

JANÁČEK BEYOND THE BORDERS



DEREK KATZ

Janáček beyond the Borders



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DEREK KATZ



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To my parents, with love and gratitude.

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Preface

My first contact with music of Leoš Janáček came while I was in high school, during a period of enthusiastic, if highly undisciplined, self-education in twentieth-century music, relying largely on the LP collection of the Princeton (NJ) public library and on the programmers at WNCN-FM. A similarly-inclined friend urged me to investigate a record of Janáček's Sinfonietta (Seiji Ozawa, Chicago Symphony Orchestra, 1969), which I promptly did, playing the recording often enough to get it temporarily banned from the Katz household. Later in life, I persistently (and rather imprudently) dragged friends through readings of the two Janáček string quartets (Jim Ellison deserves special mention for patiently leading many such sessions from the first violin). My first serious immersion into the study of Janáček's music, though, came courtesy of the 1988 international conference "Janáček and Czech Music," organized by Michael Beckerman and Glen Bauer at Washington University in St. Louis. I attended the conference not long after graduating from college, while working at the late, lamented Record Hunter in Midtown Manhattan. The conference not only exposed me to many of Janáček's works, and to Jaromil Jireš's wonderful biographical film about Janáček, *Lev s bílou hřívou* (The Lion with the White Mane), but also introduced me to a distinguished and congenial group of scholars and to many of the important issues and problems of Janáček reception and criticism. To a great extent, this book is the result of a longstanding desire to reconcile the portrayals of Janáček that I have encountered in textbooks, program notes, and some scholarly works—generally either a thorny modernist seemingly more aptly grouped with younger composers than with his own generation, or a composer largely formed by his native region, conditioned most strongly by the inflections of Czech speech and folk music—with the more complicated, problematic, and rich composer that I have experienced as a player and listener.

Portions of this book (chapters 1, 5, 6, and part of chapter 4) have their origins in my PhD dissertation for the University of California, Santa Barbara, which I completed in 2000. I would like to thank my dissertation committee, which was chaired by Michael Beckerman, and also included Alejandro Planchart and Pieter van den Toorn. My dissertation research in Brno was supported by a grant from the International Research & Exchanges Board (IREX), while my final year of writing was supported by a President's Year Dissertation Fellowship from the University of California. I am very grateful to both sources.

Many people were kind enough to assist me in the Czech Republic. In Prague, I would like to thank Mgr. Aleš Březina for bringing me (and a sizable contingent

of Californians) to the 1997 Bohuslav Martinů Festival, Dr. Milan Pospíšil for helpful comments about a very early version of chapter 5 presented at that festival, and Dr. Jarmila Gabrielová for translating that work. In Brno, Dr. Miloš Štědroň and the late Dr. Jiří Fukač hosted me at Masaryk University, with the help of many students. Šárka Pelanová and Pavel Jirásek were particularly helpful in guiding me through various administrative and bibliographic mazes. Most of all, I would like to thank everyone who helped me in the Janáček Archive in the Music Division of the Moravian History Museum, both then and in subsequent visits. After being frightened by the horror stories of fellow scholars about European archives, I was shocked by the warm reception with which I was greeted at the Janáček Archive. I would like to thank the then director, Dr. František Malý, for allowing me to work in the archive, and the distinguished Janáček scholar Dr. Svatava Přibáňová for helping me to find everything that I was looking for, suggesting material that I didn't know I was looking for, and for helping me to decipher Janáček's appalling handwriting. Mgr. Jiří Zahrádka, Jitka Buriánková, and Dr. Vojtěch Kyas were also exceedingly helpful. Finally, a special thanks to Mgr. Simona Šindlářová for being generous with her time at the archive.

I am grateful to have had the opportunity to present versions of some of this material at conferences and festivals. The University of Michigan Czech Cultural Studies Workshops, lovingly tended by Jindřich Toman, have been an invaluable resource, and I thank my fellow participants, especially Jindra, Herbert Eagle, Jonathan Bolton, and Matthew Witkovsky for their comments and suggestions. Part of chapter 6 was presented at another international Janáček conference, "Janáček's Brno between Vienna and Prague," held in London in 1999. My thanks to Geoffrey Chew for facilitating my participation, and for his comments on my paper. Further thanks to Eckhard Weber for inviting me to Berlin for the 2004 conference "Von Grenzen und Ländern, Zentren und Rändern: Der Erste Weltkrieg und die Verschiebungen in der musikalischen Geographie Europas," at which I read what turned out to be the beginnings of chapter 3. I am also grateful to have been able to participate in the 2003 Bard Music Festival devoted to Janáček and his world, and thank Christopher Gibbs and Leon Botstein for that opportunity.

