
Diane Carole Roy

A thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

of

The Australian National University

3 August 2011
DECLARATION

I, Diane Carole Roy, hereby declare that, except where otherwise acknowledged in the customary manner, and to the best of my knowledge and belief, this work is my own, and has not been submitted for a higher degree at any other university or institution.

...........................................
DEDICATION

Jeseň na Slovensku

Vonku je ticho, všade je šero
Vo vnútri hmly vidím priatelských duchov
Biele brezy so zlatými vlasmi
Okolo ich nôh, zlaté koberec
Táto krajina je moja sestra
Niekedy rušová, niekedy pokojná
Niekedy stará, niekedy mladá
Ďakujem jej

Di Roy 2003

Autumn in Slovakia

Outside is quiet, all around is dim,
Yet inside the fog I see friendly ghosts
White birches with golden hair
Around their feet a golden carpet
This country is my sister
Sometimes turbulent, sometimes peaceful
Sometimes old, sometimes young
I thank her
I would like to thank the following people, without whom this work could not have been achieved:

Dr Stephen Wild, for giving me the freedom to follow my lights, and for his support and friendship; Dr Johanna Rendle-Short, for her encouragement in acquiring knowledge and skills in Conversation Analysis; Dr Jozef Vakoš, who generously accepted me into the Trenčín Singers’ Choir, enabling me to be part of the choral community in Trenčín; my friends in the Trenčín Singers’ Choir, who shared their songs and joy in their traditions, and who showed me why by taking me away from the track trodden by tourists; Dr Hana Urbancová at the Institute of Musicology, and Dr Gabriela Kilánová at the Institute of Ethnology, at the Slovak Academy of Sciences, who generously gave me time, consultation and literature; Ing. Július Jackuliak, whose interview I will remember with deep emotion for the rest of my life; Ján Horeš, President of the Slovak Social Club in Laverton, Victoria, who welcomed me without reservation into the Melbourne Slovak community; Ján Haviar, who similarly welcomed me at the Slovak Lutheran Church in Laverton; my friend, Susan Conroy, cultural planner, without whom I could not have conducted the audience survey; my brother, Dr Don Roy, for his ear and his encouragement.
ABSTRACT

This thesis explores the significance of a Slovak traditional music and dance performance in Melbourne in October 2007 by Lúčnica: Slovak National Folklore Ballet. While the troupe represents a genre of traditional music performance that is revered by many Slovaks, it is also criticized in the community and scholarly narratives as being ‘artificial’. This thesis shows that Lúčnica’s performances are deeply significant, however, and that they constitute a legitimate form of music folklore practice for performers and Slovak audiences, embodying the Slovak landscape and history, despite artistic modifications. However, by taking an interactional viewpoint, this thesis shows that on foreign soil, complex meanings were thrown into relief. While Lúčnica’s stated mission is to spread Slovak traditional music culture abroad, it was found that in multicultural Melbourne, Lúčnica’s performance generated a variety of discursive strands. The same performance confirmed and celebrated Slovak ethnicity for Slovak Australians, and at the same time, contributed to the discourse of British hegemony and marginalization of the same. A second, but equally important focus of the thesis, is that it addresses the dialectic between theory and data. Ethnographic notes were analyzed according to Goffman’s model for non-verbal interaction, an ethnographic interview was analyzed according to the methods of Conversation Analysis, and an audience survey was conducted. These varied data and methodologies were unified by adopting an over-arching Foucauldian theoretical framework, thus aligning theory, data, and methodologies, and giving findings added cogency.
Chapter 1: Introduction ................................................................. 1
  Background ............................................................................. 1
  The aim of the study .............................................................. 10
  The research questions .......................................................... 11
  The rationale ........................................................................... 13
  Theoretical considerations ...................................................... 17
  Design and logic of the research project ................................. 24
  Methodologies ........................................................................ 27
  Thesis overview .................................................................... 41

Chapter 2: The discourse of history ........................................... 44
  Background ............................................................................. 44
  The Slovaks: How do they imagine themselves? ....................... 44
  The Australians: How do they imagine themselves? .................. 63
  Comparisons .......................................................................... 73

Chapter 3: Overview of Slovak musical life and scholarship .......... 77
  Background ............................................................................. 77
  Classical music ....................................................................... 78
  Choral music .......................................................................... 81
  A ‘World Music’ festival ......................................................... 84
  Slovak traditional music ......................................................... 86
  Conclusions ........................................................................... 103

Chapter 4: Ethnographic account .............................................. 107
  Background ............................................................................. 107
  The participants ...................................................................... 108
  Methods of data collection: Issues and problems ....................... 112
  Ethnographic notes and analyses ........................................... 113
  Conclusions ........................................................................... 129

Chapter 5: Ethnographic interview ............................................. 134
  Background ............................................................................. 134
  The participants ...................................................................... 135
  Methods of data collection: Issues and problems ....................... 137
  Interview excerpts and analyses ............................................. 142
  Conclusions ........................................................................... 163

Chapter 6: Audience survey ....................................................... 169
  Background ............................................................................. 169
  The participants ...................................................................... 175
  Methods of data collection: Issues and problems ....................... 176
  Audience survey: First phase ............................................... 180
  Audience survey: Second phase ............................................ 183
  Conclusions ........................................................................... 206
Chapter 7: Conclusions ................................................................. 212
    The significance of Lúčnica for Slovak ethnicity .................. 212
    Evaluation of the methodologies ........................................ 216
    Future directions .............................................................. 219

References ................................................................................... 221

Figure 1: Brochure for Lúčnicá’s 2010 tour ................................. 4
Figure 2: The Slovak National Anthem ........................................ 49
Figure 3: The Slovak National Hymn ........................................... 49
Figure 4: Regions of traditional Slovak culture ................................ 99
Figure 5: Young participants at Seniors’ Festival, Krivosúd-Bodovka, June 2006 ...105
Figure 6: Ethnographic notes ..................................................... 114-115
Figure 7: The Review in the Melbourne Quarterly .......................... 174
Figure 8: Questionnaire for audience survey: First phase .............. 178
Figure 9: Questionnaire for telephone interviews: Second phase ..... 179
Figure 10: Ethnic breakdown of audience .................................... 182
Figure 11: Rating of singing ....................................................... 184
Figure 12: Rating of dancing ....................................................... 187
Figure 13: Rating of instrumental music ...................................... 189
Figure 14: Rating of costumes ................................................... 192
Figure 15: Seniors’ Festival, Krivosúd-Bodovka, June 2006 .......... 193-194
Figure 16: Rating of production .................................................. 196
Figure 17: Slovak culture or not ............................................... 197
Figure 18: Programme missed or not ......................................... 200
Figure 19: Slovak respondents: Comments ................................. 201
Figure 20: Slovak culture yes and printed programme no .......... 203
Figure 21: Age distribution of telephone interviewees ............... 204

Table 1: Ethnic composition of Slovakia, 2001 ............................. 62
Table 2: Styles of Slovak folk songs ........................................... 88
Table 3: Regional categorization of Slovak folk song styles ........... 89
Table 4: Pantheon of Slavic pagan gods ..................................... 90
Table 5: Traditional instruments in Slovakia ................................. 95-96
Table 6: Regional categorization of music folklore troupes and activities ......100-102
Table 7: Population for telephone interviews .............................. 180
Table 8: Ethnic breakdown showing Confidence Index ................. 181

Appendix I: Transcription of monologue of Professor Štefan Nosál
Appendix II: Transcription glossary
Appendix III: Transcription of ethnographic interview
Appendix IV: CD of ethnographic interview back cover
Chapter 1: Introduction

Background

A folkloric performance by Lúčnica, Slovakia’s National Folklore Ballet troupe, in Melbourne’s Hamer Hall on 8 October 2007, provided an extraordinary opportunity to examine the meaning of that event. This was a ‘premiere’ event from two perspectives; Lúčnica is Slovakia’s most famous folklore ballet troupe, and Hamer Hall is Melbourne’s superb, modern performance venue for orchestral and ballet performances. The performance itself was consistent with Lúčnica’s performances at home, where they are reputed to combine the spectacular and the traditional, but this reputation did not map onto the multicultural Australian landscape simply. Ambiguities were generated, given that the audience was ethnically diverse, composed of Slovak Australians, Anglo Australians, and other Australians with a wide variety of ethnic backgrounds.

