



Socio-Political Topicality in the Repertoire of Nineteenth-Century Provincial Theatres

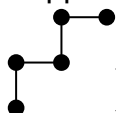
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Thursday, 6 July 2023

- 10:10 **Welcome**
Martin Skamletz, HKB
Giulia Brunello, Raphaël Bortolotti, Annette Kappeler (Bern)
Introduction: Socio-Political Topicality in the Repertoire of Nineteenth-Century Provincial Theatres

Panel 1 – Local Theatres and Sociopolitical Topicality (Chair: Martin Skamletz)

- 10:40 **Christine Carrère-Saucède (Toulouse)**
23 ans de Bibliographie de la vie théâtrale en province [France] au XIX^e siècle ou l'art et la manière de repousser les limites
- 11:20 *Coffee break*
- 11:40 **Annette Kappeler (Bern)**
I misteri della polizia austriaca in Feltre.
A Curious Performance in a Provincial Theatre from the Italian Peninsula
- 12:20 **Giulia Brunello (Bern)**
Magnetism on Stage: Elisa and Antonio Zanardelli
- 13:00 *Lunch break*

Panel 2 – Theatre Makers, Theatre Goers (Chair: Giulia Brunello)

- 14:30 **Lenka Křupková (Olomouc)**
Visitors to the City Theatre in the Olmützer Sprachinsel at the Turn of the 19th and 20th Centuries
- 15:10 **Sophie Horrocks (Durham)**
Performing Provincial Hierarchies: French Travelling Theatre Troupes and the Creation of Regional Communities, 1824–1864
- 15:50 *Coffee break*
- 16:10 **Michele Nani (Naples)**
Disciplinare I lavoratori teatrali: multe e multati nella Ferrara del XIX secolo
- 16:50 **Anna Piotrowska (Krakow)**
From an Actor to an Author, from an 'Amant' to an Animator:
The Role of an Individual in Shaping the Local Theatrical Repertoire
- 17:30 *End of the Panel*

Panel 3 – Opera as a Political Genre (Chair: Raphaël Bortolotti)

- 9:30 **Andrew Holden (Oxford)**
Opera and Theatre in an Industrial Model Community:
The Case of Schio's Teatro Civico
- 10:10 **Alessandra Palidda (Sheffield)**
Teatro arciducale, teatro di corte, teatro di periferia:
Monza, Milan and the Transnational Opera House
- 10:50 *Coffee break*
- 11:10 **Maria Teresa Morelli (Rome)**
L'«Opera» come forma popolare di comunicazione politica
- 11:50 **Cecilia Nicolò (Pesaro)**
Il Liceo musicale di Pesaro e le celebrazioni rossiniane del 1892
- 12:30 *Lunch break*

Panel 4 – Political Discourses in 19th-Century Performances

(Chair: Annette Kappeler)

- 14:00 **Tushara Meleppattu & Rakshit Kweera (Kerala)**
Between Ritual and Radical: Socio- Political Discourses on the Transition of
Kutiyattam's Performative Tradition
- 14:40 **Samira Mehdipour Shekakomi (Tehran)**
The Social and Political Significance of 19th-Century Provincial Theatre
Repertoire: An Analysis of Performance as Social Action in Performances of
George Bernard Shaw
- 15:20 *Coffee break*
- 15:40 **Platon Mavromoustakos (Thessaloniki)**
Local Conflicts and National Issues:
Language and Performance at the San Giacomo Theatre in Corfu
- 16:20 *End of the conference*

Abstracts and Biographies

Giulia Brunello, Raphaël Bortolotti, Annette Kappeler (Bern)

Introduction: Socio-Political Topicality in the Repertoire of Nineteenth-Century Provincial Theatres

The conference focuses on the repertoire of provincial theatres and its importance for local topical debates and events in the nineteenth century. In contrast to a vast majority of theatre research concentrating on major theatres in metropolitan areas, we want to stress the importance of local theatres which were an important socio-cultural venue for a nineteenth-century population not yet urbanised to a great extent.

The nineteenth-century reality of theatre was one of small scale – of small halls, of small ensembles, and of limited financial means. The provincial theatre was a place of social gathering and of permeable boundaries between stage and auditorium. Being one of the only places of assembly, theatres were engaged with an ongoing local reality reflected in their repertoire and staging decisions.

We believe that nineteenth-century theatre cultures and socio-political debates and developments are intrinsically linked, and we will ask if this hypothesis is applicable to various geographical contexts. We believe that it is enlightening to consider theatre performances from different socio-cultural backgrounds together, compare their ways of engaging with local realities, their functions for a local population, and the people involved in theatrical activities.

Giulia Brunello did a PhD in Contemporary History at Padova University and Universidade de São Paulo (USP), developing a research within social history, gender history and cultural history. Since 2020 she has been working with an interdisciplinary team for the SNF project “Italian provincial theatre and the Risorgimento. The organisation, repertoire and original stage décor of Feltre’s Teatro sociale, 1797–1866” at the HKB. She has published, with her project fellows, several articles in the journals *Quellen und Forschungen aus italienischen Archiven und Bibliotheken* and *Rivista Feltrina*, among others. Furthermore, she has been the main editor of the volume *Feltre’s Teatro Sociale and the Role of Provincial Theatres in Italy and the Habsburg Empire during the Nineteenth Century* (2023) to which she has also contributed parts of the introduction and an article on “Mode, decoro artistico e orgoglio municipale: il Teatro Sociale di Feltre nell’Ottocento”.

