Problem with Definition
Discussing the question of European heritage – at both national and pan-national levels – we often concentrate on the material that remains, like bricks, trees, urban resources, design and art, etc. Very often, we forget about the results of spiritual or emotional results of human thinking, about the intangible heritage, including music, instead paying attention mostly to visible artefacts. According to romantic aesthetics like Wilhelm Schlegel and others, music is the highest of the fine arts just because it does not need any kind of media to be perceived, and does not need any material form to transcribe an artist’s idea into any listener’s mind. I am afraid that at the moment we have lost such an understanding of art and – under the reign of “picture civilisation” – it is no longer valid. However, it is worth noticing that people most often associate the term “heritage” with tangible and immovable heritage (mostly “monuments”). Recent research (concerning the role of “affectivity” and “time” in cultural understanding and social memory) underlines the role of feelings and intangible traces of cultural memory within the process of social self-definition.\(^1\) I would like to describe such a small example of (Central) European cultural heritage within the area of music – to show the increasing complications that arise when defining the borders of musical heritage, but also to find some solutions – describing the specific case of the pastorella. As described below, it is almost impossible to find

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a definition of “Central Europe” appropriate for musicological purposes. However, it is possible to describe the given cultural unit with distinctive elements of musical style. Looking for such essentials not only increases our apprehension of culture – in all its aspects – but allows us to find intercultural relationships, invisible at first glance.

Despite the widely discussed (and still not quite clear) understanding of the term “cultural heritage,” the first question concerns the definition of “Central Europe.” How should we define the Central European heritage within the area of music culture? What exactly does “Central Europe” mean, and what kind of argumentation should be used to provide the deepest understanding of the titular topic? It seems that there are several possibilities of definitions according to geography, history, politics, or stylistic genres, or according to the similarities of cultural objects. According to a widespread political definition, Central Europe unites the so-called Visegrad Group countries as well as Switzerland, Germany, Austria, Switzerland and Slovenia (see the map on p. 678).²

If we also take into consideration the cultural background of various regions, we must add the Baltic countries, part of Bulgaria, Romania and Croatia (blue on the map). In a broader sense, Central Europe also includes the former Yugoslavian republics and all the remaining regions of Bulgaria and Romania.³

The term “Central Europe” is so widespread that it sometimes covers even more than the group of countries mentioned above. In this case, it is necessary to divide the discussed area into three subareas: Northern, Alpine-Carpathian and Balkan. Within the Northern zone one can find Eastern Germany, Poland, Lithuania, Belarus, Ukraine and Moldova; within the Alpine-Carpathian zone are Austria, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Romania, Slovenia and Hungary; and in the Balkan zone are all Balkan countries including Greece and the European part of Turkey.

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As we can see, such various countries cannot be defined as any united area with common cultural heritage. The different historical paths, religious milieu, various political and cultural background, and alterations of social consciousness do not allow us to perceive a “Central Europe” defined in such a way as any homogenous space. It also concerns music – although we discuss the origin, folk or artistic elements of national musical styles and traditions. As we see, political and geographical definitions are useless as we are looking for a common cultural heritage, and a coherent definition of the region.

Rejecting the political and geographical definitions, we must also reject the historical ones. The map of Europe in the mid-seventeenth century (see p. 677) allows us to prove that Central Europe at that time was moved considerably towards the west, as far as the Netherlands, Belgium and Lorraine, to the north – including Denmark, and to the south – with the Venetian Republic, Croatia and Carniola. The eastern border of
the region was set at Silesia, Brandenburg and Pomerania. Poland was excluded from this array. And the date 1648 is (in Polish history) the last moment when the Great Kingdom – the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth – existed. At that time, Poland played the role of a superpower country belonging to the Western Culture Area. This again shows that simple historical definitions are valid only for a given period of time and for a strictly defined period. Here, the regions defined in mid-seventeenth century as Central European are so different according to cultural (and of course musical) heritage, and cannot be described within the shared pattern. Their traditions are simply quite heterogeneous.

