

INTRODUCTION

MUSIC AND MUSICAL GENRES ON THE PRE-ERKEL HUNGARIAN STAGE

Ferenc Erkel (1810–1893) has been called the founder of Hungarian national opera. However, one should remember that Erkel was given the opportunity to carry out such a historic turn within the framework of the Hungarian National Theatre. This institution, along with the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, was the primary manifestation of the national ideals and cultural goals of the Hungarian Reform Age. With the exception of *Bánk bán* and *Hunyadi László*, which enjoyed wide popularity in several Hungarian theatres, Erkel's operas were never or only occasionally performed outside the walls of the National Theatre and the Budapest Opera House where the opera division of the theatre moved in 1884. Thus his operas need to be interpreted and analysed in the light of the cultural disposition that reigned around the theatre and the intellectual trends and changes in taste that influenced its directorial policies.

At the 1837 opening of the National Theatre (called the Hungarian Theatre in Pest until 1840) professional theatre production in Hungary looked back upon a past of about fifty years. The early performances by German touring companies were followed by regular seasons in German from 1787 onwards at the Buda *Burgtheater*, transformed for theatrical purposes from the church of the Carmelite monastery suppressed by Joseph II. Various kinds of plays with music and singing were cultivated from the outset, and from 1789 operas – in the strict sense of the word – were performed with remarkable frequency, although usually not in their original form. As generally established on German stages, *opere buffe* (including those by Mozart), which made up the bulk of the repertory, were performed in *Singspiel* form, i.e. recitatives were substituted by prose dialogues. Performances in German also took place regularly in the rapidly growing city of Pest. The idea of constructing a building designated to this purpose soon awakened. The new theatre was to replace the *Rondella* (or round bastion), a part of the abandoned city walls, that functioned as the provisional theatre of Pest since the late 18th century. The Municipal Theatre opened in 1812 with Kotzebue's *König Stephan* and *Die Ruinen von Athen* with incidental music composed by Beethoven. With its capacity to house 3,200 spectators, it was more suitable for opera performances than for drama. In this theatre the audiences of Pest and Buda could luxuriate in opera productions which followed the international trends of contemporary fashion with only a short delay.

At its beginning in the 1790s, acting in Hungarian did not have the resources that would have enabled it to

compete with the international opera repertory of the German companies. The Hungarian company acting in Buda from 1793 onwards engaged ten musicians altogether and this number did not increase considerably in later years. The immediate models of its musical repertory are to be sought in the Viennese *Volksstück*, a popular play with musical insertions, which influenced contemporary Hungarian literature. The first local play was performed in the very first season of the Hungarian troupe; it was Philipp Hafner's "merry tragedy" *Evakathel und Prinz Schnudi*, adapted into Hungarian as *Pikkó herceg és Jutka Perzsi* [Prince Pikkó and Jutka Perzsi], staged with genuine music numbers composed by Joseph Chudy.¹ In 1812 the young Gábor Rótkrepf (later Mátray) wrote songs to István Balog's historical play *Csernyi György*, the melodies being partly of his own invention and partly well-known popular tunes. The performances achieved great success on a provisional stage in Pest.

In the 1820s the centre of theatre activity in Hungarian shifted to Kolozsvár in Transylvania (now Cluj-Napoca, Romania). The first Hungarian stone theatre was erected there in 1821. It housed a permanent Hungarian theatrical company and focused on international opera played in Hungarian. French *opéra comique* was much cultivated in the beginning; then operas with higher demands on performance were launched with Weber's *Der Freischütz*, performed in 1825, and a series of Rossini's works. It was in the Kolozsvár theatre that music accompanied an opera from the beginning to the end for the first time, following the introduction of the new manner of *recitativo accompagnato* instead of spoken dialogues in the 1830s.² Moreover, the existence of this theatre was stimulating for the output of genuine Hungarian musical pieces. *Béla futása* [Béla's Flight], set to music for the Kolozsvár stage by József Ruzitska in 1822, proved to be extremely popular and long-lived. It was based on the Hungarian adaptation of Kotzebue's play *Belas Flucht* that was supposed to be performed at the

¹ Hungarian theatre literature has observed the way the original genre of the play – a parody of the classicist French tragedy – was transformed into a mere musical play without parodic connotations. Cf. Ferenc Kerényi, "Magyar színészet Pest-Budán (1790–1796)" [Hungarian Acting in Pest-Buda (1790–1796)], in *Magyar Színháztörténet 1790–1873*, ed. Ferenc Kerényi (Budapest: Akadémiai, 1990), p. 77.

² K. Kreutzer's *Cordelia* was the first opera given in 1830 "according to the Italian custom without spoken words." At the 1836 premiere of Bellini's *I Capuleti e i Montecchi* in Kolozsvár a return to prose dialogues can, however, be seen as evidenced by the play-bill. See Ferenc Kerényi & László Gerold, "A vándorszínészet második szintje: a klasszikus értelemben vett vándortársulatok és színjátéktípusaik" [The Second Level of Touring Players: Classic Touring Companies and Their Repertory], in *Magyar Színháztörténet 1790–1873*, p. 206.

opening of the German Theatre of Pest, had the censor not intervened. Dramas of the Hungarian playwright Károly Kisfaludy were also set for the Kolozsvár theatre: *Kemény Simon* composed separately by Ruzitska and György Arnold (1826) and *Mátyás királynak választása* [The Election of King Matthias] with music by József Heinisch and György Arnold (1829).

Ferenc Erkel began his musical career in Kolozsvár. He did not hold a position at the theatre and had to content himself with giving piano recitals and conducting an amateur orchestra. By his own account he received the main incentive to become an advocate of the Hungarian national opera for his whole life after seeing *Béla futása* in Kolozsvár. Unfortunately, his stage music composed in that town has been lost. From 1835 on Erkel acted as a conductor of the Hungarian National Stage in the Buda *Burgtheater*, the forerunner of the National Theatre. The company was formed from members of the disbanded Kolozsvár troupe. Between December 1835 and November 1837 he was associate conductor of the German Municipal Theatre in Pest. Since the theatre was living through one of its best operatic eras, Erkel had the opportunity to get thoroughly acquainted with the subjects and roles in contemporary Italian and French opera and to observe the methods of running a modern theatre efficiently.³

Like all German theatres in Hungary (and in Austria, for that matter), the Municipal Theatre in Pest had a mixed repertory of various musical and prose genres and other spectacles. Therefore, it is understandable that the Hungarian Theatre in Pest had also been designed as a multifunctional theatrical institution from the beginning. However, this multi-functionality was severely restricted by the deficiencies of the staff. The ensemble had practically no educated opera singers at the outset, and in the first months only four out of the twenty male members of the stage company assumed singing roles exclusively. As for the actresses, the proportion of actors to singers was eleven to four.⁴ Therefore, actors appearing mainly in plays had to double even in through-composed operas. Naturally, specialisation within the musical genres was also lacking until the modernisation of the opera repertory made it impossible to apply the light singing technique appropriate for earlier musical comedies.⁵

In the eyes of the leading liberals of the Reform Age the poor state of opera at the Hungarian Theatre was not a bit worse than what it deserved. They deemed the Hungarian Theatre as an institution of national education which had to stimulate the writing of genuine plays in the mother tongue; therefore, they destined it for a house of spoken drama primarily. Consequently, in the four months after the opening, there were only thirteen operatic performances and six concerts as opposed to the eighty-nine dramas in prose. At the German Municipal Theatre this proportion was 56 to 31 in favour of drama. Apart from the Italian and French comic operettas borrowed from the repertory of the former Hungarian National Stage in Buda, only two through-composed operas and two *opéra comiques* were staged in the first months of the existence of the Hungarian Theatre.

The opening performance given on 22 August, 1837 unveiled the prevailing ideas concerning music. A chorus was inserted into the allegoric prologue *Árpád ébredése* [Árpád's Awakening] written for the festive occasion by Mihály Vörösmarty, one of the greatest Hungarian poets and playwrights; then Eduard von Schenk's piece *Belisar* was performed with an overture composed by local conductor József Heinisch for this occasion. Between these two principal items of the programme Hungarian dances were inserted.⁶ As far as the music is concerned, the programme is typical of the pre-Erkel Hungarian stage; there was almost no theatrical performance without more or less music of some kind, but it was the very ubiquity of the music that confined it to a clearly supplementary and decorative role. Moreover, music was not recognised as a medium of dramatic expression. The inclusion of *verbunkos* dances in the programme indicated the demand for the representation of the Hungarian national element as a symbol of national emotions on stage.

A comparison of box office receipts from performances of pieces of various genres made the theatrical management realise in the very first months that the institution could not survive if they did not give musical genres more attention, since opera and various musical forms, collectively termed as parody, attracted twice as large audiences as plays did.⁷ As a result, a prompt decision was made to organise a semi-independent opera division. Consequently, opera gained a substantial foot-

³ Amadé Németh, *Az Erkelek a magyar zenében: Az Erkel család szerepe a magyar zenei művelődésben* [The Erkels in Hungarian Music: The Role of the Erkel Family in the Hungarian Musical Culture] (Békéscsaba: Békés Megyei Tanács, 1987), pp. 38–43.

⁴ The proportion of actors to singers in the German Municipal Theatre were 23:9 for men and 16:8 for women. See Ferenc Kerényi, "A Pesti Magyar Színházról a Nemzeti Színházig (1837–1840)" [From the Hungarian Theatre in Pest to the National Theatre (1837–1840)], in *Magyar Színháztörténet 1790–1873*, pp. 265, 267.

⁵ A typically multifarious figure recalling the years of touring companies was Benjámín Egressy, a factotum of the Hungarian theatre and librettist of Erkel's first three operas. He composed

music, appeared as singer and prose actor alike, and provided the theatre continuously with translations of stage works. The excellent baritone Mihály Füredi staged plays, József Szerdahelyi sang, staged plays and composed, Mme. Schodel brought piano scores of operas from abroad and occasionally instructed other singers.

⁶ See Vörösmarty's critique of the opening performance: Mihály Vörösmarty, *Drámák, elbeszélések, bírálatok* [Dramas, Short Stories and Critiques] III (Budapest: Szépirodalmi, 1974), pp. 662–665.

