

Edition Eulenburg
No. 472

SMETANA

MÁ VLAST
MY FATHERLAND
MEIN VATERLAND

No. 2 Vltava
Symphonic Poem
Nr. 2 Die Moldau
Sinfonische Dichtung



Eulenburg

BEDŘICH SMETANA

MÁ VLAST
MY FATHERLAND
MEIN VATERLAND

No. 2 Vltava
Symphonic Poem
Nr. 2 Die Moldau
Sinfonische Dichtung

Edited by/Herausgegeben von
Milan Pospíšil



Ernst Eulenburg Ltd

London • Mainz • Madrid • New York • Paris • Prague • Tokyo • Toronto • Zürich

CONTENTS

Preface	III
Editorial Notes	VII
Vorwort	XI
Revisionsbericht	XV
Einzelanmerkungen	XIX
Vltava	1

© 2015 Ernst Eulenburg & Co GmbH, Mainz
for Europe excluding the British Isles
Ernst Eulenburg Ltd, London
for all other countries

All rights reserved.

No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system,
or transmitted in any form or by any means,
electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise,
without the prior written permission of the publisher:

Ernst Eulenburg Ltd
48 Great Marlborough Street
London W1F 7BB

PREFACE

If Bedřich Smetana's rightful claim to the title of founder of Czech nationalism in music rests on his operas and especially on *Prodaná nevěsta* ('The Bartered Bride'), he also made an important contribution to the field of Czech programme music with his cycle of symphonic poems *Má vlast* ('My Fatherland'). In a certain sense, this cycle may be described as an instrumental counterpart of the 'festival' opera *Libuše*:

Both works are ideologically similar in their glorification of the country and its people, dictated by the period of their origin. [We must not forget that] it was the time of the culmination of the active struggle of the politically oppressed Czech nation for independence and the attainment of a full cultural and political life which had been waged for almost a hundred years. 'My Country' and *Libuše* are direct symbols of that consummating national struggle.¹

Of the six works that make up the cycle, two (*Vyšehrad* and *Šárka*) are settings of national myths, one (*Tábor*) deals with national history, and two (*Vltava* and 'From Bohemia's Woods and Fields') are inspired by natural beauty and by Czech folk dances and folksongs, while the sixth (*Blaník*) is a hymnic profession of faith in the glorious future of the Czech nation. The first four pieces were written in pairs and completed relatively quickly, after which the cycle was brought to a provisional end with 'From Bohemia's Woods and Fields' on 18 October 1875. At this stage Smetana still referred to it as a 'tetralogy', which he initially titled *Vlasť* ('The Fatherland'). Not until he completed the cycle with *Blaník* on 9 March 1879 and was preparing the work for the printer did he give it its definitive title, *Má vlast*.²

There are very few surviving documents relating to the genesis of either *Vyšehrad* or

Vltava, although both works clearly date from the same period as *Libuše*, which was completed on 12 November 1872. On 7 November 1872 the periodical *Hudební listy* carried the following item: 'Now that the composer Bedřich Smetana has completed his grand patriotic opera *Libuše* [...], he intends to take in hand two longer orchestral works, *Vyšehrad* and *Vltava*.'³ Later press reports mentioned other titles and other ostensible plans on Smetana's part to write symphonic poems, but the truth of the matter is that the composer was at no time engaged on any of the projects imputed to him. It seems beyond question, therefore, that it was with *Vyšehrad* and *Vltava* that Smetana began work on the projected cycle. The thematic links between *Vyšehrad* (*Vyšehrad* was the name of the castle overlooking the Vltava at Prague) and the opera *Libuše*, which is similarly set in Prague, are impossible to overlook. In both cases, *Vyšehrad* functions as a symbol of mythic antiquity. Not less symbolic was the river itself which flows through the Bohemian capital: it, too, was regarded as a mythic source of ancient tales, not least since it had been hailed as such in the *Rukopis Zelenohorský*, a famous early 19th-century manuscript forgery that was also one of the sources of the libretto of *Libuše*. Nineteenth-century national consciousness viewed the Vltava not only as an embodiment of the Bohemian countryside but also as an incarnation of the continuity of national Czech history. It was a view that also found expression in the most varied works of visual art, some of which may perhaps have influenced Smetana⁴ particularly since the composer also acted as a graphic artist. Music, too, was affected by this development. Particularly noteworthy in this context is the romantic opera *Svatojanské proudy* ('The St John's Rapids')