The other methodological option is to define the particular cultural area by its internal similarities, like use of similar clothes, habits, instruments, etc. Such a method is widely used by archaeologists to define the particular historical “cultures” or by biologists to define the sphere shared by the defined group of animals or plants. In the case of music history, one can define the instruments typical of a particular regional or national musical culture (and not dispersed in other areas) – a good example of this is dombra from Kazakhstan. On the other hand, the traditional komuz – described as a traditional Kyrgyzstan instrument – is
known in many other countries of Central Asia and China (used by the Uyghur people).

Within ethnomusicology, the mentioned method is useful only if we bear in mind the limitations of convergence theory. The widespread use of bagpipes in European mountain regions can easily be explained by the connection of sheep farming areas. But the different tuning, construction and decoration of various bagpipes is the result of local/regional musical styles. See for example the differences between the Polish dudy, Balkan gajdy/gajde, Russian волынка, various French musettes, Spanish gaita, Irish uilleann pipes, German Dudelsack, Arabic mizwad, Scottish Great Highland bagpipe and of course many others.

The other example of a false case is the well-known “Alpenhorn” or “Alphorn.” According to the Oxford Grove Music Encyclopaedia, the Alpenhorn is “a long wooden trumpet of pastoral communities in the Alps. The name also covers similar instruments of Scandinavia, Eastern Europe and the highlands of Germany. Alphorns are known best as herdsmen’s calling instruments, but also serve to summon to church and formerly to war.” In fact, these instruments – contrary to the most popular name – are also known outside the Alps. They are the so-called “national” instrument in Switzerland, Austria (Tirol) and Bavaria – but not in the French Alps. Looking more closely, one can find the same instrument in Ukraine – especially in the Hutsul (Гуцулі) region and the Ukrainian Carpathians (for example nearby Uzhorod). The only difference is the name – this time trembita. We must not forget Romania. Here it is also the “national” instrument, which preserved the old-Roman name bucium (also called trâmbiţă or tulnic). In Poland, the same instrument is always described as characteristic of the Podhale (with the Slavic name trombita), Pomerania (bazuna) and Wielkopolska (ligawka) regions. It is worth noticing that the construction of all the mentioned instruments is similar, as long as the musical scale and sound. This long list of appearances of the Alpenhorn allows us to conclude that the method of defining the cultural heritage by the similarities of cultural elements – i.e. musical instruments – is insufficient. It is obvious that the same instrument – described as “regional” – cannot be the cultural marker for such different parts of Europe as described above.

The situation will be more complicated if we mention the Australian Aborigines’ trumpet (didgeridoo) which is the same wind-instrument we

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4 See the Latin buccina.
encountered in Europe. We face here the phenomenon – well-recognised in biology – of convergent evolution, here within the field of culture. The same technical possibilities (the simplest technology of woodwork), similar needs (communication over long distances) and similar way of sound-making caused the construction of similar instruments in countries that were connected culturally only weakly or not at all. The last example of this process is Tibet, where the so-called long horn *dung chen* is widely used among monks for making sound-signals. The construction, way of execution and sound is similar to the Alpenhorn family. The only difference is material embodiment – *dung chen* is manufactured with metal, not wood. The same good example for multi-national treatment of particular musical instrument is the case of the bagpipes, known well in all of Europe: from the northern edge of the British Isles to Italy and the Balkan countries, from the Eastern European borders of Ukraine to Spain. There are different sizes, decorations and pitch/tuning, but the idea of the instrument is always alike.