⁷ Ferenc Kerényi, "A Nemzeti Színház a polgári forradalom előestéjén (1840–1848)" [The National Theatre on the Eve of the Bourgeois Revolution (1840–1848)], in *Magyar Színháztörténet 1790–1873*, p. 282 (table).

hold in the repertory and achieved increasing popularity that was not to the liking of the actors and of the literary circles. Opera got into the centre of violent polemics both inside and outside the theatre – a clash of interests and principles later termed as the “opera war.” Although some literary groups could hardly find aesthetic justification for the genre, the expansion of opera could not be halted.

Opera reached a higher level of quality in the Hungarian Theatre in January 1838 when Ferenc Erkel and prima donna Rozália Schodel (1811–1854), who had given some occasional guest performances earlier, were employed. Under Erkel’s direction educated opera singers were engaged and the orchestra was enlarged and reorganised. Thus in due course an efficient opera company was established. The new conductor acquired full authority over the matters of the orchestra. He invited five musicians from Vienna, among them Georg Kaiser (later Hungarianised as György Császár) who took the post of concertmaster and soon became the assistant conductor of the theatre. He was also an excellent composer. The size of the orchestra rose thereby to 34 and at the same time the chorus was increased to 32.⁸ In the 1838–39 season Erkel premièred eight operas, among them, as a serious feat of arms, a genuine Hungarian piece.⁹

Given the predominance of comic opera in the operatic repertory of the first period at the Hungarian Theatre, Rossini’s *Il Barbiere di Siviglia* having been the first opera performed there at all, it is no wonder that the the first genuine Hungarian musical play premièred in April 1839 was also a comic opera. *Csel* [The Intrigue] composed by Endre Bartay to István Jakab’s original libretto bears traces of Rossini’s and Donizetti’s influence and also makes use of the *verbunkos*.¹⁰ Although Bartay attempted to introduce the reci-

tative he retained prose dialogues, too, which made the piece rather out of date even at the time of the first performance. Thus *Csel* cannot be designated as the first Hungarian opera in the sense the word conveyed around 1840. A fully-fledged Hungarian opera could no longer grow out directly from the old-type comic *sujets* or the *Singspiel*-like genres mixing singing with spoken dialogue. This fact was clearly exemplified by Erkel’s first opera *Bátori Mária* which was premièred on 8 August, 1840. With it, the Hungarian national opera of full artistic validity was born from a determined and sensitive adaptation of the typology of plotting and characterisation borrowed from contemporary international music drama. Shortly before, Erkel had premièred Italian melodramas like *Beatrice di Tenda* and *Lucrezia Borgia* that clearly mark the point where he had taken up the cultivation of the genre. Similarly to his models, the heroine in his first opera is put through a tragic ordeal, dies innocently and becomes an emblem of moral integrity. The adoption of international models by Erkel did not contradict any of the current interpretations of the concept of “national art” coined at the time by some influential circles of national liberal thinkers.

BÁTORI MÁRIA: THE ANTECEDENTS OF THE TEXT AND THE HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF THE PLOT

The choice of the librettist Benjámín Egressy (1814–1851) fell on the subject of *Bátori Mária* taken from a stage play in prose by András Dugonics (1793; first performed in 1794, published in 1795). The play had been popular on the Hungarian stage for nearly half a century.¹¹ The Hungarian Theatre in Pest put it on bill in March 1838, soon after Erkel had joined the company.¹²

The plot of *Bátori Mária* was based upon the tragic story of Ines de Castro, a theme that had been wandering all over Europe for centuries. It was first adapted by Camoës in *Os Lusíadas* (1572)¹³ and later reappeared in dramatic form on the stages of several nations. One of these plays, Paul Weidmann’s five act

⁸ According to the almanacs of the National Theatre, the orchestra had 32 to 37 members in the 1840s; the number of players was 39 in 1852, 46 in 1858 and 45 in 1859–1860.

⁹ The National Theatre soon gained an advantage over the German Municipal Theatre in playing operas, thus the latter stopped performing operas regularly long before it burnt down in 1847. The primacy of the National Theatre is reinforced by the travel reports of the Danish writer Hans Christian Andersen visiting Pest in 1842: “Buda has a theatre, too, Pest possesses even two (not to mention the summer theatre in Városliget), the most famous of them being the National Theatre in which only Hungarian plays are performed [sic]. It is also used as a concert hall...” See *Útikalandok a régi Magyarországon* [Travel Adventures in Old Hungary], ed. Sándor Haraszti & Tibor Pethő (Budapest: Táncsics, 1963).

¹⁰ Erkel composed two series of variations on the themes from *Csel* which have been lost, but a fragmentary manuscript of a further series of variations on a theme from the opera for piano and string quintet has survived. See Ervin Major, “Erkel Ferenc műveinek jegyzéke: bibliográfiai kísérlet” [The Catalogue of the Works of Ferenc Erkel: A Bibliographical Attempt], offprint of *Zenei Szemle* 1947 II, III (Budapest, 1947), p. 7; Ervin Major, “Erkel Ferenc műveinek jegyzéke: második bibliográfiai kísérlet” [The Catalogue of the Works of Ferenc Erkel: Second Bibliographical Attempt], in *Magyar Zenetörténeti Tanulmányok*, ed.

Ferenc Bónis (Budapest: Zeneműkiadó, 1968), pp. 11–43, particularly p. 17; Amadé Németh, *A magyar opera története a kezdetektől az Operaház megnyitásáig* [The History of Hungarian Opera from the Beginnings to the Opening of the Opera House] (Budapest: Zeneműkiadó, 1987), p. 47.

¹¹ András Dugonics, *Bátori Mária: Szomorú történet öt szakaszban: Endrődy Sándornak Dugonicsról írt tanulmányával* [*Bátori Mária: A Tragedy in Five Acts: With a Study on Dugonics by Sándor Endrődy*] (Budapest: Aigner, 1881).

¹² Amadé Németh, *The History of Hungarian Opera*, p. 57. – In the 1835–36 season of the Theatre at Buda Castle Benjámín Egressy appeared in Dugonics’s play as Szepelik. See Gyula B. Bérczessi, *Egressy Béni zenei alkotásainak jegyzéke* [Catalogue of the Musical Works of Béni Egressy]. Manuscript at the Institute for Musicology of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences.

¹³ Canto 3, verses 118–136.

tragedy *Pedro und Ines* is listed in the inventory of a theatre manager active in Pest during the first half of the 19th century.¹⁴ A variant of the theme, the ballad of Agnes Bernauer, reached the operatic stage (Abbé G. J. Vogler's lost opera: *Albert der Dritte von Bayern*, 1781; Karl Krebs: *Agnes Bernauer*, 1833).¹⁵ An elaboration of the tragic fate of Ines served as the sujet for the opera *Ines und Pedro oder Der Geist bei Montegalva* by Johann Spech, the first conductor of the German Municipal Theatre in Pest. Originally composed on a libretto after Sándor Kisfaludy's poem *Tátika*, Spech later transferred the plot to picturesque Spain and premièred it in 1814 with a happy ending.¹⁶

Interest in the literary sources of the drama must have arisen in theatrical circles after the revival of Dugonics's play in 1838. A sign of this interest can be seen in the fact that the fashion magazine *Regélő*, published by Gábor Mátray who was deeply involved with the theatre at the time, printed the story of Ines and Pedro in January 1839, a year before Erkel's opera was staged.¹⁷ This literary publication must have had the same source Dugonics had drawn upon; the tragedy *Ignez de Castro* by Julius Friedrich von Soden, first performed in 1784.¹⁸ The fundamental elements of the plot are identical in all of the cases: the heir to the crown has a mistress of noble birth but not of royal blood who bears him two illegitimate children. Convinced that this state of affairs endangered the throne, members of the court plot against the innocent lady and take her life. Von Soden's drama was not completely unfamiliar to Hungarian audiences; it was played in German in different locations in Pest and Buda on eight occasions between 1790 and 1830.¹⁹ It was staged in Hungarian in Kolozsvár, coinciding with the 1794 performance of Dugonics's drama in Pest.²⁰

Dugonics followed Soden's drama very closely, thus his work is a transition between translation and adaptation. The remark Dugonics made in the preface to the printed edition of his *Bátori Mária* is fairly euphemis-

tic: "I adapted it for the Hungarian theatre (fully altering some de Kasztro [sic]) to make the impression of a genuine work."²¹ In fact, the arrangement of the acts is almost identical in both plays, the characters correspond to each other in all respects, and, for the most part, the Hungarian drama follows its model word by word. The insertion of narrative sections between the scenes which report off-stage action and describe the motivation of the characters makes up the bulk of Dugonics's contribution. The Hungarian playwright's own invention is the mystery surrounding the heroine; his Bátori Mária turns out to be a member of the royal family (unfortunately as belatedly as Gennaro turns out to be the son of Lucrezia Borgia in Donizetti's opera), whereby the love-tragedy is extended into a family drama. It was through intrigue that her descent was kept secret before the royal family and herself. Dugonics's other major addition is that the murderers get caught at the end. This development reveals that the King has regretted his ambiguous behaviour leading to the murder; by clearing up the situation the son is allowed to forgive his father and thus a complete resolution of the father-son conflict, the starting point of the drama, is achieved. Carrying out the revenge devolves on the son, Prince István, but the curtain drops before he performs this act. It is remarkable that Egressy's libretto omits both changes and returns to Soden's version. By doing so, the text renders a surprisingly modern open ending to the opera.

From a dramaturgic point of view Egressy's adaptation of Dugonics's play was restricted to curtailing the list of the *dramatis personae*, compressing the original five acts into two and producing the appropriate texts for the inevitable closed numbers. The fourth scene in the first act of the opera (Mária's appearance) coincides with the beginning of the second section of the original drama whereas the second act of the opera comprises the last three sections of the drama. Two minor characters, who would curb the unfolding of the conflict between father and son (Queen Buzilla, István's mother and Szemerédi, the King's right hand man), disappear from the libretto; the number of villains is reduced from three to two. Mária's plan to take the veil, a motive present both in Dugonics and Soden, is missing in Egressy; it would not have fitted into the even flowing of the operatic plot. Similarly, the perjury of the heir to the throne, István, who concealed his marriage with Mária from his father is not retained by Egressy. The figure of the King, who struggles to maintain a balance between personal and public interest and undergoes a fundamental transformation changing from an archaic despot to a noble, enlightened and forgiving ruler, became slightly obsolete by the time it got to the opera stage more than fifty years after it was put in the lime-light in the play. In Dugonics's drama both Árvai and

¹⁴ *Deutsche Theater in Pest und Ofen 1770–1850: Normativer Titelkatalog und Dokumentation*, ed. Hedvig Belitska-Scholtz & Olga Somorjai (Budapest: Argumentum, 1995), vol. II, p. 664, No. 4726.