Thanks also to Caryl Emerson, for kindly sharing her essay on *The Makropulos Case* before its publication, and to Daniel Albright for looking over an early version of chapter 2.

Everyone that I have worked with at the University of Rochester Press has been both patient and helpful beyond any reasonable expectations. Ralph Locke has encouraged and supported me throughout the entire process and Suzanne Guiod has gently, but firmly, guided me through the endgame. Tracey Engel has done a wonderful job with the production of the book, and Cheryl Carnahan has been a laudably thorough and understanding copyeditor. I am especially grateful to the two anonymous readers who reviewed the manuscript for the press. Their expert and detailed comments have made this a stronger book. Any remaining errors are, of course, entirely my responsibility.

The musical examples were prepared by Edmond Johnson, student, colleague, and friend, who also helped to edit the manuscript, made many helpful suggestions, and generally bailed me out on numerous occasions.

The index is courtesy of Marilyn Bliss, who deserves both credit for her expert work and extra thanks for heroically stepping in at the last minute.

The excerpts from Janáček's *Pohádka* and *Taras Bulba* are reproduced with the kind permission of Bärenreiter Music Corporation. All other examples from Janáček's works are used with the kind permission of Universal Edition.

My thanks to John Pennino of The Metropolitan Opera Archive for help with the cover photograph.

I also have a number of more personal debts. My fellow American scholars of Czech music have constituted an informal support group, upon whom I have leaned at many different stages of my academic career. Brian Locke, Diane Paige, Judith Mabary, and Erik Entwistle, in particular, have all been helpful in various ways, and I owe special thanks to Diane and to Jonathan Secora Pearl for hospitality in Brno. At UCSB, my colleagues William Prizer, Stefanie Tcharos, Timothy Cooley, David Paul, and Paul Berkowitz have been unfailing sources of friendship and support.

Michael Beckerman's name has already appeared more than once in these acknowledgements, but I cannot thank him enough for all of the ways in which he has guided, mentored, encouraged, and supported me. Mike remains my model as both a scholar and as a person, and I am very fortunate to have had him as a friend and mentor.

My son Sam, now in his early teens, has barely known a life in which I was not working either on my dissertation or on this book, and, I am sure, has suffered more from this than I realize. He has endured time in the Czech Republic, bedtime stories in Czech, and could name four Czech composers before his second birthday, a circumstance for which I hope he will someday forgive me.

Irving Portner, lifelong family friend, has encouraged my love of opera for even longer than I knew that I had one, and I am delighted to have been his companion on a tiny fraction of his visits to the Met.

My parents, Stanley and Adria Katz, have been extraordinarily supportive of my musical and scholarly efforts throughout my life. They have been especially responsible about attending Janáček performances and related events, and, in particular, have a perfect attendance record at Metropolitan Opera Janáček productions since 1992. This book is dedicated to them.

Chapter One

Finding a Context

Janáček's Success

During an intermission feature in a January 2000 Metropolitan Opera broadcast of *Rigoletto*, participants were asked what names they would remove from, or add to, the pantheon of opera composers once enshrined on the facade of the old Met. The eliminations were fairly predictable, with Gounod taking a particular beating (the Met is clearly the “Faustspielhaus” no longer). The proposed additions were more surprising. One participant nominated Strauss, Puccini—and Leoš Janáček.¹ A long-obscure Moravian with a name bristling with diacritical marks, born in a town too small to be listed in most atlases, may seem an unlikely candidate for the company of Mozart, Wagner, and Verdi.