Raphaël Bortolotti obtained a first Master's degree in Art History at the University of Lausanne and a second Master's degree in Baroque singing at the Schola Cantorum Basiliensis. He performs regularly as a soloist and in various professional vocal ensembles in Switzerland and abroad. He also works as a singing teacher and choir director in Switzerland and Italy, with a particular interest in the early music repertoire. In 2017, he became aware of the existence of original 19th-century stage material in the theatre of the small town of Feltre, in northern Italy. Drawing on his two educational backgrounds, he then undertook a PhD in Art History on nineteenth-century Italian stage painting under the supervision of Andreas Beyer (University of Basel) and Maria Ida Biggi (Ca' Foscari University).

Annette Kappeler is a literature and theatre scholar, and a musician specialising in Early Music. She is especially interested in theatre cultures of the 17th-19th centuries and their socio-political relevance, in organisational forms of theatre ensembles and orchestras, and in translations of theatre texts.

Christine Carrère-Saucède (Toulouse)

23 ans de *Bibliographie de la vie théâtrale en province [France] au XIX^e siècle ou l'art et la manière de repousser les limites*

Commencée en 2000, cette bibliographie, devenue en 2020 *Recensement des salles et Bibliographie* est passée d'environ 250 entrées à plus de 1000 références accompagnées de 600 mentions de salles. Cette évolution expansionniste s'accompagne de nombreuses questions méthodologiques relatives aux limites à assigner à un tel document afin que la tentation d'exhaustivité ne se transforme en pléonexie : De quel théâtre ou spectacle parle-t-on ? Sur quelles frontières géographiques s'appuyer ? De quelle province est-il question (celle de 1806/celle de 2023) ? Quelles limites temporelles assigner au XIX^e siècle ? Quel type de salle repérer ? Quels supports mentionner dans ce corpus en perpétuelle augmentation ? Quelle forme donner au document final et comment le qualifier ? La communication tentera de répondre en partie à ces questions.

23 Years of *Bibliography of theatrical life in the provinces [France] in the nineteenth century or the Art and Manner of Pushing the Limits*

Begun in 2000, this bibliography, which in 2020 became *Census of Theatres and Bibliography*, has grown from approximately 250 entries to more than 1000 references accompanied by 600 mentions of theatres. This expansionary evolution is accompanied by numerous methodological questions concerning the limits to be assigned to such a document so that the temptation of exhaustiveness does not turn into pleonexia: Which theater or show are we talking about? On which geographical borders should we base ourselves? Which province is being discussed (that of 1806 /that of 2023)? What temporal limits should be assigned to the 19th century? What type of venue should be identified? What materials should be mentioned in this ever-growing corpus? What form should the final document take and how should it be qualified? The communication will attempt to answer these questions in part.

Christine Carrère-Saucède est maître de conférences en littérature française moderne. L'essentiel de son travail porte sur l'histoire la vie théâtrale dans les petites villes françaises. Depuis l'an 2000, elle alimente une *Bibliographie de la vie théâtrale en province au XIX^e* qu'elle a récemment enrichie avec un recensement des salles de spectacles.

Annette Kappeler (Bern)

***I misteri della polizia austriaca* in Feltre.**

A Curious Performance in a Provincial Theatre from the Italian Peninsula

On the 31st December of 1866, only a few months into the independence from the Habsburg Empire, the provincial theatre of Feltre, in the Veneto Region in what is today Northern Italy, staged a piece by the author Antonio Scalvini entitled *I misteri della polizia austriaca* (*The mysteries of the Austrian police*). Scalvini was a popular author of novels, dramas and opera libretti, famous for his political criticism. The piece is a severe accusation of the Habsburg authorities, and especially of its police force, and had been on the censorship lists of the whole Habsburg empire since its first publication.

The town of Feltre was one of the hundreds of European towns which had a theatre for the surrounding population renovated or newly built in the beginning of the nineteenth century. The theatre was the only sociocultural centre of the whole region. The presentation asks what could have prompted a provincial theatre in a politically calm region to bring this drama to its stage. It resumes the socio-cultural situation in Venetia under the Habsburg regime, the activities of its police force, the attitudes of the local population towards the government, and thus places the performance of the *Misteri della polizia austriaca* in a local socio-historical context.

CV **Annette Kappeler** see above, p. 5

Giulia Brunello (Bern)

Magnetism on Stage: Elisa and Antonio Zanardelli

The presentation examines the experiments in magnetism staged in Italian theatres in the mid-nineteenth century. The presence of this kind of performance in theatres all over the Italian peninsula shows how a theatre – not only a big theatre but also a small provincial one – could be the venue for current scientific discussions, like other places of sociality (e.g. academies and private drawing rooms).

While most studies on magnetism in Italy have privileged the period at the end of the century, from the 80s onwards, I will examine the presence and the significance of this kind of performance in the 1850s and 1860s. As a case study, I chose a pair of magnetisers about which little is known: Antonio Zanardelli and his daughter Elisa, who had great success and performed experiments in magnetism (clairvoyance and somnambulism) both in theatres for the general public and in academies and private salons in front of medical commissions. Antonio started his career as an actor, and then became an illusionist, a professor of magnetism and a scientist; the young Elisa was known as a ‘famous sleepwalker’.

The presentation will focus on theatrical practice, trying to outline the characters of the performance: the experiments were in fact interspersed with magic tricks, comedies and farces, music entertainment and scientific demonstrations such as the first tests of electric light. An attempt will also be made to understand the composition of the audience, who was expressly called upon to take part in the experiments. The research will finally highlight the relationship between these artists and the medical

institutions and the intellectual milieu as well as the debates arisen from the performances.