The term ‘music and dance folklore’ appears frequently in the present study, and so clarification of its use is warranted. In Slovak scholarship the term ‘folklore’ has referred to culturally embedded ethnographic phenomena such as folk tales, customs, dress, traditional industries and folk songs in peasant culture. And yet, the Slovak term folklór, in the community and in scholarship, denotes the genre of folkloric performance of traditional music and dance performed as one entity on the stage, of which Lúčnica is iconic, and translated as ‘music and dance folklore’. Such performances by troupes, measured in ‘pairs’ to denote the number of dancers, take place in theatres or out-door amphitheatres, or in the street as part of a festival, and are enjoyed and valorized by a considerable proportion of the Slovak community. By contrast, the term ľudová hudba refers to folksong and instrumental music in a more abstract sense, not as specifically tied to a particular concertized practice, as is folklór.

History of Lúčnica

Considering that Slovakia extends for only 49,000 square kilometres, with a population of about 5.4 million, it is remarkable that the Slovak Ministry of Culture manages to field the country’s favourite troupe abroad annually. The Ministry of Culture has funded two national troupes since 1949: the fully professional SLÚK [Slovak Folk Art Collective] and the semi-professional Lúčnica, mainly comprised of students. Whereas
the standard of SLÚK’s performance is exceptionally high, it has had a chequered career. On the other hand, Lúčnica’s more far-reaching and continuous fame can be at least partly attributed to the fact that it has had the same director since its inception. In an interview on one of Lúčnica’s commercial DVDs, Professor Štefan Nosáľ, the troupe’s artistic director and choreographer for almost 60 years, explains the formation of the troupe before ratification by the Ministry of Culture:

No-one really founded Lucnica. It formed gradually, spontaneously. I guess we can say that this was in the last century, in 1948. It formed from a group of students at university in Bratislava that were interested in presenting something purely Slovak. So, they put together a few dances. Back then Mrs Chodakova and Mrs Bakova, who was more oriented on singing, were putting the dances together. Soon after, Professor Plicka from Prague, a great lover of folklore and film maker, invited the group to perform at an agricultural trade fair in Prague, that was back in 1948. The group performed a short program and we, the older ones decided that the year 1948 would represent the official birth of Lucnica…

Lúčnica was co-opted a year later by the Ministry of Culture as part of the “new, frankly ideologically motivated direction of culture”, whose aim was to cultivate “folklore in collective forms” with the widest possible reach into all layers of society in the new Soviet states (Chalupka 2003: 324). Lúčnica’s mission was to include performing abroad, and to this end, its role in presenting ‘folklore for export’ was also established early. In 1949, the troupe toured Romania and Poland, but ventured into Austria and Germany in 1951. Since then, as well as performing extensively at home, an annual tour abroad has been part of Lúčnica’s itinerary. In 1956, it performed in Mexico, Argentina, Brazil, Uruguay and Scandinavia. The first of seven visits to Great Britain was in 1966, and the most recent was in 2002, when they played to packed houses at Covent Garden. The first trip to Canada was in 1969, and to the United States in 1982. The latter did not yet include New York, where they made their debut in 1994. Lúčnica’s first visit to Australia was in 1999 as part of a government cultural initiative, but it was not until 2007 that they ventured to perform in premier Australian venues such as Hamer Hall and the State Theatre in Sydney. These were the last of the 14 performances for their Oceania tour that year, which had included major cities in China. But they are always busy at home; for example, in 2007, apart from two special performances to accompany national events in Bratislava, they mounted 26 regular performances around the region, including four in Czech Republic (Lúčnica 2007).

---

See Appendix I: Transcription of monologue of Professor Nosáľ, p.1.
The name of Professor Štefan Nosáľ is almost synonymous with Lúčnica. His 80th birthday was celebrated at a gala performance held in the Slovak National Theatre in Bratislava on 28 January 2007. Born in Hriňová in central Slovakia in 1927, Nosáľ graduated from structural engineering in 1953, but became a solo dancer with Lúčnica in 1949, and by 1951 had become choreographer for the troupe. His subsequent formal studies in choreography culminated in his becoming a professor at VŠMU [Higher School for Musical Arts] in Bratislava in 1980, and establishing the Department of Folk Dance Choreography in 1984. He is also credited with having inspired the creation of at least 48 children’s folklore troupes in the Bratislava area, which also constitute feeder groups for Lúčnica. Interviewed at his birthday celebration, he said that he was glad to have attracted young people to Slovak folklore, and also that one of his primary motivations has been “to expand folk dancing’s artistic and musical traditions beyond the borders of Slovakia” (Liptáková 2007). In this, he appears to concur with the mission envisioned by the Ministry of Culture, but as will be shown, the concurrence was by no means complete. Since 1975, Nosáľ has created over a hundred programmes for the troupe, with names such as Fifty Years of Youth and Beauty, Beautiful and Young, Games and Marriage, The Carpathians, and Representative Programme, one of the earliest, which was performed in Melbourne. For the first time in 2007, the choreographic work of two of his students was included in a new programme, Slovenský Triptych [Slovak Triptych], performed only in Slovakia up to the time of writing.

Folklore for export

These programmes have been applauded enthusiastically at home, but when Lúčnica play to audiences in modern theatres abroad, they aim to please foreign audiences, too. Their recipients are modern theatre audiences, such as the audience in Hamer Hall in Melbourne. As proof of their success as ambassadors for Slovak culture, they trade on reviews of past performances abroad. A link on the Lúčnica website reveals a collation of reviews published after their 2002 tour:

…We have seen an excellent stage-managed, very smooth-flowing and fully learnt show that enraptured every lover of eastern dances. The choreographer Stefan Nosal has proved a great fantasy without touching the originality of national dances.
FRANKFURTER ALGEMEINE (GERMANY)
(SRN)
Figure 1

Brochure for Lúčnica’s 2010 tour

Photograph: Mr Peter Brenkus.
Reproduced with kind permission of Mgr. Art. Marián Turner, Director of Lúčnica Assembly.
If dancing is or is supposed to be an expression of people’s enjoying life, then there is no doubt that we could not have seen a better prove of this principle than the in-every-way beautiful performance that the Lucnica ensemble showed us in Florencio Sanchez Theatre.

EL TELEGRAFO MONTEVIDEO (URUGUAY)

... Lucnica, a Slovak dance ensemble from Bratislava, is absolute number one. Its young dancers spark with excellent technique in the overwhelming repertoire that truly grasps the surprisingly various sources.
... Stefan Nosal, the artistic director and choreographer, scenically arranged the dances with bold variations and sudden changes of rhythm. Mr. Nosal's great gift is his ability to create dances with high artistic spark while keeping their originality.
THE NEW YORK TIMES
(USA)

Nowhere else would we have seen such gorgeous temperament, love and joy from dance and music of home country. They had so much apparently inexhaustible energy and such perfect movement that even Olympic sportsmen would not be ashamed for it. With their talent and pure beauty, these dancers are absolute shining representatives of their country.
THE CANBERRA TIMES
(AUSTRALIA)

... Last night was opened by Lucnica - an artistic ensemble from Slovakia. This monument of folklore came after six years of invitations. We could call this ensemble, which represents the Slovak culture all around the world, "The Rolling Stones of Folklore". Wonderful vivacious dances, beautiful costumes and fantastic music brought inimitable experience.
La MARSEILLAISE
(FRANCE)

(BBC World Service 2002)

The high value of these reviews for Lúčnica’s promotional team is confirmed by the fact that the brochure reproduced in Figure 1, obtained from the Canberra Theatre box office during Lúčnica’s most recent Australian visit in 2010, features the same reviews, with pictures that have been on the Lúčnica website since 2004. Quoted verbatim from the BBC World Service collation above, these reviews reach back until at least 1994.

Following the troupe’s tour to Macao in April 2006, The Slovak Spectator online reported an interview with Mikuláš Sivý, delegated choreographer, describing the school workshops they had conducted, in which maps, regional differences, costumes and instruments were shown to Chinese children. According to Sivý, “the Asian agencies work hard in importing culture from around the world to their countries and are especially efficient in promoting the foreign ensembles, as was the case with Lucnica. The Chinese have learned to go to theatres and each small town has a large theatre, most of them bigger than Slovakia’s new National Theatre building, and
excellently equipped” (Habšudová 2006). This repeats the rhetoric of superlatives, not only of the troupe itself, but of the quality of the host performance venues.

