boli v súlade s hlavnými charakteristikami parížskej bohémy 19. storočia. Do Paríža prišiel so sformovaným sociálnym názorom a odchádzal posilnený o bohémske postoje svojich francúzskych predchodcov. Spriaznenosť, ktorú cítil s českými roľníkmi a robotníkmi, reprezentuje transfer umelcovej bohémskej kritickosti do podmienok habsburskej spoločnosti, charakteristickej triednymi a etnickými nerovnosťami a rozpormi.

*Preklad z angličtiny M. Hrdina*

## Bohemians in Hungary, Hungarians in “Bohemia”

György SZÜCS

On May 8, 1990, an obituary in the Los Angeles Times newspaper announced the death of Endre Bohem, a writer and producer with Metro Goldwyn Mayer and Columbia Pictures. Not surprisingly, Bohem – like so many others in the film industry – was a native of Hungary: he was named Endre Böhm when he emigrated to the United States.<sup>1</sup> A few years later, in 1995, the French duo Deep Forest won the Grammy Award for the album *Bohème*, featuring Hungarian folk vocalist Márta Sebestyén. The album sampled Eastern European Gypsy songs with electronic music – hence the name of the album. These two random examples go to demonstrate the continuing presence of the term “bohemian” in our daily lives as a reference to artists or, like here, as the chosen name of an artist, as well as a reference to Gypsies. It is well known that the etymology of the word can be traced back hundreds of years to sixteenth-century France where Gypsies, expelled from the country, were thought to have originated from Bohemia. Interestingly, however, the Gypsy girl Esmeralda, the main protagonist of Victor Hugo’s *Notre-Dame de Paris 1482*, had come to France by way of Hungary. By the nineteenth century, however, the term bohemian was used to refer to free thinking, libertarian young writers and artists with lax morals, a critical attitude to bourgeois norms, and a light-hearted outlook on life. The relevant volume of *Pallas Encyclopedia*, published in Hungary in 1893, provides

an accurate albeit somewhat laconical definition: “*Bohemian (Fr.), in fact, a Czech; a Gypsy; informally, a writer, especially a journalist (on account of his dissolute life).*”<sup>2</sup> For the average person today *La Bohème* means an opera by Giacomo Puccini and/or maybe another by Ruggiero Leoncavallo; the name of the French writer Henri Murger, the originator of the idea, is hardly ever mentioned, for the *belle époque* – the true epoch of bohemians – occurred at the turn of the twentieth century, rather than in the mid-nineteenth century. It was a time when artists, writers and thinkers still believed in the power of art to change the world. The illusion was shattered by World War I, and although in the wake of the war the type of the eccentric artist continued to exist, the coffee houses, art clubs, and salons continued to welcome regulars, work continued in studios, and people continued to flock to theatres and art shows, there was no bringing back of the joyful pre-war era – all that remained of it was but a nostalgic memory.

In 1886, one year after his huge success with his mildly erotic rustic genre painting *Corn Husking*, Simon Hollósy opened a free art school in Munich, which was to receive students not only from among his Hungarian compatriots, but also Germans, Russians, Poles and other nationalities. Challenging the tenets of traditional academic painting, Hollósy swore by nature studies and the naturalism of Jules Bastien-Lepage. No wonder, then, that his pupils

<sup>1</sup> [http://articles.latimes.com/1990-05-08/news/mn-96\\_1\\_endre-bohem](http://articles.latimes.com/1990-05-08/news/mn-96_1_endre-bohem).

<sup>2</sup> *Pallas Nagy Lexikona*. Vol. 3. Budapest 1893, p. 459. For the “*bohème*” definition and history before the Puccini’s era, see *Grand dictionnaire universel du XIXe siècle par Pierre Larousse*. Vol. 2. Paris 1867, pp. 864-870.

and friends, including János Thorma, Béla Iványi Grünwald, and Károly Ferenczy, joined him in doing subtle naturalist oils. One of his followers was István Réti, who came from the small Hungarian mining town Nagybánya (now Baia Mare, Romania). While it was in Munich that the master had seen the paintings of his French hero, Hollósy's students personally traveled to Paris for inspiration. Having spent a semester at the Budapest Academy of Fine Arts in 1890, Réti went on to study at Hollósy's school in Munich in 1891, and later on, in 1893, at the Académie Julian. Réti was to achieve great success expressing the moods of young people who, torn out of their small town and family milieu, entered their careers alternating between enthusiasm and despair, a sense of unconstrained freedom and homesickness: in his first year in Paris, he painted *Bohemians' Christmas Abroad*. The paint had barely dried when the picture – the young artist's first major work – was sent to an exhibition at the Budapest Múcsarnok (Palace of Art). To his great surprise, Réti received notification from the National Fine Arts Society of the National Museum's intention to purchase the work even before the show closed.<sup>3</sup> The unexpected success encouraged Réti to try his luck the following year with a similar composition entitled *Anguish*, which he also exhibited at the Múcsarnok.<sup>4</sup>

The painting shows three young men musing silently around a table in a room dimly lit by the flickering light of a single lamp on the table, with a bed to the right and the blurred outlines of a female nude on the wall to the left. Melancholic atmospheres and intimate interiors were no uncommon subjects for paintings done around 1890, as attested, for example, by Edvard Munch's *Spring* (1889, Oslo, Nasjonalgalleriet), István Csók's *Orphans* (1891, Budapest, Hungarian National Gallery; Csók also belonged to Hollósy's circle in Munich), or József Rippl-Rónai's *Two Women in Mourning* (1892, Budapest

History Museum, Municipal Gallery) from the Paris period of the Hungarian "Nabi".

Almost half a century later, Réti himself recounted the circumstances under which the painting came to be created. It started at Christmas 1892, which Réti and his painter friends spent penniless in Munich. "*That evening, that Christmas Eve was the foundation upon which, aided by the unconscious recollection of a couple of small literary and art works of a similar genre, I managed to base a sentimental narrative.*" The first version of the composition was done in Paris as a rough sketch, which Réti showed to his friends before he left Paris, and, on his way home, he also showed it to Hollósy in Munich.<sup>5</sup> The advice received was then incorporated into the large final version that Réti completed in Nagybánya.

We might feel moved by the gloomy picture if we didn't know that however homesick he felt abroad, the artist was to find the small town atmosphere of his home town much too narrow, even stifling after having seen the capitals of Europe. "*You have thus ordered me to write you a light-hearted letter,*" wrote Réti, longing for city life, to a friend as early as 1891. "*Well then, I must be light-hearted, whether I like it or not. But what if I can't? I'm no longer among the bohemians; no more starving, no more revelling; I bid farewell to cheerful Gypsy life, the source of good temper and happy disposition; I got stuck in the comfort of middle-class life, an abundance of material goods, a fully regulated, normal life, always the same...*"<sup>6</sup>

In Hungary, like elsewhere, the spread of the word bohemian – and of a consciously bohemian lifestyle – was directly attributable to Henri Murger's *Scènes de la vie de bohème* and the play written collaboratively with Théodore Barrière. Originally, the stories in the book had been published as a series of unrelated sketches before they were compiled in a volume in 1851, while the play based on the episodes was first staged in France in 1849. Although he died young in 1861, Murger's best-known work became

<sup>3</sup> Miklós Szmeccsányi, letter to István Réti, 27 November 1893. Archives of the Hungarian National Gallery in Budapest, Inv. No. 10539/1959.

<sup>4</sup> Miklós Szmeccsányi, letter to István Réti, 21 December 1894. Archives of the Hungarian National Gallery in Budapest, Inv. No. 10540/1959. Both paintings in the collection of the Hungarian National Gallery.

<sup>5</sup> RÉTI, I.: Az első lépés. A "Bohémek karácsonyestje" [The First Step. "Bohemians' Christmas Abroad"]. In: *Ujság*, 9 April 1939, p. 25; republished in *Bánya és Vidéke*, 10 May 1939, pp. 1-2. For a history of the painting, see ARADI, N.: *Réti István*. Budapest 1960, pp. 29-34.

<sup>6</sup> István Réti, letter to Aladár Hegedűs, 29 July 1891. Archives of the Hungarian National Gallery in Budapest, Inv. No. 19710/1976.



1. István Réti: *Bobemians' Christmas Abroad*, 1893, oil on canvas, 145 × 122 cm. Budapest, Hungarian National Gallery, Inv. No. 2837. Photo: Archive of the gallery.

a world success. The American painter Whistler, for instance, went to Paris instead of London under the influence of Murger's book.<sup>7</sup> The book's protagonists – the poet Rodolphe, the musician Chaunard, the painter Marcel, the philosopher Colline – possess an amiable naturalness and fanatic self-confidence, although they live in hardship, which is alleviated and sometimes brightened by the presence of their girlfriends Mimi, Musette, and Phémie.

Hollósy and the artists in his circle were of course familiar with Murger's book. In Munich, the group of friends of Emil Pottner – one of Hollósy's

German pupils – took the name of *Zigeunerbande*, frequenting the restaurant Götzensberger near the Academy. "Murger's *Vie de bohème* was our bible, and we competed with those in Paris at art, at shocking the philistines, and at looking at the brighter side of life."<sup>8</sup> Émile Zola's 1886 *L'Œuvre* was another major influence, a novel which the Munich artists regarded as the apotheosis of plein air painting, the trend they were following. "And the book passed from hand to hand," wrote, recalling the Munich period, art historian Károly Lyka who had initially trained to be a painter. "A whole world opened up in it. Revolution. A terrible war against academicians. Everybody felt a Claude Lantier, an artist who is suppressed and misunderstood, yet called to help persecuted truth triumph."<sup>9</sup>

In 1893 Réti could have no knowledge of Puccini's plans to compose *La Bohème*. "When the curtain goes up," Puccini wrote to one of his librettists, "the three men – Colline, Schaunard, Rodolfo – are facing the window, musing about smoking chimneys, and complaining about the cold. One of them suddenly grabs a chair and throws it in the fireplace, but is there any paper to light the fire? Rodolfo sacrifices the manuscript of his drama, thinking it over act by act, then, as the fire dies down, they just sit dejectedly around the table, grumbling about poverty. It's Christmas Eve: everybody's having fun, while they are just sitting around penniless!"<sup>10</sup> The 1896 Turin premiere of Puccini's opera, set to a libretto by Giuseppe Giacosa and Luigi Illica, permanently eclipsed Murger's original drama and also overshadowed Leoncavallo's Venice premiere the following year.

In Hungary, the theatrical version of *La Bohème* premiered at the Buda Theatre in 1896. The Hungarian translator, Emil Szomory, translated the title as *Cigányélet* (Gypsy Life).<sup>11</sup> The National Theatre presented the play with the title *Bobémvilág* (Bohemian World). Dezső Szomory, who was the translator's brother and came to be a fashionable writer between the two world wars, was living in Paris at the time. It

<sup>7</sup> ANDERSON, R. – KOVAL, A.: *James McNeill Whistler. Beyond the Myth*. London 1994, p. 37.

<sup>8</sup> POTTNER, E.: *Indiskretionen aus meinem Leben*. [s.l.] 1930, typescript, p. 9. For this source, I am indebted to Marcus Oertel, Emil Pottner's monographer.

<sup>9</sup> LYKA, K.: A bohém-korszakból [From the Bohemian Era]. In: *Új Idők*, 12 October 1919, p. 403.

<sup>10</sup> Puccini's letter to Illica, dated Milan, June 1893. In: PUCCINI, G.: *Levelek és dokumentumok* [Letters and Documents]. Vol. 1. Budapest 1964, p. 112.

<sup>11</sup> Mimi halála. Részlet a Cigányéletből [The Death of Mimi from Cigányélet]. In: *Magyar Szalon*, July 1896, pp. 763-780. Murger's original work was only published by Athenaeum in 1913 under the title *Bobémvilág* [Bohemian World], translated by Gyula Komor.



2. Károly Ferenczy: *Gypsies*, 1901, oil on canvas, 122 × 122 cm. Budapest, Hungarian National Gallery, Inv. No. 1998. Photo: Archive of the gallery.

was only a few decades later in 1929 that he wrote his *Párizsi regény* (Paris Novel), which is now a valuable source for literary historians. In view of the fact that in spring 1894 Puccini himself visited Hungary to be present at the premiere performance of *Manon Lescaut*, it is somewhat surprising that the Royal Hungarian Opera chose Leoncavallo's rival work for production in 1897. It was only in 1905 that Puccini's *La Bohème* was first presented at the Budapest Opera House; by 1917, however, it had been running for 100 performances.

An attempt to outline the wider socio-historical background of bohemianism was made by Arnold Hauser in his 1951 book *The Social History of Art*. According to Hauser, the development of the modern artist's lifestyle could be divided into three historical periods, namely, bohemianism in the eras of Romanticism, Realism, and Impressionism. With the extravagance of their behaviour and dress, Théophile Gautier, Gérard de Nerval, or Arsène Houssaye (editor of *L'Artiste*, the magazine where Murger's stories were first published) could only be occasional visitors in the world of the outcast, and they were well aware of this. But the next generation – which



3. István Réti: *Portrait of Simon Hollósy*, 1896, charcoal on paper, 633 × 362 mm. Budapest, Hungarian National Gallery, Inv. No. 1943-3706. Photo: Archive of the gallery.

included Murger, Courbet, and Nadar – actually lived most of their lives in bars and coffee houses, adopting a lifestyle far removed from the bourgeois way of life, although Murger, for instance, made the world of bohemians look somewhat more attractive than it really was. Illusions were finally dispelled by Rimbaud, Verlaine and Lautréamont, whose racuous outspokenness was already an anticipation of twentieth-century attitudes.<sup>12</sup> If we look for parallels, Réti and his colleagues could undoubtedly be regarded as belonging to the romantic and the realist schools; their artistic and literary horizons did definitely not expand beyond those of Bastien-Lepage, Murger, or Émile Zola at most. As a result, the attitude to life and art of the new generation of artists emerg-

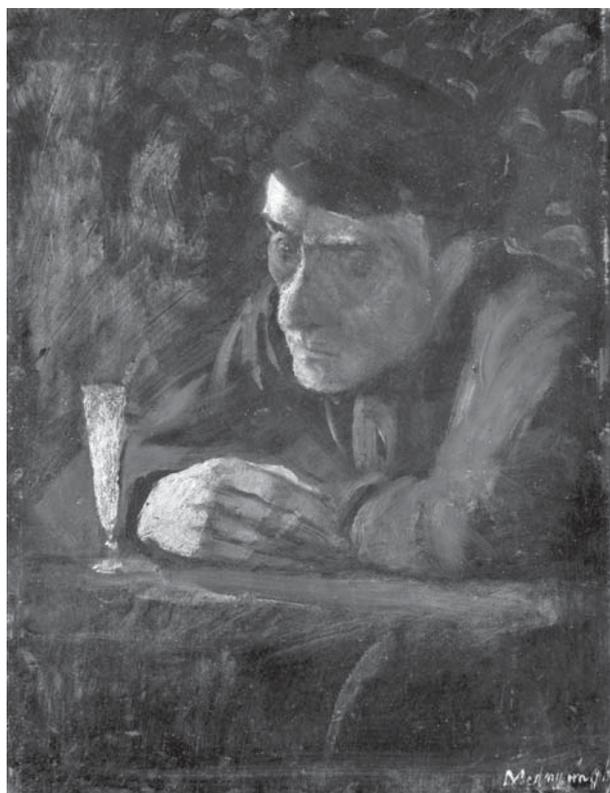
<sup>12</sup> HAUSER, A.: *The Social History of Art*. Vol. 2. London 1951, pp. 892-894.



4. Simon Hollósy: *Good Wine*, 1884, oil on wood panel, 28 × 34 cm. Budapest, Hungarian National Gallery, Inv. No. 5190. Photo: Archive of the gallery.

ing on the scene after 1900 made them puzzled and suspicious.<sup>13</sup>

How did the Hungarian bohemians live? A description of Hollósy's studio at the time of the start of his school in Munich can be found in István Csók's *Memoires*: "He had been living on the first floor of *Ramberg*hof for a time. The place was somewhat reminiscent of the *bôtels meublés* in the *Quartier Latin*. Spacious entrance hall, with small furnished rooms on every side. Only the most necessary furniture. Table, two chairs, bed, washbasin; that's it. Chest in one corner, easel standing at the window."<sup>14</sup> Due to a similarity of lifestyles, it is no wonder that the above scene corresponds precisely to the studio set in Puccini's *La Bohème*: "Spacious window, from which one sees an expanse of snow-clad roofs. On left, a fireplace, a table, small cupboard, a little book-case, four chairs, a picture easel, a bed, a few books, many packs of cards, two candlesticks."<sup>15</sup> French impressionist Frédéric Bazille's painting *Bazille's Studio; 9 Rue de la Condamine* (1870, Paris, Musée d'Orsay) is an early example of puritan interiors. Calling to mind the Paris studio of renowned artist Mihály Munkácsy, cluttered with carpets, antique weapons and other antiquities, remembering the receptions he gave for hundreds



5. László Mednyánszky: *Absinthe Drinker*, ca. 1896, oil on wood panel, 35 × 26,7 cm. Budapest, Hungarian National Gallery, Inv. No. 6322. Photo: Archive of the gallery.

of guests, and studying the list of invited dignitaries will suffice for us to see that even sociologically, the world of bohemians – the proletarians of art and of the intellect – on the one hand, and the world of the salons – the living space of the aristocrats of art and of the intellect – on the other hand, were two separate entities.

Sojourning in Paris in 1888 – 1889, Hungarian writer Zsigmond Justh was a welcome visitor at the salons of Sarah Bernhardt, François Coppée, Hyppolit Taine, and Mihály Munkácsy. In his journal, Justh gave an accurate description of the figures of Parisian high society. He and his friends also

<sup>13</sup> For new generation, see PASSUTH, K. – SZÜCS, Gy. (eds.): *Hungarian Fauves from Paris to Nagybánya 1904 – 1914*. [Exhib. Cat.] Budapest, Hungarian National Gallery. Budapest 2006.

<sup>14</sup> CSÓK, I.: *Emlékezéseim* [Memoirs]. Budapest 1990, p. 39.

<sup>15</sup> *La Bohème*. Music by G. PUCCINI. Libretto by G. GIACOSA – L. ILLICA. English version by W. GRIST – P. PINKERTON. New York 1898, p. 9.

6. János Thorma: *Gypsy Street*, 1907, oil on canvas (cutting). Budapest, Hungarian National Gallery. Photo: Archive of the gallery.



frequented coffee houses where Hungarian Gypsy musician Ferkó Patikárius played the violin; at other times they made trips to the Quartier Latin. People at a reading evening at Café Voltaire reminded Justh of Murger's characters: "Long tables and velvet sofas all along the walls. As these young writers, one after another, paraded in clothes picturesquely untidy, dishevelled, with dreamy eyes fatigued from pleasures and privations, I remembered Henri Murger's age, *La vie de bohème!*" Following the late night time travel, Justh and his friends dragged along their "Musette" to their favourite haunt, the Café de la Paix near the Opera.<sup>16</sup>

Hollósy, the prophetic leader of young artists in Munich, always vocal in opposing Academism, gave, as it were, a comprehensive definition of the bohemian artist in a letter: "In sharp contrast to those manufacturers of kitsch is the new breed of witty bohemians turned painters. The bohemian is one who is educated by

*circumstances only – circumstances that give him spiritual satisfaction. It is freedom that he wants; come hell or high water, he will stand by his freedom and stick to his principles; he will pay an expensive model in the first days of the month, and if he runs out of money in eight days, he will gladly suffer and go hungry for the remaining twenty.*"<sup>17</sup> When Elemér Jankó, a successful comic artist for *Fliegende Blätter*, died tragically early, the task of writing his obituary fell, not surprisingly, to Károly Lyka, the "literary guy" of the group in Munich, who took the opportunity to also reminisce about the memorable evenings the friends had spent together: "[Hollósy] started off by drinking a toast to every one of his pupils in turn. From then on they remained buddies, worked together, frequented Café Lobengrin together, played tarock together, played billiards together, and cursed Hungarian art critics together. It was a group of true bohemians. After work they gathered around the fabled Hungarian table at the coffee house,

<sup>16</sup> KOZOCSA, S. (ed.): *Justh Zsigmond naplója és levelei* [Zsigmond Justh's Diary and Letters]. Budapest 1977, p. 124.

<sup>17</sup> Simon Hollósy, letter to Elek Koronghi Lippich, 5 December

1894. In: SOLTÉSZ, Z.: Hollósy Simon leveleiből [From the Letters of Simon Hollósy]. In: *Művészettörténeti tanulmányok. A Magyar Művészettörténeti Munkaközösség Évkönyve*. Budapest 1953, pp. 194, 621.



7. Béla Iványi Grünwald: Poster Design, 1903, oil on cardboard, 97 × 67 cm. Budapest, Hungarian National Gallery, Inv. No. FK 9708. Photo: Archive of the gallery.



8. Hollósy's pupils in his studio in Munich, 1890s, photo. Budapest, Hungarian National Gallery. Photo: Archive of the gallery.

celebrating feasts of endless fun and fresh humour. There were Russians, Poles, Americans and Italians among the company, but the tone was set by the Hungarians. It was during those evening and night sessions that Jankó filled the white marble table top with his delicious sketches.”<sup>18</sup>

In the late nineteenth century, bohemian groups started to be formed on the fringes of Europe as well. In 1895, Edvard Munch did colour drawings and etchings depicting his friends in Oslo, the *Kristiania bohémians*. While concert and theatre audiences were hardly aware of life's harsh realities that lay behind the facade of romantic sentimentality, destitute young students did not choose a bohemian lifestyle

of their own free will, even though that harshness was somewhat offset by young age and a faith in the future. In his semi-autobiographical screenplay entitled *The Best Intentions*, Ingmar Bergman tells the life story of his parents, recalling his father's youth as a student of theology in Uppsala in 1909, living in modest quarters not unlike those seen in *La Bohème*.<sup>19</sup>

Of course, there are plenty of counter-examples. Mention should be made of the Baron László Mednyánszky who, in spite of his wealth and aristocratic background, felt most at home in the company of beggars, vagabonds, and ragmen on

<sup>18</sup> LYKA, K.: Jankó Elemér. In: *Magyar Hírlap*, 3 March 1892, p. 3.

<sup>19</sup> BERGMAN, I.: *A legjobb szándékok* [The Best Intentions]. Budapest 1993, pp. 17-18.

the outskirts of cities, and sought to find his ideals among simple folk. In 1914, owing to his interest in emergencies and disasters, he volunteered to be a war artist, but because of his old age the prime minister's intervention was needed for him to be allowed to the Galician front. Previously he had attended academies at Düsseldorf, Munich and Paris, worked in Barbizon, and held a solo exhibition at the Galerie Georges Petit in Paris in 1896. While his philosophy was tinged with Buddhism and Theosophism and, as a result, he regarded this world as ephemeral and insufficient, Mednyánszky and his friend Zsigmond Justh hatched plans for social reform. Mednyánszky loved to watch people; maybe that's why he named the circle of his protégés "Aquarium". The self-styled "Old Dog" gave his friends the names of animals, too, according to the qualities they possessed. Thus, Zsigmond Justh became Falcon, István Réti Greyhound, János Thorma Newfoundland, István Csók Dachshund; as a sign of special appreciation, Károly Ferenczy was nicknamed Holy Squirrel.<sup>20</sup> The white bearded, ragged Mednyánszky was often seen in coffee houses from Café Greco in Rome to Báthori in Budapest. At the time, Gypsy violinists Antal Kocze, Béla Radics, Marci Banda and Laci Rác – the "stars" of the period, who were also welcome in metropolises and royal courts – played in the cafés and restaurants of the Hungarian capital.