¹⁵ Cited in Gusztáv Heinrich's study to the edition of Dugonics's drama (Olesó Könyvtár, 1887). See also Kálmán D'Isoz, "Egressy Béni első dalműszövegkönyvéről" [On Béni Egressy's First Opera Libretto], offprint of *Zeneközlöny* 9, Nos. 16–17 (Budapest, 1911).

¹⁶ *Deutsche Theater in Pest und Ofen 1770–1850*, vol. I, p. 455, No. 2941, and Wolfgang Binal, *Deutschsprachiges Theater in Budapest* (Wien: Hermann Böhlau, 1972), p. 99.

¹⁷ *Regélő*, 27 January, 1839.

¹⁸ Julius Fr. von Soden, *Ignez de Castro: Ein Trauerspiel in fünf Aufzügen* (Augsburg, 1789).

¹⁹ *Deutsche Theater in Pest und Ofen 1770–1850*, vol. I, p. 453, No. 2924.

²⁰ Ferenc Kerényi, "Az erdélyi magyar hivatásos színészet kezdetei (1792–1797)" [The Beginnings of Professional Hungarian Acting in Transylvania (1792–1797)], in *Magyar Színháztörténet 1790–1873*, p. 91.

²¹ The first edition is cited in Amadé Németh, *The History of Hungarian Opera*, p. 58.

Szepelik harbour personal grievances towards the Bátori family which reinforces their traditional role as villains. Traces of these private motivations can be found in the opera; we learn about Szepelik's earlier futile attempt to marry Mária and about Árvai's being humiliated by Mária's brother Miklós in asides in No. 10 (Szepelik: "Proud as you are, Mária, you turned me down. / Now prepare for the wedding: death is your groom.") and in the second finale (Mária [*to the King, pointing at Szepelik*]: "This one is miserably lovesick, / [*pointing at Árvai*] while the other one is fired by having fallen from grace.") As far as the stock types of scenes in contemporary opera are concerned, Egressy adeptly recognised the melodramatic potential of several episodes in the original play. Thus, the prayer, the hunt scene and István's forest vision of the murder had been depicted in Dugonics's and Soden's dramas, whereas the drinking and hunting songs and the idea that István arrives to see the murdered Mária with his own eyes instead of being told about the fatality by a messenger were invented by Egressy. The only rhymed section of the Hungarian drama is the lament over Mária's body which had presumably been sung in the play since the first performances.²² The mad scene is the only cliché of contemporary opera which is apparently missing; however, in a different context, Mária's rejoicing aria of gratitude in No. 14 with its capricious melodic line, coloraturas and high pitches could well have conveyed the affect of madness.

Dugonics has rightly shown a certain self-assurance concerning his achievement in his "adaptation" of the Ines de Castro sujet "for the Hungarian theatre," i.e. the success of his effort to harmonise a European theatrical topic with a Hungarian historical background, or rather, to insert real or legendary events of old Hungarian history into an itinerant subject. The view prevailing in the Erkel literature that the plot of *Bátori Mária* is pure fiction and most of the characters of the opera were merely invented, is unfounded. Dugonics's monstrous footnotes to his epico-dramatic creation use an extensive scholarly apparatus to prove that all significant moments of the drama reflect authentic historical events; in fact, apart from some minor details his data have been corroborated by modern Hungarian historiography. It turned out that not only were King Kálmán (Koloman Beauclerc, 1096–1116) and his son István II (Stephen II, 1116–1131), a lesser known member of the House of Árpád, historical personalities but the political events delineated in the play were based on historical events and minor characters were modelled after historical figures as well. Álmos and his son Béla, mentioned in the libretto as claimants to the throne ("Álmos and Béla are on the outlook to dissent," in No. 2), were real protagonists of the political fights during the reign of King Kálmán. The several-year-long struggle

between Álmos and Kálmán for the throne was rooted in a peculiar order of succession to the throne. Since the previous King Ladislaus I had no male heir, he had no other choice but to declare either Álmos or Kálmán, one of the two sons of his brother Géza, as the successor to the throne. His choice fell on Álmos.²³ Nonetheless, due to circumstances unexplained to these days, Kálmán was crowned king of Hungary. Álmos even had to abdicate from the throne of Dalmatia and received dukedom over one third of Hungary in exchange.²⁴ The ill-fated Dalmatia had first been annexed by Byzantium, then partly occupied by Kálmán in 1105; this historical event forms the starting point of the plot of the opera. However, there is but a fleeting remark in the opening chorus to reveal that the victorious troops of István were just returning from Dalmatia ("Gloomy clouds have lifted from our sky and drifted above Dalmatia now"); the rest of the libretto mentions the enemy only in general.²⁵ Strangely, the libretto bears traces of an allegation documented in Hungarian chronicles, but ignored by Dugonics: "King Stephen did not want to marry lawfully but took up with concubines.²⁶ The barons and leaders – feeling sorry for the abandonment of the country and the King's absence of issue – brought him the daughter of Robert Guiscard of Apulia (recte: Robert of Capua) as a wife."²⁷

This noble Italian lady of Norman descent formed the historical prototype of Mária Bátori's figure. According to Dugonics's sources, she was an offspring of the Sicilian Buzilla²⁸ dynasty, the family of King Kálmán's wife. Her father, the uncle of the Hungarian

²³ Dugonics used a source in which Álmos appeared as the son of Lampert, the younger brother of Ladislaus. Consequently, Álmos's claim to the throne is branded unlawful from the beginning. However, the sources calling Álmos the brother of Kálmán are greater in number. See Ferenc Makk, *A tizenkettedik század története* [The History of the Twelfth Century] (Budapest: Pannonica, 2000), p. 9.

²⁴ The historical Álmos later sought help abroad on several occasions, stirred up an uprising and attempted to make his own son Béla accede to the throne instead of the childless István. In the end King Kálmán had both of them blinded. Nevertheless, Béla succeeded István on the throne and is recorded in Hungarian history as Béla the Blind. – A Byzantine sub-plot is included in Dugonics's play but not in the opera. Confronted with the expansionist policy of Kálmán on the Balkans, the Emperor of Byzantium Ioannes hoped to take the winds out of the Hungarian King's sails by marrying Kálmán's sister Piroska who assumed the name Eirene in the Orthodox Church. In the drama she sends Kálmán the second letter which, together with the one from Sicily, finally clears up the intrigue. See Ferenc Makk, *op. cit.*, pp. 32–33.

²⁵ It is an unfounded assertion that the enemy in *Bátori Mária* is represented by Romanians (Ferenc Kerényi, *The National Theatre on the Eve of the Bourgeois Revolution*, p. 320), even though István happens to arrive in Buda from Dalmatia via Transylvania, more precisely Marosvásárhely.

²⁶ Szepelik, Árvai: "Here comes the usurper with his rampant troops. / Does he not bring with him women of pleasure, / to bury our country's worries in their luscious groins?" (No. 2 *Marcia ongarese trionfale*)

²⁷ Cited by Ferenc Makk, *The History of the Twelfth Century*, p. 51.

²⁸ According to recent research the name resulted from misreading. See Ferenc Makk, *op. cit.*, p. 16.

²² Ferenc Kerényi, *Hungarian Acting in Pest-Buda (1790–1796)*, p. 76.

queen had secretly sent her to Hungary to be brought up in the Transylvanian family of the Bátoris (who had had a long past behind and a glorious future before them) and in due course to accede to the throne as the wife of István. There is a reference to the secret upbringing of Mária in the first finale of the opera (“The triumphant groom takes his bride by the arm / who was brought up for him in deep solitude.”). The scheme was upset by Mária’s foster father Sándor Bátori who, pretending that Mária was his own daughter, appropriated her dowry. In Dugonics’s play the real descent of Mária “Bátori” is shed light upon by a letter from Sicily which arrives too late because the three murderous villains are already on the way to Leányvár.

It is thus beyond doubt that the main character of Erkel’s opera can be traced back to a real historical figure, even if it appears in the context of an inauthentic plot, originating with Dugonics. This plot deviates from the recorded historical facts in a number of respects: the Sicilian lady did in fact ascend to the Hungarian throne, and István is not known to have had children whereas in the play István and Mária are ascribed two illegitimate children. In the opera, István’s first and lawful wife dies before the plot begins to unfold. The deceased Judit is the third historical person, besides Álmos and Béla, whose name found its way to the libretto with the aim to create a historical background. In reality, she was a Polish princess whose purported marriage with István has not been substantiated by historical scholarship, despite close Polish–Hungarian ties in those days.

CRITICAL ACCLAIM AND THE CONCEPT OF NATIONAL MUSIC

The German press of Pest reviewed the première of Erkel’s first opera in a different tone and in more detail than Hungarian critics. This dissimilarity was not only due to the opera war whose fronts divided Hungarian critics, but also to differences in education. The average German critic could draw upon a long tradition of musical criticism in German and generally had a thorough musical education whereas Hungarian critics were literary gentlemen in most cases and did not possess any musical learning. Therefore, they were unable to treat musical problems in a professional manner. This explains why the majority of Hungarian critics expressed themselves rather laconically compared to their German colleagues and approached music from more of an ideological point of view.

Nevertheless, on the whole the contemporary press unambiguously transmitted the picture of the resounding success of *Bátori Mária*. It is worth examining the components of this success. One of the factors to be considered is the Hungarian elements in Erkel’s score which were easily recognisable to both the audience and

the critics. Instrumental *verbunkos* elements could, by then, look back on a presence of several decades on the Hungarian stage; they had formed a part of the professional theatrical performances from their very birth in the late 18th century. Various types of Hungarian musical pieces had already proved the viability of vocal adaptation of the *verbunkos* and that the Hungarian style conformed to the structures of European art music, although only to a limited extent. Finally, Hungarian audiences had got acquainted with contemporary opera in the German theatre by that time, and had also experienced the ecstasy of the first encounter with Italian, French and German operas that were at last performed in their native language in the National Theatre.