Critical views

The parallel drawn in the Canberra Times review above between Lúčnica and ‘Olympic sportsmen’ is noteworthy, because although the term ‘spectacular’ is not used specifically in any of the collected reviews, it is an apt descriptor for the acrobatic, visually dazzling performances they describe. Anthropological research into large-scale cultural events like the Olympic Games, in which the notion of ‘spectacle’ is deconstructed, addresses the meaning of such events. For example, the term’s etymological roots show that besides the positive connotations of striking visual display and acrobatic prowess, the word also suggests a negative connotation (Manning 1992: 293). The Oxford dictionary specifies this potentially negative connotation as stemming from possible embarrassment.² However, in the case of the kind of performances of which Lúčnica is quintessentially representative, the risk of being less than superlative according to a relevant set of parameters in the staged folkloric performance stakes, is more likely to be the explanation of the shadowy side of ‘spectacle’.

For example, folklorist Barbara Kirschenblatt-Gimblett (1998: 64) points out that in order to please modern audiences, ‘ethnic’ performances must comply (my emphasis) with certain standards, such as:

- Variety, eclecticism
- Musical accompaniment (for a cappella)
- European harmony
- “Concertized” arrangements
- Vocal styles modeled on European opera
- Movement styles based on balletic styles
- Virtuosity
- Tight coordination, highly choreographed routines
- Evidence of training, professionalism
- Delivery of exactly what promised in promotions
- Elimination of improvisation
- Stylized costumes
- Frontal orientation for proscenium stage
- Inclusion of traditions such as weddings and harvest rituals

² See Oxford Dictionary online website: http://oxforddictionaries.com/view/entry/m_en_gb0798180#m_en_gb0798180
The implication from the notion of ‘compliance’ is that authenticity has been sacrificed for acrobatic and artistic virtuosity, and that the sacrifice is regrettable. In fact, the contrary claim occurs frequently in Lúčnica’s promotional rhetoric, suggesting that the charge has been recognized. The following makes the charge more explicit. In an extended version of the 1994 review from *The New York Times* cited above by the BBC World Service, the reporter mentions the diversity of sources, freshness, sophistication and professionalism, and the skill of Professor Nosáľ in combining artistry and authenticity, but goes on to explain how Nosáľ has “staged the dances with a spirited variety and change of pace that avoid the formulaic glibness that can color other folk groups founded in the former Soviet bloc” (Kisselgoff 1994). This comment names the counter argument, showing that accusations of banality were an important part of the discourse around such performances at that time and place, flying in the face of acknowledged virtuosity.

The fact that the programme selected for the second official Australian tour, as recently as October – November 2010 was *Beautiful and Young*, one of Nosáľ's earliest choreographies, confirms the suspicion that for interacting with foreign audiences, it is better to play safe, and take the risk of being accused of “formulaic glibness”. The most recently created *Slovenský Triptych* [Slovak Triptych] includes choreographic input by two of Nosáľ's choreography students for the first time. When asked in 2007 whether *Slovenský Triptych* had been considered for export, the troupe’s manager explained that it was still being regarded as experimental, not yet a safe bet for foreign audiences until Slovak audiences had registered their approval. However, despite the fact that Slovak audiences do seem to approve of the *Slovenský Triptych* programme, it is still not presented abroad. Especially in the light of reviews like Kisselgoff’s piece in *The New York Times*, it would seem that the choice of Nosáľ's early programmes for foreign audiences, *Representative Programme* in 2007 and *Beautiful and Young* in 2010, created exclusively by him, is well-considered, and that confidence in a proven formula is more important than the risk of being taken as banal.

Perhaps, for the promoters and producers of Lúčnica’s performances, other factors insure against such a risk. Kirschenblatt-Gimblett points out that not only the performance itself, but the infrastructure, or “frame”, is loaded with meaning. To illustrate,

---

[t]he more modern the theater where the troupe performs the better, for often there is a dual message: powerful, modern statehood, expressed in the accoutrements of civilization and technology, is wedded to a distinctive national identity … the possession of a national folklore, particularly as legitimated by a national museum and troupe, is cited as a mark of being civilized. (1998: 65)

Giddens also discusses the importance of the architecture surrounding an event, explaining that it specifies the kinds of behaviour available to and expected from those present (1988: 260-1). These observations by such scholars support the notion that the discourse of modern civilization and ethnic identity is central to performances like Lúčnica’s, which typically take place in performing venues like the Hamer Hall. It is just such observations that fuel the claim that authenticity may have been sacrificed in favour of a form of ethnic performance that is banal and formulaic, while conceding its modernity. Nevertheless, it is clear that from the point of view of Lúčnica’s organizers and the rhetoric of their promotional material, their contribution to the discourse is the firm belief that the troupe is portraying authentic Slovak music and dance folklore in such a manner that modern civilization can be claimed at the same time.

Alongside the popularity of Lúčnica in Slovakia, accusations of banality concerning this kind of folkloric production can also be found at home. It is negatively labeled as ‘official’ folk culture by such proponents of Slovak traditional music as Zuzana Mojžišová, trained musicologist and editor of Slovak Radio’s music programmes. Born in 1974 into a ‘musical’ family, Mojžišová was in her mid-teens when the communist regime collapsed, but was already well-versed in Slovak folkloristic song and dance culture, performing it since childhood. In her early 30s, she began collaborating with rock musicians to produce a fusion of traditional folk songs and rock styles, and was known for a time as a ‘world musician’, winning the prodigious Aurel award for sound production in 2004 with her third CD, Zuzana Mojžišová. In an interview for the Slovak Spectator, Slovakia’s English language newspaper, she commented thus concerning Slovak music and dance folklore: “During socialism they fed people with it on every occasion, which resulted in a kind of negative approach” (Habšudová 2004). Her impulse, which has met with success if packed audiences of young people are any indication, was to re-establish the links between younger generations of Slovaks and their traditions.
Slovak ethnologist Milan Leščák would concur with Mojžišová’s criticism of staged music folklore. He describes this kind of performance, typified by Lúčnica, as an “institutionally organized and regulated” expression of folk culture which has been removed from its “natural existence” (Leščák 1992: 5). He labels these cultural manifestations negatively as ‘folkloristic’, as distinguished from ‘natural’ folklore, by their lack of spontaneity, and their adaptation or recreation of what was considered natural in its original context. Oskár Elsche, professor of musicology commonly recognized as having charted the course of ethnomusicology during the Soviet era, has also taken up a negative stance towards the forms of ‘folkloristic’ manifestations that evolved during the communist era. He denounces the commodification of folk music during the regime, claiming that after the 1950s, Slovak traditional music had been reduced to a state of “shallowness, ideologization, commercialization and loss of artistic substance” (Elschek 1999: 43). But in the same article, he makes a statement that could be used to support the notion that these activities were still functioning as traditional practice, when he says that cultural policies can only “slow down or speed up processes that are already taking place” (32). This thesis shows that in the case of Lúčnica’s performance, despite flagrant commodification, an argument for “shallowness” or “loss of artistic substance” is by no means black and white, and that despite all, performances such as Lúčnica’s can be defined as instances of traditional practice, even when taking place on foreign soil.

Similarly with Leščák’s term ‘folkloristic’, reserved for such phenomena as staged folk music and dance, negative connotations can be questioned. In fact, the term ‘folklore’ is routinely used in a positive sense in the Slovak community to include just the kind of performances typified by Lúčnica. Consequently, the mentioned valorization by Slovaks in the community has informed this thesis. Its contention is that just because the discursive strands manifested in such performances include commodification or political manipulation, they are no less instances of traditional practice. Rather, when so-called ‘folkloristic’ performances are seen as part of an on-going process rather than as objects arbitrarily fixed at a point in time, it is possible to ask relevant questions concerning them. McDonald deals with the vexed term, ‘tradition’, for example, by suggesting that an intransitive verb ‘to tradition’, describes more accurately what is going on when members of a culture perform aspects of it. Thus, the activity represented by Lúčnica’s performances could be thought of as ‘tradioning’ in those terms, because it could be convincingly defined as:
a) a shared, repeatable activity or complex of activities

and

b) the activation of a certain spiritual/emotional power in the relationship-network of those involved in the collaboration. This power is produced by, and in its turn, generates the conscious desire for the activity, its objects (for example, particular songs, styles or stories), and the relationship network itself to persist – just as they had in the past, so on into the future. (McDonald 1996: 116)

While it is impossible to redefine all terms in the narrative used in this study which do not grammatically conform to such a view, the concept that performance of staged folk music and dance is dynamic and discursive, that performers and Slovak audiences are engaged intellectually and emotionally in connecting with and projecting their music traditions, and that Lúčnica’s performance is a prime example, is at the heart of this study.