CV **Giulia Brunello** see above, p. 4

Lenka Křupková (Olomouc)

Visitors to the City Theatre in the Olmützer Sprachinsel at the Turn of the 19th and 20th Centuries

The German City Theatre in Olomouc, whose history as an independent institution began in 1770, occupied the position of the most important cultural institution in the city. In the history of the theatre, there was only one period when the importance of this stage went beyond the borders of the Moravian region in terms of quality and geography. Friedrich Blum was responsible for this during his tenure as director from 1847 to 1859. Blum was at the head of the Olomouc theatre during the turbulent revolutionary period of 1848, when the Imperial Court was expelled from Vienna to Olomouc. At that time, as well as in the following years, when the Imperial Court visited Olomouc several times, Blum turned the house into a kind of court institution that attracted the attention of important artists and had a resonance even with audiences from distant regions. This chapter of Olomouc theatre, however, was an exception to the otherwise prevailing type of city stage with the character of a typical 19th-century provincial theatre whose sphere of activity did not extend beyond the city and its immediate surroundings. In the second half of the 19th century there was an increase in the influence of the city, which owned the theatre and which, in return for numerous subventions granted to theatre directors, claimed control not only over the economic operation of the theatre, but also over the form of the repertoire and the quality of its interpretation.

From the 1870s to 1920, when the still German city theatre in Olomouc was handed over to the Czechs, the stage with a cosmopolitan opera repertoire was gradually transformed into a city theatre of a distinctly national character, where the basis of the opera programme consisted of the most played operas of the time, mostly of German provenance. The conference paper will attempt to reveal the structure of the opera-goers in particular at this most important cultural institution in the city at a time when the existing German majority was beginning to be threatened by the growth of the Czech population and the emancipation of Czech culture in Olomouc. The aim is to characterize the specifics, tastes, national distribution or dynamics of audience change.

Lenka Křupková is an associate professor at the Department of Musicology, Palacký University in Olomouc, which she headed from 2012 to 2022. She currently holds the position of Vice-Dean for Science at the Faculty of Arts. Her main areas of research interest are Czech music of the 19th and 20th centuries (particularly the work of Vítězslav Novak, Leoš Janáček, Josef Suk and J. B. Foerster), music theatre, sociology of music, music and politics. She has published a number of articles and six books.

Sophie Horrocks (Durham)

Performing Provincial Hierarchies: French Travelling Theatre Troupes and the Creation of Regional Communities, 1824–1864

The French government initiated a comprehensive system to provide access to theatre across the nation in legislation from 1806, revised in 1814 and 1824, and lasting until 1864. In this system, small provincial towns without a year-long theatre company hosted performances from touring troupes known as the *troupes d'arrondissement*. These itinerant groups were allocated to a specific French region (the *arrondissement*), and had the responsibility of performing opera, vaudeville and spoken theatre for audiences across a network of several towns. In this paper, I examine the way in which the work and artistic conditions of these itinerant theatre troupes shaped concepts of regional community and hierarchy in mid-nineteenth-century France. I draw from archival research from four case studies from my wider doctoral work: the Nord/Pas-de-Calais, Alsace, Brittany and the Pyrenees. I demonstrate how the artistic practice and repertoire of a touring troupe was experienced, reported and compared across the *arrondissement*, fostering a sense of a regional community joined through stage culture. Yet, as I show, the troupe also worked across radically different theatrical environments, adapting their performance practices and repertoire to fit theatres of varying sizes and resources, and attempting to appeal to audiences with distinctive tastes. By analysing these co-existing conditions of theatrical sharing and differentiation inherent to the touring circuit, I argue that itinerant theatre companies catalysed the creation of tangible French regional hierarchies between 1824-64, with stage culture, and especially the production of opera, being used by municipal councils and the local press to leverage intra-provincial power dynamics and intra-provincial centres and peripheries. In doing so, my project challenges two traditional ways of writing musical and theatrical history: privileging the stage culture of the capital and describing it as 'French'; and treating so-called high and low art genres separately.

Sophie Horrocks is in the final year of her doctoral studies in the music department Durham University, funded by the AHRC Northern Bridge Consortium. Her thesis explores the working and artistic practices of travelling theatre troupes providing sung entertainment across France and the role of touring theatre in defining the French national imaginary, 1824-64. Prior to her PhD, Sophie studied at the University of Cambridge, and King's College London. Sophie's current research interests include nineteenth-century artistic mobility and cultures of adaptation; transnational opera studies; and theatrical disability studies.

Michele Nani (Naples)

Disciplinare I lavoratori teatrali: multe e multati nella Ferrara del XIX secolo

Alle coriste del teatro comunale di Ferrara poteva capitare, nel 1897, di essere multate durante l'esecuzione della *Bohème* perché "sono solite fare le cicisbee, e i saluti con quelli del pubblico – presso il telone". L'archivio storico del Comune di Ferrara conserva due serie documentarie di grande interesse, la "Direzione" di teatri e spettacoli e il titolo "Teatri e spettacoli" del Carteggio amministrativo municipale.