The public hailed the breakthrough in Hungarian opera achieved by Erkel who combined three essential elements in *Bátori Mária* in a way that was theretofore unprecedented on the Hungarian stage. He used the vernacular, he composed music of unquestionable genuineness, and blended the national text and national music to form a through-composed opera.²⁹ The criticism of the great literary personality Ferenc Toldy (formerly named Schedel) thus proved adequate in the context of both national culture in general and the history of Hungarian opera in particular when he asserted: “At any rate, not only is this our first genuine serious opera but also one that is worthy of being the starting point in the history of the genre in Hungary.”³⁰ The German critic of *Pesther Tageblatt* formulated a similar opinion in a remarkably professional analysis published after the première claiming that this opera has raised Hungarian music to equal status with that of the other branches of art.³¹

Several Hungarian and German critics hailed *Bátori Mária* as the embodiment of the concept of Hungarian national opera.³² However, it also had its opponents who were of a different opinion about the concept of national opera created by Erkel in his first experiment. The difference in judgement resulted from the conflicting postulations the parties set as the concept of national art. A moderately liberal literary circle around the periodical *Athenaeum*, including József Bajza, Vörösmarty and Toldy, formed the “brain trust” of the National Theatre and advocated classicist

²⁹ A review of the première noted the artistic and practical problems of integrating a locally composed opera into the international repertory: „Diese außerordentliche Theilnahme kann dem wackern Kompositur zu um so größerem Ruhme gereichen, da man weiß, wie schwierig es ist, mit einer Originaloper, die nicht aus Paris oder Italien kommt, zu reüssieren.” *Der Spiegel*, 3 February, 1841.

³⁰ *Athenaeum*, 3 February, 1841.

³¹ *Pesther Tageblatt*, 12 August, 1840.

³² The audience of *Bánk bán* evidently did not need any help in recognising the opening motif of the Hungarian march from *Bátori Mária* (No. 2) in one of Petur’s recitatives. It appears there “on the right (i.e. national) side” in a dramatic conflict where oppositions are far more elaborate musically.

aesthetic views. Thus, they focused on the classical qualities of Erkel's work in their criticism and tended to depreciate the prominent presence of Hungarian elements. In 1842, *Athenaeum* declared in an essay comparing the latest local opera *Gizul* by Károly Thern and *Bátori Mária* that "both works are a remarkable reflection of the endeavour to give their schooling [i.e. musical technique] a Hungarian character, to adorn it as if it were in Hungarian garment. *Bátori Mária* is a product of the German (classical) school and, except for its national character, the author subordinated all aspects of composition to the requirements of classicism. [... Erkel] created his work in a manner that enables it to withstand the changes of time and taste."³³ Thus, if Hungarian opera intended to position itself on classical European foundations, for the sake of universality the Hungarian element had to remain a mere garment. Gábor Mátray, music director of the theatre in the first months of its existence, found the proportion of national elements in *Bátori Mária* too high for the same reason: "The composer has deftly woven in Hungarian melodies. They could well have been omitted in some places or at least less frequently repeated." Classicism is again at stake; Mátray classified *Bátori Mária* disapprovingly as "a fashionable romantic opera." He criticised some numbers in which "the style inclines towards German romanticism" and contrasted them with other items of the opera like the King's aria in the second act ("Who says that kings are a happy breed?") or the ensemble concluding the same scene which he believed to be Italian and declared as strikingly successful as opposed to the Hunters' song (No. 12), for instance, which evidently represented the German tradition for Mátray and proved to be ineffective.³⁴

Hidden behind the postulations of classicism there lied the optimistic conviction of the Hungarian Reform Age that European music forms could be reconciled with the Hungarian popular tradition. Differences in opinion originated in the critics' judgement on whether or not the postulations were fulfilled by the opera. By contrast, the radical literary circle that broke with the ideals of *Athenaeum* and became known as *Young Hungary*, defined the national character by the individuality of its genesis rather than from the aspect of the universality of its treatment. They hailed the integrity of national art rather than its integration into a classical concept of art. They understood that Hungarian music should be attached to the "trunk" of the universal art of music but they stressed that it should also remain an "independent, separate and original branch of the art," retaining its distinctive features. The concern for the ethnic character of national music is characteristically interwoven with the defence of dramatic individualisation on stage. When the insignificant playwright Imre

Vahot demanded that historical figures should not be represented on the operatic stage, he came very close to the standpoint of Gábor Egressy, one of the greatest actors living at the time, who claimed that music was incapable of depicting human character.³⁵ When Vahot called Erkel's attention to "the nature, customs and morals of the Hungarian race, and the music of the *csárdás*" in connection with *Bátori Mária* and warned him that "it is by no means sufficient to add some fragments from the spirit of our folk songs to a totality that is constructed along differing principles," he was by no means voicing an isolated point of view but that of a common radical nationalism in music. In the 1840s similar views could be heard but sporadically. However, they became prevalent after the defeat of Hungary in the War of Independence of 1848–49. Some declared then that Hungarian music would become "the fourth musical idiom" besides the German, the Italian and the French.³⁶

Apart from discussing matters of principle, both detailed critiques of the première, the anonymous German review in *Pesther Tageblatt* and Gábor Mátray's essay in *Honművész*, analyse the individual numbers of the opera.³⁷ Between these two extremes critics do not seem to recognise the fact that the Hungarian character has a precise dramaturgic function in the opera as a musical means to reflect the moral conflict in the piece. The national musical style takes sides with Mária and

³⁵ See Imre Vahot, "Még egy szózat a magyar színházról" [One More Word on the Hungarian Theatre], *Regélő Pesti Divatlap*, 28 April, 1842; and *Vahot Imre válogatott színházi írásai (1840–1848)* [Selected Essays on Theatre by Imre Vahot] (Budapest: Magyar Színházi Intézet, 1981), pp. 9–62, esp. pp. 29–31 (facsimile of the 1840 edition); as well as *Egressy Gábor válogatott cikkei (1838–1848)* [Selected Articles by Gábor Egressy] (Budapest: Magyar Színházi Intézet, 1980), pp. 22–26, esp. p. 25.

³⁶ "There is no Hungarian musical style yet, or it is just on the verge of being created by the good Erkel. [...] Once this musical style will have been created and will be taken on by other artists, it will lend itself to the writing of all kinds of works as the French, Italian and German idioms do." (Andor Vas [Ferenc Hazucha], "Hangászati levelek" [Musical letters], *Életképek*, 1844, I/7); "Hungarian music has a calling to form one of the independent, separate and original branches of the trunk of musical arts..." (Mihály Mosonyi, "A magyar zene" [Hungarian music], *Zenészeti Lapok* I, 3 October, 1860, p. 5); "...Providence points to us, so to say, with its finger that through the artistic evolution of Hungarian music we should establish the fourth world-famous musical manner: the Hungarian idiom (beside the German, Italian and French musical trends and schools)." (Mihály Mosonyi, *Zenészeti Lapok* I, 17 July, 1861, p. 330) – When Erkel wrote commentaries to the numbers of *Bánk bán* he ranked the Hungarian style with the rest of the national styles in the same manner. See Ferenc Bónis, "Erkel Ferenc a Bánk bánról" [Ferenc Erkel on Bánk bán], in *Magyar Zenetörténeti Tanulmányok*, pp. 63–73.

³⁷ *Pesther Tageblatt*, 12 August, 1840; *Honművész*, 13 August, 1840. István Barna published both critiques almost in full in the original language in "Erkel Ferenc első operái az egykorú sajtó tükrében" [Ferenc Erkel's First Operas in the Light of Contemporary Press Reports], in *Zenetudományi Tanulmányok II: Erkel Ferenc és Bartók Béla emlékére* (Budapest: Akadémiai, 1954), pp. 175–218, esp. p. 176 and pp. 183–186, respectively.

³³ *Athenaeum*, 4 January, 1842.

³⁴ *Honművész*, 13 August, 1840.

István and musically represents purity and humanity as opposed to royal power and court intrigue.

However, individual analyses deserve special attention since not only do they word the critic's own view but also report the reactions of the audience. Occasionally, they also inform the reader about the circumstances of a given performance. It has already been mentioned how Mátray reported the acclaim the Italianate numbers had received. He also observed the predominance of the choruses and their high musical standard; other critics shared his view almost unanimously after the first night and later performances of *Bátori Mária*.³⁸ The *Pesther Tageblatt* called *Quartetto con coro* (No. 3) one of the most successful numbers of the opera, and also gave an account of the ovation with which the audience greeted it; an ovation that was justified neither by the situation on the stage nor by the affect that was conveyed by the music. Apart from the quartet, Mátray also praised Mária's *Romanza* (No. 4 – without the *Cabaletta* that had not yet been composed for the première) and her *Aria* in the second act (No. 8). Conversely, the *Duetto* in the first act (No. 6) was unanimously criticised. It was said to be reminiscent of Mozart rather than contemporary opera in instrumentation and musical idiom, it was deemed too long and a shortening was suggested (similarly to the opening chorus of the second act and the King's scene in No. 10). The hunting chorus (No. 11) seemed affected to Mátray, whereas his German counterpart merely spoke of the deficiencies of the performance. The unanimous praise of the first finale was disturbed by one voice of criticism; the German reviewer criticised the wedding chorus for its ineffectiveness and weakness in composition. Citing counter-examples by Halévy and Auber, he ascribed the failure to Erkel's lack of clear distinction between church style and theatrical style. It is remarkable that the same review distinguished the closing section of the first finale (which he called *Friss Magyar*) from gypsy music, the memory of which was evoked by the mistaken manner in which the violinists of the orchestra had performed the music. It is an essential and telling moment that both critics judged the second finale of the opera as lengthy and ineffective. As we shall see later, Erkel found a remedy for all these problems.