The heart of the study, however, has another side. While this study shows that Lúčnica’s performance fulfilled McDonald’s definition of traditional practice, it did so from the perspective of the Slovak performers, Slovak producers, and Slovak Australian audience members. For non-Slovak participants, including myself and non-Slovak audience members, the discourse generated by the performance differed in important ways. In an Australian context, especially for Anglo Australians as members of the dominant social group, this was transformed into an ‘ethnic’ performance. Examination of the performance from these two perspectives enabled a deep understanding of the complex discourse generated at that time and place.

The aim of the study

The aim of the thesis to clarify the ambiguities expressed in the mentioned debates about the value of such staged ‘folkloric’ performances such as Lúčnica’s by looking for empirical evidence of its meaning for Slovaks and for an Australian audience when they performed in Melbourne in 2007. The front line of such an inquiry necessarily involves the interface between the rhetoric associated with Lúčnica’s performances abroad, and the rhetoric of Australian multiculturalism. Because of this, the histories infusing the rhetoric in each case have been taken more as phenomena being lived than as mere ‘context’. However, the data gathered from the field in the course of research to support this thesis focusses upon publicly observable interactions occurring in real time in the presence of the researcher before, during, and after Lúčnica’s visit. In the
instances amenable to inquiry, the interactions between participants are regarded as being sites where important meaning was generated. The aim of the study is to explore the question of how understanding Lúčnica’s significance could be deepened and expanded by examining contemporary interactions of key Slovak and non-Slovak participants in the event at the micro-level. Two strands of inquiry are thus intertwined, the question of the significance of Lúčnica’s performance, and the question of effective methods for exploring its meaning.

**The research questions**

Consistent with an ethnomusicological orientation, initial questions on my part were inspired by the ubiquitous and prolific manifestations of folk music and dance performed onstage while immersed ‘in the field’ even before formal research began. Between 2001 and 2006, while teaching English at an American business college in Trenčín, a university town 120 kilometres north of Bratislava, I attended many musical performances. As well as performances of traditional music and dance, I attended opera and ballet performances in Bratislava, and performances by local chamber ensembles of various kinds, professional groups from Bratislava, and international touring groups when they came to Trenčín. I sang with the *Trenčianský spevačký zbor* [Trenčín singers’ choir] and the academic choir at the Alexander Dubček University in Trenčín and travelled around Slovakia and neighbouring countries to perform in festivals and competitions with each of them. This experience accelerated my Slovak language learning, and gave me an insight into the attitudes and feelings of those Slovak friends towards their music folklore. While these choirs performed an eclectic choral repertoire, after each performance and the inevitable banquet following, and especially on the bus trip home, a seemingly inexhaustible number of folk songs would be sung. Then, when attending performances of professional and amateur song and dance folklore performances with my choral friends, sometimes being the only foreigner identifiable amongst over a thousand people, an important aspect of the question fuelling this thesis emerged. It was the atmosphere generated by audiences, which seems almost trance-like at times, and the reverential affect displayed in the faces and voices of my choral friends when recommending this or that folkloric performance or festival, and the assumptions implied concerning my expected level of appreciation as a foreigner and as a musician.
The experiences of a lifetime as an Anglo Australian, followed by those five years’ immersion in the Slovak community fuelled my conviction that staged music folklore performances had different meanings in different times and places. Then after undertaking the present study, when Lúčnica’s tour ‘down under’ was announced, the question became more focussed on how such a performance might be received by an Australian audience, and how it might differ from its significance for ethnic Slovaks. In formulating the research question, therefore, Foucault’s definition of such cultural performances as discursive practice was assumed. The question became more specifically focussed upon the interaction of producers and receivers of folklore performances by virtue of exposure to the rhetoric of Australian multicultural ideology. Finally, the question can be distilled as follows: What was the significance of Lúčnica’s performance in Melbourne, and how was that meaning produced? Can this kind of performance of Slovak music and dance be regarded as an example of traditional practice? If so, how did this meaning translate across cultural boundaries in Melbourne?

While the initial interest was the meaning of Lúčnica’s performance in Melbourne, a second question inevitably emerged, as to appropriate methodologies for exploring such a question. Initially, the intent was to conduct an audience survey, in which case ethnographic observations and interviews would serve as preparatory phases, as providing ancillary, background knowledge. However, consideration of available methodologies resulted in giving an ethnographic account and an interview with Lúčnica’s manager status as data in their own right, rather than as mere resources to support survey results. As a result, a comparative methodological inquiry emerged, and is intertwined with the quest to uncover the meaning of the studied phenomenon, Lúčnica’s performance in Melbourne. The second question addressed in this thesis is as follows: How effective was the use of different kinds of data, each demanding its own distinctive methodological approach, in supporting claims made concerning the meaning of Lúčnica’s performance?

4 See pp. 16-22.
The rationale

The marginality of Slovaks in Australia

A unique aspect of this study is that it is done from an Australian vantage point, from which Slovakia and Slovaks are rarely considered, either by the Australian community or within academia. One fundamental reason for their near invisibility in Australia is the fact that Slovak Australians are very few relative to the Australian population. Whereas the 2001 census lists Slovaks as the 78th largest ethnic group in Australia, numbering 7,054 (Khoo & Lucas 2001), a later factsheet from the Australian Bureau of Statistics shows that according to “ancestry responses”, Slovaks number in the range from 10,000 to 19,999 (Australian Bureau of Statistics 2003). It should be remembered that approximately 5,000 Slovaks had migrated from the former Yugoslavia in the 1980s and 1990s from Slovak enclaves within that nation. They were Yugoslav nationals and ethnic Slovaks, but were not able to designate themselves as such until revised census questions allowed them to self-designate by ancestry in 2001. Slovaks emigrating from Czechoslovakia after the Communist crack-downs of 1948 and 1968 had a similar problem with the census. While they represented more visible waves of immigration, they were necessarily registered as Czechoslovak nationals. The most specific available figures for ethnic Slovak numbers are supplied by František Vnuk (2001), an Adelaide-based Slovak historian, who claimed the existence of approximately 12,000 Slovaks in Australia in 2001, 7,000 of whom came from what is now Slovakia, and 5,000 from the former Yugoslavia. In the 2006 census, specific numbers for Slovaks are no longer given (Australian Bureau of Statistics 2007, August 7). Besides their relatively small numbers to begin with, and the complexity of national politics in Central and South-Eastern Europe over the last two centuries, the assimilation of subsequent generations appears also to have contributed to the fact that Slovaks as a discreet ethnic group have remained marginal in the consciousness of the Australian community. Since the fall of the communist regime in 1989, few Slovaks have left Slovakia for Australia; in fact, statistics show a reverse movement between 1994 and 2004, when 185 Slovaks migrated to Australia, but 373 returned (Ethnic composition 2005).
Contribution to Australian scholarship

Little academic work has been done in Australia concerning Slovak culture specifically, before or after the ‘Velvet Divorce’ of Slovakia and the Czech Republic in 1993. A PhD thesis completed in 2007 at Monash University analyzed the place of the popular media in Slovakia in the imagining of Slovak identity since separation (Barrer 2007). Earlier Australian literature found is of a primarily documentary nature. Vnuk’s work, mentioned above, was a thumbnail sketch of Slovaks in Australia contributing to James Jupp’s *The Australian People: An Encyclopaedia of the Nation, its Culture and their Origins* (2001). Apart from this, documentation of the immigration and settlement of the Czechs in Australia, which included Slovaks, was published in Michael Cigler’s book, *The Czechs in Australia* (1983). Vnuk also published two small books documenting the complicated events and negotiations resulting in the Catholic priest, Jozef Tiso, becoming president of Slovakia under the Nazi regime during World War II (Vnuk 1964, 1967). So, not only are Slovakia and the Australian Slovak community marginal with respect to Australian consciousness, they have rarely caught the attention of Australian scholars.

Contribution to Slovak scholarship

Not surprisingly, there is much scholarly interest in Slovak cultural performance in Slovakia, as a genealogical overview of Slovak scholarship shows. Both ethnomusicological and ethnological strands continue to be robust disciplines in Slovak scholarship. The former has a more idiographic and musicological bias, while the latter includes questions of culture. Both flourish in Slovak universities and in the Slovenská Akademia Vedy (SAV) [Slovak Academy of Sciences] established in 1946 by the Ministry of Culture as a clone of the Academy of Sciences in Moscow, as in other satellite states. Nevertheless, the evolution of both strands has involved much cross-fertilization, and many crossings of disciplinary boundaries.