In fact, though, it can be argued that Janáček is one of the most successful opera composers of the twentieth century. While none of his works is as famous and beloved as, say, *Madama Butterfly* or *Rosenkavalier*, *Jenůfa* is now a repertoire staple, and *Kát'a Kabanová*, *The Cunning Little Vixen*, *The Makropulos Case*, and *From the House of the Dead* are standard fare in the world's great opera houses. In the 2007–8 season, for instance, there were ten productions of *Jenůfa* in America and Europe—including productions in Los Angeles, Hamburg, Stuttgart, Cologne, and Prague—and eleven productions of *Kát'a Kabanová*, *The Cunning Little Vixen*, *The Makropulos Case*, and *From the House of the Dead*, stretching from Toronto to Berlin and from Vienna to Sydney. Even the once hopelessly obscure *The Excursions of Mr. Brouček* was produced twice, in Geneva and Frankfurt. American audiences have been able to choose from productions in New York, Chicago, San Francisco, Los Angeles, Houston, Seattle, Cooperstown, Dallas, Portland, Philadelphia, San Diego, Long Beach, and Charleston. All of the operas have been recorded, all but the early folksong pastiche *The Beginning of a Romance* more than once. Five have been recorded in English. Five of Janáček operas are available on DVD, including competing versions of *Jenůfa* and *The Cunning Little Vixen*. Janáček has also made inroads into other realms of Anglo-American culture. *The Cunning Little Vixen*, despite the death of the title character (much in the manner of Bambi's mother), is included in a children's book of opera stories and is the subject of a BBC animated film (albeit one that significantly abridges Janáček's score). The Brothers Quay have made an animated short about Janáček (*Leoš Janáček: Intimate Excursions*, 1983), Janáček's music fills the soundtrack of Philip Kaufman's 1988 film of Milan Kundera's *The Unbearable Lightness of Being*, and the composer's youthful

patriotism serves as a point of reference in Bernard MacLaverty's *Grace Notes*, a novel about music and Irish politics.²

While there are single twentieth-century operas that were performed more frequently than any by Janáček, the only other composer who contributed as many operas to the international repertoire in that century as Janáček was Richard Strauss. Strauss, though, was one of the foremost conductors in Europe, and his orchestral tone poems had already established him as the continent's most important composer by 1905, when *Salome* was first produced. Most of his operas from that point on entered the repertoire immediately. At this same time, Janáček, although a decade older than Strauss, was still a provincial teacher and journalist, barely known in Prague, let alone outside the Czech lands. His first production outside Brno was still more than a decade away. Although *Jenůfa* was taken up fairly swiftly in German-speaking lands, none of Janáček's other operas received more than one foreign production during his lifetime. For such a sizable body of work to make its way into the international repertoire well after the composer's death is without parallel in the history of twentieth-century opera.

The fact that all these operas are in Czech, a language understood by only a tiny fraction of the world's opera audiences, makes the circumstance even more remarkable.³ Janáček's Czech libretti have been an impediment not only to current comprehension but also to productions during his lifetime. Had Janáček been able to provide Gustav Mahler with a German translation of *Jenůfa* in 1904 and had Mahler been as enthusiastic an advocate of that opera as he was of another Czech classic, Smetana's *Dalibor*, Janáček's long wait for operatic recognition might have been curtailed considerably.⁴ Another barrier is Janáček's frequently less-than-idiomatic vocal writing. The tenor Gregory Turay, who sang Janek in *The Makropulos Case* at the Met in 1998, when interviewed about Janáček, complained, "I'm no fan of Janáček. . . . He writes for instruments."⁵ Despite this, Janáček's operas have served as vehicles for many of the world's great singers, especially sopranos—both from the Czech and Slovak lands, such as Štěpánka Jelínková, Drahomíra Tikalová, Gabriela Beňačková, and Lucia Popp, and beyond, including Karita Mattila, Nina Stemme, Jessye Norman, Catherine Malfitano, Anja Silja, Elisabeth Söderström, Leonie Rysanek, Sena Jurinac, and Magda Olivero.

It should, then, no longer be necessary to proselytize for Janáček and plead for his significance as a composer. True, Janáček is not for everybody, and he never will be. A recent *New Yorker* profile of the Metropolitan Opera's general manager Peter Gelb included an interview with one of the Met's major patrons, who listed *From the House of the Dead* as one of the operas she could live without, and she admitted that she was not planning to attend the 2009 Met production.⁶ Still, Janáček has become about as big as it is possible for a composer of his time to become. This book is primarily concerned with Janáček's operas, but the two string quartets are also in the repertoire of any serious professional quartet (as I write, over thirty different performances of the second quartet are

available on CD). Further, many of the orchestral works are repertoire staples (especially *Taras Bulba* and the *Sinfonietta*), as is the Glagolitic Mass. The song cycle *The Diary of One Who Vanished* is not only frequently performed but has been the occasion of a number of significant semi-staged productions, including one from 2001 directed by Deborah Warner, with Ian Bostridge singing Seamus Heaney's English translation of Ozef Kalda's verses.⁷