Around 1907 – 1908, Café Japan had undoubtedly become the best known and most sophisticated art café in Budapest. Of the older generation, the leading figures at the artists' table were Ödön Lechner, the originator of Art Nouveau architecture in Hungary, and Pál Szinyei Merse, who with his 1873 painting *Picnic in May* was considered a precursor of Hungarian Impressionism. Less frequently seen were the genteel Károly Ferenczy and József Rippl-Rónai, who occasionally left his country mansion for a short trip to the capital. The artists' table was a natural platform for the adherents of modern painting, the members of the then already existing artist colonies of Nagybánya and Szolnok. The privilege of hanging out with the grand old men was valued by young artists more than any gold medal. Among the patrons of Café Japan were art collectors

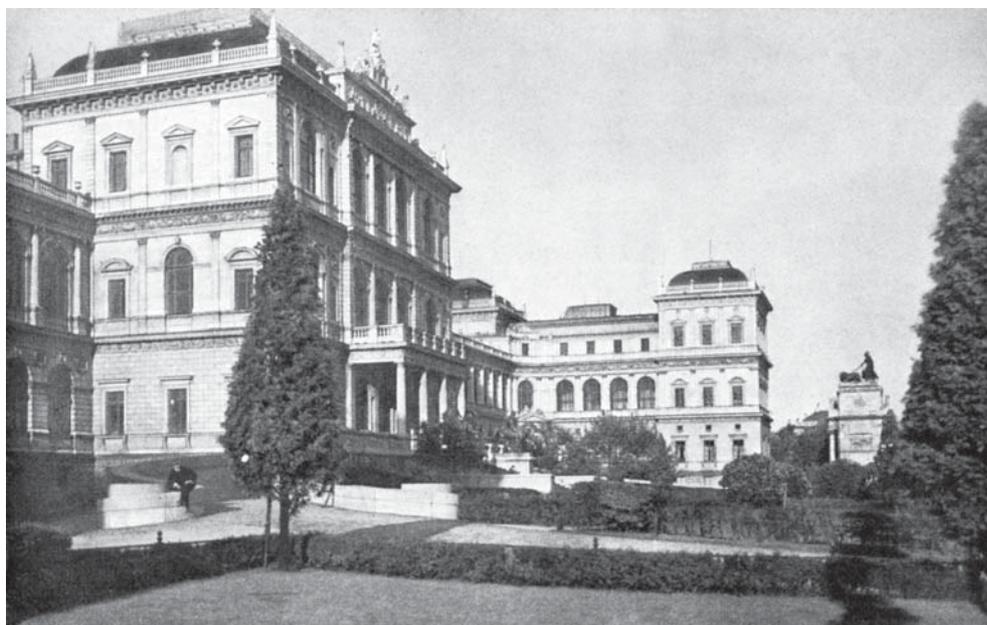


9. Hollósy and his friends in Munich, 1893, ferrotype. From the left second standing: István Réti. Sitting: János Thorma and Simon Hollósy. Budapest, Hungarian Academy of Sciences, Institute for Art History. Photo: Archive of the institute.

Baron Ferenc Hatvany and Marcell Nemes, Lajos Ernst, founder of the nearby Ernst Museum, and art historian Elek Petrovics, a famed future director of the Museum of Fine Arts. Café Japan was a rendezvous point for issues of art and politics to be discussed, exhibitions to be planned, and reports on trips abroad to be presented on coming home. Besides serious issues, jokes and caricatures were of course – like anywhere else – staple ingredients of life at the café: marble table tops, napkins and tablecloths were often populated by quick sketches and funny caricatures.<sup>21</sup>

<sup>20</sup> CSÓK 1990 (see in note 14), p. 103.

<sup>21</sup> GÖMÖRY, J.: Ernst Lajos és a Japán kávéház művészasztala [Lajos Ernst and the Artists' Table in Café Japan]. In: RÓKA,



10. The building of the Munich Academy, 1900s, postcard. Private collection.

As artist colonies were gradually started away from the cities, artists strove to transplant metropolitan bohemian lifestyles to the provinces. It was in May 1896 that Hollósy – encouraged by Réti and Thorma – first took his Munich students and friends to Nagybánya on the picturesque banks of the River Zazar, for summer practice. Arriving by train, the painters were formally received by the mayor, who then invited them to brunch in the garden of the town Casino. Next, they were shown the common “studio” converted from a barn in a picturesque corner of the City Park. Most of the artists – except for a few who were more affluent – took up lodgings in small miners’ cottages nearby, and – as landlords were often paid with pictures by painters who seemed to always be suffering from a lack of finances – there soon developed a class of local art collectors. Locals became accustomed to

seeing artists work in the streets, on the riverbank, or in forest clearings, and their initial reticence was gradually replaced by a sense of pride. From the very first year, Károly Lyka wrote enthusiastic reports for papers in Budapest and, later on, an article entitled “Ein ungarisches Barbizon” for the Leipzig *Kunstchronik*.<sup>22</sup> The lives of bohemian Gypsies and bohemian artist overlapped at two points: the artists’ first models were Gypsies,<sup>23</sup> and Gypsy music was an indispensable part of night parties, especially in the presence of Hollósy, who was an excellent chello player. At climactic moments, Hollósy would take the bow from the violinist. At one time, one of the musicians hugged him and cried, with tears in his eyes: “*You must admit, Simon, you are a Gypsy, aren’t you?*”<sup>24</sup> (In fact, the dark-skinned, raven-haired Hollósy was of Armenian extraction.) Nagybánya artists had little interest in ethnography, yet in some of

E. (ed.): *Egy gyűjtő és gyűjteménye. Ernst Lajos és az Ernst Múzeum*. [Exhib. Cat.] Budapest, Ernst Museum. Budapest 2002, pp. 213-226.

<sup>22</sup> LYKA, K.: Ein ungarisches Barbizon. In: *Kunstchronik*, 20 January 1898, pp. 1-2. For history of the Nagybánya artist colony, see JACOBS, M.: *The Good & Simple Life. Artist Colonies in Europe and America*. Oxford 1985; JURECSKÓ, L. – KISHONTHY, Zs. (eds.): *Seele und Farbe. Nagybánya: eine*

*Künstlerkolonie am Rande der Monarchie*. [Exhib. Cat.] Wien, Collegium Hungaricum. Wien 1999.

<sup>23</sup> FERENCZY, B.: Nagybányai emlékeim (I. vázlat) [Recollections of Nagybánya (Sketch One)]. In: *Írás és kép* [Writing and Image]. Budapest 1961, p. 7.

<sup>24</sup> FERENCZY, B.: Nagybányai emlékeim (II. vázlat) [Recollections of Nagybánya (Sketch Two)]. In: *Ibidem*, p. 16.

11. Open air studio in Nagybánya, 1904, photo. Budapest, Hungarian National Gallery. Photo: Archive of the gallery.



their paintings they showed a tendency to go beyond the merely exotic and capture, albeit not free from stereotypical notions, the social types of Gypsies in a complex composition (Károly Ferenczy, *Gypsies*, 1901; János Thorma, *Gypsy Street*, 1907). Other Nagybánya artists were also fascinated by the subject. For instance, according to the catalogue of the 1908 London exhibition of Hungarian artists, Béla Iványi Grünwald – who was to expressly specialize in painting Gypsies during the interwar period – had three paintings of Gypsies in the show, and it might well have been the last time for Thorma to exhibit his large *Gypsy Street*, which the dissatisfied artist later cut to pieces in a fit of temper.<sup>25</sup>

Hollósy's break-up with his former students – an event that had been looming for quite a while – was a crucial moment in the history of the Nagybánya

artist colony.<sup>26</sup> In a letter to Réti, written in Munich in 1900, a jaded Hollósy confronts the principles of true bohemianism with the pettiness – real or perceived – of the Nagybánya artists. “I can't wait to be back in Bánya! I do have my rights there, and memories, which mean more, which are purer and more valuable than any recognition in the world, more than the friendships of Thorma, Ferenczy, Glatz etc.; and it will remain like this as long as I am able to think with my own mind and feel with my own heart. They are closer in deed and thought to what I learned from people like Tolstoy and Zola, Petőfi and Murger, and what I have been taking in with German culture for twenty-one years now...”<sup>27</sup> Perhaps we are not far from the truth in assuming that changes in the social environment contributed to Hollósy's artistic crisis and the weakening of his credibility as leader. Nagybánya was quite unlike Munich, the metropolis,

<sup>25</sup> *Hungarian Exhibition in London. Catalogue of the Hungarian Exhibits of Painting, Sculpture and Drawing, Decorative and Applied Art.* London, Earls Court, May – November, 1908. Aldershot 1908, János Thorma, No. 174, *Gypsy Street in Nagybánya*; Béla Iványi-Grünwald, No. 223, *A Gypsy Hamlet*, No. 224, *Landscape*, No. 225, *A Gypsy Maiden Spinning*, No. 226, *Gypsy Girls*.

<sup>26</sup> See also BORGHIDA, I.: A nagybányai “szakadás” Hollósy

Simon leveleinek tükrében [The “Rift” in Nagybánya as Reflected in Simon Hollósy's Letters]. In: KÁNTOR, L. (ed.): *Képzőművészeti írások* [Writings on Art]. Bucharest 1984, pp. 31–37.

<sup>27</sup> Simon Hollósy, letter to István Réti, 20 March 1900. Archives of the Hungarian National Gallery in Budapest, Inv. No. 5428/1954.

where different people from various backgrounds shared the life of bohemians. Nagybánya was a small town: two of the founders, Réti and Thorma, lived in their parental homes; Béla Iványi Grünwald had married the daughter of the Greek Catholic priest, Stefan Bilțiu; Ferenczy had brought his family with him right at the outset. Hollósy ignored local customs and expectations, and did not hesitate to let the town leadership know it; his bohemian conduct stuck out, and even drew criticism from his friends who were settling down. Hollósy remained consistent until his death: he made no concessions – he retained his spiritual and lifestyle independence, even at the cost of losing his friends.

By the outbreak of World War I, Nagybánya had established itself as a respected school of art, and the former bohemians had made it as established artists. Starting the modernization of the institution, Pál Szinyei Merse, the newly appointed rector of the Academy of Fine Arts in Budapest, invited Ferenczy and Réti to teach there in 1906 and 1913, respectively. Although both of them would regularly return to Nagybánya in the summers, their way of life had by now permanently tied them to the capital. This is what painter Lipót Herman wrote in his diary at the time: “*Although he has recently arrived in Budapest, Réti is a true night owl. It is as if he had been preparing for this career during all those years, hidden away in Nagybánya. He is the one who is quietly but constantly receptive to and interested in every manifestation of night life; he is the one who willingly embraces every suggestion to go to another venue; he is the one who at 4 a.m. is still willing to sit down to a cup of tea with Molnár and me, and talk intently till 6 a.m. That, by the way, is something that Szinyei and Lechner have also been ready to join in recently, and even Ferenczy has joined us a couple of times.*”<sup>28</sup> It seemed as though Réti, who was in his early forties, refused to acknowledge the passage of time, like the character in Viktor Cholnoky’s short story who, at a similar age, sadly complains to

a friend in a coffee house that he can no longer be “*a light-hearted clown, a crazy fool*”. “*Ah, my friend, finis Bohemiae,*” he sighs, as if to say goodbye.<sup>29</sup>

In the post-war years, Thorma and Réti laboured to keep alive and pass on the Nagybánya tradition – the former, teaching in Nagybánya, the latter, at the Budapest Academy of Fine Arts. During their active years, they remembered decades of hope and despair, with the highlight falling on their youthful years in Munich and Paris, Nagybánya and Budapest. One of Réti’s students recalls a scene in the 1930s, when Laci Rácz, the famed old Gypsy violinist would see the rector at the beginning of each month, to collect his “fees” that Réti – rector of the art school at the time – would always hand him over, smiling.<sup>30</sup>

In 1929, to commemorate János Thorma’s 50<sup>th</sup> career anniversary, a series of *tableaux vivants* was presented on the stage of the Nagybánya theatre. Actors performed Thorma’s *Late September*, Hollósy’s *Corn Husking*, Ferenczy’s *Joseph Sold by His Brothers*, Béla Iványi Grünwald’s *Between Crags*, and Réti’s *Bohemians’ Christmas Abroad*. As moving as it all was, everybody felt that it was but a purely nostalgic evocation of a bygone world.<sup>31</sup>

But when exactly did bohemians die out? We cannot specify the exact date. Jenő Heltai (whose collection of stories entitled *Hét sovány esztendő* [Seven Lean Years, 1897] could be regarded as a Hungarian *Vie de bohème*) published a short novel with the title *Az utolsó bohém* (The Last Bohemian) as early as 1911. *Az utolsó bohém* is also the title of a 1912 silent film directed (still back in Hungary) by Michael Curtiz (that is, Mihály Kertész) and written by Zsolt Harsányi, a fashionable author of popular fiction. When László Mednyánszky died in 1920, the author of an obituary commemorated him as the last great bohemian.<sup>32</sup> As the most fitted person to answer the question, Lipót Herman, a permanent member of the company at the artists’ table in Café Japan, was asked in 1937:

<sup>28</sup> HERMAN, L.: *Diaries*. Vol. 14. [s.l.] 9 November 1913 – 25 July 1914, manuscript, p. 3526. Archives of the Hungarian National Gallery in Budapest, Inv. No. 19920/1977.

<sup>29</sup> CHOLNOKY, V.: *Finis Bohemiae*. In: *Magyar Génius*, 1902, pp. 793-794.

<sup>30</sup> BÉNYI, L.: *Körhinta. Emlékek egy festő naplójából* [Carousel. Memories from a Painter’s Diary]. Budapest 1991, p. 15.

<sup>31</sup> *Nagybánya és Vidéke*, 10 November 1929, pp. 1-2.

<sup>32</sup> TURCHÁNYI, I.: *Az utolsó nagy bohém* [The Last Great Bohemian]. In: *A Nép*, 14 October 1921, p. 5; republished as *Mednyánszky-olvasókönyv* [Mednyánszky Reader]. In: *Enigma*, 2000, Nos. 24 – 25, pp. 273-275.

“Does the world of bohemians still exist?” This is the answer he gave with a rather unusual objectivity: “In Murger’s *Vie de bohème* every bohemian ends up settling down to a bourgeois family life, looking back (and down) on the road of cheerful frivolities from a chateau of tranquility. Due to so-called changed conditions, the road no longer leads

to a safe haven; travellers end up in the abyss of misery and helplessness, from whence there is no return. [...] Artists have long ago surrendered true bohemian life – along with the cheerful Mimis, Musettes, Lavalère ties, velvet jackets, and all the night bars – to shop assistants, window dressers, clerks, highly paid political agitators, and moneyed men.”<sup>33</sup>

English translation by A. Boros

## Bohémi v Uhorsku, Uhri v „Bohémii“

### Resumé

V roku 1886, rok po fenomenálnom úspechu jeho jemne erotického rustikálneho obrazu *Lúpanie kukurice*, si Simon Hollósy v Mníchove otvoril umeleckú školu, do ktorej sa prihlásili nielen jeho uhorskí krajanovia, ale aj Nemci, Rusi, Poliaci a príslušníci ďalších národností. Proti doktrínam tradičného akademického maliarstva postavil naturalizmus Julesa Bastien-Lepaga. Jeden z jeho žiakov, István Réti, namaloval v roku 1893 ikonický obraz *Vianoce bohémov v cudzine*. Encyklopédia Pallas, vydaná v tom istom roku, uvádza presnú, hoci trochu lakonickú definíciu: „*Bobém (fr.), v skutočnosti Čech; Cigán; spisovateľ, predovšetkým novinár (žijúci spustým spôsobom života).*“

Tak ako v iných krajinách, aj v Uhorsku sa rozšírenie pomenovania bohém – a sebavedomého bohémkeho životného štýlu – rozšírilo vďaka knihe *Scènes de la vie de bohème* od Henriho Murgera a súvisiacej divadelnej hre, napísanej v spolupráci s Théodorom Barrièrom. Hollósy a umelci jeho okruhu Murgerovu prácu samozrejme poznali. Ďalšou vplyvnou publikáciou bol román *L’Œuvre* (1886) od Émila Zolu, mníchovskými umelcami považovaný za apoteózu nimi vyznávaného plenérového maliarstva. V roku 1893 Réti nemohol tušiť, že Giacomo Puccini plánuje skomponovať operu *Bobéma*. Divadelná verzia tohto slávneho diela bola v Uhorsku premiérovito prezentovaná Budínskym divadlom v roku 1896. Vzhľadom na Pucciniho osobnú účasť na uhorskej premiére opery *Manon Lescaut* na jar roku 1894 je trochu prekvapivé, že Uhorská kráľovská opera

vybrala pre rok 1897 ako premiérové dielo prácu jeho rivala Ruggiera Leoncavalla. Svojho prvého uvedenia v budapeštianskej opere sa *Bobéma* dočkala až v roku 1905; v roku 1917 však mala za sebou už 100 opakovaní.

Kniha *The Social History of Art* (1951) od Arnolda Hausera predstavuje pokus o vykreslenie širších sociohistorických súvislostí bohémy. Rétiho a jeho kolegov možno v tomto kontexte bez pochyb zaradiť medzi romantické a realistické školy; ich výtvarné a literárne obzory nepresiahli svet Bastien-Lepaga, Murgera alebo Zolu. Životné a umelecké postoje novej generácie umelcov nastupujúcej po roku 1900 ich preto zaskočili.

Hollósy, prorocký vodca mladých umelcov v Mníchove, vždy v hlasnej opozícii voči akademizmu, definoval bohémkeho umelca v liste Elekovi Koronghovi Lippichovi z 5. decembra 1894 takto: „*V ostrom kontraste voči výrobcom gýču tu stojí nové pokolenie duchaplných maliarov-bohémov. Bobém čerpá poučenie len z konkrétnych situácií – situácií, ktoré mu poskytujú duchovné vyžitie. Chce byť slobodný; nech sa deje čokoľvek, vždy bude slobode a svojim princípom verný; na začiatku mesiaca zaplatí drahejšiu modelku a ak mu peniaze za osem dní dôjdu, zvyšných dvadsať rád pretrpí a prebladuje.*“ Samozrejme, nájdeme aj mnoho výnimiek. Spomenúť treba predovšetkým baróna Lászlóa Mednynászkeho,

<sup>33</sup> HERMAN, L.: Van-e még bohémvilág? [Does the World of Bohemians Still Exist?]. In: *Pesti Napló*, 3 July 1937, p. 5.

ktorý sa napriek svojmu pôvodu a bohatstvu najlepšie cítil medzi žobrákmi, tulákmi a handrármi na okrajoch miest, kde medzi obyčajnými ľuďmi hľadal svoje postavy. Hoci sa vo svojej filozofii inšpiroval budhizmom a teozofiou a považoval preto tento svet za dočasný a nedokonalý, spolu s priateľmi pracoval na sociálnej reforme. Otrhaného Mednyánszkeho s charakteristickou bielou bradou bolo často vídať v kaviarňach – od Café Greco v Ríme až po Café Báthori v Budapešti. V kaviarňach a reštauráciách uhorského hlavného mesta hrávali v tomto období cigánski huslisti Antal Koczé, Béla Radics, Marci Banda a Laci Rác – dobové „hviezdy“ vítané v európskych metropolách a na kráľovských dvoroch.

Café Japan sa v období rokov 1907 – 1908 stala nepochybne tou najznámejšou a najsofistikovanejšou umeleckou kaviarňou v Budapešti. Vedúcimi osobnosťami pri umeleckých stoloch boli zo staršej generácie Ödön Lechner, tvorca uhorskej secesnej architektúry, a Pál Szinyei Merse, ktorý sa obrazom *Májový piknik* (1873) zapísal ako predchodca uhorského impresionizmu. Umelecký stôl bol prirodzenou platformou pre stretnutia prívržencov moderného maliarstva, členov už existujúcich umeleckých kolónií v Nagybánii a Szolnoku. Umelci sa snažili preniesť veľkomestský bohémsky život do malomestského prostredia, v ktorom umelecké kolónie postupne vznikali. Hollósy, podporovaný Istvánom Rétiom a Jánosom Thormom, v máji 1896 po prvýkrát zobral svojich študentov a priateľov do Nagybánie (dnes Baia Mare, Rumunsko) na malebných brehoch rieky Zazar, aby tu strávili letnú prax. Životy Cigánov a bohémov sa stretali v dvoch bodoch: Cigáni boli prvými modelmi a cigánska hudba bola nevyhnutnou súčasťou nočných zábav, predovšetkým v prítomnosti Hollósyho, ktorý bol vynikajúcim hráčom na violončelo. Hoci sa nagybánski umelci o etnografiu zaujímali iba okrajovo, niektoré ich maľby zachytávajú viac než len exotiku, stále však aj s prvkami stereotypných riešení, napríklad v prípade charakterizovania nízkeho sociálneho postavenia postáv (Károly Ferenczy, *Cigáni*, 1901; János Thorma, *Cigánska ulica*, 1907).

Je veľmi pravdepodobné, že k Hollósyho umeleckej kríze a k oslabeniu jeho vodcovskej pozície prispela zmena spoločenského prostredia. Nagybánia bola úplne iným mestom ako Mníchov, metropola, kde sa ako bohéma stretali rozmanití ľudia s rozličnými zázemiami. Nagybánia bola malým mestom: dvaja spomedzi zakladateľov kolónie, Réti a Thorma, žili v rodičovských domoch; Béla Iványi Grünwald sa oženil s dcérou miestneho gréckokatolíckeho kňaza Stefana Bilťiu; Ferenczy si sem hneď na začiatku priviedol svoju rodinu. Hollósy ignoroval miestne zvyky a neobával sa to dať najavo ani pred miestnou vrchnosťou; jeho bohémnosť vyčnievala a bola kritizovaná aj jeho priateľmi, ktorí začali viesť usadlejšie životy. Hollósy ostal rovnaký až do smrti: neustúpil – udržal si nezávislosť ducha aj životného štýlu, a to aj za cenu straty priateľov.

Do začiatku 1. svetovej vojny sa Nagybánia stala rešpektovaným umeleckým centrom a bývalí bohémi uznávanými umelcami. Pál Szinyei Merse, nový rektor Akadémie výtvarných umení v Budapešti, ktorú sa rozhodol modernizovať, pozval v roku 1906 Ferenczyho a roku 1913 Rétiho, aby na škole učili. Obaja sa na leto ešte do Nagybánie pravidelne vracali, no pracovný život ich už natrvalo zviazal s hlavným mestom.

V povojnových rokoch sa Thorma a Réti snažili udržať a rozvíjať tradíciu nagybánskej umeleckej kolónie – Thorma učil v Nagybánii, Réti na budapeštianskej Akadémii výtvarných umení. Spomínali na desaťročia nádejí a zúfalstiev, najviac však na mladosť strávenú v Mníchove a Paríži, Nagybánii a Budapešti.