A precedent for an interdisciplinary approach was set within ethnological scholarship from its beginnings in 1921 as the Department of Ethnography and Folklore Studies within the Faculty of Arts at Comenius University in Bratislava (Bitušíková 1998; 2003). In ethnographic research, collaboration with archaeological and historical disciplines, and folklore studies, was common, and methodologies of European
anthropology were followed. During the communist era, choices had to be made as to which areas of research were permissible, with the result that the main emphasis was historical, focussing on peasant culture within the region. After the fall of the communist regime in 1989, that Department was renamed as the Department of Ethnology and Cultural Anthropology, one of whose streams includes folklore studies.

Separate institutes for musicology and ethnology now exist within the SAV, but ethnomusicologist Hana Urbancová, now director of its Institute of Musicology, shows the cross-fertilization of comparative musicological and ethnographic disciplinary strands within ethnomusicology before this (Urbancová 2007). Whereas the research done by Hungarian composer and musicologist Béla Bartók between 1905 and 1918 is widely known by musicologists, outside of Slovakia it is not so well-known that an ethnographic strand was being born simultaneously in Slovak scholarship with the work of Karol Medvecký in the central Slovak village of Detva. This work was published in a monograph in 1905. For his part, Bartók established a research model for analyzing folk songs based on “their elaboration, analysis and classification”, a model which grew from a broader European research orientation where analysis of melodies was paramount (Urbancová 2007: 150). His collection had consisted of approximately 3,000 Slovak songs, 3,400 Romanian, 2,700 Hungarian, and a total of 250 Arab, Bulgarian and Serbian folk songs (Suchoff 1997). But Medvecký’s work included ethnographic considerations such as the natural context of the village, its history, its administrative, economic and social structure, architecture, costumes, embroideries, songs and dances, and the customs and “mentality” of the inhabitants. (Urbancová 2007: 148). A little known fact is that Medvecký had made wax-cylinder recordings of songs in Detva in 1901, and although they were destroyed and later reconstituted, this predates the recording activities of Béla Bartók (149). The musicological skills of Milan Lichard, a specialist in the analysis of Slovak folk song, had been co-opted by Medvecký for his ethnographic account of Detva, indicating an enrichment of ethnomusicological research. Apart from this collaboration, there was little or no overlap between the ethnographic and musicological research models until the 1950s, when Jozef Kresánek linked music structural elements to cultural context, confirming the birth of Slovak ethnomusicology as a distinct sub-discipline of musicology.

Cultural policy during the Soviet era imposed significant limits on the development of ethnomusicology, in that ‘scientific’ typologization of Slovak folk songs, not regarded
as a politically sensitive research activity, was allowed to proliferate. This is still the basis of much research, along with organology, but now that the regime has fallen, open debate concerning cultural and political aspects of the performance of traditional music has been possible. Nevertheless, at the beginning of the 21st century, Slovak ethnomusicology is still preoccupied with the study of Slovak folk song collected from the end of the 19th century. A notable proponent is ethnomusicologist Alica Elscheková, who presents categories for classification including distribution, genre and function as well as song structure (Elscheková 2002). But despite the persistence of this relatively conservative approach to Slovak ethnomusicological research, an ethnographic dimension can be seen to have always been present, if not forefront. Urbancová also cites the later work of Soňa Burlasová, who further analyzed folk songs in terms of ‘genre’ rather than on their musical characteristics (Urbancová 2007: 151). This approach has laid the foundation for later ethnomusicological research of traditional song genres in Slovakia (152), not the least for Urbancová’s own prodigious, continuing, and highly respected research of yet untapped Slovak song genres.

Research more closely aligned with this thesis is more actively undertaken in the Institute of Ethnology of the SAV. Not only is there collaboration with the universities, there is also a European doctoral programme run in partnership with institutions abroad. This has meant the introduction of comparative research, and the inclusion of such topics for research as national myths and folklore manifestations “as a kind of social communication” (Bitusiková 2003: 97). Research into traditionally ethnological questions has meant recourse to social anthropological and even sociological theories and methodologies (97). Leščák, for example, asks “What causes the return to folk culture in our present cultural and social conditions, in this so-called Modern period? What has been the reason that the return to folk culture has caused its recognition and cultivation to reach the level of intensity that it has?” and suggests that a social-communication model may be appropriate for answering them (1992: 10). On the other hand, an anthropological approach has been taken by Eva Krekovičová, another ethnologist at the SAV. Her work, together with Gabriela Kiliánová, former director of that Institute, addresses the meaning of Slovak folklore more generally, including the evolution of staged folklore production as an important phenomenon (Krekovičová 1992). Given these trends in Slovak scholarship, questions concerning the significance of Slovak music folklore performed at home or abroad have relevance for that body of inquiry.
Theoretical considerations

Justification for taking a cross-disciplinary approach

This study attempts to contribute towards an ethnomusicological explanation of a genre of traditional music and dance practice of which Lúčnica is an iconic example. Theories and methodologies from the social sciences have been borrowed in order to do so. It thereby situates itself as an ethnomusicological inquiry that is within the domain of social theory, without which such a research question would not be possible (Rice 1997, 2010). Such borrowing is not without precedent; Foucault himself, in responding creatively to social problems such as madness, sexuality, Nazism, and Stalinism, crossed disciplinary boundaries between sociology, philosophy, history, and politics (Barth 1998). In the case of explaining a cultural performance such as Lúčnica’s, something besides thick description or musicological comparison, both already established in ethnomusicology, is needed. Especially because this study focuses on the interactive interface as a site for knowledge production, the social dimension, including the use of language in interaction, has need of sociological theory and method. For this reason, the over-arching theoretical model used as a starting point for analysis draws on the work of Foucault and Bourdieu. The injunction of the latter, to consider as many different kinds of data as possible is taken seriously, so that methodologies from social sciences are necessarily borrowed in order to analyze and interpret the data from ethnographic notes, an ethnographic interview, and the results from an audience survey.

Traditional music and dance folklore as dynamic process

The idea that cultural expressions can be seen as part of a socially dynamic process, in the sense of McDonald’s definition of tradition (1996), is not new. For example, key aspects of Foucault’s sociological theory can be invoked to support it, particularly those he developed in his commentary on the phenomenon of sexuality. The parallels are striking; while sexuality could be termed a “quite recent and banal notion” (Foucault 2000: 360), he argues that it is much more, just as this study views staged music folklore performance as more than an artificial or meaningless practice. In the same way as sexuality is shown by Foucault to be “a complete strategical situation in a particular society”, outside of which there is no meaning (1976: 93), the ubiquitous and increasing incidence of folklore productions in Slovakia, and its performance abroad, demonstrate
a similar kind of social dynamic, representing an intersection of important discursive strands for Slovaks and for their audiences. In fact, Lúčnica is demonstrably a highly institutionalized phenomenon, as indicated by statements concerning ethnic solidarity at home and abroad implied in its activities, as well as explicit statements contained in the rhetoric surrounding its very existence.

The role of institutions

The dynamism inherent in Foucault’s elaboration of the transformation of cultural expressions into energetic discourse can be traced in the evolution of staged music folklore in Slovakia. When he speaks of the discourse of sexuality “that gathered momentum from the eighteenth century onwards” (1976: 18), the “incitement” to speak about it through the mediaeval church confessional, and medicalized domains such as population control and health (20), he could be describing the processes through which folklore studies have evolved in Slovak scholarship, and through which music folklore performances have become valorized in the Slovak community. Likewise, music folklore production is exemplified when Foucault defines power-knowledge as:

[the multiplicity of force relations immanent in the sphere in which they operate and which constitute their own organization; as the process which, through ceaseless struggles and confrontations, transforms, strengthens or reverses them; as the support which these force relations find in one another, thus forming a chain or a system, or on the contrary, the disjunctions and contradictions which isolate them from one another; and lastly, as the strategies in which they take effect, whose general design or institutional crystallization is embodied in the state apparatus, in the formulation of the law, in the various social hegemonies” (1976: 92-93).

In the case of Slovak folkloristic expressions, “institutional crystallizations” can be identified not only in scientific and pedagogical institutions, but also in political and historical discourse. As early as 1764, the folklore of Slovak and other minorities within the Kingdom of Hungary was named as cultural currency, when an unknown speaker before the Hungarian parliament in Bratislava spoke of its crucial significance for “the fame and happiness” of the nation (Švehlák 1992: 15). Švehlák goes on to cite the more than ten thousand plays incorporating folk songs and dances mounted in the region by the Jesuits between 1601 and 1773. Cultural events and organizations continued to proliferate from the awakening of national consciousness in the late 18th century until World War I. They included the publication of folk poetry and songs, folkloric scenes in theatre productions, Slovak costume balls held in Budapest, the establishment and fight
for survival of *Matica slovenská*, the Slovaks’ most significant cultural organization under Hungarian domination, and the establishment of *Žívena* [Women of Life], a women’s guild responsible for collecting embroidery traditions, songs and folk customs (16-24). In the complex history of the evolution of folkloristic activities, Foucault’s idea of the mutual reinforcement of power and knowledge, with multiple resistances and sites of emergence, is demonstrated no less convincingly than in the case of the discourse of sexuality.