Accanto a materiali più tradizionali, ad esempio quelli sulla programmazione e sui costi, si ritrovano testimonianze di una serrata attività di controllo da parte delle autorità comunali sui lavoratori e le lavoratrici alle proprie dipendenze, che affiancava altri tipi di sorveglianza, garantiti dalle forze di polizia e dai pompieri. Infatti la Direzione affidava a un proprio delegato il compito di mantenere l'ordine in sala e il potere di comminare multe per ogni devianza (dalla presenza in luoghi vietati ai ritardi, dal presentarsi ammalato all'interagire con gli spettatori). Sia pure in maniera discontinua sono giunti a noi rapporti sulle serate, carteggi a partire da singole multe, registri delle multe e dei pagamenti delle stesse. Attraverso un'analisi quantitativa e qualitativa di un fenomeno del tutto trascurato dalla storiografia teatrale, si cercherà di capire continuità e persistenze di alcuni aspetti nel corso del XIX secolo: chi veniva punito, ricostruendo anche elementi biografici; per cosa si veniva puniti; quanto e come si potesse negoziare la multa; quante multe venissero effettivamente pagate; quanto incidessero le multe sulla carriera dei lavoratori/trici e quanto fossero note all'opinione pubblica.

Disciplining Theatre Workers: Fines and the Fined in 19th-Century Ferrara

In 1897, the chorus girls of the Municipal Theatre of Ferrara could happen to be fined during a performance of *La Bohème* because 'they are used to playing the cicisbee, and greetings with those in the audience - by the curtain'. The historical archive of the Municipality of Ferrara preserves two documentary series of great interest, the "Direction" of theatres and performances and the title "Theatres and performances" of the Municipal Administrative File. Alongside more traditional materials, such as those on programming and costs, there is evidence of a tight control activity by the municipal authorities on the workers in their employ, which flanked other types of surveillance, guaranteed by the police and fire brigades. In fact, the management entrusted one of its delegates with the task of maintaining order in the auditorium and the power to impose fines for any deviance (from presence in forbidden places to tardiness, from showing up sick to interacting with spectators). Although discontinuous, reports on the evenings, papers from individual fines, records of fines and their payment have come down to us. By means of a quantitative and qualitative analysis of a phenomenon that has been completely neglected by theatre historiography, an attempt will be made to understand the continuity and persistence of certain aspects during the 19th century: who was punished, also reconstructing biographical elements; what people were punished for; how much and how the fines could be negotiated; how many fines were actually paid; how much the fines affected the career of the workers and how well known they were to the public.

Michele Nani è ricercatore presso la sede di Napoli dell'Istituto di Studi sul Mediterraneo del Consiglio Nazionale delle Ricerche (CNR-ISMED). Si occupa di storia sociale, di demografia storica, di storia urbana. Ha pubblicato *Migrazioni bassopadane. Un secolo di mobilità residenziale nel Ferrarese (1861-1971)*, Palermo 2016 e ha co-curato *ACERFerrara100. Per una storia della casa pubblica a Ferrara e provincia*, Firenze 2021. In ambito storico-teatrale ha studiato una tournée ottocentesca: *Una zuffa di simboli. Il Cristo di Bovio e il suo pubblico*, in *L'Italia fin de siècle a teatro*, a cura di Carlotta Sorba, Roma, Carocci 2004

Anna Piotrowska (Krakow)

From an Actor to an Author, from an 'Amant' to an Animator:

The Role of an Individual in Shaping the Local Theatrical Repertoire

Having authored over one hundred theatrical pieces, having served as a director of the theatre in Warsaw and contributing to the development of the theatrical life in Warsaw as a journalist Ludwik Adam Dmuszewski (1777–1847) seems to deserve a place in the history of the Polish 19th century theatre. Although his name is recognized, his input is rarely discussed. In my presentation I would like to focus on the figure of Dmuszewski as an actor and as an author, but also as an animator of the theatrical life of Warsaw who stayed in the shadow of his predecessor Wojciech Bogusławski. Yet, Dmuszewski's versatility and adaptability to the current trends allowed him to have his plays performed in the early 19th century Warsaw. He was also respected as an actor, and translated and adapted foreign works. In my presentation I claim that on the one hand it was the 'hands on' experience that enabled Dmuszewski to occupy the position as an influential agent impacting the repertoire of the early 19th century Warsaw theatres, while on the other hand it was his close relations with Wojciech Bogusławski – a doyen of the theatrical Warsaw and then also popular locally composers that helped him exercise his position. My presentation will, however, be predominantly dedicated to discussing the role of an individual (on the example of Dmuszewski) in shaping the image of the theatrical repertoire in a given town, as well Dmuszewski's role in establishing the popularity of certain genres – borrowed, adapted or partially locally developed (such as comedy-opera).

Anna Piotrowska, PhD is a musicologist predominantly specializing at researching artistic music with Romani motifs. She has written, among others about operas, operettas and ballets focusing on the representations of the Romani heroes. Anna G. Piotrowska actively participates in many international conferences; currently, she is associated with Centre for Research on Music Multimediality (PBM²) at the Institute of Musicology, Jagiellonian University in Kraków, Poland, where she teaches on musicological topics.

Andrew Holden (Oxford)

Opera and Theatre in an Industrial Model Community:

The Case of Schio's Teatro Civico

The Teatro Civico di Schio sits in the *nuovo quartiere operaio* of this small town in the Veneto. Schio's historical significance in the nineteenth century derives from its role as the home of the wool-making business expanded by Alessandro Rossi in the first years after the Veneto's absorption into the new Kingdom of Italy in 1866. Rossi's version of the European paternalist industrial model saw strict Catholic observance wedded to social programmes of education, health and recreation as well as building model housing and civic amenities for his workers including schools, libraries and cultural activities, while preserving social hierarchies and opposing socialist organisation or greater equality for women.