INSERTIONS, SINGERS, REVIVALS

The critic of *Pesther Tageblatt* stated that after Mária's *Romanza* (No. 4) in the first act the *banda* (i.e. the stage band of wind instruments) played a march directly preceding the *Duetto* (No. 6): "The arrival of the prince was announced by a march which, performed by the banda

³⁸ „Die Musik hat durch und durch einen national-charakteristischen Anstrich, viele Schönheiten, worunter besonders die Chöre, das Quartett in der Introduction, das erste Finale &c. &c. zu rechnen sind." *Der Spiegel*, 12 August, 1840.

alone, did not produce the effect that the participation of the full orchestra would have achieved. – A banda in itself does not make a good impression in a confined space, and as all wind music it is more effective in open air. The subsequent duet is simple and impressive."³⁹ If this piece of information is genuine one must accept that *Coro* (No. 5) in its present, known and final form employing chorus, full orchestra and the *banda* was not presented at the première (and probably at later performances either). Instead, the *banda* played a march which must have been an early variant of the *Coro* instrumented for the banda. The critic's description is supported by the autograph score (AU) and reinforced by the promptbook which was probably used at the première (SK1). Both confirm that Erkel had in fact planned to include a chorus at this place. The words were even published in the libretto printed for the première (L1) but he apparently did not finish the instrumentation in time. An entry in pencil can be read at the top of the relevant page in the above-mentioned promptbook: "Kórus. Banda" [Choir. Banda]. However, the place for the text of the chorus remained blank. In the autograph manuscript Erkel completed the *Maestoso* passage after the *Romanza* (see critical notes), he also notated the beginning of *Coro* (No. 5) in D major with an indication as to the scoring for full orchestra. Nevertheless, the number itself remained incomplete; Erkel wrote the chorus parts to the end in D major, but broke off the two staves of the *guida* for the *banda* after fourteen bars, and left the staves of the orchestral parts blank. He later filled out the orchestral parts in C major, the new key of the section, and added the choral parts for the C major version at a blank space in the score (see facsimile 3).

This drastic change of key is due to the fact that between the *Romanza* and the *Maestoso* Erkel inserted a *Cabaletta* for Mária. The new number survived in the autograph manuscript on unnumbered pages added later. The copyist of SK1 inserted the text for the new item into the space left blank for the text of the chorus. The insertion of the *Cabaletta* made a shortening and a transposition of the *Maestoso* necessary, and the original key of the *Coro*, D major, also had to be altered. A full orchestration of the chorus was carried out with regard to the already existing *Cabaletta*.⁴⁰

³⁹ „Die Ankunft des Herzogs kündigt sich in einem Marsch an, der, von der Banda *allein* ausgeführt, nicht den Effekt machte, den er hervorgebracht haben würde, wenn das volle Orchester mitgewirkt hätte. – Eine Banda allein gefällt nicht in einem geschlossenem Raum, und ist, wie überhaupt alle Harmoniemusik, mehr für das Freie angewiesen. – Das darauffolgende Duett ist einfach und wirksam." *Pesther Tageblatt*, 12 August, 1840.

⁴⁰ In a pioneering study László Somfai claims that the German critique referred to the fanfare after the *Romanza* and not to the *Coro*. It is improbable, however, that the critic would have left the *Coro* (No. 5) unmentioned while he described a musically insignificant moment of thirteen bars which had already been heard in the opera once, before the *Marcia*; it is also improbable that the critic would have referred to the short fanfare as a

The earliest datable insertion proper, István's aria accompanied by the men's choir, was added to the first act (No. 2 *Aria con Coro*). Erkel wrote it for Zsigmond Joób who took on the role and first sang it on 29 January, 1841. Mátray's only remark about the new piece in *Honművész* was that it was "less effective than difficult."⁴¹ The extremely high tessitura of the tenor part in *Bátori Mária* (and in Erkel's later operas for that matter) was criticised constantly throughout the stage history of the piece. It probably resulted from the singing technique called *false tone* that had already begun to decline on the international stage by the 1830s.

From Mátray's review we also learn that Mária's role was originally intended for Mme. Schodel, the *prima-donna assoluta* of the 1840s in the National Theatre: "as a matter of fact, today's extremely difficult role was written by the composer for Mme. Schodel and measured to her talent." Mátray's information is supported by another review according to which the "young and charming Mária Felber had learnt the title role of Bátori Mária within an extremely short period of time" for the première.⁴² One can safely assume that the resignation of Mme. Schodel was the result of the opera war; offended by the continuous attacks against her, she left Pest in the summer of 1840 for an extended tour in Austria. After Mária Felber left in 1841,⁴³ the theatre tried to fill the title role with the beginner Paulina Lang and the internationally known Henriette Carl, former prima donna of the German Theatre.⁴⁴ In September 1843 Endre Bartay, the new director of the National Theatre, announced that a long-term agreement could be reached with Mme. Schodel.⁴⁵ Consequently, she appeared three times on the stage of the National Theatre as Mária (on 15 and 20 December, 1843 and 11 February, 1845) and she also performed in May 1844 in Pozsony (now Bratislava, Slovakia). Although none of the insertions are associated with her person directly in contemporary sources, one cannot rule out the possibility that the *Cabaletta* after the *Romanza* was written for the festive occasion of her appearance.

After Mme. Schodel, Mária's role was sung almost exclusively by Kornélia Hollósy (1827–1890), the other leading Hungarian prima donna of the time. Newspaper reports were enthusiastic about her coloratura all the time. The only mark her appearances in the title role

left on the work was a cadenza for the *Cabaletta* (No. 4) with the accompaniment of a flute. With the exception of the vocal part that has been lost, the cadenza could be reconstructed from the contemporary performing material of the orchestra (NSZ) (see critical notes).⁴⁶

The only interruption in Hollósy's success series came with four guest performances by Luise Liebhardt in 1852 (the one on 5 July was attended by Emperor Franz Joseph). Both the play-bill made for Liebhardt's guest performances and the press reports attest that Erkel composed a new aria in the second act for the guest singer from Vienna.⁴⁷ No traces of this piece could be found so far. In any case, the assumption in the literature that it must be identical with one of the known arias cannot be substantiated. For such hypothesis, two numbers in the second act could be taken into consideration; the *Cabaletta* in G major (No. 8), and the aria in the second *Finale* (No. 14) in which Mária joyfully expresses her gratitude over her supposed escape. The latter is very unlikely to have been an insertion because it forms part of the first layer of the autograph manuscript and fits into it without discontinuity. By contrast, *Cabaletta* (No. 8) seems to be a later insertion; the autograph manuscript confirms that the *Scena, terzetto e coro* (No. 9) was to follow the G minor aria (No. 8) directly. However, Erkel must have decided to insert the *Cabaletta* at a very early stage because its text was included in the promptbook (SK1) dating from before 1841 and having probably been in use since the première. Nevertheless, in this textual source, heretofore unknown in Erkel research, a loose leaf is stitched in after No. 8 which contains the words of a single stanza, sufficient to serve as the text for a coloratura aria.⁴⁸ The way such insertions were usually treated explains how the music of the aria (called "Hungarian song" in a review) may have got lost. In the case of a new *Duetto* (see Appendix II) and two dances (see Appendix IV, V), to be discussed in detail later, the parts for the additional numbers were copied and kept separately

"march." See "Az Erkel-kéziratok problémái" [Problems of Erkel's Manuscripts], in *Zenatudományi Tanulmányok IX: Az opera történetéből* (Budapest: Akadémiai, 1961), pp. 81–158, esp. pp. 104–106.

⁴¹ *Honművész*, 4 February, 1841.

⁴² "Dem. Felber, die junge, anmuthige Sängerin, die die Titelparthie in sehr kurzer Zeit studierte, sang mit allem Aufwande ihrer schönen Stimme, und war besonders in den höhern Tonlagen ausgezeichnet." *Der Spiegel*, 12 August, 1840.

⁴³ See *Nemzeti Színházi Zsebkönyv 1842. évre* [Almanac of the National Theatre for the Year 1842] (Pest, 1842), p. 15.

⁴⁴ *Ibidem*, p. 31.

⁴⁵ *Honderú*, 23 September, 1843.

⁴⁶ The flute part of the cadenza has survived on a sheet of small-sized note-paper (probably in Erkel's handwriting) attached to the part-book of the flute (see facsimile 9). The entry "Hollósy-Cadenz" in several places of the orchestral material indicates that Erkel composed the cadenza for the popular soprano.

⁴⁷ The play-bill of the four performances to be staged "with a new cast and production" says: „Miss Luiza Liebhart will also sing a new aria in the second act composed explicitly for her." *Pesti Napló* also reports on the new aria: "Miss Luiza Liebhardt distinguished herself in Mária's role through her singing and acting alike; the highlight of her role, however, was a Hungarian song written by Mr Erkel explicitly for the actress which was received with enthusiastic thunderous applause by the audience and was repeated by the actress" (26 June, 1852); "She was particularly excellent in the artful aria composed for her which she sang with surprising ease and precision." (13 July, 1852).

⁴⁸ The so far unknown and unpublished words of the aria run as follows: "Look upon me oh, merciful heavens / and give me strength in my struggle. / Should I have to perish, Lord God, / be it at thy will. / Let thy guardian angels protect / my poor innocent children / in this storm. / Let them be protected by angels."

from the bulk of the performing material. This way they could easily be detached from the corpus of the work and set out on their own path of transmission, leading to unknown places. As for the lost aria, it is possible that this was the very piece that some articles in *Koszorú* and *Magyar Sajtó* report on. According to them, the famous singer Anna Carina, who later settled down in Pest, sang an excerpt from *Bátori Mária* in Vienna on 28 February, 1864, a “grand aria” with orchestral accompaniment in Pest at a “Recitation, Song and Music Academy” organised by the National Theatre on 23 December the same year, and also an “aria” with orchestra on 26 March, 1865 in Pest.⁴⁹ In view of the comparatively short time that elapsed between the performances it can be supposed that she sang the same piece on all three occasions. If she had sung an aria with orchestral accompaniment in Vienna as well, she obviously would have needed the instrumental parts which must have been easy to transport and therefore could not belong with the corpus of the whole opera. As regards the transportability of the parts, two of Mária’s arias come into question; transposed versions of both the *Romanza* (No. 4) and the *Aria* at the beginning of the second act (No. 8) survived in contemporary parts separately from the main body of the performing material. As for the performability of the *Romanza*, one should bear in mind that it also involves a choir. On the other hand, the performing material for the G minor/G major *Aria* has been handed down with extremely deficient parts on loose leaves, a deficiency that must have made its use at a concert difficult. Unless the dishevelled state of the material points exactly to its being lent to Vienna, it might be assumed that the press recorded concert performances of the lost aria. There were no traces of the insertion of a new number in the 1858 promptbook (SK2) or in the libretto (L2) printed the same year, which suggests that after Luise Liebhardt’s departure Erkel did not consider the aria an organic part of the opera.