**Central European Music Heritage or Heritages?**

Coming back to the basic issue of the Central European heritage, which is the difficulty in finding one, undisputable border of this cultural unit, it is necessary to find a solution useful for musicology. Examining the apparently simpler definitions of different areas of culture,
according to geography, history, politics or similarities, it has been proved that they do not work. The last possibility is to define the regional musical culture heritage by stylistic genres. By enthusiastically discussing the EU common cultural sphere, as the new achievement of international collaboration, we forget that project “Europe” is not a political arrangement which appeared just after the Second World War. Of course in Europe we have a common cultural heritage – also within the music area – but it is rather a whole group of common cultural heritages than one universal. Such pieces of the European cultural area jigsaw puzzle concern theatre, fine arts, architecture, habits, cuisine, etc. and – according to regional and social criteria – the cultural areas of the Carpathian Mountains, Galicia, Piedmont, Hutsuls, the Greek culture of Podhale highlanders, Bavarian Bauers, Parisian artists and hundreds of others. Despite the geographical understanding of this term and the “national” background of contemporary Europe per se, a whole variety of “(Central) European cultural heritages” also existed in the past. A cultural entity which exists now could not exist a hundred years ago, and the well-defined cultural heritage of a given group or region could pass away a long time ago, and at the moment we can examine only the remains of a vivid cultural activity.

The main idea of the European Capitals of Culture initiative was set up to “highlight the richness and diversity of European cultures.” This initiative is a perfect fit to European history as the history of a variety of cultures. Cultures were defined not only as Western, based on the Hellenic tradition community, but also as a mixture of regional, national or local cultures. Their interference throughout the centuries flourished with this incredible mosaic that one can observe nowadays. I will try to examine one of many artistic phenomena – the case of the opposition of the pastoral style and the pastorella – the unique genre popular in Central European countries between 1650 and 1800.

**Pastoral Style in Music**

The musical version of the pastoral style is a style based on Arcadian philosophy, popularised by Jean-Jacques Rousseau’s model of rusticity and simplicity. The aim of the pastoral style was to create an idyllic world, described as the idealised life of the peasant, natural and full of harmony. In music, the most typical examples of pastoral ideology were various ballet/opera performances and an instrumental *pastorale* in the “Italian pastoral” style characterised by:
• *siciliano* triple rhythms, with 6/4 (6/8) or 12/8 time and peaceful (not dramatic) rhythmic patterns;
• melodies built in conjunct thirds and sixths; often lullaby-like in character with repeating patterns and motifs that were easy to duplicate;
• *larghetto* or equivalent tempo;
• suggesting a rustic or bucolic subject;
• imitating the drone of a shepherd’s bagpipe or musette and others.

Pastoral style as artistic ideology was known long before the fundamental works by Jean-Jacques Rousseau. Among the various manifestations of this style throughout Europe one must count early dialogo/cantata manifestations, like: Giacomo Carissimi’s *Quasi aquila* or *Salve Puellule*; Giovanni Kapsperger’s *I pastori di Bettelemme*; Octavio Catalano’s *Angelus ad Pastores* Dialogus Pastoralis; *Sonate pastorali* by Johann J. Fux and Georg Muffat; *Le triomphe de l’Amour* by Charles de Bey and Michel de La Guerre (1655) and Jean-Baptiste Lully’s *Les fêtes de l’Amour et de Bacchus* (1672). All these works (and others as well) used bucolic staffage, but all of them were purely artistic, professional compositions, completed according to one of the principal styles of the baroque/classical idea. As we are looking for a definition of (Central) European cultural heritage, they cannot be used, as they do not represent any specific heritage but only a general artistic tendency – the “mainstream” according to present terminology. There are also numerous examples of such music in the eighteenth century – including pieces by Johann Sebastian Bach – but one of the most popular orchestral compositions is *Sinfonia Pastorella* for Alphorn and String Orchestra by Leopold Mozart (1755).

**Pastorella – Origin and Description**

On the contrary, *pastorella* is not just a style; it is a sacred, vocal-instrumental composition for the Christmas period, widespread from the second half of the seventeenth to the nineteenth centuries. Such pieces were always composed by professional musicians – although very often musicians of mediocre quality – church organists, educated amateurs, members of monastery music ensembles/choirs etc., but always in a “simplified,” “rustic” style, different from their general musical output. A *pastorella* consists of one or more movements, usually for choir or soloists and a small ensemble, uses various elements of (quasi)-folk stylisation, is one of the first examples of artistic stylisation for a folk music style, and typical only of a particular region of Europe: southern Germany, upper Austria, the Czech lands, Slovakia and southern Poland.
As we see, the distribution of this genre is generally equal to the narrow definition of geographic Central Europe. *Pastorella* has a series of common musical distinctive features,5 basically use of:

- shawm-and-bagpipe effects – like in many Italian “pastoral” compositions;
- “pastoral trumpet” (Alpenhorn, trombita) as one of the characteristic folk instruments;
- long pedal points in the “basso” part;
- “fanfare” motifs – as the manifestation of the angels’ proclamation of God’s birth mentioned in the Gospel;
- simplicity of harmonic vocabulary (especially “lullaby” pastorellas);
- irregular structure of melody – as in many folk songs;
- prominent “Lydian” fourth, occasionally augmented sixths (typical of the Gypsy or mountaineer scale);
- use of tunes or lyrics from popular Christmas carols;
- lack of formal complexity (typical schemes are ABA or stanza-form);
- more extended pastorellas often divided into several short movements;
- *bourdon* in bass and 2nd violin;
- imitation of folk solo violin performances (for example typical virtuoso part of 1st violin in Podhale region);
- *imitatio tubarum* in the vocal part – as the other manifestation of the angels’ call (instead of instrumental “fanfare motifs”);
- strange chromaticism based on folk scales (augmented fourth/sixth);
- repeating of basic harmony (Tonic-Dominant-Tonic);
- unexpected unison as a sign of primitiveness/archaisation; this element does not appear in the artistic style, a surprising contrast between the polyphony and monody could be recognised as lack of musical knowledge.

The elements mentioned above can easily be observed by every music lover – not only by professionals. All kind of shawm-and-bagpipe effects including *bourdon* and pedal points are characteristic of many

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folk performances throughout Europe. This is one of the European musical clichés attributed to folk style. The strange chromaticisms, including the “Lydian” fourth, are also an element that is widely perceived in Europe as an element of folk style – especially attributed to the Carpathians/Alps region. The imitation of various local instruments – so characteristic of the pastorella – is a crucial element. It joins the multinational cultural heritage with local traditions. In one case this would be imitation of the watchman horn typical of southern Germany, in another the Alphorn signal of shepherds, and in another still imitation of band soloist performances. The intentional musical clumsiness creates the impression of non-professional busker performances.

Consequently, pastorella is the first genre to apply stylisation as the fundamental element of its construction. We should understand the uniqueness of this construction, as the music theory of those times paid a great deal of attention to perfect construction and stylistic suitability according to given patterns. Writing the perfect counterpoint in proportion to pieces by the Old Masters was perceived as much more valuable than inventing a new genre. Any modification of regular style was perceived as a mistake – not an artistic experiment, as we see it nowadays. Stylisation was a rather peculiar element this time, as it appeared as an artistic means of expression, not earlier than in the mid-nineteenth century. However, composers of pastorellas pretended to be seen a dilettante, a peasant who tries to express his joy of Christmas with musical performance. The quasi-unintentional mistakes in melody, harmony or polyphony ought to be the evidence of the amateur origin of the piece. The unexpected breaking of the melody line, strange sequence of chords or counterpoint errors define the stylistic world of the pastorella. It has also used some – according to the terminology of Geoffrey Chew – common allusive clichés, like:

- The night-watchman song prescribed to choirs of angels – this song, typical in small towns and villages, was often used to evoke the night atmosphere (typical of German-speaking countries) – a good example of implementation of the local tradition within the universal cliché.
- “Rocking” melodies within “lullaby” pastorellas indicated the mother-child situation, well known in every home.
- Broken-chord fanfare motifs (as tuba pastoritia/pastoralis) or imitatio tubarum in vocal parts were necessary to evoke the presence of angels.
- Imitation of birds’ voices: the cock (gallus) or hen (pallin), cuckoo and others have a double meaning – firstly it remains nature, the bucolic
scenario of action, but secondly it is a lasting relict of the pre-Christian epos of birds, which were implemented into Christmas carols in many countries.

- The imitation of folk instruments, e.g. the bagpipe’s bourdon is the strongest indication of folk stylisation; the composer pretends to notice the character of the original folk ensemble – sometimes it is an imitation of a particular instrument, and at other times it is an imitation of the characteristic local performance technique.