¹ František Bartoš, 'My Country', in: *Bedřich Smetana, Má vlast*, Partitura, *Studijní vydání děl Bedřicha Smetany* XIV (Prague, 1966), XXIX–XXXIV; quoted on p. XXIX (English by Joy Kadečková)

² Bartoš (fn. 1), *Předmluva*, XI

³ *Hudební listy*, III, 1872, 370

⁴ Vladimír Lébl and Jitka Ludvová, 'Dobové kořeny a souvislosti *Mé vlasti*', in: *Hudební věda*, XVII, 1981, 99–137

by Josef Richard Rozkošný,⁵ which is set in the area around the Vltava and which Smetana knew. The river itself appears in the opera in the form of the water-sprite Vltavka, and a number of its scenes and situations are also found in Smetana's symphonic poem: a woodland setting and hunt, a country wedding, the St John's Rapids, moonlight on the river, dancing water-sprites and the castle.⁶ There can be no question, however, of any musical influence on Smetana's work.⁷

A further source of inspiration was Smetana's own experiences and impressions of nature. According to the conductor Mořic Anger, the earliest impulse to write *Vltava* came during an excursion to the confluence of the Křemelná and the Vydra at Čenková pila, which Smetana visited on 28 August 1867.⁸ In 1868 and 1872 he also visited one of the sources of the Vltava at Kvilda in the Bohemian Woods (Šumava).⁹ And on 14 August 1870 he visited the St John's Rapids, noting in his diary: 'river in flood, the sight of the countryside glorious and magnificent.'¹⁰ Smetana's diaries also reveal that he spent long periods watching the river Vltava in Prague in all its seasonal variations.¹¹

It is not known exactly when Smetana began work on *Vltava*. Since his sketches for the work long remained unknown, it was wrongly assumed that he wrote out the full score without any preparatory sketches. In 1983, however, a folio discovered among his unpublished papers was found to contain sketches for *Vyšehrad*, *Šárka* and 'From Bohemia's Woods and Fields', in addition to five sketches for *Vltava*, the very first of which reveals the polyphonic combination of two independent compositional layers, namely, that of the wave motif and that of what is later to be the main theme:¹²



It is highly unlikely, of course, that these five sketches represent the sum total of Smetana's preliminary work on *Vltava*, an assumption that receives some support from the speed with which the composer completed the work: the full score was written between 19 November and 8 December 1874, at a time when Smetana was already completely deaf.

Individual works from the cycle were already performed before its completion in 1879: *Vltava* received its first performance on 4 April 1875 at a concert in the Žofín Hall conducted by Adolf Čech and organized by the Czech Opera Orchestra in honour of the composer. Unlike *Vyšehrad* and 'From Bohemia's Woods and Fields', it was not repeated at its first performance, although its success was never in doubt.

Our 'silvery bright' Vltava could not have been paid a more inspired tribute than by Smetana's symphonic poem. [...] It is scarcely surprising that this work, with its fragrant, flower-scented colour and

⁵ The authorized German title is 'Die Moldaunixe'. The first performance in Prague's Royal Czech Theatre on 3 October 1871 was conducted by Smetana himself; see Milan Pospíšil, 'Josef Richard Rozkošný, Svatojanské proudy', in: *Pipers Enzyklopädie des Musiktheaters*, Vol.5 (Munich/Zurich, 1994), 467–468.

⁶ Bořivoj Srba, 'Bedřich Smetana a soudobá divadelní konvence', in: *Opus musicum*, XVII, 1985, 71–81 and 97–107, esp. 73.

⁷ *Vltava* also plays a major role in the plot of Smetana's final opera, *Čertova stěna* ('The Devil's Wall'), first performed at the New Czech Theatre in Prague on 29 October 1882.