The problem remains, though, of how to understand Janáček and his works. Janáček exists in two separate critical worlds. One is based in academia and places Janáček in historical contexts by writing about him in scholarly articles, monographs, and textbooks. The other world is made up of program notes, liner notes, pre-concert lectures, journalism, and other ways of mediating between performers and listeners. In the academy, the task has been to situate Janáček within the history of musical modernism and find a way to place him in the story of modernism's triumph over Romanticism. In America, this story is still heavily influenced by Theodor Adorno's view, as articulated in his *Philosophie der neuen Musik* (*Philosophy of New Music*), of the early twentieth century as split between Schoenberg and Stravinsky. Neither a serialist nor a neo-classicist, Janáček fits on neither side of Adorno's divide, and, if he is to be portrayed as a significant figure, he must be placed in a third category. The most usual solution is to see him as analogous to Bartók, another pioneering ethnographer, and to describe the distinctive characteristics of Janáček's mature style as derived from his studies of Czech folk music and the Czech language, thereby granting him credibility as a modernist while grounding his music in local culture.

For anyone who has taken a music history course, this immediately recalls the lamentable textbook practice of quarantining "national" composers in separate chapters, where they can be safely mentioned without contaminating the mainstream of music history. In this scheme, Beethoven and Brahms are composers, without any need of modifiers, while Smetana, Dvořák, and Janáček are *Czech* composers. As Richard Taruskin has pointed out in writing about Russian music, canonical figures, such as Verdi and Wagner, tend to be praised as "heroic individuals," while Russian composers are treated as members of a national (and nationalist) group. Taruskin continues, citing Gary Tomlinson and Tzvetan Todorov, to regret "a common failure to perceive difference without imputing it to inferiority."⁸ Outside of the academy, Janáček's music tends to be presented as the product of his biography, especially his collecting of folk music, his much-vaunted (if poorly understood) "speech melody theory," and his notorious infatuation with Kamila Stösslová.

Scholarly writings about Janáček's work have, for the most part, argued variations on the same thesis: that Janáček's musical style is modern and original and that this originality springs directly from the composer's fascination with the intonations of Czech speech and his interest in folk music from the Czech lands. This is an eminently reasonable approach. This thesis had already been formulated during the composer's lifetime and would have met with the approval of

Janáček himself, who consistently identified folksong and Czech speech as sources of his musical style. Nonetheless, the rather monolithic nature of this approach to Janáček has tended to crowd out counter-narratives. This study intends to apply critical pressure to the ways in which Janáček has been understood and to suggest that he is a more complicated and problematic figure than textbooks and program notes would have us believe. Janáček is far too rich, quirky, and protean a figure to be contained by a single story.

Janáček as Old Avant-Gardist

One of the final chapters of Miloš Štědroň's 1998 study *Leoš Janáček and Music of the 20th Century* is entitled "Young Conservative—to Old Avant-Gardist?!"⁹ Despite the intriguing punctuation, at the end of this chapter Štědroň did indeed conclude that Janáček grew into an avant-gardist and declared that Janáček's music of the 1920s is one of the most radical manifestations of European music from the first three decades of the century.¹⁰ This view of Janáček's career as culminating in an avant-garde, or modernist, period is a widespread formulation with a long history. In a 1983 essay, Milan Kundera wrote of Janáček, "A solitary conservative figure in his youth, he has become an innovator in his old age." Kundera described Janáček's late works as "audacious" and suggested that he must be heard in the company of composers thirty and forty years younger, like Bartók, Stravinsky, Hindemith, Krenek, and Schoenberg.¹¹ Similarly, the opening narration of Jaromil Jireš's 1986 documentary film about Janáček declared that "Leoš Janáček was born deep in the mid-nineteenth century. His music belongs wholly to the avant-garde of the twentieth century. Although he was thirty years older than Bartók or Stravinsky . . . Janáček's works rank amongst the most progressive of modern European music."¹²