In 1858 the National Theatre revived *Bátori Mária*. This choice is rather surprising because Erkel’s second opera *Hunyadi László* had been performed continuously since 1844 and at the time of the revival he was busy working on *Bánk bán*, which would be premièred in 1861, some months after the last performance of *Bátori Mária*, and proved to be the second opera destined to unbroken success in his oeuvre apart from *Hunyadi László*. Nevertheless, both the composer and the theatre made preparations for the revival with apparent ambition. The play-bill and the press mutually stressed the fact that a new production with “new cast, new items of music and songs, new scenery and new dances” would be presented.⁵⁰ Having a new

⁴⁹ *Koszorú*, first half of 1864, p. 239; *Magyar Sajtó*, 22 December, 1864, p. 1368; *Magyar Sajtó*, 27 March, 1865, p. 302.

⁵⁰ *Hölgyfutár*, 3 February, 1858.

promptbook copied and a new libretto printed obviously suggests that this time the composer did not content himself with incidental changes but intended to modify the “canonised” form of the work. The play-bill does not help to clarify what these purported modifications implied. Although the press occasionally made a hint at the novelties in the score,⁵¹ the critics were unable to identify their exact nature in a piece that had rarely been performed in the previous decades, and not at all in the preceding six years. Yet, most critiques note the “nicely conceived duet” by Mária and István as “one of the highlights of the opera,” which was “one of the most difficult pieces to sing.”⁵² This characterisation does not apply to the original *Duetto* (No. 6) in *A major* in the first act that was subject to criticism as early as the time of the première. Erkel himself must have been dissatisfied with the *Duetto* which is witnessed by the fact that all musical and textual sources display severe cuts. The composer started to cut the duet very early and the cuts affected increasingly long sections; in one version only the first forty-one bars of the whole duet seem to have been retained.⁵³

Finally, Erkel found a radical solution – he put the duet aside altogether. Erkel research had been aware of this fact since a text for a new duet was available in both sources of the libretto prepared for the 1858 revival (SK2 and L2). Since no new duet could be found in the

⁵¹ “Erkel’s *Bátori Mária* is being diligently rehearsed at the National Theatre so that it can go on stage as soon as possible. The eminent composer has carried out a few advantageous changes to his earlier opera, as one hears. In particular, the role of Mme. Hollósy-Lonovics is said to be extremely beautiful and very effective.” *Hölgyfutár*, 28 January, 1858.

⁵² “[The audience] warmly welcomed its favourite actress Mme. Hollósy-Lonovics in the aria of the first act and in the duet sung jointly with Jekelfalussy which, with the brilliant quartet of the first act, can be claimed to be the highlights of the opera.” (*Magyar Sajtó*, 4 February, 1858) “The duet of the first act (between Mme. Hollósy and Jekelfalussy) is one of the most difficult pieces to sing.” (*Pesti Napló*, 4 February, 1858) “The audience is moved not only by the larger orchestral and singing ensembles and marches but also by the lyrical sections, for example, the nicely conceived duet between Mária Bátori (Mme. Hollósy) and István (Jekelfalussy).” (*Hölgyfutár*, 10 March, 1858)

⁵³ Five larger cuts can be reconstructed from the sources. The *Con moto* section (81–140) was cut very early and was not copied into the common part-book of the cello and double bass made before 1842. (Anton Weindl, cellist of the orchestra, who copied it, died in 1841.) The passage in question was, however, restored later as is confirmed by the entry “gilt” [valid] in the part-books, as well as by the entries “Einlage Con Moto” in the part-books copied later which evidently refer to inserted pages by now lost. In one of the part-books of the second violin (VI II/1) a note in pencil reading “Harfe” can be found; the almanacs of the theatre list a harpist from 1848 on, although she was already engaged at the theatre in 1846. See Tibor Tallián, “Átváltozások, avagy a Nemzeti Színház operai kottatárának néhány tanulsága” [Metamorphoses or Some Lessons of the Operatic Collection of the National Theatre], in *Zenetudományi dolgozatok 1999* (Budapest: Institute for Musicology of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, 1999), pp. 281–286. The section concerned was undoubtedly performed between 1846 and 1852. The cuts affected ever longer sections: the section from 41 to 80 also fell victim to it, the *Con moto* was cut again and finally *Alla polacca* as well (142–204).

autograph score, its music was declared lost.⁵⁴ During the course of work on the present edition a completely unknown *Duetto* was discovered inserted on separate pages into the performing material of the opera. There is no doubt that it was the very duet the critics were so enthusiastic about. In the first version of *Bátori Mária* the Hungarian elements were not able to support an autonomous musical construction of such complexity as Mária and István's new duet. Experience in the compositional process of *Hunyadi László* and *Bánk bán* was needed to enable Erkel to perform the task. The stylistic similarity of the latter opera to the duet cannot be overlooked. Since Mária's part has not been discovered, the new *Duetto* could be reconstructed only fragmentarily. For this reason it is published in Appendix II of the present edition; emendations are, however, suggested.

As in the case of the duet, Erkel took the advice of his critics when it came to transforming the second finale (No. 14). He must have cut the mourning duet of István and Miklós and the closing chorus at an early stage, obviously affected by the reviews claiming unanimously that the finale was long-winded. Then he added two pages of music which – attached to the autograph score – bear evidence of his recognition that the dramatic conciseness and the conceptual openness of the ending of the opera are lost if the vow of vengeance is set into the traditional framework of a closed number. Instead, in the new version, the men's choir recites the magic words of vow almost in prose above the passacaglia motive played menacingly by the brass. While this second version concentrates on the motive of revenge instead of bereavement, the third version of the finale exposes an additional lyrical motive. The vow of revenge is retained but before it is uttered Erkel brings Mária back to life to take leave of her lover and the father of her children. With a melancholic citation of the *Cabaletta* from the first act (No. 4), she sorrowfully recalls the sounds of their foregone happy union. This version of the *Finale* was copied on small-sized notepaper and attached carefully to all performing parts, although not to the score.

Apart from the duet, music for two additional, so far unknown, insertions emerged in the course of work on the present edition: two Hungarian dances instrumented for full orchestra (see Appendix IV–V). No unequivocal statement can be made about their composer.⁵⁵ One of the dances was inserted in the perform-

ing material of the orchestra before the *Duetto* (No. 6). In most orchestral parts a reference confirms the insertion of a dance at this place and the play-bills also call one's attention to a newly introduced dance in the first act. (One should remember that the first *Finale* already in the autograph manuscript contains a pair of dances inscribed "Hungarian allegoric dance"). The other dance survived separately from the performing material. These dances must have served as music for various stage dances interpolated in the opera as indicated on the play-bills during the twenty years of its existence on stage.⁵⁶ The play-bills of the very first performances include the name of the coach and director of the "dance and tableaux that would occur on-stage" in the list of participants. In 1846–1847 "a great Hungarian *pas de deux*" was announced on the play-bills of four performances. The demand for authentic national dances greatly increased after the mid-1840s which explains why the name of Samu Tóth, a Hungarian dance specialist, is recorded on play-bills from 1848 onwards so often. His appearance at the National Theatre coincides with the departure of János Kolosánszky, whose pseudo-Hungarian choreographies induced much aversion, and with the engagement of choreographer Frigyes Campilli. On 26 August, 1848 Samu Tóth and his partners danced a "Hungarian *pas de trois*" and his appearances in 1858–1860 included a "Hungarian dance" in addition to the invariably present "tableaux and chorus dances." It is obvious that at the 1858 revival the new dances and the new duet were intended to establish the predominance of the Hungarian element over Italian, French and German influences. In short, these alterations were meant to reshape the work into a Hungarian opera, in a different sense than that of the 1840 version.

Rather surprisingly, the play-bills indicate that *Bátori Mária* was performed in three acts at its last series from 9 March, 1858 onwards. Sporadic notes in the orchestral parts indicate that the second act of the three act version began with No. 6 or No. 7, and the third with Mária's G minor/G major *Aria e Cabaletta*

⁵⁴ See Dezső Legány, *Erkel Ferenc művei és korabeli történetük* [The Works of Ferenc Erkel and Their Contemporary History] (Budapest: Zeneműkiadó, 1975), pp. 29–31.

⁵⁵ The orchestral parts, the only sources of the dances, do not indicate the name of the composer. As for the style of the compositions, one cannot be sure whether Erkel can be taken into consideration as the author of any of the dances. Ferenc Kirchlechner and József Szerdahelyi emerge as possible contributors since they both performed occasional tasks of composition and instrumentation for the theatre.

⁵⁶ The entries heading the slow sections ("3mal," "4mal" [three times, four times] etc.) confirm the concern, often heard at the time, that in contemporary stage practice the middle section of Hungarian dances tended to be neglected, i.e. *Lassú* [slow] was followed directly by *Friss* [fast]. This concern was worded by Gergely Czuczor as follows: "The accompanying music repeats the same verse ten or twelve times and the dance also continues steadily in the same metre. This is the fault of certain recent composers and our gypsies adopt this habit as well, although in old times they never played *lassú* without *czifra* [ornamented] afterwards and they alternated these two. Now they play *lassú* to the point of yawning, then they start playing the fastest section immediately, and so the dance consists of only two and not three parts, contrary to the old custom and the proverb [three is the number of dances] which is true only if *the beginning is slow, the middle ornamented, and the end fast*." *Athenaeum*, 1843, vol. I, p. 114. See also Bence Szabolcsi, *A XIX. század magyar romantikus zenéje* [The Hungarian Romantic Music of the 19th Century] (Budapest: Zeneműkiadó, 1951), pp. 74–75.

(No. 8). The chorus opening the original second act was cut in all sources to meet the requirements worded in one of the critiques of the première. It is possible that the entry found in one of the dance insertions, which directs the player to follow it with the B major dance of the first finale (*Lassú tánc* [Slow Dance]), is related to the 1858 revival. (The other dance insertion does not contain any notes that would indicate where it should be placed.) Since the entry at the end of the new *Duetto* (“end of Act One”) is likely to be related to the three act version, the newly created second act seems to have been formed by the extension of the first finale into a dance tableau. A *divertissement* could not be incorporated into the second act for dramaturgic reasons, therefore, the creators of the 1858 adaptation found an appropriate place for it in the original first finale. Hence, it may be supposed that in addition to the increasing importance of the Hungarian element in both singing and dance, the last revival of *Bátori Mária* also sought a way to renew the interest of the modern audience in the slightly antiquated work by increasing the proportion of elements of high decorativeness.