⁸ Rudolf Jaroslav Kronbauer, 'Z nejšťastnějších chvílí Mistra Bedřicha Smetany (Z vypravování kapelníka Mořice Angera)', in: *Záhadné příběhy a vzpomínky* (Prague, 1904), 69–78, esp. 75; excerpts from this article are reprinted in German in: *Smetana in Briefen und Erinnerungen*, ed. František Bartoš (Prague, 1954), 131.

⁹ Mirko Očadlík, *Smetanova Má vlast* (Prague, 1953), 7; and Mirko Očadlík, *Rok Bedřicha Smetany v datech, zápisech a poznámkách* (Prague, 1950), 153 and 156, where only a single visit, on 8 August 1872, is mentioned.

¹⁰ Diary entry, autograph in Muzeum české hudby Praha, Inv. No. 1110, siglum MBS Tr XVI/1, quoted in Bartoš, *Předmluva* (fn. 2), VI. This section of the bed of the Vltava disappeared in 1954, with the building of the Slapy Dam.

¹¹ Diary entries of 19 October 1871 ('Vltava beginning to ice over') and early December ('Vltava stationary, young people skating'); autograph in Muzeum české hudby

Praha, Inv. No. 1111, siglum MBS XVI/2, quoted in Jaroslav Smolka, *Smetanova symfonická tvorba: Dílo a život Bedřicha Smetany* 5 (Prague, 1984), 126.

¹² A description of the sketches, together with music examples, may be found in Smolka (fn. 11), 148ff; the example quoted here appears on p.151.

captivating charm, should have delighted the general public to such an inordinate extent. The composer was repeatedly called back on to the platform.¹³

Vltava was first performed as part of the complete cycle seven years later, on 5 October 1882. The venue was again the Žofín Hall, the conductor Adolf Čech.

Conscious of the uniqueness of the work and anxious that it should become more widely known, the normally somewhat impractical composer took steps to ensure that *Vltava* appeared in print. During his visits to Vienna and Würzburg in April 1875 to consult ear specialists, he offered the full scores of the first three symphonic poems to B. Schott's Söhne in Mainz. In the event, the offer was not taken up.¹⁴ Equally unsuccessful were Smetana's negotiations with the Berlin firm of Bote & Bock in 1878, even though the composer had already declared his willingness to agree to terms altogether unworthy of him: 'I demand no fee, except for a handful of free copies.'¹⁵ It was only when the Prague bookseller František Augustin Urbánek expanded his business to include music publishing that the cycle as a whole saw the light of day. First to be published – between December 1879 and June 1880 – were transcriptions for piano four hands, since these were more readily marketable. From 1880, however, all six works began to appear in the form of printed full scores, together with the necessary parts. Shortly after their publication, Smetana sent copies of *Vyšehrad* and *Vltava* to Franz Liszt:

I have taken the liberty, revered master, of sending you the first two numbers in full score and in an arrangement for piano four hands. All six have been performed here in Prague on repeated occasions, and

always with extraordinary success. Otherwise only the first two have been heard in Chemnitz. It was their great success that led the local publisher Urbánek to run the risk of publishing them.¹⁶

In his agreement with Urbánek of 14 May 1879 Smetana himself proposed a derisory fee: for each work he would receive 40 gulden for the full score and parts and 30 gulden for the piano-duet version, in other words, a total of 420 gulden for the entire cycle. In the event he did not live to see its complete publication. By the date of his death in 1884 only *Vyšehrad*, *Vltava* and 'From Bohemia's Woods and Fields' (1881) had appeared in print.¹⁷

Smetana was not the sort of composer to offer the waiting world interpretations and literary commentaries on his works. At a time when music was often interpreted by means of the written word, composers were expected to explain the 'content' of their music in words, especially when that music was a symphonic poem. Smetana, by contrast, reacted to this demand with relative reserve: in his view, the title of the work was itself sufficient to provide listeners with a basic sense of orientation and put them in the right frame of mind. In the main, he counted on the eloquence and self-sufficiency of his music, arguing that it was 'permissible for every listener to leave everything else to his imagination and read into the work whatever he wanted, according to his own individual taste.'¹⁸ Presumably Smetana also felt insufficiently qualified from a literary point of view to write his own programmes for his symphonic poems and submit them to the general public. In consequence, he tended to rely on silver-tongued journalists who, if programmes were required, would provide them on the basis of his own instructions. In short, the commentaries