Immediately behind the theatre Rossi created a complex named significantly for Joseph Marie Jacquard, the French innovator of automation in weaving. This included

a fantastical ornamental garden, flanked by an imposing building containing a library and theatre. Here Rossi and his supporters experimented with creating a theatre suitable for his workers including prose and melodrama, and often depicting the lives of working people. For example he commissioned a local dialect version of Vittorio Bersezio's piedmontese play, *Le Miserie di Monssù Travet*, which had become a national success. A grander cultural project was realised in the last years before the First World War by Rossi's grandson when the new Teatro Civico was inaugurated in 1909 with a production of Boito's *Mefistofele*.

This paper examines through archival sources the social and cultural meanings ascribed to opera and theatre during the period of the establishment of the *nuovo quartiere operaio*. I consider what inferences we can draw from the repertoire choices made, and how the social conservatism of the Rossi industrial model was reflected in the supervision and reception of theatrical activities involving or attended by both his bourgeois peers and the proletarian residents of the *nuovo quartiere*. Finally, in the context of Rossi's stature as a national politician I assess what this provincial case study teaches us about identity-formation and the mission to forge a national sense of citizenship during the period of Liberal Italy.

Andrew Holden is a Visiting Researcher at Oxford Brookes where he was awarded a PhD for a thesis entitled 'Opera avanti a Dio! Opera and religion in Liberal Italy'. His research focuses on transnational themes of operatic production, circulation and reception in both historical and contemporary contexts, particularly evolving forms of censorship. Recent publications include "A slice of operatic life in London's East End", *Journal of Modern Italian Studies* 26/1 (2021): Italian Musical Migration to London (special issue) which he co-edited; From Heaven and Hell to the Grail Hall via Sant'Andrea della Valle: religious identity and the internationalisation of operatic styles in Liberal Italy in Körner and Kühls (eds.), *Reimagining Italianità: Italian Opera in transnational perspective* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2022). Forthcoming: 'Opera censorship in Europe - production, circulation and reception in a transnational market' in Anne Etienne and Chris Megson (eds.), *Theatre Censorship in Contemporary Europe* (Exeter: University of Exeter Press, in press); 'Puccini and Religion' in Alexandra Wilson (ed.), *Puccini in Context* (Cambridge: CUP, in press).

Alessandra Palidda (Sheffield)

Teatro arciducale, teatro di corte, teatro di periferia:

Monza, Milan and the Transnational Opera House

A seemingly small and peripheral centre in the outskirts of Milan, the town of Monza was chosen by both the Habsburg and Napoleonic courts of Milan (1771-1796 and 1805-1814, respectively) as summer and pleasure residence. With its Schönbrunn-inspired *Villa Reale* built by Giuseppe Piermarini, its greenery and salubrious climate, its proximity to many pleasure villas of the aristocracy, and its own illustrious history (including its cathedral safeguarding the Iron Crown of Lombardy), Monza soon came to constitute a significant pole in the cultural and social life of the Milanese elite. Since its inception by Archduke Ferdinand Karl of Habsburg, the Monza court

residence included an opera house, initially called *teatro arciducale* and edified ex novo in the town's market square. Strongly associated to the Archduke, yet attended by the Milanese aristocrats, employing many local artists, and hosting ground-breaking performances such as the Italian premiere of *Le nozze di Figaro* (1787), the teatro arciducale can be seen as occupying an interesting place in the theatrical landscape and networks of the time. After the decadence and vandalism of the republican years (1796-1805), Monza's theatre experienced a new life as *Teatrino* or *Teatro di corte*, built by Luigi Canonica in 1807 *within* the Villa reale, and functioning more as a private/courtly venue, yet occasioning interesting encounters in terms of events and repertoire.

Using a variety of primary sources to complement the still scant literature, this paper will offer an overview of Monza's "court" theatre(s) seen as interesting examples of public/private and central/peripheral cultural and social spaces. As well as reflecting on their role in relationship to the capital (Milan) and the town (Monza), the paper will offer some reflection on the role these experiences played within the theatrical networks connecting Lombardy to the capital cities of the transnational polities to which it was associated i.e., Vienna (Austrian Monarchy) and Paris (French Empire). Such an inquiry will hopefully cast new (first?) light on a forgotten, yet impactful page of theatrical history and geography.

Dr **Alessandra Palidda** trained as a classical singer and musicologist at the Conservatorio "Giuseppe Verdi" and Università Statale of Milan. She then moved to Cardiff University to earn her PhD with Prof David Wyn Jones and Prof Clair Rowden with a project on music, society and politics in Northern Italy between Habsburg rule and Napoleonic republics. She is currently Senior Lecturer in Music at Oxford Brookes University and Teaching Associate in Musicology at the University of Sheffield. Her research focuses on the one hand on cultural-political communication in the eighteenth century, on the other hand on musical theatre, print culture and intermediality at the turn of the twentieth century. She has widely presented and published on both topics, and her first monograph on republican festivals in Napoleonic Milan is expected later this year in the CUP Elements series 'Music and the City'.

Maria Teresa Morelli (Rome)

L'«Opera» come forma popolare di comunicazione politica

Ai fini della propagazione delle idee politiche e nella costruzione di una identità nazionale, il Teatro dell'800 - in tutte le sue forme, dal melodramma a quello di prosa, di strada e dei burattini - svolge un preciso ruolo, complementare a quello della poesia e degli scritti letterari e politici in genere.