Foucault points out that the truth of sexuality for some cultures is produced within the domain of art rather than science (1976). In the case of Slovak folklore productions, both scientific and artistic discursive strands continue to constitute contemporary folklore culture. A critical point in their genealogy can be traced to the establishment of two branches of the Ministry of Culture in Prague and Bratislava within months of Czechoslovakia’s liberation by the Russians from the Nazi regime at the end of World War II. In a report on cultural policy for UNESCO published in 1970, updated in 1986, a formidable hierarchy of bureaucratic organizations is described, including regional, district and local committees, clubs, trade unions, institutes, youth organizations and groups, all funded by the state. Both the Czech and Slovak Academies of Sciences were answerable to their respective ministries. A huge investment in “the fundamental reconstruction of the institutional and professional basis of scientific research” into culture was made (Šimek & Dewetter 1986: 40). At the same time, however, the formal establishment in 1949 of the two national folklore troupes, Lúčnica and SLÚK, with full financial support from the Ministry of Culture guaranteed, planted folklore firmly in the artistic domain. Both Štefan Nosáľ and Juraj Kubánka, the best known octogenarian artistic director of SLÚK for a time, were accomplished dancers themselves, and are hailed as choreographers of the highest artistic level.

Lúčnica and its activities are also styled in artistic terms on the company website, the interface between Lúčnica and the rest of the world:

Slovak National Folkore Ballet
Slovakia – a picturesque country of fertile lowlands and rugged mountains lies in the heart of Europe, where the cultures of the West and East meet with the cultures of the sunny South and neighboring North of Europe. Rich in its natural beauties, historical and cultural sights, Slovakia is also very rich in national art and folk culture. National songs, music, dances and costumes are manifold and diverse in every region, each filled with poetry and dynamic temperament.
Lúčnica ballet called "Rolling Stones of folklore" or "Lucnica - Forever young". The representative of this cultural richness is the Slovak national folklore ballet – Lúčnica. Inspired by the national traditions, they create by their mastery and fantasy a folkloric show filled with a high level of artistic performance in capturing the originality of each dance. Lúčnica ballet spreads its art for more than 59 years in countries all around the world. More then 2000 young people have been members of Lúčnica ballet and the ensemble presented Slovak folklore in more then 60 countries on 5 continents including Broadway in New York and The Royal Opera House in London. Lúčnica has served as an official representative of Czechoslovakia and after the separation (1993) The Slovak Republic.

Dance ensemble
The dance ensemble is formed by young people who posses brilliant dance technique and spontaneous performance skills. In spite of the complexity of individual dances which are comparable with top sport mastery the dancers perform the dances with lightness and great enthusiasm. Pretty young girls and skilful dancers present dynamic and poetic dances and songs in colorful national costumes from different regions. (Lúčnica 2006)

Writing of the esoteric arts of sex, Foucault speaks of “an absolute mastery of the body, a singular bliss, obliviousness to time and limits, the elixir of life, the exile of death and its threats” (1976: 57-58), a description most evocative of the performances of these two troupes, whose members are invariably young, smiling, beautiful or handsome, and balletrically disciplined. Lúčnica’s mentioned programme titles such as Fifty Years of Youth and Beauty, and Beautiful and Young capture this message. Thus, to use Foucault’s formulation, within the artistic domain, the problematization of health is transformed into a maximization of life, and a discourse of youthful vitality.

Theorizing interaction

Foucault’s idea of “the multiplicity of force relations” already supports the idea that meaning is located at the interface between producers and receivers. His analysis of Velásquez’s painting, Las Meninas, serves further to illustrate the interaction between an artistic phenomenon, its producer, and its observer. The main points of Foucault’s analysis are readily applicable to a definition of Lúčnica’s performance as traditional practice: the painting is not a true reflection, but is doing discursive work, producing new knowledge; the meaning is never complete, but is constantly deferred; what is absent, including the painter, is as important as what is seen; and, most important, the meaning ascribed by the receiver, is essential to the discourse (as cited, Hall 1997: 58-60). So, in interpreting the meaning of traditional Slovak music and dance productions, the exploration of how producers, recipients and absent actors, past and present, mutually generate the manifested discourse through interaction is central.
Hall himself concurs with Foucault when he locates the production of the discourse at the point of reception of cultural representations. Although he gives semiotics a more prominent place in theorizing reception, he points out that Foucault, also, was indebted to the semiotic legacies of Saussure and Barthes (Hall 1997). But Hall’s explanation of the sending and reading of information is quite specific. He shows how song and dance folklore productions constitute currency for creating meaning, because he defines language broadly. It is “the actual sounds we make with our vocal chords, the images we make on light-sensitive paper with cameras, the marks we make with paint on canvas, the digital impulses we transmit electronically. Representation is a practice, a kind of ‘work’, which uses material objects and effects. But the meaning depends, not on the material quality of the sign, but on its symbolic function” (25-26, his emphasis).

The benefit of including this aspect of Hall’s explanation of cultural representation is that a performance such as Lúčnica’s is rich in symbolic objects and effects, which have the potential for being imbued with meaning as they are read by recipients. This means that recipients as well as producers are decisively in the spotlight when considering the meaning of cultural production.

Bourdieu’s formulation of society as being essentially an agonistic field also implies that discourse is produced at the point of reception (1977). His account of the struggle for domination involves the circular conversion of economic and cultural capital, and so the trajectory of that circle can only be propelled by Foucauldian struggles and confrontations. In every case, the site of meaning production will be an interactional interface. Furthermore, Bourdieu’s account serves to answer Leščák’s questions about the proliferation of music folklore performance in Slovakia. He explains that the space of social positions is at stake for the dominant and dominated, each holding larger or smaller amounts of economic or cultural capital. Further, the more that is “collectively at stake”, the more instances of synchronized group activity will be evident (1977:163). This explains the enormous investment in traditional performance culture by Slovak institutions and community organizations, which have fought against domination on behalf of their own ethnic identification on what has become their own soil, and who have been preparing for, then adapting to joining the European Union, which was achieved in May 2004. It also implies that for Slovaks the space of sociality being claimed in cultural performance is large. But in the case of a performance in Australia, the question arises as to how successful such a claim might be, and how much of it would be granted by the host audience. There are many answers to that question,
especially since a significant number of audience members for Lúčnica’s Melbourne performance belonged to the dominant group in Australian society, and significant numbers belonged neither to that group nor to the Slovak Australian group.

Out of the armchair

Great care must be taken, however, in theorizing what happens at the interactional interface. In searching for empirical evidence for claims about interactional dynamics, assumptions regarding the nature of cognitive objects inside the heads of participants in cultural manifestations must be brought to light. While Foucault explains knowledge production on a broad scale, and Bourdieu and Hall are concerned with dynamic processes for which observable phenomena are currency, including producers and recipients at the micro level as crucial to their explanations, the processes taking place at that level are by no means clear enough to indicate specific methodologies for examining them.

Bourdieu and Hall appeal specifically to what is observable at the micro-level in explaining human sociality and its discursive nature. Bourdieu’s theorizing of the mechanisms of the individual includes spatiality and body *hexit*, which communicates directly and physically (Bourdieu 1977). For his part, Hall defines language as including observable phenomena, thus concurring with this view. However, while the idea of body *hexit* communicating directly, and the idea of symbols functioning as language are seductive, and while both seek to bring the site of knowledge production out of the armchair of theory into the field where it can be empirically examined, the idea of meanings being passed from one individual to another is assumed in both models. On the other hand, Schegloff’s formulation of what is happening at the interactional interface is built around the notion of interaction itself.  

He points out that “direct interaction between persons is the primordial site of sociality” (Schegloff n.d.), and that knowledge and meaning are being produced at that interface, rather than in the armchair of theory. So, while the details of body *hexit*, and the specifics of symbols such as those abundantly displayed in such an event as a folkloristic performance are available for public observation, the process of knowledge production itself remains obscure in these formulations.