¹³ Ludevít Procházka in: *Národní listy*, 11 April 1875, quoted in Procházka, *Koncert Bedřicha Smetany*, in: *Slavná doba české hudby* (Prague, 1958), 116–22, esp. 118–19

¹⁴ Otakar Hostinský, *Bedřich Smetana a jeho boj o moderní českou hudbu* (Prague, 1901), 325–6, excerpts reprinted in German in: *Smetana in Briefen und Erinnerungen* (fn. 8), 190–91

¹⁵ Smetana's letter of 16 October 1878 to the agent Josef Srb-Debrnov, autograph in Muzeum Bedřicha Smetany Praha, Inv. No. 321, siglum W 33/5, published in: Vladimír Balhar, *Bedřich Smetana* (Prague, 1924), 133

¹⁶ Smetana's letter of 19 March 1880 to Franz Liszt, autograph in Nationale Forschungs- und Gedenkstätten der klassischen deutschen Literatur in Weimar, Goethe- und Schiller-Archiv, quoted in Bartoš, *Předmluva* (fn. 2), XV

¹⁷ Bartoš, *Předmluva* (fn. 2), XIII

¹⁸ Smetana referring to Šárka in a letter of 19 February 1877 to Adolf Čech, autograph in Muzeum Bedřicha Smetany Praha, Inv. No. 197, siglum MBS W 36/49a, b; first published in: *Dalibor*, VII, 1885, 197

that appeared in the press before the first performance of *Vltava* in 1875¹⁹ and in the first edition of 1880,²⁰ although not written by Smetana, may none the less be regarded as authorized by him. The most apposite interpretations, however, are those provided by the composer himself in the form of the headings to several sections of the score. (Of the entire cycle, only *Vltava* contains such headings.) These have been entered in the full score in the following order: 'The First Source of the Vltava', 'The Second Source of the Vltava', 'Woods – Hunt', 'Peasant Wedding', 'Moonlight – Water-Sprites' Dance', 'St John's Rapids', 'The Broad Stream of the Vltava' and 'Vyšehrad Motif'. These entries are supplemented by a table of contents headed 'Brief Draft of the Contents of the Symphonic Poems', which Smetana wrote as the basis for further literary reworking and submitted to his publisher in May 1879. (In the event it was Václav Vladimír Zelený who elaborated the draft.)

The work depicts the course of the river Vltava, beginning with its first two sources, the cold and warm Vltava, and the confluence of the two streams that join to form a single river; then the course of the Vltava through forests and meadows, and through open countryside where a peasant wedding is being celebrated; water-sprites dance by the light of the moon; on the nearby cliffs castles, mansions and ruins rise proudly into the air; the Vltava eddies in the St John's Rapids, then flows in a broad stream as it continues its course towards Prague, where the Vyšehrad appears, before the river finally disappears into the distance as it flows majestically into the Elbe.²¹

According to a contemporary account, Smetana saw a difference between the symphonic poems that make up *Má vlast* and his three so-called 'Swedish' symphonic poems, *Richard III*, *Wallensteins Lager* and *Hakon Jarl*, which he regarded as 'true symphonic poems'. He wrote them in Sweden, he went on, 'under the direct influence' of Liszt's symphonic poems, which he had heard in Weimar. 'They have exactly the same form as Liszt's.' In the case of the symphonic poems that make up *Má vlast*, by contrast, 'the situation is completely different: in these I allowed myself the liberty of defining a specific and entirely new form; all that they have in common with symphonic poems is their name.'²² Whereas the other works in the cycle largely resist any unequivocal formal classification, *Vltava* is based on a clear formal model, its compositional originality notwithstanding. It is cast in the form of a free, large-scale rondo that reflects the basic relationship between music and programme: the recurrent motif associated with the river – the main theme – changes as the individual situations change, while the scenes that are enacted along its banks are treated as the episodes of a rondo. With its ascending and descending melodic line, the main theme constitutes a musical image of the surging billows of the river's broad stream and derives from a melodic archetype already found in the Middle Ages, variants of which are also known from Czech folksongs.²³ According to a later account, Smetana is said to have chosen this melody 'because all nations possess it and it is intelligible to everyone'.²⁴ The main theme is heard three times: first in bb39ff, then in bb238ff and finally, transposed from E minor to E major, in bb332ff. It alternates with characteristic interludes: a fanfare-like episode that at the same time hints at thematic transformation within the framework of the ex-

¹⁹ Anonymous article in *Národní listy*, 2 March 1875, reprinted in Smolka (fn. 11), 138–9; Karel Teige, *Skladby Smetanovy* (Prague, 1893), 76, describes this introduction as 'compiled on the basis of Smetana's own interpretation'.