- The use of various textual clichés, like: liturgical quasi-quotations, diminutive, national names of shepherds, local scenery, use of local languages and dialects, mixture of the national language with Latin; all these activities try to create the unique atmosphere of a rustic party, far from official religious church manifestations.

The allusive clichés mentioned above appear – in various tensions – in all pastorellas, but the manner of folk stylisation is subject to change according to the local/national diversity. The scheme of the genre is therefore universal within the given area, but the execution of a particular piece is closely linked to local folk elements and habits, although the strict quotation of folk melodies does not appear.

The history of the pastorella starts in the mid-seventeenth century, when so-called parochial culture based on the ideology of sarmatism came into sight⁶ and various local musical traditions became more valuable than the official “Italian” style. The first mention of a composition like a pastorella can be found in a letter to the Prince Bishop of Olomouc, Karl Liechtenstein-Castelcorn (1669). The very early examples of such pieces can be found in Polish archives, like the anonymous composition from Łowicz Parvule pupule (1699), Gloria in excelsis Deo by Stanisław Sylwester Szarzyński (1704), or Vigiles pastores by Kazimierz Jezierni (turn of the eighteenth century). Among the first pastorellas composed in other countries are those by Gottfried Finger, Jan Dismas Zelenka, Johann Joseph Fux in Germany, and in the Czech/Slovak lands pieces like Pastýřská hra o narození Páne by Rakovník or Slaviček rajský by Jan Josef Božan. There were also numerous anonymous compositions. From the beginning of the eighteenth century one can find numerous pastorellas both in Latin and in the vernacular within

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Austria, the Czech lands, Bavaria, Slovakia, Poland and other Central European territories.\(^7\)

It is also worth noting the function of these pieces. They are not liturgical compositions. In Czech archives, however, there are some remarks that pastorellas could be performed during the Holy Mass (e.g. during the *offertorium* instead of songs performed by people, in parallel to regular Latin liturgical pieces, or during para-liturgical ceremonies of folk origin. Such ceremonies assume a variety of forms and names and were naïve imaginations of the events of the Holy Night, like: the song of angels, Mary’s lullaby for Child, the visit and dance of the shepherds, offering gifts by the Three Magi, etc. The Catholic/Franciscan tradition, very powerful in a given territory, was of course an important factor in the popularisation of the *pastorella*, but it never spread to other Catholic European countries. The local – maybe of folk origin – habits played the prevailing role in the appearance and recognition of the genre.

It is noticeable that pastorellas never appeared in areas in which Protestant Churches prevailed. The cultural background of this very musical genre was so strictly connected with the Catholic/Franciscan kind of devotion on the one hand, and with folk customs and beliefs on the other, that the Protestants’ or Puritans’ understanding of the world could not accept it. The discussed case is good evidence of why the Italian *pastorale* was popular in the northern, Protestant part of Germany, while pastorellas appeared only in the southern, Catholic one.

**Conclusions**

The opposition of pastoral artistic ideology versus pastorella as a specific genre is a unique phenomenon of this time. Pastoral music based on artistic ideology without relations to local or folk culture could be treated only as a set of rules implemented into the “official” European musical language. The pastorella, however is something more interesting – it is a marvellous example of creation of the pan-national cultural heritage within the area divided geographically by high mountains (the Carpathians), separated with various languages (of Slavic and German group) and based on various folk traditions. The elements putting this region into one, unified culture area with a common musical heritage are of purely

stylistic significance. This case is also a good reminder that the idea of multinational cultural heritage areas did not appear in the twentieth century, but much earlier.

The pan-national common elements of the pastorella are: the idea of genre, the function – as the secular celebration for Christmas time, the set of characteristic stylistic elements, the unconventional artistic manifestation of professional composers and understanding pastorella as stylisation. One can find all these elements in any pastorella. On the other hand, it is easy to find national dissimilarities based on local musical traditions, sets of texts and melodies. The discussed topic is therefore a perfect example of the unity of the pan-national cultural heritage with local traditions, the mixture of religious traditions with secular ones, and the implementation of European ideology with the richness of Central European habits.