V roku 1929, pri príležitosti 50. výročia pracovných úspechov Jánosa Thormu, bola na pódii divadla v Nagybánii prezentovaná séria živých obrazov. Herci zahrli výjavy diel *Neskorej september* od Thormu, *Lúpanie kukurice* od Hollósyho, *Jozef predaný svojimi bratmi* od Ferenczyho, *Medzi útesmi* od Grünwalda a *Vianoce bohémov v cudzine* od Rétiho. Predstavenie bolo dojemné, všetci však cítili, že ide iba o nostalgickú evokáciu dávno minulého sveta.

*Preklad z angličtiny M. Hrdina*

## The Myth of Bohemianism in Nineteenth-Century Warsaw

Katarzyna MURAWSKA-MUTHESIUS

The first generation of students of the School of Fine Arts in Warsaw, established in 1844, formed a close and special kind of friendship for more than a decade.<sup>1</sup> The group of young painters and draftsmen which included Franciszek Kostrzewski and Henryk Pillatti, Wojciech Gerson and Ignacy Gierdziejewski, all in their early to mid-twenties, marked a presence in the city as guests in Warsaw's cultural salons and cafés, and as suppliers of images to the newly established illustrated journals. They also met for walking trips to the countryside in search of motives, as well as for discussions coupled with drawing sessions at the apartment of their friend and patron, the amateur draftsman turned photographer Marcin Olszyński. The group dispersed in the early 1860s, some of their members dying prematurely, others pursuing their careers as respectable painters, art school professors and sought-after illustrators [Fig. 1]. Even if never united by an artistic programme, nor by an adopted name, the group was already identified by its contemporaries as a distinct circle of young Warsaw artists, which revitalised the conventions of landscape

painting and popularised urban genre in high art, to be labelled “bohemian” by the early 1900.<sup>2</sup>

The first monograph of the group, published by Stefan Kozakiewicz and Andrzej Ryszkiewicz in 1955, upheld this association with bohemianism, and was entitled *“Bohemian” Painters in Warsaw: The Group of Marcin Olszyński* (Warszawska “cyganeria” malarska: Grupa Marcina Olszyńskiego).<sup>3</sup> The book formed part of the unprecedented project led by the Institute of Art of the Polish Academy in the early 1950s, which originated Marxist-oriented studies on patronage, art market and institutions, paying special attention to the neglected area of the Warsaw art world, between the anti-Tsarist uprisings of 1830 and 1863.<sup>4</sup> Accordingly, Kozakiewicz and Ryszkiewicz stressed the group's adherence to “progressive” realism and social critique, thus setting up the terms within which it was to be discussed by art historians in Poland. The social aspects of the notion of bohemianism, however, did not belong to the authors' research agenda. They used the term in the title of their publication, referring broadly to

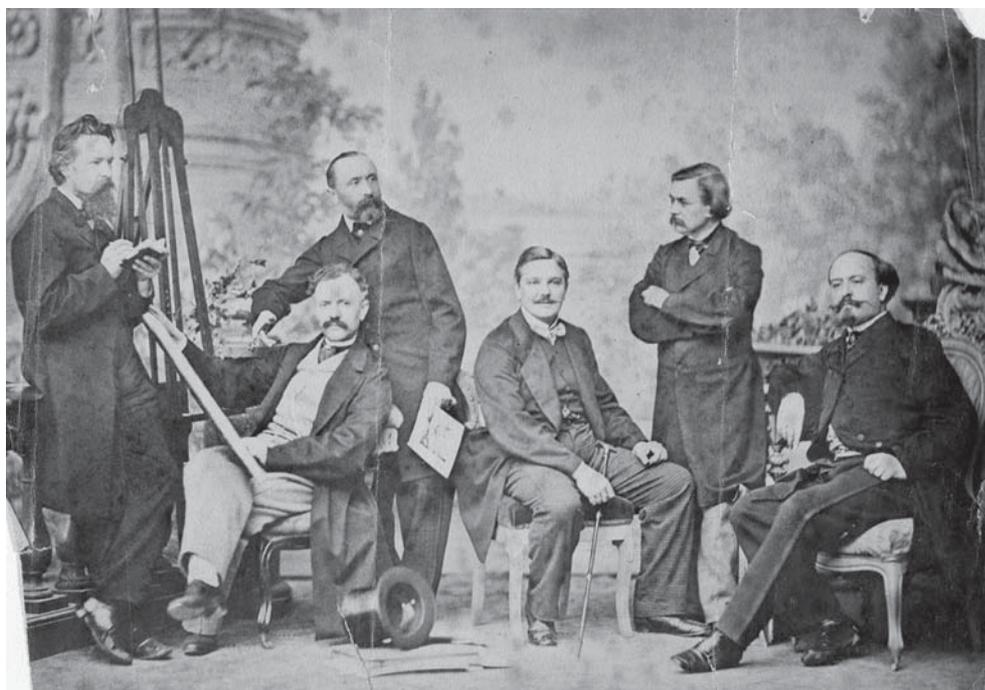
<sup>1</sup> I want to thank Aneta Błaszczyk-Biały for sharing with me many of her ideas on the “bohemian” community of painters in Warsaw, to Anna Rudzińska for her help in the Department of Prints and Drawings of The National Museum in Warsaw, and to Marek Machowski from the Department of Visual Documentation of the Museum.

<sup>2</sup> PIĄTKOWSKI, H.: *Polskie malarstwo współczesne: szkice i notaty* [Polish Contemporary Art: Notes and Queries]. St. Petersburg – Kraków 1985, p. 6; WITKIEWICZ, S.: *Juliusz Kossak*. Lviv 1906, p. 38.

<sup>3</sup> KOZAKIEWICZ, S. – RYSZKIEWICZ, A.: *Warszawska*

*“cyganeria” malarska: Grupa Marcina Olszyńskiego* [“Bohemian” Painters in Warsaw: The Group of Marcin Olszyński]. Wrocław 1955.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. RYSZKIEWICZ, A.: *Początki handlu obrazami w środowisku warszawskim* [Beginnings of the Trade in Paintings in the Warsaw Milieu]. Wrocław 1953; KOZAKIEWICZ, S.: *Warszawskie wystawy sztuk pięknych w latach 1819 – 1845* [Warsaw Exhibitions of Fine Art 1819 – 1845]. Wrocław 1952; also articles by various authors published in *Materiały do studiów i dyskusji z zakresu teorii i historii sztuki, krytyki artystycznej oraz badań nad sztuką* [Texts for Studies and Debates on Theory and History of Art, Art Criticism and Art Studies] (1950 – 1954).



1. Wojciech Gerson, Józef Simmler, Marcin Olszyński, Franciszek Kostrzewski and Juliusz Kossak, 1858 – 1860. Warsaw, National Library. Photo: Archive of the library.

the group's links with some of the life styles of the literary *bohème* which had been active in Warsaw in the early 1840s, but they de-emphasised it by bracketing it within quotation marks. Making the patron Marcin Olszyński the central character of the book, Kozakiewicz and Ryszkiewicz used his name in the subtitle as the most apt designation of the group. And indeed, it was Olszyński's extraordinary art collection which provided the primary material source for the monograph. His collection – unprecedented in Polish art, and not having many parallels in Europe at the time – included several paintings, but, above all, over 700 hundred informal drawings, sketches, photographs, caricatures and other ephemera, made by the young artists in their leisure time. Not intended for publication, but scrupulously preserved by Olszyński in seven albums,<sup>5</sup> called a “*chronicle of the first moments of the existence of Polish art*”, the works

provide today an exceptional record of work, life and entertainment of the young Warsaw artists, bearing witness to their ideas and arguments about art, social aspirations and anxieties about their professional prospects. This text revisits the Olszyński group, examining its links with the Warsaw literary *bohème*, as well as casting a glance at the socio-economic conditions of their making. It also takes another look at the striking collection of images preserved in Olszyński's albums, paying special attention to the dominant mode of caricature, the medium which was favoured by both of the Warsaw's *bohèmes*, by poets as much as by painters.

As argued by Elizabeth Wilson, “*an essential precondition for the emergence of the bohemian was the expansion of urban society*”,<sup>6</sup> and indeed, the socio-political structures of mid-nineteenth-century Warsaw played a most significant part in the formation of its artistic

<sup>5</sup> “*Mister Marcin Olszyński has an album of 800 pages, which contains over 700 drawings, watercolours and small sketches in oil, not counting photographs and press cuttings. This is a chronicle of the first moments of the existence of Polish Art – the document of a great value to get to know its history.*” – WITKIEWICZ 1906 (see in note 2), p. 38. Only 3 albums have been preserved and are today in the

collections of The National Museum in Warsaw; the remaining 4 were lost during WWI.

<sup>6</sup> WILSON, E.: *Bohemians. The Glamorous Outcasts*. London 2009, p. 28.

circles. The depopulated capital of the semi-autonomous Congress Kingdom of Poland annexed to the Russian Empire, would not be called a city of art. The loss of the remnants of the Kingdom's political autonomy affected all major art and educational institutions located in the capital. The University which, after the failed Uprising of the 1830, was identified personally by the Tsar with the hotbed of dissent, was closed down, including the Department of Fine Arts, the only public art school in Congress Poland. Instead, a newly built military fortress, serving as prison and the site of executions, cast a dark shadow on the city, preventing at the same time its urban development. The infamous phrase of General Ivan Paskevitch, who crushed the 1830 Uprising and was appointed Viceroy of the Congress Kingdom – “*The Pole going to bed in the evening should be afraid of not being taken to prison at night*” – gave rise to the metaphor of the “Paskevitch night”, describing vividly the terror and the ensuing stagnation of the public sphere in Warsaw in the 1830s and the 1840s. To escape police persecutions and obsessive censorship, many of the leading poets, personalities and artists fled abroad, causing the wave of Great Emigration as well as a virtual displacement of the centre of Polish cultural life to Paris. On the socio-economic front, Warsaw's industrial growth was almost brought to a standstill by the imposition of quintuple custom fees with the Russian Empire, causing businesses' escape from the city.<sup>7</sup> Thus, at the time when European capitals witnessed the growth of the bourgeoisie and the accelerated development of the public sphere, the rise of the new bourgeois patronage and the art market, Warsaw lost its major institutions, its students, cultural producers and potential new patrons, and thus its cultural elites were still dominated by the old nobility. Conditions began changing slowly

throughout the 1840s with the opening of the first stretch of the Warsaw-Vienna railway, and the tentative development of industry, largely due to the activities of Jewish and German entrepreneurs. Art patronage, however, and especially the interest in the local production of Warsaw painters, was very low, almost nonexistent.

This was also the time, when the imminent decline of the nobility and the weakness of the bourgeoisie began to be compensated by an emerging “new social class” of an intelligentsia, typical for the societies which, like Poland, missed the first wave of the industrial revolution and, still dominated by the old feudal relationship between the nobility and peasantry by mid-nineteenth century, were deprived of the strong middle class.<sup>8</sup> The intelligentsia – embracing the well-educated urban dwellers, and recruited from the lower nobility but also from all other social classes – was more than just a late substitute for the bourgeoisie, aspiring, as it did, to the cultural and spiritual leadership of the nation, to preserving and constructing its social norms and cultural values. As argued by Ryszarda Czepulis-Rastenis and Jerzy Jedlicki, by the 1850s the intelligentsia had already emerged as a class “*which had a self-knowledge of its shared interests, and not just professional ones, the class which was in the process of its emancipation from the protection of landowners and the consolidation of the awareness of its own values, that were formed both against the traditions and mentality of the nobility, as well as in disagreement with the bourgeois ethos of entrepreneurship and the cult of the commercial success*”.<sup>9</sup> As I argue below, alongside writers, journalists and teachers, artists did also form part of this new social group, and the community of the young Warsaw artists played a significant role in this process.<sup>10</sup> Amongst the harbingers of a new dynamics in the cultural field implemented by the intelligentsia

<sup>7</sup> DROZDOWSKI, M. M. – ZAHORSKI, S.: *Historia Warszawy* [The History of Warsaw]. Warszawa 1981.

<sup>8</sup> GELLA, A.: *Development of Class Structure in Eastern Europe. Poland and Its Eastern Neighbours*. Albany 1989, pp. 130-141.

<sup>9</sup> CZEPULIS-RASTENIS, R.: *Ludzie nauki i talentu. Studia o świadomości społecznej inteligencji polskiej w zaborze rosyjskim* [Scholars and the People of Talents. Studies of the Social Consciousness of the Polish Intelligentsia in the Russian Partition]. Warszawa 1988; after JEDLICKI, J.: Przedmowa

[Introduction]. In: JANOWSKI, M.: *Narodziny inteligencji 1750 – 1831* [The Origins of the Intelligentsia]. Warszawa 2008, p. 13.

<sup>10</sup> LEWICKA-MORAWSKA, A.: Kwestia przynależności do inteligencji malarzy generacji międzypowstaniowej [The Issue of the Intelligentsia's Status and the Generation of Painters Active between the Warsaw Uprisings]. In: CZEPULIS-RASTENIS, R. (ed.): *Inteligencja polska XIX i XX wieku* [The Polish Intelligentsia of the Nineteenth and the Twentieth Centuries]. Warszawa 1987, pp. 109-143.

was the establishment of the aforementioned Warsaw School of Fine Arts, but even more so the explosive rise of new periodicals, which were set up in turn by diverse literary and social groups, some of them motivated by more radical social and political goals.

### Warsaw's Literary *Bobème*

Any inquiry into bohemianism in Warsaw must start from the activities of the most dynamic coterie of poets, which was active just for a few years, from the late 1830s to the early 1840s. It was identified as the “Warsaw *bobème*” in the 1850s, and it provided the model for a number of social and artistic groups, to be set up in Warsaw, including the Olszyński group.<sup>11</sup> Its members, young poets of strong romantic leanings, such as Seweryn Filleborn, their unofficial leader and the most flamboyant character, the radical poet Włodzimierz Wolski [Fig. 2] as well as the Slavophile Roman Zmorski, kept meeting at a tavern in the Old City run by the legendary landlady Miramka, and celebrated their friendship during the walking trips to the Mazovian countryside. The core of their activity, however, was the periodical *Nadwiślanin* (On the Vistula), which they set it up in 1841 as the venue to publish their own works. The end of *Nadwiślanin*, which ceased to appear for the lack of subscriptions in 1842, coincided roughly with the dissolution of the group. As argued by their chronicler, Juliusz Wiktor Gomulicki, the members shared their fundamental attitude of a negation of contemporary reality in Warsaw. Motivated by a “*patriotic revolt against the Tsarist government*”, their commitment to protest was extended to the Poles collaborating with the Tsarist administration, to the “*class of private property owners*” which were prone to conciliatory attitudes, to all “*philistines*”, and, progressively, to the whole society of the law-obeying citizens, oppressed by the lethargy of the “*Paskevitch night*”.<sup>12</sup> Their poems and short stories expressed contempt towards the “*rotten world*”, “*pygmy tribe*”, “*living dead*”, the city and its “*gilded salons*”, while declaring their fascination with



2. Juliusz Kossak: Włodzimierz Wolski. Repro: GOMULICKI W.: *Cyganeria warszawska. Bajki o niej i prawda* [The Warsaw Bohemia. Truth and Fiction]. Part 1. In: *Tygodnik Ilustrowany*, 52, 1911, No. 42, p. 828.

folk legends and the fantastic, and a pre-modern trust in the redemptive forces of the folk, the peasantry and the countryside, bordering on an obsessive anti-urbanism. Importantly, the group and its publications were supported by a member of the nobility, the so called “red castellan” Edward Dembowski, who died at the age of 24 as the hero of the 1846 revolution in Galicia; he sympathised with the radical social tones and political commitment of some of the members of the group, which were variously arrested for their

<sup>11</sup> Such as Cech Głupców (Guild of Fools), and Muszkieteria (The Clique of Musketeers), both of them short-lived, and embracing some of the members of the original literary *bobème*, plus journalists, socialities and artists. See GOMULICKI, J. W. (ed.): *W. Szymanowski – A. Niewiarowski: Wspomnienia o*

*cyganerii warszawskiej* [W. Szymanowski – A. Niewiarowski: Memories of the Warsaw Bohemia]. Warszawa 1964, pp. 32-38.

<sup>12</sup> GOMULICKI 1964 (see in note 11), p. 10.

3. Franciszek Kostrzewski: *Przeprowadzka* (*The Move*). Repro: KOSTRZEWSKI 1881 (see in note 31), p. 21.



conspiratorial activities, or chased by the Tsarist police and forced to flee the country.<sup>13</sup>

And yet, in spite of the radicalism which was found in the “young writerly culture of Warsaw”<sup>14</sup> both by Dembowski and by the Tsarist apparatus, the group of Filleborn and his companions was identified by their contemporaries primarily, “not by what they did, but how they lived and what they looked like”. In a striking analogy to the Parisian *bohème* of the 1830s, almost parallel in time, they performed “their identities through outrageous gestures, eccentric clothes and subversive life styles”, abolishing the boundary between life and art.<sup>15</sup> However, instead of Gautier’s famous “red satin waistcoat, meticulously tailored for the occasion”, the Warsaw cultural rebels were attracted to shabby black coats, worn every day, as if prefiguring, already in the early 1840s, the codes of “sentimental bohemia”, to be immortalised soon by Henri Murger.<sup>16</sup> According to one account, a largely unsympathetic one, Warsaw bohemians “were wearing their hair long, their beards wide,

frock-coats ragged and shoes deformed. One frock-coat and one pair of shoes served several companions. They took their pride in poverty, and in the same way in which plutocrats put their riches on display, so they would show off their rags. [...] They improvised while drinking, and they could raise their thoughts high up while taking delight in living in a pit.” Or, according to another description, they were “always ready for any demonstration, either by taking part in it, or through their writings. They kept themselves intentionally dirty and miserable, raising noise and tumult also in the street.”<sup>17</sup>

Indeed, amongst the most famous actions of the group was a noisy parade of all its members through the streets of Warsaw, which was vividly described by the group’s “apprentice” Waclaw Szymanowski in 1855.<sup>18</sup> It is worth having a closer look at this event, as it encapsulates the major attitudes and strategies adopted by the poets, which would later be emulated by the Olszyński group, as recorded in a drawing by Franciszek Kostrzewski [Fig. 3]. Officially, the literati assembled to give a helping hand to one of

<sup>13</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>14</sup> KAWYN, S.: *Cyganeria warszawska* [The Warsaw Bohemia]. Wrocław 2004 (1967), p. 262.

<sup>15</sup> I am borrowing the words of Mary Gluck. – GLUCK, M.: *Popular Bohemia. Modernism and Urban Culture in Nineteenth-Century Paris*. Cambridge – London, p. 27.

<sup>16</sup> Ibidem, p. 28.

<sup>17</sup> GOMULICKI 1964 (see in note 11), p. 25; KAWYN 2004 (see in note 14), p. XLIX.

<sup>18</sup> GOMULICKI 1964 (see in note 11), pp. 119-130.

their companions, the author and historian Ksawery Zenon Sierpiński, who was moving from one rented flat to another. The whole group marched together through the major streets of the city, carrying the bed with Sierpiński prostrated on his miserable mattress, and flaunting a pitiful stock of domestic items owned by the poor writer, so few of them that they could easily be carried by hand by his friends. Carefully staged, the move meant much more than a common move, transforming the episode from everyday life into a street performance, and was used as an occasion to proclaim the group's artistic, social and political credo, and to demonstrate the contempt towards all kinds of strictures imposed by the Tsarist police. On the one hand, the event created a perfect opportunity to extol poverty as both virtue and rebellion in its own right, and on the other hand it lent itself rather aptly to evoke the romantic longing for the freedoms of the nomadic life of Gypsies, vagabonds and itinerant performers. On top of that, the singing of arias from operas during the procession served as a way of attracting attention to the provocation, but also of stressing its artifice, and indeed of turning the move-event into an art-event, to the bewilderment and irritation of the law-obeying citizens of Warsaw. As argued by Gomulicki, however, behind the provocation against the “*comic philistine*” stood “*the whole Empire with thousands of Tsarist officials*”.<sup>19</sup> The procession through the streets of Warsaw was a manifestation of contempt against the laws of the police, forbidding public assemblies in streets. Thus, the real addressee of this action was not the philistine, but the Paskevitch's apparatus of persecution, attempting to discipline not just the political life in Congress Poland, but also the private sphere of the individual, who could be arrested just for growing a beard, associated with the revolutionary views.

<sup>19</sup> Ibidem, p. 26.

<sup>20</sup> Murger's book was known to the members of Warsaw's literary bohemia who referred to it explicitly in their own works, see NIEWIAROWSKI, A.: *Rotmistrz bez rotty* [Cavalry Captain without Cavalry]. Warszawa 1856, Vol. 2, pp. 86-87. It was translated into Polish as *Sceny z życia cyganerii* in 1907 by Zofia Wróblewska, and again in 1927 by Tadeusz Boy-Zeleński.

It is almost impossible to assess today to what extent the eccentric life habits, careless dress and street demonstrations practiced by the Warsaw literary *bohème* were of their own invention, or, to what measure they might have been inspired by the news from Paris, disseminated both by the word of mouth, by journals and by Murger's *Scènes de la vie de bohème*,<sup>20</sup> or, indeed, whether they might have been directly influenced by the rituals of unruly behaviour celebrated by some German students corporations, the Burschenschaften, which had been known to some of the group members through first-hand experience.<sup>21</sup> An additional problem is created by the fact that the very accounts of the eccentricities of the Warsaw bohemia were written as memoirs, dating from the 1850s or later and thus, almost inevitably, they must have followed the already thriving literary discourse about bohemianism. Thus, what we analyse are not the actual street performances and other eccentricities of the Warsaw bohemia, but their descriptions. As argued by Wilson: “*Bohemia... could never be separated from its literary and visual representation. Once these representations existed, new generations could build on them. So that the bohemian myth was self-perpetuating..., recycled and amplified.*”<sup>22</sup> The picturesque accounts of the untidy space of the editorial board of *Nadwiślanin*, and of the chaotic contents of their flats and their untidy clothes must have been informed, at least to some extent, by the existing literary tropes.<sup>23</sup>

Regardless of the originality, however, what appears to be specific just to the Warsaw literary *bohème* are the political overtones of their protest, and the adoption of the patterns of social and aesthetic dissent associated with bohemian communities into the strategies of the fight for political autonomy. In the opinion of the poet and the writer Aleksander Niewiarowski, the Warsaw bohemia did not follow

<sup>21</sup> Józef Bogdan Dziekoński studied in Dorpat University. – KAWYŃ 2004 (see in note 14), p. 15. For the role of German universities in establishing the boundary between the students and the townsfolk in the early modern period, and the origins of the term “philistine”, see RYKWERT, J.: The Constitution of Bohemia. In: *Res: Anthropology and Aesthetics*, 1997, No. 31 (The Abject), p. 112.

<sup>22</sup> WILSON 2009 (see in note 6), p. 6.

<sup>23</sup> GOMULICKI 1964 (see in note 11), pp. 67-217.

simply the Parisian one. Unlike the latter, “*it was born not out of the detritus of apathy and moral decline, but it rose on the charred ruins of destruction, fed by its nourishing ashes*”.<sup>24</sup> It remains to be examined however, whether this fusion of the social, aesthetic and political could be identified as a long-standing feature of bohemianism in Poland, generated, as it were, by the conditions of subjugation to foreign power.