²⁰ Václav Vladimír Zelený's introduction was published anonymously in: *B. Smetana: 'Má vlast', cyklus symfonických básní II. Vltava*; also published separately in: *B. Smetana, Má vlast. Mein Vaterland* (Prague, s. a. [1880]), unpag[ed] [3–4] and in the various full scores, where it appears together with a parallel German translation by Josef Srb-Debrnov; the Czech original is reprinted in Smolka (fn. 11), 138–9.

²¹ Bedřich Smetana, *Kratký nastín obsahu synf. básní*, autograph in Muzeum české hudby Praha, Inv. No. 476, siglum MBS W 13/10, facsimile in Bartoš, *Předmluva* (fn. 2), pl.12 after p.XVI, with complete German and English translations, XXVII–XXVIII and XXXIII–XXXIV respectively.

²² Václav Vladimír Zelený, 'K životopisu Bedřicha Smetany', in: *Lumír*, 10 and 20 November and 1 and 10 December 1884, reprinted in Zelený, *O Bedřichu Smetanovi* (Prague, 1894), 1–55, esp. 23.

²³ Jan Racek, *Motiv Vltavy. Genese hlavního motivu Smetanovy symfonické básně* (Olomouc, 1944); and Robert Smetana, 'Smetanova Vltava a její melodická tematika', in: *Hudební věda* XVI, 1979, 195–218.

²⁴ Adolf Piskáček, *Má vlast*, 5th edn (Prague, n.d.), 44.

position (b80),²⁵ a polka intermezzo (b118), a nocturne (b181) into which archaic-sounding fanfares are later introduced (b213), a development section (b271) and, finally, a coda that quotes the main theme of *Vyšehrad* (b359). Quite apart from its programmatic significance as a depiction of the turbulently flowing river, the onomatopoeic element of the wave motif (an element which, following the introduction, is transferred to the level of an accompanying figuration) also has an important formal function, linking together the separate sections of the work (with the exception of the polka).²⁶

Although the other parts of the cycle were gradually able to find a niche for themselves in international concert halls and although complete performances of *Má vlast* are increasingly common, *Vltava* continues to be the most frequently performed and also the most popular of the six. It owes its impact to musical qualities that do not presuppose a nationally inspired response: for all its national characteristics, it remains universally accessible as a paradigmatic example of a symphonic poem. *Vltava* is not only Smetana's best-known work, it is also – like the Largo from Dvořák's Symphony 'From the New World' and the same composer's G flat major Humoresque – a symbol of Czech music in general.

The editor would like to thank the staff at the Muzeum české hudby – Muzeum Bedřicha Smetany, Prague for supplying the autograph.

Editorial Notes

Sources

I Autograph scores

- A Autograph full score, Muzeum české hudby Praha, Inv. No. 1250, siglum MBS Tr XXVIII/2.²⁷ 32 folios in half-

cloth binding, with 24 staves per folio; written on both sides in purple ink, with occasional corrections in black ink. From folio 1r onwards autograph pagination by the composer on the outside of each folio. Folio 1 (first page of music) headed: 'II. Vltava', with an additional entry above it and to the left: '(započato dne 20 listop. 874)'.²⁸

In the lower right-hand corner of folio 32v Smetana has added the note: 'Ukončeno dne 8 prosince 1874 (za 19 dní / jsa úplně hluchým). / Bedř. Smetana'.²⁹ The autograph contains numerous additions in an unknown hand in pencil and in blue and red crayon: these include occasional bar numbers as an aid to writing out *come sopra* passages, instructions for dividing bars on the plates, bars that were indicated by abbreviation signs after page-turns in the autograph but are now written out in full, highlighting of individual entries and so on.