Se si tiene conto dell'elevato tasso di analfabetismo presente in Italia, forse è proprio il teatro itinerante e povero a dare il contributo più evidente alla circolazione delle idee e alla contrapposizione di una identità locale – reale – ad una teorica identità nazionale. Le Compagnie che si esibiscono nelle arene, nei teatri più poveri, che recitano nelle sale e nelle piazze dei paesi, raggiungono anche i centri più sperduti della penisola. L'intento della mia proposta è quello di evidenziare quanto il teatro d'opera favorisca, nell'800, l'incontro tra dimensione locale e nazionale, attraverso l'esecuzione delle

opere da parte di Compagnie minori, che si esibiscono al di fuori dei circuiti ufficiali, ma in piccole realtà di provincia, nelle arene, nelle piazze, nei giardini pubblici. Le opere vengono raccontate dai cantastorie o dal teatro di marionette e burattini, avvicinando – in tal modo – un pubblico molto eterogeneo.

La cultura urbana comincia a penetrare in quella contadina.

Si realizza, quindi, un tipo di comunicazione “informale” che penetra capillarmente nella società, restituendo ai centri minori, gli intrecci del melodramma debitamente adattati alla comprensione e al gusto popolare. Un esempio, fra tutti, è rappresentato dal cosiddetto “teatro di stalla” nella «casa della cultura del mondo contadino», dove, nel 1897, l’anno successivo all’avventura coloniale dell’Italia in Abissinia, la rappresentazione di un’*Aida* “da fattoria” si dimostra momento di forte anticolonialismo, provocando reazioni simili a quelle suscitate dai riferimenti patriottici della prima metà del secolo.

Pertanto si intende evidenziare il ruolo svolto dalla rappresentazione teatrale del XIX secolo, quale importante strumento di educazione, di identificazione, di formazione di un’opinione pubblica, dunque di costruzione del consenso e al contempo di opposizione politica.

Sotto forma metaforica e con ricorso alla melodia, circolano temi che eludono la censura; e se la perorazione della causa italiana non è esplicita, se l’azione e l’identità dei protagonisti sono ambientati in epoche diverse, vi è un continuo e importante riferimento ai temi della nazionalità italiana: a cantare di una patria bella e perduta, infatti, sono gli schiavi ebrei nel *Nabucco* (1842) di Verdi o i congiurati spagnoli contro Carlo V nell’*Ernani* (1844).

Opera as a Popular form of Political Communication

For the propagation of political ideas and the construction of a national identity, 19th century theatre - in all its forms, from melodrama to prose, street and puppet theatre - plays a precise role, complementary to that of poetry and literary and political writings in general.

If we take into account the high rate of illiteracy in Italy, perhaps it is precisely the itinerant and poor theatre that makes the most evident contribution to the circulation of ideas and to the opposition of a local - real - identity to a theoretical national identity. Companies that perform in arenas, in poorer theatres, that play in village halls and squares, reach even the most remote centres of the peninsula.

The aim of my proposal is to highlight how much opera theatre in the 19th century favoured the meeting of local and national dimensions, through the performance of operas by minor Companies, which performed outside the official circuits, but in small provincial towns, in arenas, in squares, in public gardens. The operas are told by storytellers or by the puppet and marionette theatre, bringing - in this way - a very heterogeneous public closer.

Urban culture begins to penetrate peasant culture.

Thus, an 'informal' type of communication penetrates society capillarily, returning to the minor centres, the plots of melodrama duly adapted to popular understanding and taste. One example, among all, is represented by the so-called 'stable theatre' in the 'house of culture of the peasant world', where, in 1897, the year following Italy's

colonial adventure in Abyssinia, the performance of a 'farm' Aida proved to be a moment of strong anti-colonialism, provoking reactions similar to those provoked by patriotic references in the first half of the century.

The aim is therefore to highlight the role played by 19th century theatrical representation as an important instrument of education, identification, and the formation of public opinion, thus of consensus-building and political opposition at the same time.

In metaphorical form and with recourse to melody, themes that elude censorship circulate; and if the peroration of the Italian cause is not explicit, if the action and the identity of the protagonists are set in different eras, there is a continuous and important reference to the themes of Italian nationality: to sing of a beautiful and lost homeland, in fact, are the Jewish slaves in Verdi's Nabucco (1842) or the Spanish conspirators against Charles V in Ernani (1844).

Maria Teresa Antonia Morelli, Studiosa del pensiero e delle istituzioni politiche dell'800 e 900 in Italia e in una prospettiva comparata, con particolare riferimento alla rappresentanza politica femminile. Gli interessi di ricerca si sono sviluppati anche sul processo di costruzione europea, l'identità culturale degli Arbëreshë in Italia, il ruolo dell'associazionismo italiano e americano in particolare il *Rotary* durante il regime fascista, il ruolo politico e sociale del Teatro dell'800. Tra le sue pubblicazioni: *L'Unità d'Italia nel Teatro. Istituzioni politiche, identità nazionale e questione sociale* (Bulzoni), *Il Rotary International. L'Italia e il Distretto 2080. Una storia istituzionale* (Giappichelli), *Le donne della Costituente* (Laterza).

Cecilia Nicolò (Pesaro)

Il Liceo musicale di Pesaro e le celebrazioni rossiniane del 1892

Nel 1892 ricorreva il primo centenario della nascita di Gioachino Rossini. A Pesaro, sua città natale, molti furono gli eventi musicali organizzati per l'occasione; tra di essi spiccano quelli organizzati dai due enti principali della città: il teatro Rossini e il Liceo musicale. Nel primo furono allestite le due opere allora più in voga del maestro, *Guglielmo Tell* e *Il barbiere di Siviglia*; l'esecuzione fu affidata a interpreti d'alto livello, come il direttore d'orchestra Edoardo Mascheroni, chiamati a esibirsi per l'occasione in un teatro di provincia, lontano dai circuiti operistici principali della Penisola.