In particular, the idea that Janáček was somehow generationally displaced can be traced back to the composer's lifetime. In an enthusiastic 1925 essay, Erwin Schulhoff, almost exactly forty years younger than Janáček, wrote that as "astounding as it may seem, the septuagenarian Janáček belongs to the latest generation of composers, whose struggle he has also fought."¹³ Hanns Eisler also noted Janáček's late fecundity, remarking after a 1927 performance of the Sinfonietta that Janáček was "entirely unique amongst current bourgeois composers" and "still astoundingly full of creative strength as an old man."¹⁴ In September 1926, Janáček traveled to Venice to hear a performance of his first string quartet at the annual International Society for Contemporary Music festival. Other living composers whose works were performed at the festival included Rous-sel, Vaughan Williams, Schoenberg, Ravel, Malipiero, Szymanowski, Stravinsky, Ladislav Vycpálek, Louis Gruenberg, Ibert, Honegger, and Hindemith. These twelve composers, although a heterogeneous group in most ways, shared at least one trait: all were younger than Janáček. In fact, most were significantly younger,

with only Roussel and Vaughan Williams within twenty years of his age. Put another way, their average age was forty-four in 1926, while Janáček had turned seventy-two in July of that year.

Another, rather more idiosyncratic, tribute came from Henry Cowell, who visited Brno and lectured at the Club of Moravian Composers in 1926. Apparently the meeting with Janáček was a success, for in August 1927 Cowell invited Janáček to be an honorary member of The New Music Society of California. The letter of invitation, although addressed to “Mr. Janarchek,”¹⁵ does describe him as “without doubt one of the very greatest of living composers, without reservations.”¹⁶ Cowell had already collected Bartók, Bliss, Malipiero, Hába, Krenek, Schnabel, Berg, Casella, and Milhaud as honorary members; all were at least a quarter-century Janáček’s juniors.

The image of Janáček as an aged modernist has become firmly entrenched in standard music history texts. John Tyrrell’s entry for Janáček in *The New Grove Turn of the Century Masters*, for instance, asserts that Janáček’s late works belong “in sound and spirit with the music of the younger generation around him.”¹⁷ Similar judgments can be found in many standard surveys. Jim Samson, in *The Late Romantic Era*, describes Janáček’s musical style as “a radical new language” and “strikingly original,”¹⁸ while Donald Jay Grout calls Janáček “individual” and “exceptional” in his *A Short History of Opera*.¹⁹ More recently, Richard Taruskin titled his section on Janáček in *The Oxford History of Western Music* “The Oldest Twentieth-Century Composer” and points out that “his music is more often (and more tellingly) compared with that of Debussy, Stravinsky, or Bartók” than with that of Mahler or Richard Strauss.²⁰

Janáček as Folklorist

For all of Janáček’s originality, though, he is paradoxically seen very much as a product of his native region. Most of these authors partition their historical narratives geographically, placing Janáček within the context of Eastern Europe, East-Central Europe, or Czechoslovakia, often implying that Janáček’s exile in the hinterlands of Moravia precluded a more normal musical development. Carl Dahlhaus, for instance, has described Janáček as an “outsider, living in provincial isolation,”²¹ while in William Austin’s words, “[Janáček’s] eminence was the reward of a long, hard, lonely adventure.”²² These texts also stress Janáček’s dependence on both folk music and the intonations of native speech. Elliott Antokoletz, for example, after discussing Janáček’s work as a folksong collector, described him as a composer whose works were “infused . . . prominently within the modality of Moravian folk music” and as one whose compositions were generated “by means of varied repetitions of a few basic melodic motifs derived from the rhythm and inflection of his native Czech language.”²³ Similarly, Grout wrote that Janáček’s “melodic idiom . . . grew organically out of the rhythms

and inflections of national speech and folk song.”²⁴ The most recent edition of Norton’s *A History of Western Music* (originally by Grout, now under the stewardship of J. Peter Burkholder), the final arbiter of musico-historical issues for most American music majors, also states that Janáček “devised a highly personal idiom” based on “the rhythms and inflections of peasant speech and song.”²⁵

Again, this assumption that Janáček’s musical language is inextricably connected to his geographical circumstances is hardly a new idea. In the article quoted earlier, Schulhoff, after placing Janáček in the company of a younger generation, continued on to state that the older composer “plays his Moravian soil, which is sound for him.”²⁶ Similarly, Ernst Krenek, in a 1925 address to the Congress of Music Aesthetics in Karlsruhe, described Janáček as a composer “who, without actually using the typical devices of ‘modern’ music, still manages to seem absolutely new and original.” Krenek then cited Janáček as “only one example of a whole series of composers whose work is rooted in the national folksong. . . . [F]olksong is an inexhaustible source of power for those who are able to find roots in it thanks to favorable conditions within their various countries.”²⁷