- PA Autograph transcription of the work for piano 4 hands, Muzeum české hudby Praha, Inv. No. 1251, siglum MBS Tr XI/7. 18 folios in landscape format, bound in half-cloth; 12 staves per side, 35 sides written in purple ink, final side (folio 18v) blank. Autograph pagination only on recto of each folio. Title on folio 1r ('II. Vltava'); on final page, after last bar, 'dohotovil 17 prosince 1875, / Bedřich Smetana'.³⁰ Unlike the full score, PA contains no headings to the individual sections. A few additional markings have been entered in an unknown hand in pencil, blue and red crayon and ink, indicating that PA was used as the basis for the engraved score, PU.

²⁵ Karel Janeček, 'Forma a sloh Mé vlasti', in: *Tempo*, XIV, 1935, 261–275, revised version in: Janeček, *Tvorba a tvůrci* (Prague, 1968), 165–220

²⁶ Smolka (fn. 11), 162–214 and 228–39

²⁷ A list of source material in the Muzeum české hudby Praha is included in: Olga Čechová and Jana Fojtíková, *Bedřich Smetana (inventář fondu) S 217*, 2 vols. (Prague, 1984).

²⁸ 'Begun on 20 November [1]874'.

²⁹ 'Completed on 8 December 1874 (in 19 days / being completely deaf)'.

³⁰ 'Finished on 17 December 1875'.

II Early printed editions

- U First edition of *Vltava*, published in Prague on 18 February 1880 by František Augustin Urbánek,³¹ plate number 16; 62 pp. Engraved and printed by Engelmann und Mühlberg of Leipzig. Title-page: 'B. Smetana / Má vlast. Mein Vaterland. / II. / Vltava. Die Moldau / Symfonická báseň Symphonische Dichtung / pro für / velký orkstr grosses Orchester / Partitura'. The title-page is followed by a folio inserted later and containing Václav Vladimír Zelený's programme note in German (transl. Josef Srb-Debrnov) and Czech.³² On the cover, which was printed by Brožík of Prague, is the dedication: 'Věnováno král. hl. městu Praze'.³³ U was engraved from A.

U shows no signs of any systematic editorial revisions affecting dynamics, articulation markings or phrasing. Even mistakes in A (e.g., wrong notes or accidentals added in error) were often left uncorrected. The printed edition follows A even to the point of failing to distinguish between diminuendo hairpins and accents. (Smetana habitually used an elongated form of accent similar to a diminuendo hairpin.) Where the slurs and ties are unclear in A, the engraver simply chose at random from among the various possible readings or, in the case of particularly ambiguous passages, omitted the markings altogether. A similar approach was adopted in the case of dynamics and articulation markings, although here the tendency – intentional or otherwise – is to omit existing markings, rather than to supplement, rationalize or standardize them. In A the dynamic markings are generally in-

dicated with extreme care. Variants in U are often attributable to Smetana's idiosyncratic way of writing lower-case s, with the result that *sf* and *fff* are often reproduced as *f* and *ff* respectively. Readings in U that differ from those in A may be attributable to the fact that Smetana, who, recalcitrant to the last, read the proofs only with great reluctance, tacitly accepted such variants, while not expressly authorizing them, since it is highly unlikely that, if he had wanted to make these late alterations, he would not have entered them in A.

- U cor Copy of Urbánek's edition included among Václav Juda Novotný's papers in the Music Department at Národní knihovna Praha, siglum 59B 2811/2. This is one of the copies in which Urbánek, unhappy with Smetana's own corrections, subsequently corrected a handful of errors and other omissions.³⁴

- PU Edition of *Vltava* in Smetana's transcription for piano 4 hands, published in December 1879³⁵ by Urbánek of Prague, plate number 5; 31 pp. Engraved and printed by Engelmann und Mühlberg of Leipzig. Cover and title-page in Czech and German, with definitive overall title, *Má vlast – Mein Vaterland*. Individual lithograph by Antonín König on title-page; dedication on cover: 'Věnováno král. hl. městu Praze'.³⁶ Although Smetana complained to Urbánek while the edition