Accanto a questi grandi eventi, suscitano una particolare risonanza quelli organizzati dal Liceo musicale cittadino, fondato solo dieci anni prima per espressa volontà testamentaria di Rossini, e dunque concreto simbolo dell'eredità, non solo economica ma anche e soprattutto culturale, del compositore. Di particolare rilievo fu la decisione di allestire un'intera opera composta ed eseguita da alcuni studenti della scuola. La scelta cadde sul dramma serio *La bella d'Alghero*, composto da Giuseppe Fara-Musio, allievo del primo direttore, Carlo Pedrotti. L'unico docente coinvolto in prima persona fu Antonio Boschini, professore di Lingua italiana e latina nello stesso Liceo musicale, al quale fu affidata la stesura del libretto. Pur trattandosi di un'opera prima, *La bella d'Alghero* presenta caratteristiche interessanti, in quanto si configura come un ideale connubio tra il passato e il presente del melodramma italiano: se il soggetto segue la moda del momento, poiché è costruito intorno a una vicenda di amore e morte

ambientata nel Sud Italia, la struttura contrae invece un forte debito con l'opera del primo Ottocento: a una chiara suddivisione in pezzi chiusi si associa l'impiego di forme che ricordano alcune caratteristiche tipiche della cosiddetta "solita forma". Questo saggio scolastico può essere dunque considerato un emblema del Liceo di Pesaro, che da un lato preserva l'eredità rossiniana, dall'altro apre uno sguardo alla realtà contemporanea.

L'esempio della *Bella d'Alghero* non fu un evento isolato: la pratica di allestire nuove opere al Liceo musicale fu infatti ripresa negli anni successivi – il caso più celebre fu la prima assoluta di *Zanetto*, espressamente composta dal nuovo direttore, Pietro Mascagni, nel 1896 – rafforzando così l'immagine del Liceo come centro di riferimento nella vita artistico-culturale cittadina.

The Liceo Musicale di Pesaro and the 1892 Rossini Celebrations

1892 marked the first centenary of Gioachino Rossini's birth. In Pesaro, his hometown, many musical events were organised for the occasion, including those organised by the city's two main institutions: the Teatro Rossini and the Liceo musicale. In the former, the master's two most popular operas of the time, *William Tell* and *The Barber of Seville*, were staged; the performance was entrusted to high-level performers, such as the conductor Edoardo Mascheroni, who were called to perform for the occasion in a provincial theatre, far from the main opera circuits of the Peninsula.

Alongside these major events, those organised by the city's Liceo musicale, founded only ten years earlier in accordance with Rossini's express will, and thus a concrete symbol of the composer's legacy, not only economic but also and above all cultural. Of particular note was the decision to stage an entire opera composed and performed by some of the school's students. The choice fell on the serious drama *La bella d'Alghero*, composed by Giuseppe Fara-Musio, a pupil of the first director, Carlo Pedrotti. The only teacher personally involved was Antonio Boschini, professor of Italian and Latin at the same Liceo musicale, who was entrusted with writing the libretto. Although it is a debut opera, *La bella d'Alghero* presents interesting characteristics, as it is an ideal marriage between the past and the present of Italian melodrama: while the subject follows the fashion of the moment, as it is built around a love and death story set in southern Italy, the structure, on the other hand, owes a strong debt to early 19th-century opera: a clear subdivision into closed pieces is associated with the use of forms that recall certain typical characteristics of the so-called 'usual form'. This scholastic essay can thus be considered an emblem of the Pesaro Lyceum, which on the one hand preserves Rossini's legacy, and on the other opens a glance at contemporary reality.

The example of *La Bella d'Alghero* was not an isolated event: the practice of staging new operas at the Liceo musicale was in fact resumed in the following years - the most famous case being the premiere of *Zanetto*, expressly composed by the new director, Pietro Mascagni, in 1896 - thus reinforcing the image of the Liceo as a centre of reference in the artistic and cultural life of the city.

Cecilia Nicolò ha conseguito la laurea magistrale in Musicologia presso l'Università La Sapienza di Roma e il dottorato di ricerca presso l'Università degli Studi di Pavia-Cremona. Tra le sue pubblicazioni si annoverano la curatela, assieme a Gianluca

Bocchino, del volume *Jommelliana: un operista sulla scena capitolina. Studi sul periodo romano di Niccolò Jommelli* (LIM 2017), e la monografia *Emma Zilli: una carriera di fine Ottocento* (NeoClassica 2019). Dopo aver insegnato presso il Conservatorio “Nicola Sala” di Benevento, attualmente è docente di Storia della musica presso il Conservatorio “Gioachino Rossini” di Pesaro.