### The Olszyński Group and the Self-Image of the Artist

The first Warsaw *bohème* before its dissolution in 1842 attracted a range of very diverse “fellow travellers”. Among them was the journalist Wacław Szymanowski [Fig. 5], mentioned above, who, after his early experience with the unruly poets, promptly climbed the ladder of the journalistic profession, becoming the editor in chief of the largest Warsaw daily *Kurier Warszawski*. At the other end of the spectrum stood a very remarkable Polish poet, prolific draftsman as well as sharp caricaturist, Cyprian Kamil Norwid, who left Warsaw in 1842 and died in poverty in Paris.<sup>25</sup> Even if only a few caricature sketches by Norwid, datable to this period, could be identified, it seems apt to emphasise at this point that caricature, was “discovered” anew and chosen by the early bohemians as a privileged mode of expression. Associated with rebellion against the authority and the canon, peripheral to high art and oscillating between text and image, and sometimes identified as a literary genre, caricature was the medium answering the quest for alternative forms of representation, both verbal and visual, and proved eminently suitable to be performed, like a joke, amongst the company of

friends, at a café table.<sup>26</sup> And unsurprisingly, amongst the painters attracted by Filleborn and Wolski, quite a few showed a special talent for it. One of them was Tadeusz Brodowski, who produced caricatures generously for the amusement of his companions, either on handy sheets of paper which were awaiting the guests at Miramka’s tavern, or on any other suitable surfaces, such as the famous entrance door and walls of Seweryn Filleborn’s apartment. Brodowski covered them with a gallery of humorous and strange images, which, according to Szymanowski, depicted “*animals unheard of, people in costumes never seen in this world, symbols not to be explained*”.<sup>27</sup> Born into a noble family as the son of the celebrated Warsaw portraitist Antoni Brodowski, he was trained privately, and left Warsaw to complete his education abroad. Moving first to Rome in 1841, he then went on to Paris, where he studied in the atelier of Horace Vernet, and excelled in painting horses and battles. Tadeusz Brodowski remained in Paris until the end of his short life, dying at the age of 27, reportedly from intemperance. And indeed, excess of alcohol, one of the signifiers of bohemian life-style,<sup>28</sup> appeared to be the most common weakness amongst this coterie of Warsaw poets, affecting also the associated painters, most notably Ignacy Gierdziejewski, who dropped his studies at the Warsaw School of Fine Arts, becoming later the member of the Olszyński group. This late Romantic, apart from his fatal addiction to vodka, shared with the bohemian poets also the longing for the otherworldly and the fantastic, and drew the topics for his compositions from romantic poetry, folk tales, and Slavic histories, occasionally harking back to the Nazarenes. His religious compositions and fantastic allegories,

<sup>24</sup> Ibidem, p. 257.

<sup>25</sup> On Norwid, see CHLEBOWSKA, E.: *IPSE IPSUM. O autoportretach Cypriana Norwida* [IPSE IPSUM. On Cyprian Norwid’s Self-Portraits]. Lublin 2004.

<sup>26</sup> On caricature performed at a café table, see MURAWSKA-MUTHEUSIUS, K.: Michalik’s Café in Kraków: Café and Caricature as Media of Modernity. In: ASHBY, C. – GRONBERG, T. – SHAW-MILLER, S. (eds.): *The Viennese Café and Fin-de-Siècle Culture*. New York 2013 (forthcoming).

<sup>27</sup> GOMULICKI 1964 (see in note 11), p. 109 and notes, pp. 293-305.

<sup>28</sup> Seweryn Filleborn, who died prematurely in 1850 in the age of 35, might have referred to the Murgerian concept of water-drinkers when, following his doctor’s advice to drink water only and run a healthy life style, he set up in his flat an installation imitating a “*miniature pine-tree forest*”, with tree branches stuck in a layer of sand strewn on the floor; the essence of his joke was that the miniature form of the forest was, inevitably, matched by the “miniature form” of water, which, in Polish spelled “wódka”, meaning vodka. – GOMULICKI, W.: *Cyganerya warszawska. Bajki o niej i prawda* [The Warsaw Bohemia. Truth and Fiction]. Part 2. In: *Tygodnik Ilustrowany*, 52, 1911, No. 43, p. 853.



4. Henryk Pillati: *Gierdziejewski in His Studio*, 10. 1. 1855, pencil on paper. Repro: The Olszyński Album, IV, Nos. 406, 407, 408. Warsaw, National Museum.

which represented “*devils, witches, ghosts, and midnight*”, appeared close to the poetry of Wolski, the faithful companion of his drinking sprees. Although he did not practise caricature himself, Gierdziejewski was a favourite subject of humorous sketches drawn by his companions [Fig. 4], who would often poke fun at his misadventures caused by alcohol. The model of the social outsider, he died prematurely at the age of 34.<sup>29</sup>

There was another talented caricaturist, who kept company with the first Warsaw *bohème* in his youth

and moved onto the Olszyński pack, namely another student of the School of Fine Arts, Franciszek Kostrzewski. Unlike Brodowski, however, he treated this medium as his major art form, becoming the first hugely successful professional caricaturist in Warsaw, who, like Daumier, kept amusing the population of the city with his characteristic cartoons appearing on the pages of the major dailies and illustrated books for many decades until the dawn of the twentieth century [Fig. 5].<sup>30</sup> In his memoir of 1881, which in itself provides an interesting document of the artist’s

<sup>29</sup> KOZAKIEWICZ, S.: *Ignacy Gierdziejewski 1826 – 1860*. Wrocław 1958.

<sup>30</sup> PIĄTKOWSKI 1895 (see in note 2), p. 244. On Kostrzewski, see JAKIMOWICZ, I.: *Franciszek Kostrzewski*. Warszawa 1952.

self-representation, Kostrzewski acknowledged his participation in the reveries of the literary *bohème*, using the already current term *cyganeria* (*bohème*).<sup>31</sup> Significantly, as a student, Kostrzewski was giving drawing lessons to Marcin Olszyński,<sup>32</sup> and it was the friendship between the artist and his pupil, which formed the nucleus of the future community of painters. As we will see, impromptu sketch would also be used as the privileged medium within the Olszyński group.

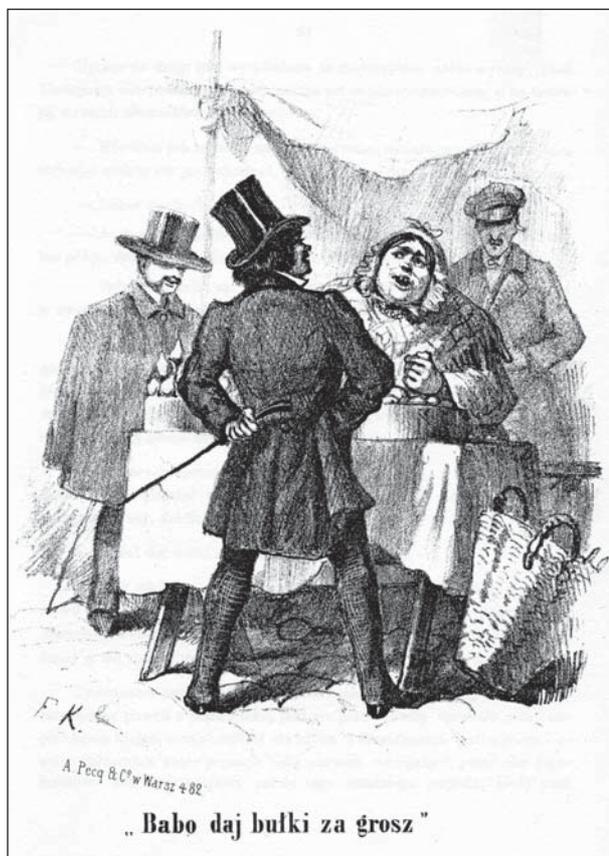
Both Kostrzewski and Gierdziejewski provided personal links between the literary *bohème* and the Olszyński group, which was set up in Olszyński's comfortable apartment in 1850, transferring some of the habits of the eccentric life styles of Filleborn and Wolski to the brotherhood of painters. The majority of the members of the literary *bohème*, who came of age when the University of Warsaw was closed and did not experience higher education, were professionally united by their publications.<sup>33</sup> For the group of painters, however, it was the School of Fine Arts which provided the starting point for the friendship and common activities. The School, set up in 1844, filled the acute gap in art education in Warsaw capital, which, after the closure of the Department of Fine Arts of Warsaw University, was deprived of a public institution to teach artists their profession. Relatively small, initially forming part of the Gymnasium, or high school, and not even gaining the status of a higher education establishment before 1852, the School produced mostly teachers of drawing and architects. Nonetheless, for those who aimed to become independent artists, the School offered also professional diplomas, so-called patents for the grade of liberal arts, which were granted to them, as in other Fine Arts Academies in Europe, on the basis of submitted works on strictly "academic" topics, taken from ancient history.<sup>34</sup> This would be, however, the last time, when its graduates would have anything in common with Roman heroes, biblical saints, or

<sup>31</sup> KOSTRZEWSKI, F.: *Pamiętnik* [Memoirs]. Warszawa 1881.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 12.

<sup>33</sup> Apart from Józef Dziekoński, see note 21.

<sup>34</sup> RYSZKIEWICZ, A. – JAKIMOWICZ, I.: *Szkoła Sztuk Pięknych w Warszawie 1844 – 1866* [School of Fine Arts in



5. Franciszek Kostrzewski: "Woman, a bread-roll for a penny". The picture illustrates a Murger-like story by Wacław Szymanowski, a "bohemian" version of the paragon between painting and literature, in which a painter (Kostrzewski) demonstrates to a man of letters (Szymanowski) the power of his eloquence as tested on a Warsaw female stallholder. Repro: SZYMANOWSKI, W. et al.: *Szkice i obrazki* [Sketches and Images]. Warszawa 1858, p. 61.

mythological goddesses, the majority of them turning towards new subject matter and artistic freedoms promised by landscapes and genre.<sup>35</sup> Such a choice was neither unusual, nor particularly bohemian at the time, as landscape, genre and cityscapes have already been practiced by the School's professors, especially,

Warsaw 1844 – 1866). In: *Rocznik Warszawski* [The Warsaw Yearbook], 4, 1963, pp. 56-113.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibidem*. The School of Fine Arts diploma was perceived as insufficient, and the majority of the young graduates were almost under obligation to complete their education abroad. The range of European Art Academies visited by them prompts a reflection on the still unwritten geography of art



6. Henryk Pillati: *Artists Who Have Gained Recognition*, pencil on paper. Repr.: The Olszyński Album, V, No. 520 B. Warsaw, National Museum.

by the painter and lithographer Jan Feliks Piwarski, who imparted on his students his own predilection towards the local and the ordinary against the neo-classical topics.

Apart from Gierdziejewski and Kostrzewski, other Art School students joined the company meeting at Olszyński's place, where, as reported by Witkiewicz, "every day they would get together and entertain themselves by making drawings; their conversation was incessantly and instantaneously illustrated, crystalliz-

ing into a visual shape before the sound of words quietened down and vanished." One of the pillars of the group was Henryk Pillati, a painter, but also a most skilful draftsman and caricaturist [Fig. 6]. Pillati, who completed his education in Munich and later also studied in Paris, was perhaps the most adventurous in his choice of topics, not avoiding overtly political themes, such as the funeral of the victims of anti-Tsarist demonstrations in Warsaw in 1861. He was also planning a series of four allegorical

of mid-nineteenth-century Europe: Gierdziejewski went to Dresden and then to Rome, Gerson won a scholarship to St. Petersburg, to continue his studies in Paris under Cogniet, Pillati belonged to the first substantial wave of artists choo-

sing Munich, the most popular destination of Polish artists in the 1860s and the 1870s, and later Paris, while Kostrzewski and Kossak opted just for Paris.



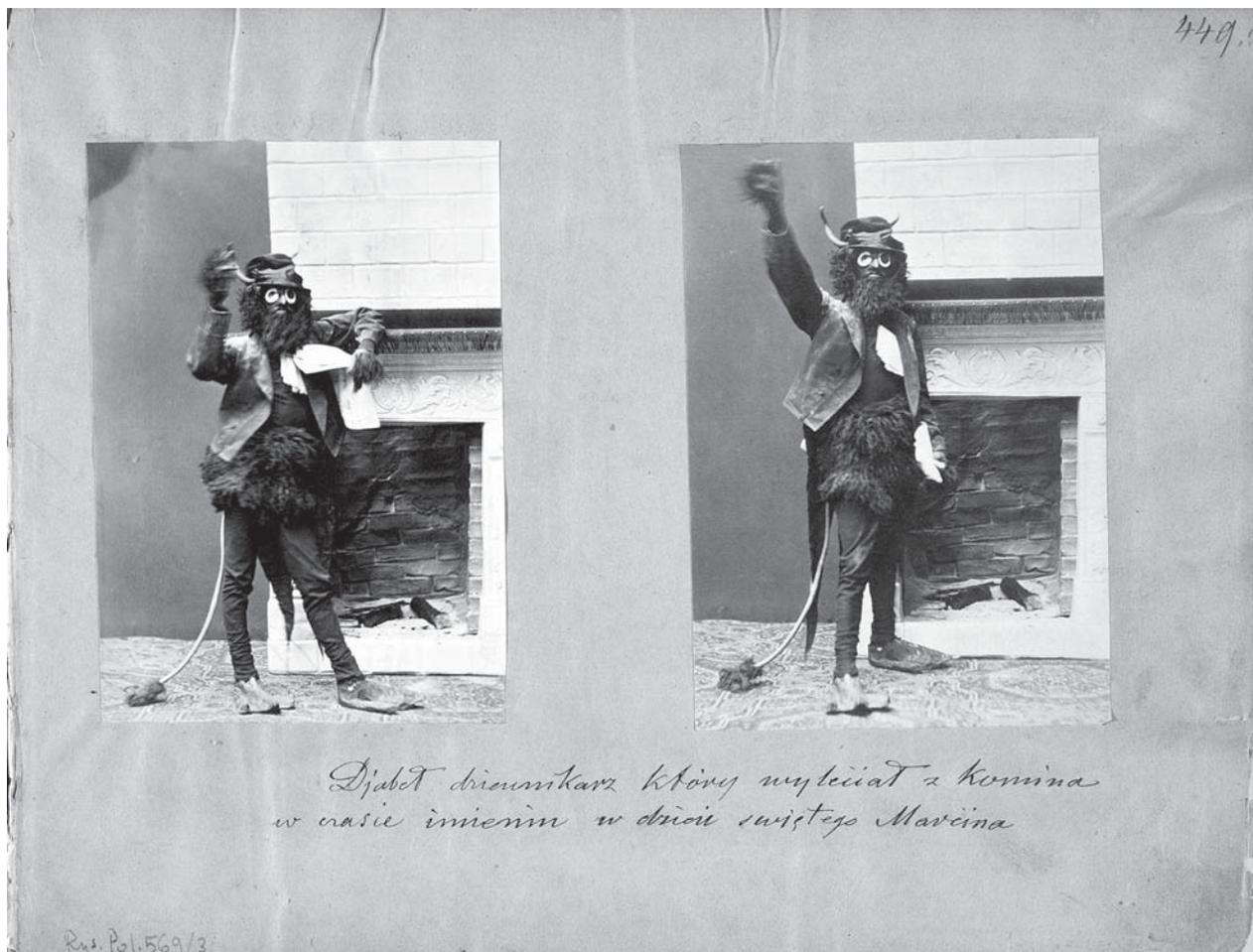
7. Juliusz Kossak: *Kossak and Kostrzewski in the Future – Anno Domini 1878, May 1854*, pencil on paper. Repro: The Olszyński Album, IV, No. 380. Warsaw, National Museum.

canvases, inspired by Wilhelm Kaulbach's murals for the Neue Pinakothek in Munich, which were devised as a visual record and a humorous commentary on the debates and arguments, as well as the allegiances and aspirations of the emerging art world in Warsaw, an unprecedented project which deserves a separate study. The protégé of the celebrated novelist Józef Ignacy Kraszewski, Pillati was often rebuked by the novelist for wasting his

unquestionable talent on a life of revelry.<sup>36</sup> The Olszyński group kept attracting other artists, including at least two of the major figures of Polish art of the second half of the nineteenth century. One of them was Wojciech Gerson, the future teacher and writer, who practised many types of art, including urban genre and *genre historique*, the latter learned during his stay in Paris, but who has been revered by Polish modernist art history mostly for his

<sup>36</sup> Pillati completed only two paintings from the intended four, and only one of them survived WWII. On Pillati, see JAKIMOWICZ, I.: *Rysunki Henryka Pillatiego* [Drawings by Henryk Pillati]. In: *Rocznik Muzeum Narodowego w Warszawie* [The National Museum in Warsaw Yearbook], 2, 1958,

pp. 259-316; MICKE-BRONIAREK, E.: *Malarstwo polskie: realizm, naturalizm* [Polish Painting: Realism, Naturalism]. Warszawa 2005, pp. 17-24. For his allegorical paintings, see KOZAKIEWICZ – RYSZKIEWICZ 1955 (see in note 3), pp. 131-148.



8. Marcin Olszyński: *Devil the Journalist which Flew Out of the Chimney during the Nameday Party on Saint Martin's Day, 1854*, photo. Repr.: The Olszyński Album, IV, No. 449. Warsaw, National Museum.

landscapes.<sup>37</sup> Another “celebrity” was Juliusz Koszak, specialising in horses and battles, the only member of the core of the Olszyński group who was of noble origin and rather well connected with his mostly aristocratic patrons. A law graduate from the University in Lviv and trained as painter privately, he did not go through the education apparatus of the Warsaw School of Fine Arts.<sup>38</sup> Nonetheless, he joined the group on his arrival in Warsaw in 1853, apparently not having any problems with fitting in, and contributing significantly to all its activities,

including a plethora of sketches in the Olszyński’s album [Fig. 7]. As reported by many commentators, the personality who “cemented” the group, acting as both its member and as a patron was the kind-hearted Marcin Olszyński. “Neither a painter, nor a sculptor, but inseparably integrated with the history of Polish art”,<sup>39</sup> he was a typical representative of the Warsaw intelligentsia of the time, the son of the civil servant of the lower nobility background. Always interested in art, and training in the new profession of the photographer, Olszyński used all

<sup>37</sup> On Gerson, see ZIELIŃSKA, J.: *Wojciech Gerson*. Warszawa 1978; KOPSZAK, P.: *Wojciech Gerson (1831 – 1901)*. Warszawa 2007.

<sup>38</sup> On Koszak, see WITKIEWICZ 1906 (see in note 2).

<sup>39</sup> *Ibidem*, pp. 38-39.



9. Franciszek Kostrzewski: *Kostrzewski is Drawing a Peasant*, 1859, watercolour on paper. Repro: The Olszyński Album, V, No. 523 A. Warsaw, National Museum.

the available means to support his artist friends: by providing them with living quarters in his own large apartment, collecting and preserving their works, lending money to those in trouble, and taking photographs during their famous walking trips to the countryside as well as at parties [Fig. 8], but also by securing commissions for illustrations in one of the most lavishly illustrated Warsaw journal, *Kłosy*, when he took on the post of its artistic editor.

Alongside highly finished drawings, oil sketches and water colours, the latter especially favoured by Gerson, Olszyński's albums contain a plethora of caricatures and comic drawings which, produced in large quantities during every evening, drawn in the presence of the group, often using the same sheet

of paper, sometimes composed of barely a few lines, frequently unfinished, but all of them scrupulously preserved by Olszewski, and glued carefully onto the pages of his albums.<sup>40</sup> As with the bohemian Warsaw poets, caricature was also the privileged medium of the painters, proving again its suitability for spontaneous commentary, stressing the informality and playfulness of the group's activities, but also its

<sup>40</sup> On the fashion for albums in the first half of the nineteenth century, see LECA, B.: *Before Photography: The Album and the French Graphic Tradition in the Early Nineteenth Century*. In: BANN, S. (ed.): *Art and the Early Photographic Album*. New Haven 2011, pp. 31-54; LE MEN, S.: *Le Livre Blanc*. In: BRUGEROLLES, E. (ed.): *L'Oeil et la plume: caricatures de Charles Garnier*. Paris 2010 – 2011, pp. 7-18.



10. Wojciech Gerson: *Departure of Wojciech Gerson, Józef Brodowski, Franciszek Tegezgo and Leon Molatyński for Studies in St. Petersburg, 14. 9. 1953, pencil on paper. Repro: The Olszyński Album, IV, No. 394. Warsaw, National Museum.*

value for neutralising a critique cast on a friend, or, for hiding both the desire of success and the fear of failure behind the protective skin of auto-irony. Although the precise meaning of many of the drawings is now lost, the Albums provide a unique insight into the ways in which the artists sought to outline their image, attempting to establish their shared values and identities.<sup>41</sup> Those impromptu drawings and water-colours, as well as occasional oil sketches on paper and photographs, record the multiple ways in which the artists kept building their collective identity and the emerging sense of worth and distinctiveness

as a group [Figs. 3, 6]. They represent the acts of painting and drawing, their study trips to the countryside [Fig. 9], their arguments about their future prospects as professional artists [Fig. 7], as well as documenting the liminal events in the artists' lives, such as the moments of departure to St. Petersburg, Rome, Paris and Munich from Warsaw's stations [Fig. 10]. Significantly, the Albums include a plethora of unusual episodes from their private lives, as well as the records of their parties [Fig. 8] and drinking escapades [Figs. 5, 7], which must have been classified as contributing both to the image of their friendship

<sup>41</sup> KOWALCZYKOWA, A.: *Świadectwo autoportretu* [The Self-Portrait's Testimony]. Wrocław 2008, pp. 126-146. I thank

Andrzej Dzieciołowski for bringing my attention to this publication.

and to the visualisation of the new code of conduct, applicable to artists. Added together, they form not only an unusual collective portrait of their friendship, but also the signifier of the emerging self-confidence as members of their artistic brotherhood, the new sense of belonging and their new social and professional status, which is distinct from other classes and professions, as well as differing from the look associated with the artist of the older generation. When compared to the early nineteenth-century paintings of Warsaw Biedermeier, which usually portray composed and well-dressed individuals, undistinguishable from other well-mannered members of the polite society, the codes of which had been established by the nobility, Olszyński's albums provide now an alternative image of the artist, provocative, socially ambiguous, transgressing rather than obeying the norms. The collection of sketches uncovers a whole range of new subject positions and social allegiances available for the artists in mid-nineteenth-century Warsaw. Regardless of their dress, often unruly, of the professional attributes, or of the space inhabited, the artists belong now to a world of their own, which at that time is, almost exclusively, a man's world. Significantly, this world is not cut for isolated individuals, but for a collective, a brotherhood which shares the same values, aspirations, pleasures and fears. Bearing in mind the mechanism of the emergence of the new social class of intelligentsia, as described by Czepulis-Rastenis, Olszyński's albums provide an exceptional historical document, a primary visual source, which testifies to the related process of the formation of the new status of the artist, who stressing the sense of belonging to an artistic brotherhood [Figs. 3, 6], positions himself *vis-à-vis* other social classes. The drawings mark a safe distance from the picturesque peasants, small stallholders and the heroic workers [Figs. 5, 9], outlining the new boundaries between the artists and their patrons, both noble and bourgeois, as well as, not without a perceivable sense of kinship, though mixed with anxiety, drawing a line between themselves and beggars, drunkards and social outcasts [Fig. 7].