Contrary to Erkel’s two following operas which have been present on the Hungarian opera stage uninterrupted since their premières, performances of *Bátori Mária* were restricted to the period between 1840 and 1860. During these twenty years the piece was given thirty-five times on the stage of the National Theatre (on three occasions only partially).⁵⁷ In May 1844 the company staged the opera in Pozsony, on the occasion of a parliamentary session, along with *Hunyadi* and a *népszínmű* (*Volksstück*) entitled *Két pisztoly* [Two Pistols] by Erkel and Ede Szigligeti. On 25 April, 1846 excerpts of the opera were performed in Kolozsvár.⁵⁸ At concert performances the overture was often coupled with the “Introduction” which consisted of the first three numbers of the opera.⁵⁹

⁵⁷ The three partial performances were as follows: on 22 June, 1843 the second act was given (following excerpts from Meyerbeer’s *Robert le diable*), on 22 August the same year a part of the second act was performed in the framework of an operatic medley, and on 15 August, 1850 the overture and the “Introduction” were played (see note 59). The data are based on information gathered from contemporary play-bills in the Collection for Theatre History of the National Széchényi Library.

⁵⁸ István Lakatos, *A kolozsvári zenés színpad (1792–1973). Adatok az erdélyi magyar nyelvű színház történetéhez* [The Musical Stage at Kolozsvár (1792–1973): Data on the History of the Hungarian Theatre in Transylvania] (Bucharest: Kriterion, 1977), pp. 46 and 115.

⁵⁹ Various sources reveal unambiguously that “Introduction” refers to the first three items of the opera. The play-bill of the “Musical and Reciting Academy” held on 15 August, 1850 – in the first part of which the “overture and the introduction” were produced in costume – mentions the personae appearing in the first three numbers but does not list *Mária* in the enumeration of singers. *Der Spiegel* also uses the word unambiguously in the above cited critique of 12 August, 1840 when it speaks about “das Quartett in der Introduction.” It is likely that the “Introduction” was played on occasions when “excerpts” from the first act

Bátori Mária was withdrawn from the programme of the National Theatre in 1860 once and for all, and was not revived in the Budapest Opera House, either. The overture, however, was detached from the corpus of the opera and started to live a life of its own. Following its first production on 9 November, 1841⁶⁰ it became very popular as a concert piece. From the entries in its performing material and the play-bills and almanacs of the National Theatre a continuous performance history of almost one hundred years unfolds.⁶¹ Further data make it probable that the overture was performed in Brussels at the end of the 19th century.⁶² Interestingly, the overture often introduced plays, as on 1 January, 1856 at a performance of Károly Kisfaludy’s play *Kemény Simon*. The fact that the audience sang Erkel’s *Himnusz* [National Anthem] at the end of the perfor-

were performed at orchestral concerts on 1 November, 1840; 6 November, 1842; 22 March, 1846; and 25 December, 1847 in Pest. See Kálmán Isoz, “A pest-budai hangszegyesület és nyilvános hangversenyei 1836–1853” [The Music Society of Pest-Buda and its Public Concerts 1836–1853], in *Tanulmányok Budapest múltjából III*, offprint (Budapest, 1934). Kálmán Isoz erroneously identified the “Introduction” with the overture. – The overture was often performed with the *Quartetto con Coro*, e.g. at the “Academy of Singing, Music and Recitation” at the National Theatre on 16 March, 1856 and remarkably, at Erkel’s last public appearance, the Philharmonic Concert of 7 November, 1890 organised for his eightieth birthday, although on the latter occasion the two numbers did not succeed each other.

⁶⁰ The only reference to the première of the overture as the beginning of the opera is made in *Pesti Hírlap* on 13 November, 1841, reporting on a benefit performance for Erkel: “The recently composed overture and the sound of the choruses and soloists were excellent.” The date 11 November, spread widely in the literature as the date of the overture’s first performance, is erroneous because *Bátori Mária* was not given that day; the Tuesday mentioned in the report fell on 9 November.

⁶¹ Entries in the orchestral parts of the overture used at the National Theatre bear witness to the following performances: “*Den 28. März 1844 im Deutschen Theater, Saphiers Akademie für den ungar. Pensionsfond für Künstler*” (trb I); “*Pesth, den 1. Jan. 1856*” and *Arad, 22 March 1856* (both tr I); “we made it on the eve of Kazinczi’s [sic] centennial commemoration, on 27 October, 1859” (co I); “*22 Dezemb. 1859 Pesth, zum Pensionsfond des Nat. Theaters*” (co II); “*Pest am 22. Dezember 1863*” (tr I, II); “*la prima volta al 22/7 1870*” (trb II); 1883 (cl II); “*Aufgeführt zum 80. Geburtstagsfeier des Komponisten am 7. Nov. 1890*” (trb I); “*Montag Ludwig 17. 11. 1892*” (vl I, 2nd stand); “*Festvorstellung Szegedin am 20 November 1892*” (fg I); “*Montag Lajos 933 Budapest*” and “*Péter Ackermann, on 13 November 1933 im Radio*” (both double bass); “*Raj István 1935. VI. 27*” (tr I). The orchestral material used in Kolozsvár bears witness to three performances and their rehearsals (February 5, 1901; January 20, 21, 23, 30, 31, February 2, 1903; April 3, 6, 1911). Further performances documented are: Pest, 1844 (see *Pesti Divatlap*, 24 November, 1844), Nagyszombat, 1844 (see Dezső Legány, in *The Works of Ferenc Erkel and Their Contemporary History*, p. 31), and Budapest, March 27, 1899 (see *A Filharmóniai Társaság múltja és jelene, 1853–1903* [The Past and Present of the Philharmonic Society, 1853–1903], ed. Imre Mészáros and Kálmán D’Isoz).

⁶² The conductor of the Philharmonic Orchestra of Brussels asked the director of Harmónia Music Publisher of Budapest for Hungarian orchestral works; this is how he must have got into possession of the *Bátori-overture* (*Egyetértés*, 3 January, 1882). See Dezső Legány, *The Works of Ferenc Erkel and Their Contemporary History*, p. 31.

mance makes it evident that it was less a festive occasion than a kind of national festival.⁶³ Another similar occasion was related to the commemoration of Mihály Vörösmarty's death; since 1859 his play *Áldozat* [Sacrifice] has been revived annually, lending the feast a cult-like character.⁶⁴ The overture thus gained a political context after the defeat of Hungary in the War of Independence; it helped to keep national consciousness alive.

SOURCES

The overture went separate ways from the rest of the opera both with regard to its dissemination in performance and to the transmission of its written sources. Since it was composed a year after the opera, the overture is missing from the autograph score. A complete set of orchestral parts survived in the music collection of the National Theatre. There it was not incorporated into the performing material of the opera but was kept separated so as to remain mobile because this material was on loan rather frequently for performances of the overture in the Hungarian capital and in country towns.

In spite of its former continuous use the performing material in NSZ remained unknown for Erkel research until recently, and a contemporary manuscript copy of the score (RP) held in the National Széchényi Library was considered the only source of the overture. It was transferred to Budapest in 1954 from the estate of György Ruzitska (1789–1869), conductor and composer at the theatre of Kolozsvár. The title-page of the manuscript copy reads Erkel's dedication to Ruzitska and the date 1845 (see facsimile 10), and his additions sporadically appear in the score. A performing material held at the Music Academy of Kolozsvár was most probably copied from this score.

The whereabouts of the autograph score of the overture is unknown; nevertheless, the version it contained can be reconstructed from other sources. Ervin Major's catalogue of Erkel's compositions (see note 10) mentions a further copy of the score in the music collec-

tion of the former National Conservatory in Budapest (ZNY); this source has not been researched before, either. Its most characteristic trait is a strikingly rich articulation that clearly reflects a later taste and could hardly have originated with Erkel. This source deviates from RP in containing an extra twenty-five bars and a cut which does not precisely coincide with that in RP; in addition, it displays further significant divergences.⁶⁵ Regarding the stemma of the sources, it cannot be overlooked that the overture in NSZ comprises the longer version even if the passage concerned was later omitted from several part-books. Accordingly, NSZ and ZNY must stem from a common early version probably originating in the lost autograph score. Consequently, a special case of transmission can be inferred; it was the early version of the overture, as contained in the autograph score, which spread over time and space; whereas the later version of RP, authenticated by Erkel in his own hand, apparently did not get beyond Kolozsvár.⁶⁶

Prior to Erkel's composing an overture to it, *Bátori Mária* began with a brief orchestral *Introduction* which anticipated the music of the mourning duet in the finale of the second act (see Appendix I). This *Introduction*, extended by eleven bars, was incorporated into the overture as a slow introduction. This fact makes it evident that the overture was intended to replace the orchestral introduction of the opera. Indeed, the *Introduction* is omitted from most orchestral parts of NSZ,

⁶⁵ E.g. bars 21 (tb), 25–26 (cl), bars 47, 49, 312 and 314 (picc and fl), bar 80 (vc and cb), bars 97–99 and 201 (co I–II); see critical notes.

⁶⁶ Another score of the overture copied in Nyitra (now Nitra, Slovakia) in 1904 and held at the Music Collection of the Hungarian Broadcasting Co. goes back to the early version. This source has been distorted by a re-orchestration resulting in the drawing together of certain wind parts; only one trombone and one bassoon instead of three, respectively two are used so that the part of the first bassoon is generally taken over by the second clarinet or by the first horn (modified accordingly) and the part of the missing trombones is often played by two horns while the only available trombone part is usually identical with the tuba part approved by Erkel. The modifications were probably necessitated by the lack of resources for performances in the country. László Somfai mentions the source *en passant* and attributes the re-orchestration to changes in taste ("Problems of Erkel's Manuscripts," p. 105, see note 40). Press reports testify a performance in Nagyszombat (now Trnava, Slovakia) in 1844 (see note 61). Geographical proximity makes it easily conceivable that the unknown score that was used for the production in Nagyszombat – i.e. the early version of the overture – served as the source for the Nyitra copy. However, the Ruzitska-copy, authenticated by Erkel, also shows signs which refer back to an earlier version employing a reduced number of winds. In this source (RP) the second clarinet part of the slow introduction is Erkel's later insertion in certain places and these insertions are missing from the score from Nyitra. Thus, it cannot be ruled out that the reduced instrumentation of the copy from Nyitra is not the result of intervention by a foreign hand, but goes back to a source which had been copied out before the above mentioned autograph insertions of RP were made. In other words, when Erkel modified the overture in 1845, the earlier version had already gained wide currency in provincial towns due to the exceptional popularity of the piece.