³¹ Dating from Urbánek's diary reproduced in Bartoš, 'Vydavatelská zpráva', in: Smetana, *Má vlast* (fn. 1), unpaginated

³² See preface, fn. 20

³³ See fn. 36

³⁴ Bartoš, 'Vydavatelská zpráva' (fn. 1), citing a transcription of Urbánek's conversations with Smetana in Muzeum české hudby Praha, Inv. No. 1706-1710, siglum MBS W 34/36, reproduced in Balthasar (fn. 15), 290-310

³⁵ Dating from Bartoš, 'Vydavatelská zpráva' (fn. 31)

³⁶ Smetana had informed the Prague town council of his intention on 14 October 1879: 'I intend to dedicate this work to your glorious town because it was here that I received my musical training, here that I have appeared in public over many years and here that I have been afflicted by the worst possible illness for any musician to suffer'; letter published in Vilém Herold, 'Smetanova Má vlast a Praha', in: *Hudební rozhledy*, XVI, 1963, 711-19, facsimile of letter on p. 713.

was at press, the edition none the less appeared with numerous errors.³⁷

Editorial principles

The starting-point for the present edition of *Vltava* is the autograph full score, A, although the first printed edition, U, and the later corrections to it, U cor, have also been consulted. The two secondary sources – the autograph PA and the authorized edition PU – were of only limited use.

Manifest errors, inconsistencies (e.g., slurs and ties that are incomplete or obscured by other markings, missing articulation markings, phrase markings and dynamics where stems are divided) and mistakes relating to the use of accidentals, dynamics and articulation markings in repeats have been tacitly corrected without being indicated as such; only problematical passages are discussed in the individual notes. In contentious cases, the first printed edition, U, was invariably consulted by way of comparison. If the reading in U is not indicated in the individual notes, this means that in these cases U and A are identical. Not listed in the individual notes are variant readings in U which did not require correcting in A.

Conversely, all discrepancies between U cor and U or A are indicated as such, i.e., all corrections in ink and pencil.

It is often difficult to determine whether the strokes (') in A are marcato markings or staccato dots to which the composer was attempting to give particular emphasis. The same is true of all the intermediate stages between stroke and dot. Here, only a facsimile edition could provide reliable information.³⁸ Since Smetana's intentions are not always clear from the autograph sources (in passages intended to be articulated in identical fashion, dots and strokes alternate

with no signs at all), no attempt has been made in the present edition to distinguish between dots and strokes: in every case, the dot has been preferred.³⁹

Performance markings and technical instructions to the players were included in A in Italian and Czech (in some cases only the latter). (In U they appear in Czech and German.) For the purposes of the present edition, they are given in the main body of the text in Italian and in the individual notes in the original wording. The Czech programme headings, which are an integral part of the work, are included in the present edition, together with English and German translations.

Original readings that were erased in A have been included in the Textual Notes in those cases where it is still possible to reconstruct them or where their deletion has led to contradictions or obscurities in the score.

Abbreviation signs, *colla parte* and *come sopra* instructions and most octave transpositions have been written out in full. Problematical passages have been included in the annotation only in the case of staves notated in the normal way, i.e., where their repetition on other staves or in other bars can be inferred by reference to corresponding *colla parte* and *come sopra* instructions.

The percussion parts (triangle, cymbals and bass drum) are placed not beneath the double-bass staff, as in A and P, but, in keeping with current practice, beneath the timpani line; for the sake of clarity, the cymbals and bass drum are notated on separate lines.

The positioning of the cue letters accords with that found in A.

Square brackets and broken ligatures indicate editorial additions and are justified either by the immediate context or analogous passages or are the result of a comparison with other sources.

Milan Pospíšil

Translation: Stewart Spencer

³⁷ Bartoš, 'Vydavatel'ská zpráva' (fn. 31), referring to Smetana's letter to Urbánek of 7 June 1879, autograph in Muzeum české hudby Praha, Inv. No. 479, siglum MBS W 34/7.

³⁸ Smetana's letters and other written sources reveal a similar confusion between strokes and dots and a concomitant impossibility of distinguishing between the two.

³⁹ Also in U, whereas in PU (where the articulation markings are not systematic) wedges are also occasionally found.