<sup>42</sup> GOMULICKI 1964 (see in note 11), pp. 35-36.

<sup>43</sup> KOZAKIEWICZ – RYSZKIEWICZ 1995 (see in note 3), pp. 20-21.

In comparison with the first literary *bohème*, however, the Olszyński group was much less inclined to stretch the limits of social permissiveness, to provoke the philistine by outrageous behaviour and extravagant dress, or to engage on a wider scale in political conspiracy. Kostrzewski's memoir records some fancy-dress street performances, including also the reconstruction of the move-event described above, but, as argued by Gomulicki, the painters adopted the bohemian style in a superficial way, not understanding its political aims, thus "*trivialising the ideals of the Warsaw bohème, by noticing solely its boisterousness and extravagancy, but completely missing on its deep drama and its major aims*".<sup>42</sup> Contrary to Gomulicki's harsh judgement, Ryszkiewicz repeatedly stressed the involvement of the School of Fine Arts students in the preparation for the January Uprising of 1863, comparing the School to a powder keg, waiting for a spark, as well as documenting the conspiratorial role played by Olszyński.<sup>43</sup> Pillati's painting, mentioned above, which was probably based on a photograph of the event, certainly testifies to the active engagement of members of the group at the time of the increasing political turmoil in Warsaw. What cannot be denied, however, is the sensitivity of the young artists to social inequality and poverty, which seems to match the democratic ideals of Wolski's poems. Some of their paintings, which valorised the ordinary and the ugly, and which chose to focus on a fire consuming a Jewish tavern in a small town (Kostrzewski), or a rag-picker girl in a city courtyard (Pillati), shocked the Warsaw public. As argued by Ewa Micke-Broniarek, discussing the rag-picker image: "... *the unusual artistic maturity and novelty of this painting is constituted by the bold exposure of poverty, dirt and ugliness which are shared by the [inner-city] space, and the protagonist of the image... transgressed aesthetic categories of Polish art of the time.*"<sup>44</sup>

What both of the "bohemian" groups shared was the poverty caused by the lack of financially committed audiences in the city. *Nadwiślanin* ceased publication because of the shortage of subscribers, and the acute lack of interest in contemporary paint-

<sup>44</sup> MICKE-BRONIAREK 2005 (see in note 36), p. 22.

ings produced by Warsaw artists has already been signalled above. The socio-economic background of the bohemian revolt in Paris and other metropolises is usually described as the “tectonic shift” caused by the industrial revolution, the decline of individual commissions guaranteed by the aristocratic and church patronage, now displaced by the rising power of the bourgeoisie and the forces unleashed by the anonymous art market. According to this narrative, the ensuing process of the commodification of art led, on the part of the artists, to the adoption of the attitude of negation and to the construction of the concept of the autonomy of art as a bastion of resistance against the levelling forces of the market and unrefined taste of the new buyer. This scenario, however, does not fit the mechanism of the socio-economic changes in the Congress Kingdom of Poland, at least not as yet, during the middle of the nineteenth century, when any dangers imposed by the new class of philistines were eclipsed by the much more acute drama of the morbid standstill in patronage altogether. Art products, dislodged from the traditional channels of exchange between the noble patron and the artist, could not have been turned into commodities because of the absence of an art market and its mechanisms of supply and demand. As reported by the contemporary critic Jerzy Kenig in the 1880s, reconstructing the art scene of the 1840s: “*There was just a handful of art buyers... no art societies, no permanent displays, no illustrated journals, which, even if occasionally intimidating and reducing high-profile art and exceptional talent, they would also protect them in some measure from starving to death. Forty years ago, there was not any such support, but solely strangling forces which were appearing from every direction.*”<sup>45</sup>

As reported by others, apart from a single modest space offered by Henryk Hirszel’s paper shop in Warsaw, the artists did not have any other venue in the city to present their works to potential buyers.<sup>46</sup> Conservative critics, preoccupied with the state of art in Congress Poland, argued for the need to restore the old forms of patronage, and recommended to Warsaw artists to move back to the countryside and seek residencies in the estates of the nobility.<sup>47</sup> What

was lacking, however, were the new art institutions of the public sphere, such as art schools, exhibition venues, as well as a team of respectable dealers and critics, who would provide new channels of interaction between the artists and the public, promoting new values and aesthetic needs. The Olszyński group arrived at the scene precisely at the time of the displacement of the old forms of patronage, and it was both affected by those major socio-economic changes, as well as being involved in the process of the construction of modern art world in Warsaw. The group, and especially Wojciech Gerson, was fully engaged in the well-reported campaign against foreign art dealers, selling Old Masters and contemporary paintings by European artists to the Warsaw public. The campaign was successful, leading to the establishment of the Society for Encouragement of Art in Warsaw in 1860, which by organising the permanent display of Polish art, offering it for sale, turned into the first large-scale public institution which mediated successfully between the artists and the audiences. If the profession of the private dealer, trading in Polish contemporary art, would not crystallise in Warsaw before the 1870s, already the 1850s witnessed the origins of newspaper art criticism, which, as in France, was the domain of all kinds of journalists, novelists, or artists themselves, and again it was Gerson who would stamp his presence in this field as well. The turn-of-the-century commentators appreciated the groundbreaking role of the Olszyński group in the development of the basic structures of the modern art world. Stanisław Witkiewicz identified its activities with the dawn of Polish painting, the departure point for the “*real development of Polish art, conscious of its own distinctiveness*”. The artists, he wrote, “*worked in difficult circumstances, both making art and awaking the love for it in society; they organised the material conditions of its existence, setting up finally the Society for the Encouragement of Art, which was the confirmation of winning the position in a social development*”.<sup>48</sup> It was also Witkiewicz, who, writing at the time when bohemian life-styles was the code of conduct of the mainstream of Polish Art Nouveau, first identified those painters with bohemianism, by beginning the paragraph devoted to the Olszyński

<sup>45</sup> Quoted after WITKIEWICZ 1906 (see in note 2), p. 38.

<sup>46</sup> RYSZKIEWICZ 1952 (see in note 4), pp. 59-60.

<sup>47</sup> Ibidem, pp. 33-35.

<sup>48</sup> WITKIEWICZ 1906 (see in note 2), p. 38.

group from a rhetorical invocation: “*Those were the times of the bohème, the times, when the border between the art world and philistinism was so sharp, that it looked like an unbridgeable chasm. Poetry and fantasy were not just [the domain of] art, but the very artistic life was constituted by poetry, fairy tale, adventure or eccentricity.*”<sup>49</sup>

But were they really bohemians? Could we apply the term to the group of painters who, unlike the bohemian poets in Warsaw, have never identified themselves with Gypsies or vagabonds? As stressed by Wilson and others, any “*attempt to define Bohemia and the bohemians is... frustrating*”, not just because of the multiple manifestations of the myth of the artist in modern society, and the impossibility of drawing the fixed boundaries between bohemian and non-bohemian, but also because of its essentially mythical construction, the inseparability from the literary discourses. The existence of bohemian painters in mid-nineteenth-century Warsaw also belongs to the sphere of representation, to the truths which have been projected backwards on the community of artists, who did not represent themselves exclusively as

social outcasts. Furthermore, if, as claimed by Seigel, Bohemia was a counter-image of the bourgeoisie, providing the way for the latter to sharpen its boundaries, the margin which helped to define the centre<sup>50</sup> – could we at all insist on the existence of *la bohème* in a society without a strong bourgeoisie? Could the dialectics of the class formation be reverted, starting from its margins rather than from the centre, while bearing in mind that the absence of the bourgeoisie in Congress Poland was compensated by the new social class of intelligentsia? The issue requires more research on the socio-economic, as well as political conditions of bohemianism in societies which, deprived of sovereignty, joined modernity with some delay, and with a different baggage of social claims, cultural desires and enmities. What remains certain is the contingency of the bohemian myth, which lives its lives according to conventions of conduct, and, whether projected on mid-nineteenth-century Paris, Prague, St. Petersburg, or Warsaw, is notoriously constructed in retrospect, reflecting the desires and attitudes of those who describe it.

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<sup>49</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>50</sup> SEIGEL, J.: *Bohemian Paris. Culture, Politics, and the Boundaries of Bourgeois Life, 1830 – 1930*. Baltimore 1999, pp. 31-58.

## Mýtus bohémy vo Varšave v devätnástom storočí

### Resumé

Štúdia si všima vznik modernej umeleckej scény a rast umeleckého sebavedomia vo Varšave okolo polovice 19. storočia. Porovnáva dve umelecké komunity, ktoré boli kritikmi neskôr charakterizované ako bohémske: krúžok radikálnych básnikov a prozaikov raných 40. rokov a skupinu výtvarných umelcov aktívnych počas 50. rokov, známych ako Olszyńského skupina. Prvé spoločenstvo sa vydělilo excentrickým vystupovaním a obliekaním, ako aj provokatívnymi akciami v uliciach Varšavy, druhé si svoju kolektívu identitu formovalo prostredníctvom neformálnych kresieb v tzv. Olszyńského albumoch.

Hlavné mesto čiastočne autonómneho Poľského kongresového kráľovstva anektovaného Ruským impériom nebolo umeleckým centrom. Strata posledných zvyškov politickej samostatnosti ovplyvnila všetky dôležité umelecké a vzdelávacie inštitúcie mesta. Univerzita, identifikovaná po neúspešnom povstaní v roku 1830 ako ohnisko disentu, bola zavretá, vrátane katedry výtvarných umení. V období, kedy európske metropoly zažívali vzostup buržoázie a rýchly rozvoj verejného života, včítane trhu s umením, stratila Varšava kľúčové inštitúcie, študentov, umelcov, organizátorov a potenciálnych mecénov. Úpadok šľachty a bezmocnosť buržoázie boli kompenzované vzostupom „novej spoločenskej vrstvy“ – inteligencie, ašpirujúcej na kultúrne a duchovné vodcovstvo národa. Podľa Ryszardy Czepulis-Rastenisa a Jerzyho Jedlického sa inteligencia okolo polovice 19. storočia vynorila ako trieda, „ktorá si bola vedomá svojich vlastných záujmov...“, ktorá bola v procese emancipácie spod ochrany statkárov a v procese konsolidácie vlastných hodnôt, formovaných v opozícii tak voči tradíciám a mentalite šľachty, ako aj voči buržoáznemu étosu podnikavosti a kultu komerčného úspechu“. Popri spisovateľoch, žurnalistoch a učiteľoch tvorili súčasť tejto novej spoločenskej vrstvy aj umelci, pričom komunita mladých varšavských maliarov hrala v tomto procese zvlášť dôležitú úlohu.

Každé bádanie na tému varšavskej bohémy musí začať aktivitami krúžku básnikov, činných v krátkom

období od konca 30. do začiatku 40. rokov. Krúžok bol vzorom pre ďalšie podobné spoločenstvá, vrátane Olszyńského skupiny, a v 50. rokoch 19. storočia dostal pomenovanie „varšavská bohéma“. Jeho členovia, mladí básnici silného romantického citenia, ako napríklad Seweryn Filleborn, Włodzimierz Wolski a Roman Zmorski, sa schádzali v krčmách starého mesta a svoje priateľstvá utužovali aj na výletoch do mazovskej krajiny. Jadrom ich aktivít však bolo vydávanie časopisu *Nadwiślanin* (Nad Vislou), ktorý založili v roku 1841 ako fórum pre publikovanie svojich básní. Podľa kronikára krúžku Juliusza Wiktora Gomulického zdieľali jeho členovia negatívny postoj voči súdobej varšavskej realite, motivovaný „*vlastenckou revoltou proti cárskemu režimú*“. Títo rebeli však boli súčasníkmi primárne identifikovaní „*nie podľa tobo, čo robili, ale podľa tobo, ako žili a ako vyzerali*“. Analogicky k parížskej *la bohème* 30. rokov, časovo takmer paralelnej, prejavovali „*svoju identitu prostredníctvom urážlivých gest, excentrických odevov a neviazaného životného štýlu*“, odstraňujúc hranice medzi životom a umením. Zdá sa, že špecifikom varšavskej literárnej bohémy bolo spájanie stratégií spoločenského a estetického disentu asociovaných s bohémskymi komunitami (ako napríklad akcie v uliciach Varšavy) s bojom za politickú samostatnosť.

Olszyńského umelecká skupina bola inšpirovaná literárnou bohémou, napodobňovala niektoré z jej aktivít, no bez otvoreného politického podtextu. Zahrnula prvých absolventov Školy výtvarných umení vo Varšave, ktorí promovali na začiatku 50. rokov a v priateľských stykoch vytrvali viac než desaťročie. Aj keď ich nespájala oficiálny umelecký program či názov, súčasníkmi boli vnímaní ako osobitá skupina mladých poľských umelcov, označená ako „bohémska“ na prelome 19. a 20. storočia. Franciszek Kostrzewski, Henryk Pillati, Ignacy Gierdziejewski, Wojciech Gerson, ako aj Juliusz Kossak, ktorý sa ku skupine pripojil neskôr, sa stretávali na výletoch a pri diskusiách a kreslení v byte ich priateľa a mecéna Marcina Olszyńského, fotografa, ktorý sa venoval

aj kresbe. Podľa kritika Stanisława Witkiewicza sa „každý deň stretli a bavili kreslením; ich rozhovory boli okamžite zaznamenávané, kryštalizovali do vizuálnej podoby ešte predtým, ako zvuk slov utíchol a zanikol“. Olszyński všetky kresby, maľby vodovými farbami a fotografie úzkostlivo uchoval na stránkach svojich siedmich albumov (štyri z nich sú stratené). Obsahujú kresby a maľby, aj zo študijných ciest umelcov po krajine, zápisy rozhovorov o vyhlídkach do budúcnosti, ako aj záznamy o dôležitých udalostiach z ich životov, napr. o odchodoch z varšavských železničných staníc do Petrohradu, Ríma, Paríža či Mníchova. Obzvlášť radi využívali médium karikatúry, ideálne pre spontánny komentár, neutralizovanie kritického postoja voči priateľovi alebo pre ukrytie túžby po úspechu zmiešanej so strachom zo zlyhania za ochrannú hradbu sebaironie. V súvislosti so vznikom inteligencie ako novej spoločenskej vrstvy predstavujú Olszyńského albumy jedinečný historický dokument, zaznamenávajúci proces formovania nového statusu umelca, ktorý sa s vedomím, že patrí k umeleckého bratstvu, stavia *vis-à-vis* ostatným spoločenským vrstvám. Kresby vytyčujú bezpečnú vzdialenosť od malebných sedliakov, drobných statkárov a heroických robotníkov, vyznačujú tiež nové hranice medzi umelcami a ich mecénmi, šľachtického aj buržoázneho pôvodu, a napokon oddeľujú umelcov aj od žobrákov, pijanov a ďalších vydedencov spoločnosti, v tomto prípade nie bez pocitu spolupatričnosti premiešanej s úzkosťou.

Olszyńského skupina sa na scéne zjavila presne v období odstraňovania starých foriem mecenátu. Bola ovplyvnená týmito významnými socioekonomickými zmenami a zároveň účastná na formovaní modernej varšavskej umeleckej scény. Skupina sa naplno angažovala v dobre zdokumentovanej kampani proti zahraničným obchodníkom s umením, ktorí

varšavskej verejnosti predávali diela starých majstrov, ako aj diela súdobých umelcov. Kampaň bola úspešná a viedla k založeniu Spoločnosti pre podporu umení vo Varšave (1860), ktorá sa prostredníctvom organizovania permanentnej výstavy poľského umenia, s možnosťou kúpy diel, stala prvou veľkou verejnou inštitúciou, úspešne zabezpečujúcou styk umelcov s verejnosťou.

Glosátori z prelomu storočí ocenili kľúčovú úlohu Olszyńského skupiny pri vzniku základných štruktúr modernej umeleckej scény. Stanisław Witkiewicz stotožnil jej aktivity s úsvitom poľského maliarstva, s východiskovým bodom „skutočného vývoja poľského umenia, vedomého si svojich vlastných špecifík“.

A bol to opäť Witkiewicz, ktorý v čase, keď bohémsky životný štýl bol bežným spôsobom života väčšiny umelcov poľskej secesie, ako prvý identifikoval maliarov z Olszyńského skupiny ako bohémov. Boli však skutočne bohémami? Môžeme tento pojem použiť v prípade skupiny maliarov, ktorí sa na rozdiel od bohémских básnikov vo Varšave nikdy neidentifikovali s Cigánmi alebo tulákmi? Ak zohľadníme názor Jerrolda Seigela, že bohéma ako náprotivok buržoázie bola perifériou napomáhajúcou definovať centrum, možno vôbec hovoriť o existencii *la bohème* v krajine bez silnej buržoázie? Možno dialektiku vzniku spoločenských vrstiev obrátiť a začať z kraja namiesto z centra, berúc na vedomie skutočnosť, že absenciu buržoázie v Poľskom kongresovom kráľovstve kompenzovala nová spoločenská vrstva, inteligencia? Istou ostáva iba náhodnosť bohémneho mýtu, ktorý si žije svoj život, a či je premietaný na Paríž, Prahu, Petrohrad alebo Varšavu okolo polovice 19. storočia, vždy stojí na retrospekcii, na prianiach a postojoch tých, ktorí ho opisujú.

*Preklad z angličtiny M. Hrdina*

## Decadents, Pessimists and Neo-Romantics, or, Young Poland and Bohemianism in Krakow

Urszula KOZAKOWSKA-ZAUCHA

*“norm is stupidity  
and ‘degeneration’ – genius”<sup>1</sup>*

The turn of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries saw Krakow’s unprecedented development in the arts. The city came to be identified with the “*Polish Athens*” and the “*spiritual capital of Poland*” in which intellectual and artistic life flourished. At that time, Krakow rose to the unquestionable capital of modernism, and it exerted an enormous influence on the cultural outlook of all Polish lands, partitioned, as they were, by Russia, Prussia and Austria. It was a time of turmoil and anxiety. The Jagiellonian University was the cradle of radical intellectual transformations which took place in the city at the time. Reformed in 1893 and directed by Tadeusz Pawlikowski, the municipal theatre staged premieres of plays by August Strindberg, Oscar Wilde and Maurice Maeterlinck. The School of Fine Arts was reformed in 1897, when Julian Fałat was appointed its director. In 1900, thanks to his endeavours in

Vienna and the support of the painter Teodor Axentowicz, the School was transformed into an Academy, which raised its prestige. Fałat employed new young professors as well as abolishing some of the academic constraints. The outdated style of work in stuffy studios was replaced by greater freedom and an emphasis on painting from nature.<sup>2</sup> From 1897, the leading journal *Życie* (Life), which was a transmitter of new ideas in European culture, established by Ludwik Szczepański and edited successively by Ignacy Sewer-Maciejowski, Artur Górski<sup>3</sup> and Stanisław Przybyszewski, came out in Krakow. Stanisław Wyspiański – the great poet-painter, and the most accomplished and versatile artist of Polish Art Nouveau – was responsible for the graphic design of the review, which published works of European decadents, including Joris-Karl Huysmans, Paul Verlaine, Maurice Maeterlinck.<sup>4</sup>

It was also in 1897 that the elitist “Sztuka” (Art) Society of Polish Artists was set up in Krakow by the painters Józef Chełmoński and Jan Stanisławski.<sup>5</sup> Its

<sup>1</sup> PRZYBYSZEWSKI, S.: *Na drogach duszy*. Kraków 1902 (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.), p. 75. English version translated by Elżbieta Chrzanoska-Kluczevska in *On the Paths of the Soul. Gustav Vigeland and Polish Sculpture Around 1900*. [Exhib. Cat.] Eds. Agata MAŁODOBRY – T. O. B. NIELSEN. Krakow, National Museum, 6 October 2010 – 26 December 2010. Kraków 2010, p. 266.

<sup>2</sup> More about Krakow around 1900: ARON, P. et al: *Art Nouveau in Polen. Brussel – Krakau 1890 – 1920*. Brussels 1997; KRAKOWSKI, P.: *Cracow Artistic Milieu Around 1900*. In: *Art around 1900 in Central Europe. Art Centers and Provinces*. Eds. P. KRAKOWSKI – J. PURCHLA. Kraków 1999, pp. 71-79; KRZYSZTOFOWICZ-KOZAKOWSKA, S.: *Polish*

*Art Nouveau*. Kraków 1999; KOPSZAK, P. – SZCZERSKI, A.: *Symbolist Art in Poland. Poland and Britain c. 1900*. London 2009.

<sup>3</sup> Ignacy Sewer-Maciejowski (1835 – 1901) was a Polish novelist, novelist, playwright and literary critic; Artur Górski (1870 – 1959) was a Polish writer and literary critic.

<sup>4</sup> MAŁODOBRY, A.: *Werewolves of Modern Sculpture. Creative Impulses and Artistic Scandals of Young Poland*. In: *On the Paths of the Soul* (see in note 1), pp. 280-283.

<sup>5</sup> KLEIN, F.: *Zarys historyczny Towarzystwa Artystów Polskich Sztuka*. In: *Sztuka 1897 – 1922*. Kraków 1922.

aim was to “boost the artistic life of the country” as well as to promote Polish art abroad. “Through the loftiness of its postulates, the steadfastness of its aspirations and the greatness of the achieved results, both in terms of morality and materiality,” the Society “played a fundamental role in the history of our contemporary art.” The *spiritus movens* of this group was Jan Stanisławski, whose “efforts and kindness helped the Society achieve the same significance as that of the Viennese Secession. [...] thanks to Stanisławski’s energy it continuously gains more and more significance and artistic dignity.”<sup>6</sup>

In this relatively small city two totally different worlds clashed – on the one hand a conservative, Galician Krakow with its God-fearing bourgeoisie, their outdated outlook on the world and dreams of successful careers (especially in administration), and on the other, a world of artists, bohemian decadents, who provoked Krakow’s serious citizens at every turn, by challenging all established rules and by breaking down taboos. The old Krakow of the old and by now isolated aristocracy and the conservative bourgeoisie, celebrating with pomp all patriotic-religious events, was gathered around the old Jagiellonian University and the Polish Academy of Arts and Sciences, the reformed Municipal Theatre, the developing National Museum and the Museum of Industry and Technology and, last but not least, the reformed School of Fine Arts. And yet, it was the emerging bohemian circle of poets, actors and painters that ultimately defined the atmosphere of Krakow, which rose to the capital of the Young Poland. With time a trend emerged towards adopting the attitude of a decadent, a pessimist and, above all, a bohemian artist. As recorded by Tadeusz Boy-Żeleński, the chronicler, the mythographer and the author of the legend of the Krakovian Young Poland: “On the left bank of the Vistula a new phenomenon, novel to Krakow, burst into bloom – bohemia.