---

5 See pp. 31-38.
Examples from literature more closely aligned with ethnomusicological concerns can also be found, where the inscrutability of cognitive objects is not directly addressed. For example, Blacking’s platform for seeing cultural performances in terms of a communication model is weakened by means of the implication inherent in such a view that ‘something’ is being communicated (1992). He describes ethnomusicology as “taking into account the socially shared perceptions and definitions of music makers”, which “includes the perceptions of ethnomusicologists” (86). However, the danger of such a view lies in the fact that the assumption of cognitive objects, called “perceptions and definitions”, almost escapes notice. In my view, the problem with a communications models is inherent in the use of the concept itself. The term ‘communication’ presupposes the reification of meanings inside people’s heads, that such cognitive objects can be transmitted from one person to the other. Rather, by looking for observable evidence about processes, meaning can be seen as interactively produced. In such a view, “the socially shared perceptions and definitions of music makers” mentioned by Blacking (86) must be repositioned as resources available to participants about which, at best, inferences can be made, based on observable and reportable evidence. In fact, although statements by Blacking such as the following ring true, the same epistemological shift needs to be made: “Music has no effect on the body or consequences for social action unless its sounds and circumstances can be related to a coherent set of ideas about self and other and to bodily feelings” (89). Again, these ‘ideas’ are things about which only inferences can be made, and those inferences must be based on empirical observation of the interaction of participants.

Clinging to a communications model is also a source of confusion in statements made by Richard Bauman, folklorist, anthropologist and ethnomusicologist. He is right when he defines folklore performances as “socially constituted, rooted in social relationships and produced in the conduct of social life” (1992: xiii), but he does not specify whether that ‘production’ is done by individual actors, or recipients, or mutually by both. He is also right when he speaks of folklore performances’ “fundamental nature as instruments of social practice” (xiv). However, the definition with which he opens this editorial preface to a collection of articles with a common theme of cultural performance as communication hides the same problem caused by that concept, of reifying the ‘thing’ communicated. Folklore performances, he asserts, belong to a “set of communicative phenomena, forms of communicative display characterized by popular appeal and the interactional co-presence of participants” (xiii). This statement is doubly problematic,
because it pays lip-service to an interactional view, even using the term “interactional co-presence”, suggesting his cognizance of the work of Goffman and Sacks, both of whom had worked on the order of interaction itself. And yet, the two concepts are not necessarily compatible.

The difference between a communications model and an interactional one is subtle, but crucial if confusion is to be avoided in theorizing interaction, and if appropriate methodologies for exploring interaction are to be adopted.

**Design and logic of the research project**

Three different kinds of data were collected for analysis during Lúčnica’s visit to Melbourne in 2007. While the observational notes and the recorded interview constituted empirical data, the survey included statistical data, data requiring mathematical manipulation, resulting in a higher level of abstraction, rather than direct observation of phenomena (Kleining & Witt 2001: The heuristic potential section, para. 7). Based on this consideration, appropriate methodological tools were selected for each kind of data, and the design planned accordingly.

The first kind of data was collected by means of ethnographic notes taken at a welcome celebration and welcome for the troupe held at the Slovak Social Club on the evening of their arrival in Australia on 6 October. The interactive interface between the assembled patrons and Lúčnica members, and also interactions between individuals including myself were interpreted in terms of Erving Goffman’s formulation of the order of social interaction. In Chapter 4, data collection methods and interpretation of results is detailed and expanded, and provisional conclusions are drawn concerning the phenomenon of Lúčnica’s performance, and the efficacy of Goffman’s model for supporting them.

The second kind of data was gathered by conducting a recorded interview with the manager of the troupe, conducted during the welcome celebration at the Slovak Social Club on 6 October. It was transcribed and analyzed using the conventions of Conversation Analysis (CA), a methodological approach developed from the initial work of Harvey Sacks in the 1960s. In Chapter 5, excerpts from the transcript are

---

6 See Methodologies, pp. 32-42.
reproduced, and specific aspects of CA theory and methodology are applied to them. Again, conclusions concerning the topic are drawn, and the methodology evaluated.

The third body of data was generated by conducting an audience survey at Lúčnica’s performance on 8 October, two days after they were welcomed by the Slovak community at the Slovak Social Club. The survey project was subdivided into two phases. The first phase involved surveying the audience using a standardized questionnaire. The second part of the survey was conducted over the two months following the performance. It involved telephone interviews with willing participants identified in the first stage of the survey. The questionnaire for the telephone interviews included standardized questions and questions asking for comments. The statistical data from both phases were analyzed using relevant formulae, and interpretation of both sets of findings was made with reference to the qualitative data collected as comments, and contextual features. The audience survey is the subject of Chapter 6.

Contemporary sociologist, David Silverman (2006), acknowledges that the challenge to make qualitative research robust is formidable, but he emphatically claims that qualitative research can be at least as respectable as quantitative research by following certain principles. As to the use of a variety of kinds of data, he would endorse a statement made by another contemporary sociologist, Udo Kelle (2001), who urges researchers to make use of “the richness of differing methodological traditions” (2001 para. 43). This is also consistent with Bourdieu’s earlier injunction to adopt a position of “methodological polytheism”, meaning that methods of observation and verification such as tabulation and statistical analysis of survey data, historical accounts, classification procedures, and interviews and ethnographic notes from the field should be appropriate to particular kinds of research question (Wacquant 1998). In this regard, the design of the present study would satisfy Bourdieu and his methodological descendants.

However, the challenge to unify research that takes recourse to using various kinds of data, along with a different kind of methodology appropriate to each of them, must be met. While each is fraught with its unique epistemological and methodological issues, the coherency of the research project as a whole is guaranteed by a number of factors. First, to unify a multi-methodological study such as this in a logical manner, an important strategy is to refocus on the theoretical nature of the actual phenomenon
being examined (Kelle 2001). In this project, the studied phenomenon is theorized in terms of the interactive interface at sites closely relevant to the central phenomenon, Lúčnica’s performance of Slovak music folklore in Melbourne. All empirical and statistical data for the study of the phenomenon was collected at these sites.

Secondly, and more fundamentally, the definition of research itself must be invoked in order to integrate a multi-methodological study such as this one. It must be acknowledged that in science, the “most important discoveries were not achieved by deduction but by exploration” (Kleining & Witt 2001: A look at discoveries section, para 1). These authors, in providing a “modern history of heuristics” from the 17th century forward, in sociological and ethnographic fields of research, point out that the rules for investigating complex phenomena are not fixed, but change along the route to discovery, as varied empirical data is collected, and patterns are found to emerge (Heuristics as a method…section, paras. 12-21). Since exploration characterizes the methodologies used in this study, and the aim of this study is to gain a better understanding of the discursive practice of music folklore performance, the design of the study and methodologies used are consistent with this ‘discovery’ model.

While an heuristic approach may serve to enable a variety of data and methodologies specifically appropriate to them to be logically aligned along a trajectory of discovery, Bourdieu’s methodological advice on another score should be heeded. In addressing the problem of rigour in qualitative research, he insists on the notion of reflexivity, of turning the spotlight on the researcher, because knowledge produced will be inevitably affected by his/her participation, especially since intellectuals, according to him, are at the heart of “games of symbolic power” (Wacquant 1998: 225-6). This advice is particularly apt for research that emerges from participant observation, as an ethnographic study such as this one does. Wacquant cites Bourdieu as saying that to regard such research as “an interpretive puzzle” rather than “a mesh of practical tasks to be accomplished in real time and space” constitutes a “scholastic fallacy” (226). In other words, disregarding the role of the researcher would erase a key generator of meaning production.

As Kleining and Witt claim, the success of exploration is enhanced by the diversity of the data explored, but the problem of subjectivity remains for interpreting qualitative data (2001: The heuristic potential section, para. 6). It must be acknowledged that
subjectivity in qualitative research is inevitable, but in this respect, it is not so different from quantitative research strategies, which also involve the researcher’s subjectivity as decision-maker with respect to the potential fertility of questions and data-generating situations, as compiler of questionnaires, and interpreter of findings. In either case, another of Bourdieu’s injunctions can be invoked, the “relentless self-questioning of method itself” (Bourdieu 1977: 219), also urged by Silverman (2006: 294, 298). Heeding this advice has a double benefit. Not only is the subjectivity of the researcher, whether the designer of a quantitative project or an ethnographic field-worker, acknowledged and taken into account as a result, but the researcher actually provides a valuable unifying dynamic. As co-participant in producing the meanings discovered, the researcher has become part of the topic.

For these reasons, the order of presentation of data and findings from applying their respective methodologies, is chronological. Because the researcher as participant experienced the phases of the empirical research in that order, the exploration process, and therefore the design and logic of the research project, were shaped by an incremental understanding over time as data were collected.