Tushara Meleppattu & Rakshit Kweera (Kerala)

Between Ritual and Radical: Socio- Political Discourses on the Transition of Kutiyattam’s Performative Tradition

Kutiyattam is one of the oldest existing classical theatre forms of the world. The Sanskrit theatre of Kerala has had a considerable role in building the socio-political culture in both internal and external nation-building in colonial and postcolonial India. The Brahmin settlement in 15th century Kerala, resulted in them finding way to enjoy leisure. Namboothiri morals were considered less rigid which made them link salaciousness in *Manipravalam* poetry inducing communities like the *Chakyars* (the jester in the theatrical plays) to adapt to the change while practicing their art adhering to local sensibilities. The premodern Kerala represents a pre-print era, where whatever was written was set to be performed, stating the importance of performativity of literary texts, which underwent a massive change in the 19th century as a result of the colonial interventions. Another major transformative aspect that fell on the Kutiyattam theatre complex was the shift in spatiality of the performance. *Koothambalams* within temples were ideally meant for the staging as it was largely a ritualistic conversation between the performers who hail from an *ambalavasi* community with the deity. Within this backdrop, it will be interesting to probe the following: the politics involved in the text being given primacy by the colonial masters in 19th century Kutiyattam with back staging of the performative aspect, the socio-cultural changes in the nature of performance after the art form reached to open spaces. The aim of this paper is to study the transitions that occurred in the performative tradition of provincial theatre complex of Kutiyattam since the 19th century Kerala when it reached to the masses and to explore the influence of British colonialists as well as the feudal establishment within Kerala on the socio-cultural-political aspect of the theatre tradition. The study is significant as it charts out the use of performance in a provincial theatre in southern part of India as structured behavior and as analytic lens involving interdisciplinary methodologies demonstrating the richness of a concept and approach that is focused on the ways in which the aesthetic and the political intersect and ignite each other. The method of the study will be archival analysis of 19th century texts available at Kalamandalam and Sangeet Natak Academy archives in Kerala. This will be substantiated with interviews of historians and established performers who hold authority in this classical theatre art form.

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Samira Mehdipour Shekakomi (Tehran)

The Social and Political Significance of 19th-Century Provincial Theatre Repertoire: An Analysis of Performance as Social Action in Performances of George Bernard Shaw

Scholars have historically focused on metropolitan theaters in their research on theater, but smaller provincial theaters also played a significant role in shaping local identity and culture through their performances and reflection of the social and political climate of their respective regions. In the 19th century, these provincial theaters served as vital venues for information exchange, sociopolitical negotiation, and the formation of public opinion. The selection of repertoire and staging decisions profoundly reflected the ongoing local reality, dynamics, and concerns of the time. These theaters were deeply embedded in the fabric of community life and actively shaped the cultural landscape of the regions they served.

This study aims to explore in depth the social and political significance of 19th-century provincial theater repertoire and how it reflects the social and political climate of the regions. Specifically, this study conducts an extensive analysis of the works of George Bernard Shaw through the lens of Richard Schechner's 'Performance as Social Action' theory. The research questions are: How did 19th-century provincial theater repertoire profoundly reflect and actively shape the social and political climate of their respective regions? What crucial role did 19th-century provincial theater play in dynamically shaping local identity and culture? How can Richard Schechner's 'Performance as Social Action' theory provide insightful analysis of the works of George Bernard Shaw in the context of 19th-century provincial theater?

The primary aim of this study is to provide a comprehensive understanding of the immense importance of 19th-century provincial theaters as vital sociocultural venues and crucial places of vigorous sociopolitical debate. The study also aims to conduct an in-depth analysis of the works of George Bernard Shaw and develop a nuanced understanding of how they profoundly reflected the social and political climate of the regions. Finally, the study insightfully applies Richard Schechner's 'Performance as Social Action' theory to the works of George Bernard Shaw in the context of 19th-century provincial theater.

The study of 19th-century provincial theater and the works of George Bernard Shaw through the lens of 'Performance as Social Action' theory is tremendously significant in several key ways. First, it highlights the crucial importance of smaller provincial

theaters in dynamically shaping local identity and culture in a comprehensive fashion. Second, the study offers profound insights into the immense social and political significance of 19th-century provincial theater repertoire and how it actively reflected the social and political climate of the regions. Finally, the study makes a substantial contribution to the existing research on the works of George Bernard Shaw and offers a nuanced new perspective on his plays in the context of 19th-century provincial theater.

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Platon Mavromoustakos (Thessaloniki)

Local Conflicts and National Issues: Language and Performance at the San Giacomo Theatre in Corfu

Some years before the beginning of the Greek war for Independence (1821), newspapers of Corfu published texts calling for a change in the repertoire of the San Giacomo Theatre. In a theatre where for more than sixty years Italian operas had been performed regularly, since 1720, a part of the audience asked for Greek works to be performed. This resulted in 1816 to the first performance on the stage of the Corfiot theatre of a tragedy with ancient theme, written in Greek by a famous intellectual and politician of the time. It was a request under the frame of the Greek enlightenment and the ideological preparation of the uprising of the Greeks. Despite the enthusiasm that the event aroused, the practice of performing Greek works was not followed up, causing the resentment of a section of the public with nationalist tendencies. The theatre returned to the systematic performance of Italian opera until the middle of the 20th century, creating a unique tradition for the Greek context. Similar controversies occurred in other regional theatres constructed after the creation of the modern Greek state until the end of the 19th century. If at the beginning the 19th century the demand for Greek works in the Corfiot theatre expresses local ideological tensions and controversies, the treatment of the inclusion of Italian opera performances in the body of the history of Greek theatre raises dilemmas. The entanglements of Greek history are expressed in the historiography of Greek theatre and their treatment is somehow disconcerting to this day: what does it mean for national consciousness to accept the foreign as part of national history?

Platon Mavromoustakos teaches as professor at the School of Drama, Faculty of Fine Arts, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki since 2023. Before, he owned the professorship at the Department of Theatre Studies, National and Kapodistrian University of Athens (1991–2022), was Head of this Department (2011–2015) and has

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