*And if there was only one of them! Almost simultaneously Krakow was witnessing the bohemia of painters, the bohemia of Pawlikowski, the bohemia of Zapolska, the bohemia of Przybyszewski, the Bronowice bohemia, and, if you like, also the bohemia of Lutosławski and Daszyński, not counting the bohemia of students, the ranks of which were strengthened by the youth from outside the [Galicia] borders which, time and again, was seeking shelter in Krakow, and by a phalanx of young women, who were given access to university education for the first time.”<sup>7</sup>*

Significantly, bohemia in Krakow stood out amongst other bohemian communities in Europe at the time. Arguably, amongst its most specific features were its enormous success, its unabashed elitism and its direct links with the major cultural institutions of the Krakow art world, as well as with the most powerful personalities. The milieu of the Krakow bohemians embraced exceptional people – the major artists, respectable professors of the Academy of Fine Arts, the leading art critics, writers, famous actors, and even some of the most distinguished professors of the Jagiellonian University. The triumph of bohemianism in Krakow coincided with the triumph of modernism, and with major exhibitions, staged both in Krakow, and in Vienna. Interestingly, those who were once outraged with the eccentricities of Krakow’s *bohème*, now began to seek the possibility of joining it. Moreover, they would be buying works of art and building up their private collections, in this way supporting the bohemians’ existence.

The indisputable leader of Krakow bohemians was the *sad Satan* – Stanisław Przybyszewski, who arrived in the city in 1898, bringing with him not only his beautiful Norwegian wife, Dagny Juel, but also a breath of Scandinavian-Berlin bohemianism. He had the reputation of “*der geniale Pole*”, which he earned in Berlin, and an aura of scandal around him. During his stay in Berlin this *leader of decadents*

<sup>6</sup> More about Polish Artists Society “Sztuka”: KRZYSZTOFOWICZ-KOZAKOWSKA, S.: “Sztuka” – “Wiener Secession” – “Mánes”. The Central European Art Triangle. In: *Artibus et Historiae*, 27, 2006, No. 53, pp. 217-259; BRZYSKI, A.: Constructing the Canon: The Album Polish Art and the Writing of Modernist Art History of Polish 19<sup>th</sup>-Century Painting. In: *19<sup>th</sup>-Century Art Worldwide*, Spring 2004, <http://www.19thc-artworldwide.org/index.php/spring04/284-constructing-the-canon-the-album-polish-art-and-the-writing-of-modernist-art-history-of-polish-19th-century-painting>

<sup>7</sup> BOY-ŻELEŃSKI, T.: Prawy brzeg Wisły [1931] [Right Bank of the Vistula (1931)]. In: *Znaszli ten kraj?...[Do You Know This Country?...] Wroclaw 1984*, p. 12. Gabriela Zapolska was a novelist, playwright and an actress, Wincenty Lutosławski was a philosopher, and Ignacy Daszyński was a socialist journalist and politician, who was to become the first Prime Minister of the sovereign Poland in 1918.

was a regular customer of the famous wine tavern Zum schwarzen Ferkel (The Black Piglet), a popular haunt of Berlin bohemian artists, making friends with August Strindberg and Edvard Munch. His shocking views crystallized in 1892 in a well-known essay entitled “Zur Psychologie des Individuums”. In 1899, one of his most famous manifestoes of the new aesthetics of the new epoch “Confiteor” was published, which called for the liberation of art from moral sanctions and any educational or patriotic obligations, at the same time rejecting all sorts of utilitarianism in art – its patriotic, aesthetic or social functions. It was Stanisław Przybyszewski who contributed largely to the development of the notion of the modern artist, perceived by him as the “*Master of Masters*”, free and independent from any constraints imposed on him. “*Neither a servant nor a ruler, he does not belong to the nation or to the word, he does not serve any idea or any society. [...] The artist stands above life, above the world... uncontrolled by any law, unlimited by any human power.*”<sup>8</sup>

According to a chronicler of the time, Tadeusz Boy-Żeleński, Przybyszewski brought to Krakow “*a new breath and charm of outstanding bohemianism, new trends, new European currents. Soon after him arrived, his chests filled with paintings by Munch, sculptures by Vigeland, prints by Goya, a collection of books on all aspects of Satanism and magnificent art works. Yet it was Przybyszewski himself that was a dynamite fuse...*”<sup>9</sup> He was a typical negative character: an intriguer, an alcoholic, a seducer of other men’s wives, a scholar interested in Satanism, an occultist, a spiritual anarchist and a piano virtuoso famous for his spontaneous interpretations of Frederic Chopin’s pieces. Finally, he was a modernist, a model of the bohemian artist, who “*felt drawn... to the deadly sequence of desperation, misfortune... he needed like Gordon*<sup>10</sup> *to have, even if only as an imita-*

*tion, his band of ‘Satan’s children’*”.<sup>11</sup> Przybyszewski’s favourite catchphrase, expressing his contempt for all philistines which he liked repeating while wandering the streets of Krakow at night – “*We are walking and the animals are asleep and snoring*”<sup>12</sup> – became famous in the city.

Przybyszewski’s views were particularly well received in a provincial Krakow that was waking up from its long lethargy of the provincial city of the Austrian Empire. The aesthetic-philosophical theories derived from the idealistic and irrational philosophy, pessimism and metaphysics of Friedrich Nietzsche and the philosophy of the immoral, popularised by the precursor and mentor of the “generation of Romantics”, Arthur Schopenhauer, appealed, apart from Przybyszewski, also to critics: Zenon Miriam-Przesmycki and Karol Irzykowski. These concepts, focused particularly on catastrophism, a spiritual crisis and decadence associated *fin de siècle*, became immensely popular in Krakow, and the city was soon overpowered by the fashionable moods of dark pessimism and decadence. It was Stanisław Przybyszewski who, surrounded by writers and painters, became the figurehead of the decadents. It was also in Krakow where a discussion on decadence, defined in *Życie* by its former editor Artur Górski, the opponent of Przybyszewski, was held. Górski considered it a moral mood pervaded by anxiety, based on the total distrust in future prospects. According to him, decadence was “*a dislocation of wings and dragging them on the ground, the wings which are sometimes extremely beautiful, yet unable to fly*”.<sup>13</sup>

Social gatherings organised by the Przybyszewski couple, first in their flat at 53 Karmelicka Street, and then in Siemiradzki Street, were attracting major personages of the cultural life in Krakow. Next to Goya’s prints and Munch’s paintings, as well as to the

<sup>8</sup> PRZYBYSZEWSKI, S.: Confiteor. In: *Życie* [Life], 3, 1899, No. 1, pp. 1-4. Cf. KOZAKOWSKA-ZAUCHA, U.: *Whispers of Art*. [Exhib. Cat.] Krakow, National Museum. Kraków 2009, p. 18.

<sup>9</sup> Quoted from KOSSOWSKI, Ł.: Totenmesse. In: *Totenmesse. Munch – Weiss – Przybyszewski*. [Exhib. Cat.] Warsaw, Museum of Literature. Warszawa 1995, p. 65.

<sup>10</sup> Gordon was a hero of Stanisław Przybyszewski’s novel *Dzieci Szatana*, 1899 (first published in German as *Satans Kinder* in 1897).

<sup>11</sup> BOY-ŻELEŃSKI, T.: Szeci Szatana. In: *Znaszli ten kraj?*... (see in note 7), pp. 99-100.

<sup>12</sup> WEISS, T.: *Cyganeria Młodej Polski* [Bohemianism of the Young Poland]. Kraków 1970, p. 70.

<sup>13</sup> QUASIMODO [GÓRSKI, A.]: Młoda Polska [Young Poland]. In: *Życie*, 2, 1898, No. 18, p. 206.

works by Polish artists Wojciech Weiss and Stanisław Wyspiański, the Krakow *bohème* held regular “symposia” that ended at dawn with concerts given by the master of the house, who would play Chopin for hours. Guests included, among others, Tadeusz Boy-Żeleński, Stanisław Sierosławski, Jan Kleczyński and the artist Jan Szczepkowski. The Przybyszewski couple would visit, in turn, the art studios of Ksawery Dunikowski, Ludwik Marcus (later Louis Marcousis), Wojciech Weiss and Stanisław Wyspiański. Przybyszewski’s salons and his lifestyle had a profound influence also on other spots of this kind in Krakow. Among salons, the most popular was the one held by Maria and Ignacy Sewer Maciejowski, a writer, literary critic and editor-in-chief of the Krakow review *Życie*. At their apartment at 6 Batory Street, to quote the chronicler Tadeusz Boy-Żeleński, “the whole generation of writers met every day for an afternoon tea. The only regular guest who did not drink was Asnyk; for him Mrs. Maciejowska always prepared his favourite white coffee with a skin.”<sup>14</sup> Other guests included the writer Władysław Reymont, the painters Jacek Malczewski, Leon Wyczółkowski and Stanisław Wyspiański and the whole pack of others. Another place to mention is the house of Eliza and Stanisław Pareński at 4 Wielopole Street, where “everyone” would come: “poets and painters, members of the newly-established ‘Sztuka’ Society”.<sup>15</sup> Among those who gathered there to play whist and hold passionate discussions were the art collector and expert Feliks Manggha Jasieński, Jacek Malczewski, the poet Adam Asnyk, Leon Wyczółkowski and, of course, Przybyszewski.

In Krakow, like in Vienna, Berlin and Paris, there were art cafés, which became the venue and the breeding ground for bohemian abode, the “*nightly sanctuaries of Secession*”, which played the role of

specific salons, and indeed displaced them as the privileged spaces of cultural exchange. “There were also other reasons. It was disturbing, to expose the social life of the bohemia, innocent, albeit often requiring a little discretion, to the eyes of the populace. Przybyszewski could not live without a grand piano, or at least a piano, Stanisławski without a table to play his favourite vint card game... All this led to an idea to create a shelter that would be inaccessible to strangers, where it would be possible to [enjoy] painting, music playing, drinking, singing and discussing no end.”<sup>16</sup> The first such venue was Café Restaurant du Théâtre, established by Ferdynand Turliński in 1896 at 38 Szpitalna Street. The first floor housed a room known as “*Paon nonchalant*” (French for peacock) (in reference to the verse from Maurice Maeterlinck’s poem “*les paons blancs, les paons nonchalants*”), where writers and artists, led by Przybyszewski, drowned their sorrows or looked for inspiration in black coffee and alcohol.

The Krakow bourgeoisie considered the café a place of moral corruption of the Polish youth as well as a den of iniquity and all evil.<sup>17</sup> To make matters worse, Dagny Przybyszewska scandalously played billiards with Tadeusz Boy-Żeleński there. It is worth emphasising that at the time “a woman playing billiards was enough to shock Krakow and it substantially contributed to the legends about orgies in Paon”.<sup>18</sup> By contrast, according to the historian Wilhelm Feldman, Paon became a place of great intellectual improvisations and artistic competitions and, above all, a place of constant “*battles with philistines*”.<sup>19</sup> Paon’s special atmosphere was immortalized in a monumental canvas (now in the collection of the National Museum in Krakow) [Fig. 1], covered with pictures and texts of the café regulars, among others, Józef Mehoffer, Włodzimierz Tetmajer, Witold Wojtkiewicz and Stanisław Wyspiański, which became a sort of album

<sup>14</sup> BOY-ŻELEŃSKI, T.: Na początku była chuć [At the Beginning Was Lust]. In: *O Krakowie* [About Krakow]. Ed. H. MARKIEWICZ. Kraków 1974, p. 69.

<sup>15</sup> ŚWIDERSKA, A.: Trwa, choć przeminęło [It Continues, but Astray]. In: *Kopiec wspomnień* [A Bunch of Memories]. Kraków 1964, pp. 325-326.

<sup>16</sup> BOY-ŻELEŃSKI, T.: Nonszalancki Paon [Paon Nonchalant]. In: *Znaszli ten kraj?*... (see in note 7), p. 160.

<sup>17</sup> KOZAKOWSKA-ZAUCHA, U.: *Z biegiem dni, z biegiem nocy czyli Narodowe Muzeum Szalonemu Kabaretowi* [Through the Day,

through the Night, that Is, National Museum to the Salon Cabaret]. Kraków 2003; MAŁKIEWICZ, B.: „Paon” – das erste Künstlercafé des „Jungen Polen“. In: *Impressionismus und Symbolismus. Malerei der Jahrhundertwende aus Polen*. [Exhib. Cat.] Eds. D. TEUBER – B. OSTROWSKA. Warsaw, National Museum – Baden-Baden, Staatliche Kunsthalle, 6 December 1997 – 1 March 1998. Baden-Baden 1998, pp. 51-57.

<sup>18</sup> BOY-ŻELEŃSKI 1984 (see in note 7), p. 162.

<sup>19</sup> FELDMAN, W.: *Piśmiennictwo polskie 1880 – 1904* [Polish Literature 1880 – 1904]. Lwów 1905, pp. 177-181.



1. Paon: a huge canvas covered with caricatures and short poems by habitués of the Café Paon, 1896 – 1901, oil, pencil, crayon on canvas, 226 × 600 cm. Krakow, National Museum. Photo: Archive of the museum.

of the Young Poland bohemianism. Legends and rumours attracted the public to Paon, as everyone wanted to see the *femme fatale*, that is, Dagny Przybyszewska, especially that “all Poland talked about the Przybyszewski couple at that time”.<sup>20</sup>

After Turlinowski went bankrupt, Krakow’s bohemians moved to Jan Michalik’s patisserie in Floriańska Street, where in 1905 the literary cabaret Zielony Balonik (Green Balloon) came into existence. The Krakow literary, artistic, theatrical and journalistic elites chose it as a venue for their meetings. And again, to quote the already-mentioned Tadeusz Boy-Żeleński, “the ignorant Krakow was again outraged about the meetings held in the Jama Michalika café. Bigots and matrons began to gossip. There were rumours about orgies, dancing naked, etc.” Nevertheless, Zielony Balonik was soon to become “Krakow’s darling, a kind of authority, especially when it came to artistic issues”. Fascinated with it, citizens of Warsaw, Lviv and Vienna arrived for first nights of new plays, and the snobbish, narrow-minded locals soon started to enjoy going there, too. Bohemian artists were also involved in the interior

design and décor of Jama Michalika café: paintings, polychromes, furniture and stained-glass windows. In 1905, a special exhibition was held there, namely the 9<sup>th</sup> parodic “Sztuka” display, which was a unique form of the artistic demonstration of bohemianism and the circle’s response to the official 9<sup>th</sup> exhibition of the elitist “Sztuka” Society of Polish Artists, organised at the Krakow Palace of Arts. It showed caricatures of prominent figures associated with the “Sztuka” Society as well as pastiches by the young graphic artists Karol Frycz and Kazimierz Sichulski.<sup>21</sup> The last trace of the bohemian presence in Jan Michalik’s patisserie, in the fourth year of the existence of the cabaret, was the decoration of its interior. This is how another phenomenon of the Young Poland era came into existence, that is the entire interior design of the café (preserved to this day) [Fig. 2]. Walls were covered with caricatures, both in the form of tiny sketches and monumental *panneaux*. What is more, Karol Frycz produced designs for the furniture, doors, windows, stained-glass windows, a fireplace, candelabra, lamps, tables and chairs.<sup>22</sup>

<sup>20</sup> KRZYŻANOWSKI, M.: Wspomnienia księgarza [Memories of a Bookseller]. In: *Kopiec wspomnień* (see in note 15), pp. 144, 147.

<sup>21</sup> See also KOSSOWSKA, I.: A Smile of Modernism: Polish Caricature 1900 – 1914. In: *Centropa: A Journal of Central European Architecture and Related Arts*, 4, 2004, No. 1, pp. 42-43.

<sup>22</sup> CROWLEY, D.: *National Style and Nation-State. Design in Poland from the Vernacular Revival to the International Style*. Manchester – New York 1992, pp. 35-36; MURAWSKA-MUTHESIUS, K.: Michalik’s Café in Kraków: Café and Caricature as Media of Modernity. In: ASHBY, C. – GRONBERG, T. – SHAW-MILLER, S. (eds.): *The Viennese Café and Fin-de-Siècle Culture*. New York 2013 (forthcoming).



2. Interior of Jama Michalika café in Krakow.  
Photo: Studio ST.

One more venue of the city bohemians was Schmidt's café on the corner of Szewska Street and the Market Square, where, however, "*Krakow philistines*"<sup>23</sup> sometimes disturbed artists. According to a painter Marcin Samlicki, professors of the Academy of Fine Arts, who, despite their official academic positions, were actively involved in the life of the bohemian circle, spent a lot of time in Franciszek Sauer's café on the corner of Sławkowska and Szczepańska Streets. In that coffee house there was a "*table of scoffers*", permanently occupied by important painters: Teodor Axentowicz (portraitist, interested in genre-scenes – usually from the life of the Hutsul highlanders from the Eastern Carpathians), Włodzimierz Tetmajer (painted above all characteristic genre scenes on Polish country themes, inspired by life in Bronowice near Krakow), Wojciech Weiss (portraitist, painted also nudes, symbolic compositions and landscapes, a member of the "Sztuka" Society of Polish Artists and Viennese Secession) and Jacek Malczewski (one of the most outstanding

Polish artists; a painter whose great artistic output included works of very difficult, sometimes indecipherable content, oscillating between the problems of life, death and love, as well as between Romantic visions and metaphysics). Samlicki writes that whenever Malczewski entered Sauer's café, the crowd cheered loudly and enthusiastically.<sup>24</sup> Another trendy spot was the Noworolski Café in the Cloth Hall (Sukiennice), frequented by almost the same painters as well as the actors: Juliusz Osterwa and Ludwik Solski and the actress Stanisława Wysocka. Professors of the Krakow Academy of Fine Arts also met in the café in Grand Hotel in Sławkowska Street.

Significantly, the most influential addressees of Przybyszewski's views were professors of the School of Fine Arts, reformed by Julian Fałat in 1897 and turned into an Academy. The Academy attracted prominent artistic personalities who had an enormous impact on the ambitious and opinion-forming "Sztuka" Society of Polish Artists. The uniqueness of such an assembly of prominent individuals and

<sup>23</sup> WAŚKOWSKI, A.: *Znajomi z tamtych czasów (literaci, malarze, aktorzy) 1892 – 1939* [Friends from Those Days (Writers, Painters, Actors) 1892 – 1939]. Kraków 1956, p. 76.

<sup>24</sup> SAMLICKI, M.: *Pamiętniki* [Memoirs]. [s.l., s.a.], manuscript in the collection of the S. Fischer Museum in Bochnia (Poland).



3. Kazimierz Sichulski:  
*Lunatic Cabaret*, 1908,  
mural. Krakow, Jama  
Michalika café. Photo:  
Archive of the author.

talents of *fin de siècle* art, the excellence of exhibitions held by the “Sztuka” Society, combined with the active involvement of these personalities in the cultural exchange between salon and café, makes it possible to distinguish, here in Krakow, a completely new kind of bohemianism: an exquisite, noble and even aristocratic bohemianism enjoyed a vogue, becoming a great source of artistic inspiration. Worthy of note are some painterly recordings of scenes from the life of the bohemian circle associated with the Jama Michalika café. For example, Alfons Karpiński portrayed painters-academics sitting around a round table in the café: Stanisław Dębicki, Karol Frycz, Stanisław Kamocki, Stefan Filipkiewicz, Józef Mehoffer, Teodor Axentowicz and Stanisław Czajkowski.<sup>25</sup> In 1908, Kazimierz Sichulski painted a monumental canvas *Lunatic Cabaret*, which decorates

the interior of Jama Michalika café to this day [Fig. 3]. It is a collective portrait of the habitués of the café walking in a cheerful procession towards the moon where “Master Twardowski” (“Pan Twardowski”)<sup>26</sup> awaits them with a cup in his hand. In 1911 – 1936, the artist made *supraportas* entitled *The Last Judgement* with caricatures of the Jama Michalika café regulars. Another frequent customer, Witold Wojtkiewicz, was the author of a gloomy, pessimistic caricature entitled *Bohemians*, of 1903,<sup>27</sup> and *The Youngest Generation of Painters Enhancing Their Talents with Coffee in “U Koziary” Café* [Fig. 4].<sup>28</sup>

Ideas inspired by the catastrophic and pessimistic philosophy of Schopenhauer, the mood of resignation and disappointment, as well as the lack of belief in the supreme being, so dear to bohemians, and propagated by Przybyszewski and Zenon Przesmy-

<sup>25</sup> Painting in the collection of the National Museum in Wrocław.

<sup>26</sup> Pan Twardowski (Master Twardowski) – in Polish literature, he is a sorcerer who entered a pact with the devil, sold his soul in exchange for special powers.

<sup>27</sup> In the collection of the National Museum in Warsaw.

<sup>28</sup> *Liberum Veto*, 1904, No. 8, p. 7; more about “U Koziary” café: MURAWSKA-MUTHESIUS, K. Karykatura kawiarniana jako medium nowoczesności: Jama Michalika w Krakowie [Café Cartoon as a Medium of Modernity: Jama Michalika in Krakow]. In: *Konteksty*, 64, 2010, No. 4, p. 171.

4. Witold Wojtkiewicz:  
*The Youngest Generation  
of Painters Enhancing  
Their Talents with Coffee  
at the "U Kozjary" Café,  
1904. Repro: Liberum  
Veto, 1904, No. 8, p. 7.*



cki-Miram and Karol Irzykowski, following Maurice Maeterlinck, became particularly visible in the painting of the turn of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Hence, the dramatically sad and sombre portraits by Olga Boznańska; hence *Night Moth* by Leon Kaufmann;<sup>29</sup> hence the melancholic landscapes by Jan Stanisławski, Ferdynand Ruszczyk's paintings pervaded by terror and Stanisław Wyspiański's symbolism-permeated landscapes; hence the motif of dying autumn landscapes that recurred in the works of Jan Stanisławski's pupils, or in the nocturnes by Ludwik de Laveaux.

A translator of the ideas promoted by the indefatigable instigator Stanisław Przybyszewski into the language of painting was his favourite, Wojciech Weiss, who, besides Edvard Munch and Gustav Vigeland, was the artist Przybyszewski respected most. Already in 1898, Przybyszewski reproduced Weiss's painting *Melancholic* in his *Życie* and in 1900, some of his other works, namely: *Melancholic*, *Youth*, *Self-Portrait with Apple*, two versions of *Spring*, *Portrait*

*of Parents*, *Dance*, *Kiss* and *Study*. Przybyszewski also used Weiss's composition *Chopin* as an illustration for his article "Ku czci mistrza" ("In Honour of the Master"), published in *Życie*<sup>30</sup> in 1899. His gloomy "De Profundis" was illustrated with *Spring* and *Kiss* while a collection of essays "On the Paths of the Soul" with *Chopin* and *Youth*. Wojciech Weiss's paintings and personality from 1898 – 1905 serve as a great example of Krakow bohemianism inspired in the city by Stanisław Przybyszewski. This bohemian episode in Weiss's artistic curriculum vitae seems to have been started by a painting full of eroticism and decadence, dating from 1898, depicting Alfons Karpiński and a naked model. The work of the then young artist also shows a clear inspiration by literature and the aura surrounding the leader of decadents. An apathetic, resigned figure depicted in *Melancholic*, also called *Totenmesse*, of 1898, is a clear reference to Przybyszewski's work with the same title, published in 1893. *Demon*, dating from 1904, is not only an allusion to the bohemian circle and lifestyle,

<sup>29</sup> In the collection of the Mazovian Museum in Płock.