⁶³ The performance of the overture on that day is confirmed by the entry mentioned in the previous note as well as by the play-bill of *Kemény Simon*; the data on singing *Himnusz* emerges from *Pesti Napló*, 3 January, 1856.

⁶⁴ After Vörösmarty's death in 1855 "the performance of his works becomes a patriotic demonstration when ladies appear in mourning veils and the actors, used to the chatting tone of social plays, strenuously recite the sonorous verses of *Áldozat* [Sacrifice] on the stage. Afterwards they produce *Áldozat* annually, first on the anniversary of Vörösmarty's death, later, on the day of his funeral, and reel it off dutifully." See Jolán Pukánszky Kádár, *A Nemzeti Színház százéves története* [The One-Hundred-Year History of the National Theatre] (Budapest: Magyar Történelmi Társulat, 1940), vol. I, p. 264. The performance of the overture introducing *Áldozat* on 27 October, 1859 is also mentioned in one of the entries found in the part-books (see note 61) and in the theatre's almanac of 1860. This performance happened to be the centenary celebration of the birth of Ferenc Kazinczy.

albeit inconsistently. Erkel, however, did not delete it from the autograph score. Thus, it cannot be claimed that the existence of the overture definitively discarded the *Introduction* as an alternative beginning for future performances of the opera. There is no doubt, however, that irrespective of the present-day performer's choice the alternatives represent two different dramatic ideas. The *Introduction*, anticipating the moment of recognition in the finale, opens the opera *in medias res*; whereas the same musical prophecy, when placed at the opening of an overture that casts it among several other motives of the opera, ceases to refer to the fulfilment of the tragedy, since it is removed from the dramatic action and is subordinated to absolute musical form.

Hardly anything is known about the history of genesis of *Bátori Mária*. The only factual information at our disposal is the dates at the head of each of the two volumes of the autograph score (AU); accordingly, Erkel started the first act on 30 March, 1840 and the second act at the beginning of July. At any rate, the autograph reveals unambiguously that the dates mark the beginning of copying and not that of composing; in spite of several compositional emendations and a large number of deleted sections that did not enter the performing material the manuscript has the character of a fair copy. It was due to haste that Erkel relied on a copyist to write out certain repeated sections, while some entries in pencil were added by another unknown hand (e.g. alternative notes in the vocal parts). At two places where the autograph is incomplete, Erkel refers to a certain "score copy" which has not survived. It may be presumed that this lost source was made as a fair copy to replace Erkel's often illegible handwriting. From minor but distinctive differences between AU and NSZ one may conclude that NSZ was prepared from the copied score rather than from the autograph. Conversely, Erkel seems to have conducted from the autograph for a while or perhaps throughout the decades during which the opera was performed.

The music to be played by the *banda* is included in AU in the form of a two-stave *guida* which is not only incomplete but also differs from the surviving parts of the *banda*. Due to its fragmentary form, the *guida* is relegated to the critical notes and is replaced by a modernised version in the score. AU is the only source of a contemporary German translation of the text of the opera. According to Legány, it has presumably been made for an unrealised Vienna and Berlin tour of the National Theatre in 1853.⁶⁷ The German translation is included in the Libretto part of this edition, whereas Erkel's meticulous changes of prosody carried out

carefully to adapt the vocal parts to the German text are not included in the score.

A score copy comprising the first three numbers of the opera (ZO), which has survived along with the related orchestral parts (ZSZ), constitutes an interesting addition to the two main sources AU and NSZ. Since this set of sources was preserved in the music collection of the National Conservatory in Pest – which had been founded by the Music Society of Buda and Pest, an important organiser of large-scale concerts at the time – it is very probable that the score and parts were copied for concert performances. This assumption may be substantiated by the fact that the part of the opera they contain is identical with the "Introduction" which was a favourite number in contemporary concert programmes (see note 59).

Contemporary instrumentations of the music for the *banda* in an opera rarely survive because it was usually local musicians who orchestrated the score for the on-stage military band. *Bátori Mária* is in a fortunate position since both the score (BP) and the parts (BSZ) of the *banda* have survived. (The score of the *banda* is published in Appendix VI.) There is no reliable information concerning the orchestrator but based on contemporary operatic practice it can be safely presumed that it was not Erkel himself but some musical factotum at the theatre. The score and the surviving parts were evidently written at different times since the scoring and the names of instruments do not exactly correspond. A comparison of this set of sources and the *guida* in AU on the one hand, and the orchestral parts on the other (most parts of the *banda* double the orchestral parts throughout), makes it clear that both the *banda* score and the parts were prepared later than the first performance of the opera. It may be assumed that one or more earlier orchestrations for the *banda* existed (which are now lost) because play-bills of *Bátori Mária* recorded the name of the military band hired for the night from the première onwards. (Such a reference is only missing from the play-bills between 20 December, 1843 and 11 February, 1845 but even that does not necessarily imply that no *banda* was employed.)

Besides the principal group of sources of *Bátori Mária*, some later manuscripts were preserved in NSZ which were not used while preparing the present edition: *Aria con Coro* (in No. 2), *Romanza* (No. 4) and *Aria* (No. 8) in transposed versions, and a later vocal part material of *Quartetto con Coro* (No. 3) which was used, as the entries in it testify, at a concert organised to celebrate Erkel's eightieth birthday, and was probably copied for this occasion (see note 59). The music collection of the former National Conservatory holds a piano score and a complete choral part material of the opening chorus in the second act (No. 8) which contains a third vocal part entered later. This version was evidently prepared for a concert performance and sung by the girls' choir of the Conservatory. It has been omitted

⁶⁷ Dezső Legány, *Ferenc Erkel's Works and Their Contemporary History*, pp. 31 and 40–41.

from the sources of the present edition for a number of reasons: it represents an occasional and non-theatrical arrangement, and Erkel's authorship of the third vocal part and the piano accompaniment cannot be substantiated. At any rate, this variant proves that not only did some sections of Erkel's works live longer on the concert stage than in the theatre but may have been performed more frequently than we learn from the sources explored so far.

Apart from the musical sources, four purely textual sources have preserved the libretto of *Bátori Mária*: two manuscripts used as promptbooks (SK1 and SK2) and two printed sources (L1 and L2). L1 and SK1 were made for the première whereas L2 and SK2 were prepared on the occasion of the last revival in 1858. SK1 is the only undated source, although several entries indicate its use as a promptbook from a very early time up to the 1858 revival. SK1, which has heretofore been unknown in Erkel research, is especially valuable because it contains several text variants that are not included in any other sources.⁶⁸ By nature, it reflects

⁶⁸ For example to the second stanza of Mária's *Romanza* (No. 4) ("Már nincs a hon felett ború" [The country is no longer in danger]) an alternative text is added: "My bosom is seized by flaming despair, / torment ravages within, / ill thoughts are haunting me / like skeletons arising from graves. / The brave swordsman / is fighting a hundredfold of deaths, / he is prepared to fight / when the nation is in need. / Guide him to my arms oh, Lord, / guide him to my arms. / Let him behold his children and wife / who are in anguish for him. (7¹)

the performed version rather than the contemporaneous printed libretto, and follows the minor, mainly prosodic changes made by Erkel. SK1 contains all the elements missing from L1 but included in AU, such as the *Cabalettas* in Mária's arias No. 4 and No. 8 and the short passages sung by the men's choir at the end of the first act. (On *Coro* No. 5, see chapter *Insertions, Singers, Revivals* in the present study.) SK2 contains István's insertion aria (*Aria con Coro*, in No. 2), which appeared merely as an insertion in pencil in SK1, and the new *Duetto* (Appendix II). L2, which dates back to the same period, differs considerably from the performed version in several places; it was evidently intended as a drama for reading rather than a text to follow the opera from. Remarkably, several text variants emerge in L2 which had previously occurred only in SK1. L1 contains the first version of the ending of the opera with the words of the final chorus. The text of the final chorus is missing from SK1; the words of the preceding duet and recitative are retained with some cuts, which reveals the stage practice before 1858. Mária's words of farewell, which were entered later, appear, as has been mentioned before, exclusively in the final version of the finale.

Miklós Dolinszky
(Translated by Erzsébet Mészáros
and Judit Bánfalvi)

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AU Autograph score of the opera in two volumes. National Széchényi Library, Music Collection, Ms. Mus. 3.

NSZ Vocal and orchestral parts of the opera and of the overture used in the National Theatre. National Széchényi Library, Music Collection, no classification number.

KP Choral score, part of NSZ. National Széchényi Library, Music Collection, no classification number.

BP Banda score, part of NSZ. National Széchényi Library, Music Collection, no classification number.

BSZ Banda parts, part of NSZ. National Széchényi Library, Music Collection, no classification number.

ZO Copy of the score of Nos. 1–3 from the Collection of the former National Conservatory of Music. Ferenc Liszt Academy of Music, Research Library for Music History, M 46.668.

ZSZ Orchestral and vocal parts of Nos. 1–3 copied from ZO from the Collection of the former National Conservatory of Music. Ferenc Liszt Academy of Music, Research Library for Music History, M 37.542.

RP Copy of the score of the overture, with Erkel's autograph dedication to György Ruzitska from 1845, and his autograph entries in the score. National Széchényi Library, Music Collection, Ms. Mus. 2644.

ZNY Copy of the score of the overture from the Collection of the former National Conservatory of Music. Ferenc Liszt Academy of Music, Research Library for Music History, M 36.882.

L1 Printed libretto, first edition. Pest: József Beimel, 1840.

L2 Printed libretto. Pest: János Hercz, 1858.

SK1 Promptbook (manuscript). National Széchényi Library, Collection of Theatre History, MM 13.539.

SK2 Promptbook 1858 (manuscript). Ferenc Liszt Academy of Music, Research Library for Music History, 26.377.

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