The idea that Janáček’s putatively progressive stylistic tendencies are linked to his ethnographic interests, implied in the earlier Antokoletz quote, has been made explicit by Dahlhaus, who has written that “the proximity to the new music, which is perceptible in Janáček, is closely connected to the folkloristic tendencies that he pursued.”²⁸ Dahlhaus’s presentation of Janáček is akin to that found in Theodor Adorno’s *Philosophy of Modern Music*, which includes a footnote in which Janáček is designated an “extra-territorial” composer, whose use of tonal materials can be excused by his geographical isolation. Like Bartók, Janáček comes from an area where “the developmental tendencies of Occidental music have not been fully accepted.” This “truly extra-territorial music . . . has a power of alienation that allies it with the avant-garde, and not with the nationalistic reaction.”²⁹ This idea, confined to a footnote in the *Philosophy of Modern Music*, can be traced to a 1928 essay about “stabilized” music. In this essay, “Die stabilisierte Musik,” Adorno explained that the isolation of South-Central Europe from industrialization allowed Bartók and Janáček to use folk music, which springs from “the natural sources of music making,” for radical ends. Bartók and Janáček, though, are exceptional cases for Adorno, who generally considers folklorism a type of “stabilized music,” which is inherently reactionary. In this formulation, neo-classicism is the form stabilized music takes in the “advanced, rational” states, while folklorism is its counterpart in the “backward, essentially agrarian lands.”³⁰

Janáček as Modernist?

At first it would seem that Janáček’s own comments about the leading composers of the day reinforce his image as a devout modernist. He was clearly flattered,

for instance, to be considered in the company of composers like Schoenberg and Schreker. In a feuilleton about the Berlin premiere of *Káťa Kabanová*, he wrote, “We were all there, Schrecker [*sic*] and Schönberg.”³¹ He wrote to Max Brod after the same event that “Schrecker [*sic*] and Schönberg came to me with compliments about *Káťa Kabanová*. That pleased me most of all.”³² In his 1925 speech on the occasion of receiving an honorary doctorate from Masaryk University, Janáček compared himself to Schreker, Schoenberg, and Debussy, all of whom he described as “moderns.”³³

Other remarks, though, suggest a different aesthetic orientation. For instance, Janáček damned Schoenberg’s Op. 24 *Serenade*, a piece he heard at the Venice International Society for Contemporary Music festival, as “reeking of the pub”³⁴ and included Schoenberg in a list of too-frequently imitated composers, asking “[b]ut how long did Beethoven march in the footsteps of Mozart and Haydn? And aren’t there already among us enough Mahlers, Strausses, Schoenbergs, Debussys? Everyone plods after them, though. Why?”³⁵ Even as late as 1927, the “old avant-gardist” was capable of sounding quite a bit like a crotchety conservative, complaining to the Berlin Opera that “[t]oday, Palestrina, Beethoven, Mozart reign alongside musical filth—and there is no God to separate by His word the land from the sea.”³⁶ Hardly the words of a closet radical.

Returning to some of the arguments summarized previously, we find similar inconsistencies. Adorno’s ascription of Janáček’s musical development to his status as a product of a backward, agrarian society is difficult to reconcile with the brief train ride between Brno and Vienna, with the latter city presumably a fair specimen of a well-developed industrial society. This argument is made even more ludicrous by the knowledge that Adorno apparently thought Janáček, like Kafka, hailed from Prague.³⁷ To be fair to Adorno, his responses to specific pieces by Janáček, particularly the first string quartet and *Věc Makropulos*, are considerably more subtle than his broader theories would suggest.³⁸ In the *Makropulos* review, for instance, he pointed out that Janáček had broken from folklorism. Nonetheless, this does seem to be an example of a syndrome identified by Jarmil Burghauser, of viewing the Czech nation as “a rural, peasant nation” that arose from “something of a state of barbarity during the 18th century.”³⁹ Burghauser detailed the distortions in Dvořák reception caused by assuming the composer was a “primitive, natural genius, with no reflective power.”⁴⁰ A similar warning is probably in order for Janáček studies. Even within the Czech context, Brno was hardly the backwater the many tributes to Janáček’s isolation might suggest. As Štědroň rather acidly put it, Brno was “no wilderness with bears and wolves.” While Janáček was born in tiny Hukvaldy and returned there at the end of his life, he was, at least after age ten, an essentially urban creature or, as Štědroň called him, “entirely a man of the city and later also the composer of the city.”⁴¹

Other attempts to elevate Janáček by linking him with more established composers or by arguing that he is important as an operatic innovator are similarly