<sup>30</sup> PRZYBYSZEWSKI, S.: Ku czci Mistrza [In Honor of the Master]. In: *Życie*, 3, 1899, Nos. 19-20, p. 1.

but it also ostentatiously refers to the Satanist themes from the prose of the sad Satan [Fig. 5]. The painting is set in a deserted café, where a crying woman is accompanied by a man that reminds one of Satan. The latter is smoking a cigarette and rocking a chair nonchalantly. There is clear discord between his cynicism and indifference and the woman's despair. The man bears resemblance to Przybyszewski himself, and the woman is anonymous. However, their relationship makes one think of an episode from Przybyszewski's life and his tragic affair in Berlin with Marta Foerder, who, unable to accept his indifference and lack of love, committed suicide. But the man with demonic features is also the demon in the painting's title – a decadent artist, who, according to the author of "Confiteor", is also "*a philosopher, God and all*".<sup>31</sup> Weiss's thoughts expressed in his paintings from Paris depicting "*devilish churches*", compositions devoted to cabarets and dives, which show the stifling atmosphere of Parisian cabarets, like *Café d'Arcourt*, of 1899, or *Cancan in Moulin Rouge*, of 1900, are so close to Przybyszewski's concepts.

After the period of tragedy and despair, after the dazing atmosphere of hopelessness, pessimism, catastrophic visions of the world and the lack of belief in anything, the year 1905 marked the beginning of the new era of optimism and affirmation of life. Poetic declarations of Kazimierz Tetmajer: "*I don't believe in anything / I don't desire anything in the world...*", or Zenon Miriam-Przesmycki: "*What can one believe in today when everything is collapsing... / What can one believe in when the light does not shine for us any more...*" were replaced by the words of Kazimiera Zawistowska from 1903: "*The golden doors of life have opened before us... / Sun! sun in hot, scorching summer...*" The character of the Young Poland bohemianism also changed. It gradually lost

its decadent character, aesthetic and philosophical formulas went into decline and Stanislaw Przybyszewski's concept concerning the special mission of the artist and the idea of the elitism of art slowly came to an end. Nonetheless, Young Poland artists, who still considered themselves geniuses, were to defend their positions, artistic concepts and the moods of that aristocratic bohemianism for a few years to come. However, artists of a new, younger and angry generation were already getting ready for radical changes. With time they would create their own bohemianism, now choosing Galka Muszkatołowa café in Krakow as the venue for their gatherings.

Krakow's artistic *bohème* of *fin-de-siècle* adopted a position that was specific and unique in Europe. Even if initially seen as an embodiment of evil and corruption and as highly controversial on the grounds of morality, it was cursed and despised by the pompous Krakow bourgeoisie only for a while. Its powerful proclamation of creative freedom and the artistic independence extolled by Przybyszewski was recognized and appreciated very soon by the promoters of modern art. Even the demoralization that appeared more aristocratic than bohemian was eventually accepted. The process was spurred by the fact that Krakow's bohemians comprised the very elite of the cultural life: the renowned artists, mainly professors of the Academy of Fine Arts, the prominent actors, talented writers and poets, as well as influential critics. These great personalities shaped their own era. They turned Krakow into a fashionable city, and their achievements were recognized on a European level. Thus the bohemians of Krakow did not detach themselves from the artistic mainstream but, on the contrary, they essentially created the major tropes of Polish modernism.

*English translation by M. Herudzińska-Oświecimska*

<sup>31</sup> PRZYBYSZEWSKI 1902 (see in note 1), p. 18.

## Dekadenti, pesimisti a neoromantici alebo Mladé Poľsko a bohéma v Krakove

### Resumé

Na zlome 19. a 20. storočia došlo v Krakove k bezprecedentnému vývoju. Mesto sa stalo „*poľskými Aténami*“ a „*duchovným hlavným mestom Poľska*“ s kvitnúcim intelektuálnym a umeleckým životom, hlavným mestom modernizmu, ktoré malo enormný vplyv na celú krajinu počas doby „Delení“.

Životom prekypujúci a rozkvitajúci Krakov bol v tom čase tiež „Mekkou“ umelcov. V tomto relatívne malom meste na seba narážali dva úplne odlišné svety – na jednej strane konzervatívny, haličský Krakov s jeho bohobojnou buržoáziou, zastaraným názorom na svet a snami o úspešnej kariére (najmä úradníckej), a na druhej strane svet umelcov, bohém-ských dekadentov, ktorí šokovali seriózných občanov Krakova na každom kroku, provokovali ich, vyhýbali sa všetkým tradičným ideálom a porušovali tabu. Ale bol to práve tento bohémsky krúžok, ktorý určoval atmosféru krakovského Mladého Poľska. Časom sa tento trend postupne stal dekadentným, pesimistickým a predovšetkým bohémско-umeleckým. V Krakove sa objavilo niekoľko typov bohémov: tí, ktorí boli spätí s krúžkom riaditeľa Mestského divadla T. Pawlikowského a autorkou divadelných hier G. Zapolskou; tí, ktorí sa zhromaždili okolo S. Przybyszewského a nakoniec bohémски maliari.

Nespochybniteľným vodcom krakovských bohémov bol „*smutný Satan*“ – S. Przybyszewski, ktorý prišiel do mesta v roku 1898 a priviedol so sebou nielen svoju prekrásnu nórsku manželku, Dagny Juel, ale priniesol aj závan škandinávsko-berlínskej bohémy. Przybyszewského názory boli mimoriadne dobre prijaté v provinčnom Krakove, ktorý sa prebúdzaľ z letargie a veľkolepo slávil najmä všetky vlastencko-náboženské udalosti: konzervatívna buržoázia, izolovaná šľachta a mimoriadne aktívna inteligencia sa zhromaždili okolo Jagelonskej univerzity, Poľskej akadémie umení a vied, zreformovaného Mestského divadla, vyvíjajúceho sa Národného múzea, Múzea priemyslu a techniky, a v neposlednom rade zreformovanej Školy výtvarných umení.

Przybyszewski bol obklopený najmä spisovateľmi a maliarmi. Nie bez významu boli aj spoločenské stretnutia (salóny) organizované manželmi Przybyszewskými, spočiatku v ich byte na Karmelickej ulici č. 53, neskôr na Siemiradzkeho ulici. Salón Przybyszewských a jeho životný štýl mal hlboký vplyv aj na iné podobné miesta tohto druhu v Krakove.

V Krakove, podobne ako vo Viedni, Berlíne a Paríži, existovali umelecké kaviarne, ktoré sa stali živnou pôdou pre bohém-ských umelcov, „*svätými*“ *nočnej secesie*“, ktoré hrali úlohu zvláštnych salónov.

Prvým takýmto miestom stretnutí bolo Café Restaurant du Théâtre, zriadené F. Turlínským v roku 1896 na Špitálskej ulici 38. Na prvom poschodí bola miestnosť známa ako „*Paon nonchalant*“. Potom, čo Turlínski zbankrotoval, sa krakovskí bohémi presťahovali do cukrárne Jama Michalika vo Floriánskej ulici, kde sa v roku 1905 zrodil kabaret Zielony Balonik. Krakovské literárne, umelecké, divadelné a novinárske elity si ho vybrali za miesto svojich stretnutí.

Aktivity umeleckého a spoločensko-kaviarensko-salónneho života umožňujú rozpoznať v Krakove úplne nový druh bohémy: dokonalej, noblesnej a dokonca aristokratickej. Bohatý umelecký a spoločenský život, ktorý ovládal krakovských bohémov, v žiadnom prípade nebránil rozvoju umenia, ani nespôsobil skazenú zábavu. Práve naopak, stal sa podnetom, motiváciou a impulzom veľkých diel. Čas triumfu bohém-ského krúžku sa prekrýva s érou veľkých výstav, ktoré boli usporadúvané nielen v Krakove, ale aj vo Viedni. Bohémi, hoci spočiatku šokovali haličskú buržoáznu mentalitu, sa časom, propagujúc nový štýl, stávali stále vplyvnejšími. Je zaujímavé, že tí, ktorí boli spočiatku pobúrení bohémou, začali hľadať možnosť, ako sa k tomuto krúžku pripojiť. Navyše, kupovali umelecké diela a zakladali súkromné zbierky, ktoré boli dôležité pre existenciu tohto krúžku. Bohéma sa tešila móde a stala sa veľkým prameňom umeleckej inšpirácie.

*Preklad z angličtiny J. Bakoš*

## New York Bohemianism in the Second Half of the Nineteenth Century

Marc S. SMITH

From the beginning of the nineteenth century, US artists were under the pressure of religious values which stemmed from the Second Awakening. Painters were often seen as lazy, corrupt and socially unnecessary. These views were the consequence of how certain protestant churches saw Europe, Catholicism and papal patronage, and associated them to the Fine Arts. These stereotypes were reinforced by the fact that many US painters went to Europe to either learn their art or to perfect their style, which was seen as an impediment to the development of a national art.<sup>1</sup>

For many of these expatriate artists Paris and London became valuable training centers and for others a second home. During their time abroad from the 1850s onward, certain US painters immersed themselves in bohemianism and once they returned to the United States many of them kept this style and attitude. This brought the establishment of a bohemian circle of artists in New York as early as the mid-1850s.<sup>2</sup>

At first, bohemianism went unnoticed for several years, but by the 1860s it started reinforcing the existing stereotypes attached to the fine arts and to artists. Soon, the trend led to a reevaluation of the identities of artists, as well as to a split in the artistic community. The growing public awareness of bohemianism in the United States also coincided with the

development of the printed press. From the 1860s to the 1890s, depictions of bohemianism appeared in magazines, newspapers and novels, often circulating contradictory values, sometimes independence and autonomy, other times vice and moral decadence. This created a rich set of images which little by little came to represent the life of all artists.<sup>3</sup>

In New York City, certain artists preferred to integrate themselves in the growing art market and attract potential buyers and patrons by dressing in ways which would reflect moral righteousness and economic productivity, while others used the bohemian attire and lifestyle to underline their artistic creativity, yet the opposing values associated to bohemianism made the symbiosis of these approaches possible. The United States had always opposed themselves to Europe in order to develop their national identity, so why did bohemianism and its associated lifestyle flourish from the 1860s to the 1890s? What were the parallels between Paris' bohemian circles and New York's? Why import values which were so clearly in opposition with the dominant ideas of the time and the spiritual corruption traditionally associated to everything European?

The goal of this article will be to first list the social and economic similarities behind the development of bohemianism in Paris and New York. This will lead in a second time to an analysis of how bohemianism

<sup>1</sup> HARRIS, N.: *The Artist in American Society. The Formative Years 1790 – 1860*. New York 1966, p. 111.

<sup>2</sup> BURROWS, E. – WALLACE, M.: *Gotham. A History of New York City to 1898*. London 1998, p. 711.

<sup>3</sup> On the development of the printed press, see MOTT, F.: *A History of American Magazines, 1885 – 1905*. Cambridge 1957; and TREBBEL, J. – ZUCKERMANN, M.: *The Magazine in America, 1741 – 1990*. New York 1991.

was used in the growing printed press as well as in literature and artist portraits as a comment on identities and social values, which ultimately romanticized it and associated it to wide varieties of images and symbols. Primary sources, such as the book *Trilby: A Novel* or scandals such as the “Pie Girl Affair”, reveal how attacking bohemianism became a way of reinforcing the status quo and dominant values. Finally, bohemianism coincided with the rise of US capital devoted to art and was often used as a catalyst to deflect attention from the social restructuring which was taking place at the time.

“Bohemians” was a term that developed in France. It referred to the Gypsy population, who were wrongly associated to historic region in Central Europe known as Bohemia. By the 1830s and 1840s, it was associated in France to the poor artists of the Parisian Latin Quarter. It was first used in derision and mockery before being transformed into fascination. France at the time was undergoing economic transformations and social restructuring, which favored the development of this lifestyle among young artists. One of the reasons for this was the fact that, from the 1830 to the 1870s, the number of High School graduates rose. From 1850 to 1875, this number jumped from 90.000 to 150.000. In reaction to this, members of the “haute-bourgeoisie” restricted social mobility by restraining the access to high paying jobs in the private sector to people from their own social group.<sup>4</sup> The same phenomenon also appeared in the public sector. As a consequence, newly educated people arising from the lower and middle classes had difficulties finding jobs on the market which were in correlation with their diplomas.<sup>5</sup>

In addition to this restricted social mobility, the cultural market was in expansion as the printed press development throughout the century. More and more artistic jobs appeared on the market, inciting

many people to go towards the arts. This trend was emphasized with a new social nobility associated to the arts, which arose from the promotion and power allotted to Salons. Yet, the access to artistic jobs was also somewhat restricted, for the development and importance given to Salons led to a rising exclusion of many artists.<sup>6</sup> A consequence of all these various factors was that France had many newly educated citizens in the arts competing on a restricted yet growing market, fighting to find recognition and social mobility. As a result, many young artists had to live in poor conditions in the French capital, while waiting for artistic recognition or a secure job.

At the same time, this poverty was romanticized in the press and in novels and came to be known as the bohemian lifestyle. Many authors wrote about this phenomenon, such as Jules Champfleury, Louis Edmond Duranty, Honoré de Balzac and Henri Murger.<sup>7</sup> The romantic tales told by Henri Murger, for example, about Paris’ left bank was serialized between 1845 and 1846 and was then published as *Scènes de la vie de bohème* in 1851.<sup>8</sup> The author presented this new class of artists as a principled people who repudiated middle-class morality, the new values given to money and its accumulation and adopted alternative life styles and work habits. They thus became the beholders of the most exquisite way of living life; as Honoré de Balzac explained in *Traité de la vie élégante*.<sup>9</sup> Through such novels, the bohemian lifestyle was little by little idealized, which explains why it went from being turned into derision to actually creating a certain fascination among the bourgeoisie.

This Parisian trend had a great impact on the other side of the Atlantic. The first apostle of what became known as the bohemian gospel in the City of New York was a Nantucket born journalist and critic named Henry Clapp Jr. Like many artists and critics he had spent several formative years in the French

<sup>4</sup> PROST, A.: *Histoire de l'enseignement en France, 1880 – 1967*. Paris 1968.

<sup>5</sup> BOURDIEU, P.: *Les Règles de l'art, gènèse et structure du champ littéraire*. Paris 1998 (1<sup>st</sup> ed. 1992), pp. 96-101.

<sup>6</sup> Ibidem, p. 101.

<sup>7</sup> CHAMPFLEURY, J.: *Confessions de Sylvius: la bohème amoureuse*. [s.l.] 1857. See Gutenberg Project, <http://www.bmlisieux.com/archives/confes01.htm>;

DURANTY, E.: *Le malheur d'Henriette Gérard*. [s.l.] 1858, [http://books.google.fr/books?id=jsEtAAAAMAAJ&printsec=frontcover&hl=fr&source=gbs\\_ge\\_summary\\_r&cad=0#v=onepage&q&f=false](http://books.google.fr/books?id=jsEtAAAAMAAJ&printsec=frontcover&hl=fr&source=gbs_ge_summary_r&cad=0#v=onepage&q&f=false).

<sup>8</sup> MURGER, H.: *Scènes de la vie de bohème*. Paris 1988 (1<sup>st</sup> ed. 1851).

<sup>9</sup> BALZAC, H. de: *Traité de la vie élégante*. Paris 1952 (1<sup>st</sup> ed. 1830), p. 16.

capital and had been greatly influenced by both the poverty stricken life of an artist in the Latin Quarter and also its newly romanticized version. When he moved back to Manhattan, in the mid-1850s, he formed the first bohemian group in the United States, which included writers such as Fitz-Hugh Ludlow, Ada Clare and Walt Whitman, as well as other painters, actors and art students.<sup>10</sup>

This group of artists started gathering in the basement of a beer hall owned by Charles Pfaff, a Swiss German who had opened shop on Broadway, north of Bleecker Street. This first circle of bohemians adopted the deceased Edgar Allan Poe as their patron saint, for they found in his morbid writing a certain attraction, and Walt Whitman became their spokesman. Whitman immortalized this period in Pfaff's basement by writing a few verses: "*The vault at Pfaff's where the drinkers and laughers/ meet to eat and drink and carouse/ While on the walk immediately overhead pass the myriad/ feet of Broadway.*"<sup>11</sup> This was the beginning of the romanticizing of the US version of the bohemian life style, but until the end of the 1850s it remained a somewhat restricted and secluded group.

This first circle of New York bohemians was first introduced to the general public by the founder of the movement Henry Clapp Jr., who launched the *New York Saturday Press* in 1858. It was an irreverent weekly paper which promoted radical view points on art and politics and also greatly promoted the writings of Walt Whitman. Clapp's paper greatly influenced the rise of a new generation of artists and critics, such as William Dean Howells, who in 1860 went to Pfaff's beer hall cellar on a kind of pilgrimage.<sup>12</sup> Clapp's weekly paper and Whitman's prose led the reality of the first bohemian circle to rapidly transform into a fashionable trend among New Yorkers and a movement among artists.

The next generation of New York artists was going to use this bohemian trend and slowly amplify its movement and grasp on the public's mind. Many young artists and critics, who either came back from Paris and London, or who were influenced by the *New York Saturday Press*, were of course attracted by this romanticized lifestyle, the freedom and independence it promoted and the love of pure art. But from a social and economic point of view, the links between France and the United States were numerous and might also help to explain why bohemianism found such a fertile ground in New York's artistic community.

Like in France, the United States were seeing a rapid rise in the number and distribution of newspapers and magazines from the 1860s and 1880s. This created a growth in the demand for professional artists, such as illustrators for novels, magazines and newspapers.<sup>13</sup> Yet, the rapid growth of a new class of professional cultural workers exceeded the job market's demand. At the same time, the demand on the art market was mainly oriented towards European productions, leaving many US painters without an access to the interior market. As a consequence, many painters were unable to live off of their art and had to endure a certain poverty before finding a financially suitable job in the printed press. In addition to these factors, painters were also under stress on the art market from a growing competition among fellow artists, as women also entered the profession and the offer rose.<sup>14</sup> Even if certain collectors such as Thomas Clarke bought paintings from local artists, the majority of the capital created by the second industrial revolution and injected onto the art market continued to be channeled by past or contemporary European artists.<sup>15</sup>

By the 1850s, New York had become the artistic capital of the United States as well as the center of

<sup>10</sup> BURROWS – WALLACE 1998 (see in note 2), p. 711.

<sup>11</sup> WHITMAN, W.: *New York Notebook*. [s.l.] 1861 – 1862. Library of Congress, Thomas Biggs Harned Collection. See Gutenberg Project, <http://digital.lib.lehigh.edu/pfaffs/w1430>.

<sup>12</sup> BURROWS – WALLACE 1998 (see in note 2), p. 711.

<sup>13</sup> SMITH, M.: *Spéculation, marché de l'art et naissance d'un réseau artistique moderne aux États-Unis de l'industrialisation à la crise des*

*années 1930. Un monopole social et culturel en construction*. [PhD. Diss.] University of Montpellier. Montpellier 2011, chap. 6, pp. 227-254.

<sup>14</sup> DEWEY ANDERSON, H. – ROBINSON, P. H.: *Occupational Trends in the United States*. Stanford 1940, pp. 493-501.

<sup>15</sup> WEINBERG, B.: Thomas B. Clarke: Foremost Patron of American Art from 1872 to 1899. In: *American Art Journal*, 8, 1976, No. 1, pp. 52-83.



1. George Du Maurier: *The Two Apprentices*, 1894. Repr.: Harper's New Monthly Magazine (see in note 21).



2. George Du Maurier: *Maudie on the Choice of a Profession*, 1881. Repr.: Punch (see in note 21).

the art market. Most young artists went there to find patrons and begin their careers. Under the different stresses from the market, the bohemian lifestyle then became a romantic way of living in poverty while waiting for fame as an artist or before finding a job in the printed press as an illustrator or critic.

From the 1870s to the 1900s, this lifestyle was romanticized among artists in several ways. Certain artists were using bohemianism in their representation either through portraits or self-portraits.<sup>16</sup> Because competition on the interior art market in the United States was so fierce, bohemian imagery was a way of setting oneself apart from the other artists and became a way of trying to find a certain originality. The connotations behind these symbols were ones of independence and creativity, which helped idealize the trend among artists. But bohemianism, in the general public, was also associated to Europe, which remained linked to spiritual corruption, laziness and social ineptitude.<sup>17</sup> As a consequence, the use of such imagery could very well back fire. Two outcomes were then possible, either the artist was already of a certain age and had gained a certain reputation and the bohemian attire would endow him with images associated to independence, originality and mastery;

or the artists was still young or unknown and such an imagery would link him to all the negative images still linked to a Europe seen as decadent and corrupt [Fig. 1].<sup>18</sup>

From the 1880s onward, bohemianism continued to be seen in a negative light in the general public through its depiction in certain novels. One example is Charles de Kay's *The Bohemian; A Tragedy of Modern Life*,<sup>19</sup> where such artists were represented as hypocrites and frauds, some silly and easily discarded, others dangerous and satyrs. The image of the perverted bohemian was also accentuated by another author George du Maurier and in his book *Trilby*.<sup>20</sup> Du Maurier accounts for the life of three young English painters in Paris' Latin Quarter. During their stay they meet Trilby O'Ferral a free spirited and amoral young woman who feels no shame in posing nude or conducting casual love affairs. The trio and the young model meet the sinister Jew Svengali, who hypnotizes the young Trilby and makes her his pet. Jew Svengali represents the archetype of the bohemian satyr, whose Eastern European name places him at the time in a sphere of perversion and in the geographical space associated to Bohemia, while Trilby becomes the archetype of the naive young lady

<sup>16</sup> See for example see photographs and illustration of and by Napoleon Sarony reproduced in SHELTON, W. H.: *Artist Life in New York in the Days of Oliver Horn*. In: *The Critic*, 1903, No. 43.

<sup>17</sup> HARRIS 1966 (see in note 1), p. 111.

<sup>18</sup> BURNS, S.: *Inventing the Modern Artist. Art and Culture in Gilded Age America*. New Haven (CT) 1996, pp. 221-237.

<sup>19</sup> DE KAY, C.: *The Bohemian, a Tragedy of Modern Life*. New York 1878.

<sup>20</sup> DU MAURIER, G.: *Trilby: A Novel*. London 1895.



3. John Moran: *Studio-Life in New York, 1879*. Repro: The Art Journal (see in note 26).

fallen prey to the corruption of bohemianism. As the moral of the time dictated, both die by the end of the novel. The book's fame in the 1890s reinforced the position of bohemianism inside the sphere of sexual corruption, which had traditionally been associated also to Paris. The influence of George du Maurier on the figure of the corrupt bohemian artist was actually greater than the novel itself. Through his illustrations for *Harper's*, where *Trilby* was also published as a serial in 1894, he placed bohemianism deeper inside a world of vice and deprivation [Fig. 2].<sup>21</sup>

Yet, at the same time, the three young English painters inside the novel came to represent the middle class and its youth. And as such, the figure of the bohemian painter also became symbolic of youth, aspiration and temporary release from the social norms and conventions before entering the age of maturity. As such, bohemianism in the 1890s was also seen as a socially acceptable period in life where the young of the middle class could temporarily step out of what was socially acceptable before becoming a socially integrated adult. In other words, bohemianism was

<sup>21</sup> See for example illustrations by G. DU MAURIER: *All as It Used to Be* (taken from *Trilby: A Novel*. London 1895, p. 40), *The Two Apprentices* (taken from *Trilby*. In: *Harper's New Monthly Magazine*, March 1894, No. 88), *Equal to the Occasion* (taken from *Harper's New Monthly Magazine*, June 1893, No.



4. William Merritt Chase: *In the Studio, 1880*, oil on canvas, 71.2 × 101.9 cm. New York, Brooklyn Museum. Photo: Archive of the museum.



5. Elizabeth Bisland: *The Studio of W. M. Chase, 1889*. Repro: The Cosmopolitan (see in note 26).

a kind of trial or rite of passage, in some way a sort of rumspringa for artists. Yet, this specific time in the life of an artist is full of danger and a possible lethal passage of age.<sup>22</sup>

By the 1890s, bohemianism in the general public was little by little seen as a normal stage in the passage into adulthood, before entering society as

87), *Maudie on the Choice of a Profession* (taken from *Punch*, 12 February 1881).

<sup>22</sup> BURNS 1996 (see in note 18), p. 266.



6. William T. Smedley: *William Merritt Chase*, 1891. Repr: Harper's Weekly (see in note 27).



7. Napoleon Sarony: *Napoleon Sarony*, 1903. Repr: The Critic (see in note 27).

a productive member. As the magazine *The Critic* explained, this was what had happened to Henri Murger in France, who after having found fame and fortune with his book *Scènes de la vie de bohème*, crossed river banks in Paris to start living in a posher part of town. Bohemia became a temporary space for the middle and upper-class youth to express its radical ideas and live the passion of its age. But to remain in Bohemia passed a certain age revealed either a deep moral corruption or an artistic failure, as Willa Cather explained “an old man who is still hanging about the outskirts of Bohemia is a symbol of the most pitiful failure on earth”.<sup>23</sup>

Certain artists continued being bohemians, or playing the part, through their careers and mature age, like William Merritt Chase or James McNeill Whistler, without being constantly associated to sexual corruption. But one of the reasons George du Maurier’s novel *Trilby* became so famous at the

time was precisely because Whistler sued Du Maurier on the pretense that the author had represented him as an easily identifiable character and mocked his bohemian pretense in his book.<sup>24</sup> On the other hand, Chase was never attacked for continuing to perform bohemianism all through his life, but one of the reasons for this might be because he was represented as both a bohemian and also a business man, while Whistler, who tried to control his appearance in the printed press<sup>25</sup> was always represented on his own accord as a bohemian, for better or for worse. So by the mid-1880s, bohemianism had also become a stance, a role to play [Fig. 3].

The example of William Merritt Chase also shows the confusion of genres around bohemianism in the United States. The bohemian was after all someone foreign, who in the mind of the public was from a far away land and who was easily identified as exotic. And as many things exotic at the time, bohemianism

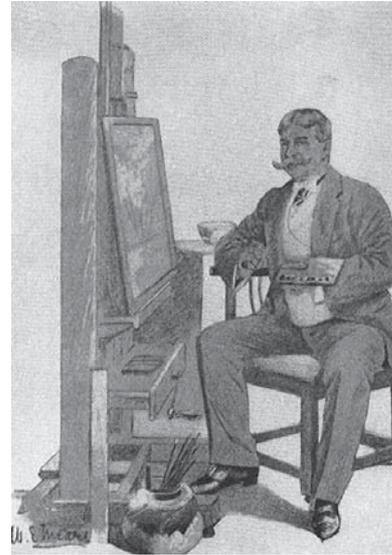
<sup>23</sup> CATHER, W.: Review of Clyde Fitcher, Bohemia. In: *Nebraska State Journal*, 5 April 1896. Cited in CURTIN, W. M. (ed.): *The World and the Parish. Willa Cather's Articles and Reviews, 1893 – 1902*. Vol. 1. Lincoln 1970, p. 133.

<sup>24</sup> On the case between Du Maurier and Whistler, see Trilbyana. In: *The Critic*, 17 November 1894, No. 25, p. 331; Whistler’s Own. In: *The Nation*, 7 August 1890, No. 51, p. 116.

<sup>25</sup> GROSSMAN, J. H.: The Mythic Svengali: Anti-Aestheticism in *Trilby*. In: *Studies in the Novel*, 1996, No. 28, p. 25. For primary sources, see James Abbott McNeill Whistler. In: *The American Architect and Building News*, 26 November 1887, No. 22, p. 293; The Man Whistler at the Telephone. In: *Life*, 8 November 1894, No. 24.



8. Napoleon Sarony: F. Hopkinson Smith, 1903. Repr.: *The Critic* (see in note 27).



9. William E. Mears: F. Hopkinson Smith, 1899. Repr.: *The Arena* (see in note 27).

also came to be associated with Orientalism [Fig. 4]. The parallels between the two were numerous, for both were associated with moral, spiritual and sexual corruption but also with creativity, beauty and foreignness, as such, in the mind of the population of the United States, both merged sometimes into the same thing,<sup>26</sup> which also tends to show that bohemianism was more of a trend and a part to play than a real lifestyle, as it was in the Latin Quarter [Fig. 5].

From this perspective, bohemianism also reflected dominant social values. In the example of William Merritt Chase and F. Hopkinson Smith, artists needed to be perceived as productive members of their communities [Figs. 6, 7]. One way of doing this was to dress as business men or at least give a

sense through their clothes of professionalism, while bohemianism through the orientalist perspective gave the idea of one having, as it was seen at the time, “gone native” and thus no more providing the image moral rectitude. So one strategy used by Chase and Hopkinson was to dress as the upper class did outside of the studio, but inside use oriental or bohemian garments and the fez seems to have been the perfect fusion of genres.<sup>27</sup> One reason for this might come from the fact that Orientalism was very trendy among the New York urban elite and collectors from the 1880s and 1890s [Figs. 8, 9].<sup>28</sup>

Through the example of James McNeill Whistler, it is also possible to see the way bohemianism was associated to formalism and the art for art sake move-

<sup>26</sup> See footnote 14 as well as respectively this article, illustration, photograph and painting on William Merritt Chase’s studio: PATTISON, J.: William Merritt Chase, N. A. In: *The House Beautiful*, February 1909, No. 25, p. 52; J. MORAN: *Studio-Life in New York*, illustration (in *The Art Journal*, 1879, No. 5, pp. 344-345); E. BISLAND: *The Studio of W. M. Chase*, photography (taken from The Studio of New York. In: *The Cosmopolitan*, May 1889, No. 7); W. M. CHASE: *In the Studio*, 1880, oil on canvas, 71.2 × 101.9 cm. New York, Brooklyn Museum.

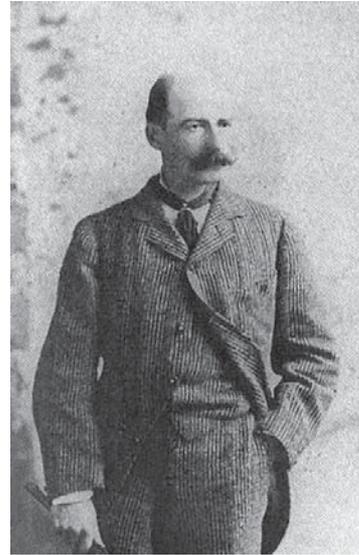
<sup>27</sup> This conclusion was made by comparing for Chase: W. T. SMEDLEY: *William Merritt Chase*, illustration (in DE KAY,

C.: Mr. Chase and Central Park. In: *Harper’s Weekly*, 2 May 1891, No. 35) with E. BISLAND: *The Studio of W. M. Chase*, photography (taken from The Studio of New York. In: *The Cosmopolitan*, May 1889, No. 7). And for F. Hopkinson Smith: W. E. MEARS: *F. Hopkinson Smith*, illustration (in *The Arena*, July 1899, No. 22) with N. SARONY: *F. Hopkinson Smith*, illustration (in *Artists Life in New York in the Days of Oliver Horn*. In: *The Critic*, July 1903, No. 43). In both cases the fez refers both to Orientalism and bohemianism.

<sup>28</sup> LEACH, W.: *Land of Desire. Merchants, Power and the Rise of a New American Culture*. New York 1993, pp. 104-111.



10. James Carroll Beckwith: *Portrait of William Walton*, 1886, oil on canvas, 121 × 73 cm. New York, The Century Association. Photo: Archive of the association.



11. Napoleon Sarony: *Portrait of Winslow Homer*, ca. 1880, albumen print. Brunswick (ME), Bowdoin College Museum of Art. Photo: Archive of the museum.

ment, or in the most extreme cases, to the way certain artists were seen to dress as the part, talk and act as artists but were seen to be devoid of any real talent. In this sense, the representation of bohemianism in the printed press became a way of mocking those whose only talent was to appear as artists. Because the Parisian avant-garde was often associated to formalism and the art for art's sake movement, which had great difficulties being integrated in the United States, the choice of clothes also became a way of affirming ones aesthetic position, which once again led to great parodies in the printed press.<sup>29</sup>

Once these stereotypes were deeply rooted inside the collective mind through magazines newspapers and novels, it was then possible to attack all deviant behavior as a result of the corruption of bohemianism. One scandal called the “Pie Girl Affair” especially targeted the artist bohemian community of New York. The incident happened during an exclusively male party organized by the Wall Street broker Henry W. Poor in honor of a friend's tenth wedding anniversary. It took place in the studio of artist James L. Breese. The other guests were painters, architects and members of the financial elite.

<sup>29</sup> SMITH 2011 (see in note 13), pp. 265-275.

The climax of the party was a pretty young model in black gauze rising from the inside of a gigantic pie. This dinner was characteristic of life among certain urban elites and was composed of a “*society of male friends, mostly in the arts... with a good deal of secrecy for an elaborate, heavy dinner, some serious drinking, and sexually titillating entertainment*”.<sup>30</sup>

The party came under the public's scrutiny when the young girl, named Susie Johnson, disappeared and the police started to investigate. As the word “secrecy” suggests, certain people viewed the arts as a cloak of good taste where wealthy individuals could hide their vice and depravity. The party was called “*the three thousand five hundred dollar dinner*”. Risqué motifs adorned the place cards and menus. In addition to Susie Johnson in the pie, two other models served wine to the men, a blond for the white wine, a brunette for the red. A news article published in *The World* stated that “*somewhere in the big studio buildings of New York's Bohemia the girl is hidden. Perhaps the article will bring Susie Johnson home to her parents and put a stop to the bacchanalian revels in New York's fashionable studios. These amusements... are beyond the reach of police or municipal reformers. [...] The contamination... works*

<sup>30</sup> BURNS 1996 (see in note 18), p. 87.

sorrow and misery in... homes.”<sup>31</sup> Whether Susie Johnson went back home or not, we do not know. It is possible to find a certain manipulation in this article in the fact that responsibility was put onto “New York’s Bohemia” and not onto the guests from the dominant class who were present. The integration and parallel rejection of bohemianism then became ways of reaffirming the status quo [Fig. 10].

From the 1870s to the 1890s, the press had stigmatized the arts and the artists with very negative and generalist views. Much of the public’s position regarding bohemianism can be found in magazines and newspapers of the time under the form of cartoons accompanied by little stories denouncing the arts as a place of corruption. Artists were seen as overpaid craftsmen, very effeminate men (after the Oscar Wilde trial), or as crooks taking advantage of a victimized elite.<sup>32</sup> This summarizes very well the general criticism made by the media at the time. Bohemians were crooks selling nonsense, which the wealthy would buy because they were naive. These cartoons often showed collectors recognizing the value of paintings from the price tag attached to the painting’s enormous, gold embedded casing placed on a silk burgundy drape. Buyers were victims of the bohemian artists’ marketing scheme.<sup>33</sup> The press had portrayed bohemian artists in such horrendous ways, that most US painters had by then started depicting themselves in self-portraits as well dressed and groomed.<sup>34</sup> One could have easily mistaken them for brokers or businessmen. Yet, at the same time, among the New York’s upper class, bohemians and Orientalism remained acceptable as long as it stayed inside certain boundaries. In other words, they were used in a form of social control to guide young adults

into becoming productive members of society, while giving them a certain space to express the rebellious nature of youth [Fig. 11].

As Matthew Josephson demonstrated, the dominant class controlled the media through shares and stock. His study of the 1885 and 1887 strikes, the Homestead uprising in 1892 and the Pullman strike showed how the business and financial elite was able to legitimize their positions and aggressive reprisals through the press.<sup>35</sup> The fact that they authorized the newspapers they owned to depict them as naive regarding the art world seems to point towards disinformation. It made the public focus on the Bohemian artist, away from the elite who actually financed the “high” arts.

But in the case of the Pie Girl, all was done to minimize the responsibility of the elite and the artist, in order to focus on a small “bohemian group”, who dressed and lived as in Paris. The media were playing with the popular image of the European art’s corruption and vice. In the “Pie Girl Affair”, the understated accusations were grave: possibly rape, prostitution, kidnapping and murder. In a time of civil strife and turmoil, the elite could not let themselves, their art and indirectly their social position be associated with such accusations. Thus the controlled image of Bohemia in the press became in some way a scapegoat, which also explains why depictions of Bohemia by the printed press and by artists was from the 1870s to the 1890s different in so many regards.

The image of the bohemian artists appeared little by little in the printed press through newspaper and magazine illustrations as well as in novels from the 1870s to the end of the nineteenth century. If many

<sup>31</sup> The Story of an Artist’s Model, a New York Trilby. In: *The World*, 13 October 1895, p. 4.

<sup>32</sup> See the following illustrations: B. MATTHEWS: *A Private View* (in *Harper’s New Monthly Magazine*, May 1894, No. 88), W. H. HYDE: *Like the Wrong Man* (in *Harper’s New Monthly Magazine*, March 1889, No. 78), C. D. GIBSON: *A Discerning Friend* (in *Life*, 31 October 1895, No. 26).

<sup>33</sup> See these illustrations: A. STERNER: *Quantity Not Quality* (in *Harper’s New Monthly Magazine*, February 1897, No. 94), C. CARLETON: *Not an Expert* (in *Life*, 5 November 1891, No. 17), Unknown artist: *Reminiscences of the Academy, where the*

*Frames Are So Much Better Than the Pictures* (in *Life*, 15 December 1892, No. 20).

<sup>34</sup> See the following photography, painting and illustration, respectively: N. SARONY: *Portrait of Winslow Homer*, ca. 1880, albumen print. Brunswick (ME), Bowdoin College Museum of Art; J. C. BECKWITH: *Portrait of William Walton*, 1886, oil on canvas, 121 × 73 cm. New York, The Century Association; W. E. MEARS: *F. Hopkinson Smith*, illustration (in *The Arena*, July 1899, No. 22).

<sup>35</sup> JOSEPHSON, M.: *The Robber Barons. The Classical Account of the Influential Capitalists Who Transformed America’s Future*. New York 1934, pp. 359-367.

parallels can be drawn with France, it adopted in the United States cultural and historic specificities that reflected the state of the art market, the position of the artist inside society, as well as the development of new aesthetics such as the advent of formalism. Through its perceived origin, bohemianism was also associated to Orientalism and as a consequence showed the taste of certain collectors of the time. From a social and economic point of view, bohemianism mirrored the poverty brought on by market

imbalances and was thus integrated as a kind of rite of passage for upper and middle-class citizens who were trying to enter the new cultural professions of the time, while providing a scapegoat for the vice of members of the upper class. All these reasons explain why bohemianism was multifaceted, from satyrs, to creative masters, from exotic themes to perverted perceptions. In this sense bohemianism mirrored in the United States the complexities of a country which was entering modernity and modern times.

## Newyorská bohéma v druhej polovici devätnásteho storočia

### *Resumé*

Od začiatku 19. storočia boli umelci v Spojených štátoch amerických pod tlakom náboženských hodnôt, ktoré pochádzali z Druhého vzkriesenia (Second Awakening). Maliari boli často videní ako leniví, skorumpovaní a spoločensky zbytoční. Tieto názory boli dôsledkom toho, ako isté protestantské cirkvi videli Európu, katolicizmus a pápežský patronát, ktoré dávali do spojenia s výtvarným umením. Tieto stereotypy boli posilnené faktom, že mnohí americkí maliari išli do Európy, buď aby sa učili jej umeniu, alebo aby si zdokonalili svoj štýl, čo sa pokladalo za prekážku rozvoja národného umenia.

Pre mnohých umelcov, ktorí emigrovali, sa Paríž a Londýn stali hodnotnými tréningovými centrami a pre mnohých aj druhým domovom. Počas pobytu v cudzine, počnúc rokom 1850, sa niektorí americkí maliari pripojili k bohéme a keď sa vrátili do Spojených štátov, niektorí z nich si podržali tento umelecký štýl i bohémsky spôsob života. To viedlo ku vzniku bohémskeho krúžku umelcov v New Yorku už v 50. rokoch 19. storočia.

Tak ako vo Francúzsku, aj americká bohéma bola výsledkom sociálnych a ekonomických tlakov, ktoré umelci v tom čase pocítovali. Spočiatku zostala bohéma niekoľko rokov nepovšimnutá, ale v 60.

rokoch, keď začali zosilňovať existujúce stereotypy, ktoré sa spájali s výtvarným umením a umelcami, bola intenzívne zosmiešňovaná. Čoskoro nastúpil trend k prehodnoteniu identít umelcov, ako aj k rozštiepeniu umeleckej komunity. Narastajúce verejné uvedomenie si bohémy v Spojených štátoch išlo súbežne s rozvojom tlačenej noviny. Bohémsky umelec bol videný veľmi protikladnými spôsobmi. Bol vnímaný jednak ako tvorivý, jednak ako zvrátený, sexuálne skazený a exotický. Jeho odev, postoj a životný štýl boli taktiež spájané s orientalizmom, ktorý bol v Spojených štátoch módnym trendom medzi zberateľmi a bohatou mestskou elitou od 70. do 80. rokov 19. storočia.

Od 60. do 90. rokov 19. storočia sa zobrazenia bohémy objavovali v obrázkových časopisoch, novinách a poviedkach, pričom často šíрили protikladné hodnoty. Niekedy bola bohéma znakom nezávislosti a autonómie, inokedy znakom neresti a morálneho úpadku. To vytvorilo bohatú sadu obrazov, ktoré postupne začali reprezentovať život všetkých umelcov. Narastajúci kapitál investovaný do európskeho umeleckého trhu priviedol výtvarné umenie do akceptovateľnejšej sféry. V dôsledku toho začala byť aj bohéma postupne považovaná za prijateľnejšiu.

Jedným z dôvodov bolo, že väčšina mladých umelcov patrila do strednej alebo vyššej triedy a bohémstvo začalo byť pokladané za mladistvú rebéliu, za istý druh vylomenín pred vstupom do dospelosti a do produktívnej spoločnosti.

Spojené štáty vždy oponovali Európe, aby rozvinuli svoju vlastnú národnú identitu, takže ako to, že bohéma a jej zreteľné európske väzby prekvitali v Spojených štátoch od 60. do 90. rokov 19. storočia? Čo boli paralely medzi parížskou a newyorskou bohémou? Prečo sa importovali hodnoty, zreteľne v opozícii s dominantnými ideami doby, a duchovná korupcia, tradične spájaná so všetkým európskym?

Cieľom tohto článku je ukázať, ako bola bohéma využívaná v rozvíjajúcej sa tlači, ako aj literatúre a v portrétoch umelcov, chápaných ako komentáre

o identite a spoločenských hodnotách. Vypočítavajú sa rozmanité väzby, ktoré mala bohéma od 50. do 90. rokov 19. storočia. Robí sa tak prostredníctvom príkladov prevzatých z kníh ako *Tribby: A Novel* alebo zo škandálov ako „Pie Girl Affair“, kde sa útok na bohému stal spôsobom posilňovania statusu quo a dominantných hodnôt. V novinách a časopisoch boli ilustrácie bohémstva spôsobom definovania novej úlohy, pripisovanej umelcom v reštrukturovanej spoločnosti, čo sa odohrávalo súbežne s nástupom Spojených štátov na medzinárodný umelecký trh. V tomto zmysle sa newyorská bohéma stala katalyzátorom, ktorý odzrkadľoval meniacu sa spoločnosť vstupujúcu do modernej doby.

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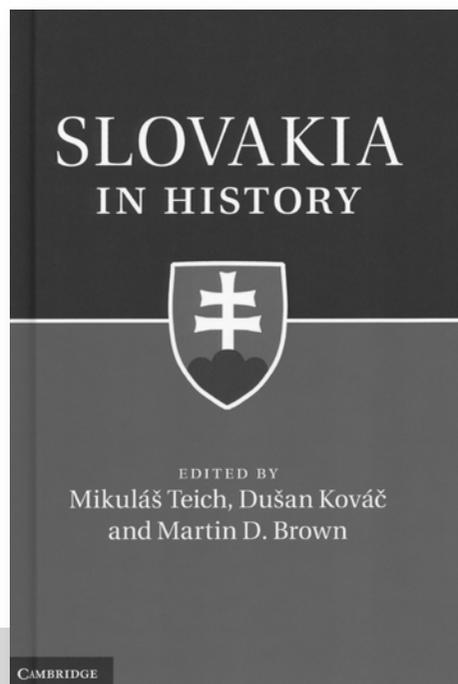
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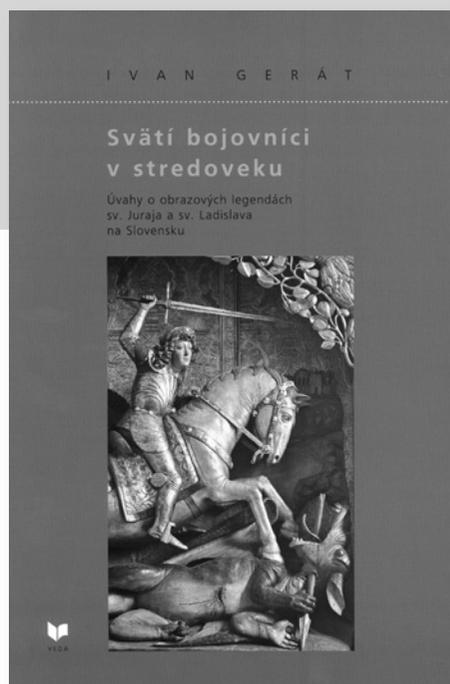


Mikuláš Teich – Dušan Kováč – Martin D. Brown (eds.):  
**SLOVAKIA IN HISTORY**  
(Slovensko v dejinách)

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Authored mainly by Slovak historians of the post-Communist era and edited by Mikuláš Teich (Robinson College in Cambridge), Dušan Kováč (Slovak Academy of Sciences in Bratislava) and Martin D. Brown (The American International University in London), this collection of essays is the first book written in English that covers the history of Slovakia from the Middle Ages to the establishment of independent Slovak Republic on January 1, 1993.

Ivan Gerát:  
**SVÄTÍ BOJOVNÍCI  
V STREDOVEKU. ÚVAHY  
O OBRAZOVÝCH LEGENDÁCH  
SV. JURAJA A SV. LADISLAVA  
NA SLOVENSKU**  
(Holy Warriors in the Middle Ages.  
Reflections of the Pictorial Legends  
of St. George and St. Ladislav in Slovakia)  
Bratislava : Veda, 2011, 183 pp., 49 illus.,  
ISBN 978-80-224-1219-3



Ivan Gerát's new book (in Slovak) bears witness to a continuation of his research of metamorphoses of the legends of saints in the area of the medieval Kingdom of Hungary in the European context – after the book on St. Elisabeth of Hungary (2009), he looks now closer at the holy warriors, St. George and St. Ladislav. Beside a number of quality and illustrative figures, the book is also equipped with a catalogue of narrative image cycles of the saints preserved in Slovakia (description, locality, present state), altogether 35 sites.

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