Methodologies

*Ethnographic observations: Goffman’s interaction order*

For several reasons, Goffman’s approach was most productive for collecting, organizing and interpreting the ethnographic observations made at Lúčnica’s welcome celebration at the Slovak Social Club. First, despite his statements eschewing a theoretical bent, his thinking is infused with a theoretical framework by virtue of his definitions of terms alone, and this theory accords with the over-all theorization of cultural manifestations as discursive events. To begin, the occasion at the Slovak Social Club would be defined in terms of Goffman’s concept of primary framework, described in his *Frame Analysis* (1975). Central to the cosmology of this event, to use Goffman’s term, and therefore indicative of its primary framework (27), was the fact that Lúčnica was the central attraction, and that virtually all the gathered patrons were Slovak Australians. Thus, according to Goffman’s thinking, interactions situated within this occasion were “guided doings” and “accountable deeds” since they incorporated the “will, aim, and controlling effort” of respective actors (22-23). The building, also, would have been an
element of the primary framework for Goffman, embodying the same will and aims, guided and accountable in the same way as actions in progress.

Secondly, Goffman’s theoretical claim that sending and receiving mutually constitute the meaning of social events concurs with the theoretical and methodological emphasis on the interactive interface assumed for this study. Describing the conditions of face-to-face interaction in *Behavior in Public Places*, he emphatically states that “not only are the receiving and conveying of the naked and embodied kind, but each giver is himself a receiver, and each receiver is a giver” (1963: 15-16). Taken in isolation, this remark by Goffman seems like a simple statement of a communication model, but this is not so. The sites of interaction are generative of knowledge in Goffman’s view, just as interactions at sites observed at the club were seen as generating knowledge about the significance of Lúčnica’s presence, and imminent performance.

Thirdly, Goffman explicitly recommended including the researcher in the ambit of inquiry. In concluding *Frame Analysis*, he says: “The student, as well as his subjects, tends to take the framework of everyday life for granted”, and regarding a student’s insights, cites Merleau-Ponty’s remark concerning the importance of recognizing the impenetrability of the inner world of another, and the importance of applying these “references” to the self (1975: 574-6). But when Goffman talks about the depth of “sleep”, and the “false consciousness” of individuals with respect to what they are really doing, he falls into the same trap. In speaking of his wish “to sneak in and watch the way people snore” (14), he neglects to specify that such “sneaking” by him must be recognized as receptive action, too, and as a legitimate and crucial generating aspect of situational data. But despite this apparent inconsistency, arguably a hallmark of Goffman’s voluble writings, these remarks serve to align his method sufficiently with the approach taken for this event, where the researcher took the role of participant-observer.

Fourthly, and most importantly, Goffman’s approach is empirically grounded, and the data privileged are non-verbal, observable and reportable. Given that the notes taken were as non-inferential as possible, the efficacy of Goffman’s formulation of interactional phenomena could be put to the test. Only a brief summary of Goffman’s huge, taxonomic body of work concerning them is possible here. The first broad set of rules pertinent to the present study concerns unfocussed interactions, which occur by
virtue of individuals’ co-presence alone. Much information is exchanged, Goffman says, by means of body idiom, which includes dress, bearing, movement, position, sound level, gestures, facial decorations and emotional expression (1963: 33). In this, he concurs somewhat with Hall’s semiotic explanation of such phenomena. Goffman goes on to say that body idiom components are “well-designed to convey information about the actor’s social attributes, and about his conception of himself, of the others present, and of the setting” (34). One significant aspect of body idiom is that it is impossible for it to express nothing (35). Goffman also proposes the involvement idiom, with its own set of rules concerning allocation of involvement, including ways used by participants to mutually and smoothly organize the beginnings, proceedings and closings of their interactions (36-38). So, merely by being physically present, participants are giving and receiving information in observable ways.

In articulating the second broad category of interactional types, focussed interactions, Goffman begins to clarify the fifth main pillar of his approach, namely, the relationship between the individual and larger social structures. As Giddens points out, he was not primarily interested in groups per se, but in how individuals behave in group settings (1988: 256). Goffman himself explains:

One objective in dealing with these data is to describe the natural units of interaction built up from them, beginning with the littlest – for example, the fleeting facial move the individual can make in the game of expressing his alignment to what is happening – and ending with affairs such as week-long conferences, these being the interactional mastodons that push to the limit what can be called a social occasion. (1967: 1)

Further, in articulating the rules that govern the relationship between the individual and a larger gathering, Goffman’s statements of what is at stake for individuals become more explicit. For example, he explains how shared eye contact can express respect for an occasion, producing a collective definition of it, and heightening a sense of mutual investment in it (1963: 83-87, 92). In this way, participants are jointly showing deference to the main focus of an occasion, and to the occasion itself. To illustrate, he explains that in managing eye contact, “the individual is required to give visible evidence that he has not wholly given himself up to this main focus of attention. Some slight margin of self-command and self-possession will typically be required and exhibited” (1963: 60). This he calls civil inattention, which “constantly regulates the social intercourse of persons in our society” (1963: 84). This implies the co-operative nature in which individuals engage in managing the balance of focussed and unfocussed
interactions in order to protect the dignity of all “actors” (105-110). While Goffman includes this in his discussion of interactions that typically occur in an unfocussed situation such as an American street, Kendon points out that this kind of delicate management of eye contact is quite focussed (1988: 25). Especially in a multi-focussed gathering such as the welcome celebration for Lúčnica at the Slovak Social Club, it is reasonable to expect to find evidence of this kind of interaction, and to infer what is being expressed, and what is understood.

Some criticism has been leveled at Goffman’s body of work on the grounds of its questionable cross-cultural generalizability (Kendon 1988: 38), but the charge that Goffman was following the Durkheimian tradition where the social world is essentially moralized, goes some way to countering them (Giddens 1988; Kendon 1988). Waksler adds to the argument for the generalizability of Goffman’s findings on those grounds:

Clearly all societies possess face-to-face interaction, non-verbal conduct, and language and therefore Goffman’s ideas are potentially applicable to all societies – all human societies and perhaps some animal ones as well. Whether or not they are in fact applicable is an empty empirical problem awaiting resolution”. (1989: 11)

The case for generalizability, then, is open to be tested with evidence from instances of multi-focussed interactions such as those observed at the welcome celebration for Lúčnica.

Goffman’s thinking concerning the connection between the individual and institutions has been criticized on the grounds that he styles institutions as normative (Giddens 1988; Psathas 1995). Nevertheless, Giddens saves Goffman again from his apparent inconsistencies by citing, for example, Goffman’s concession to a “loose coupling” between interactional behaviour and larger social structures (Giddens 1988: 277). Goffman himself proposed that “we deal not so much with a network of rules that must be followed as with rules that must be taken into consideration, whether as something to follow or carefully to circumvent” (1963: 42). At the same time, he says that the point of expertly managing “subordinate involvements is to show respect for the occasion, and to feel constrained to do so” (42, italics added). Even in drawing a distinction between behaviour as being established “in regard” to institutions, as opposed to being determined by them, the individual cannot escape having to negotiate institutional constraints, and when rules of propriety are contravened, “the embarrassment can be
surprisingly deep” (248). However, he does qualify his remarks by saying that the situation is merely an opportunity rather than an entity in itself (1963: 196, italics added). Thus, he escapes absolute reification of institutions and institutional constraints, and in so doing, reinstates the freedom of the individual in managing them.

Goffman builds on his formulation of the freedom of individuals to choose in managing institutional ‘constraints’, as he calls them, to propose not only a mutually poietic relationship between them, but the morality involved in those choices (1967: 45). According to Giddens, Goffman also included “an awareness of identity” in his conceptualization of the self (1988: 259), and hence a stake in personal dignity and its intimate connection with the management of the rules of engagement in an institutional setting. Goffman’s enunciation of the self in Interaction Ritual expands the moral aspect of what is at stake for individuals in negotiating institutional requirements. At the same time as defining itself in terms of the flow of events in real time, the self is also engaged in a “ritual game” involving honour and diplomacy. Through “the judgmental contingencies of the situation”, the self can create distance for its own reasons, for example, to show the seriousness or authenticity of a particular role (1967: 31). The possession of a “sacred self” in this sense is generalized to include all interactants, who show “deference” and “demeanor” with respect to ceremonial occasions, of which the welcome celebration at the Slovak Social Club is a fitting example. In particular, rules pertaining to asymmetries in status can provide a means for participants to show not only propriety, but character, and appreciation of other participants (51-52). If both participants in an asymmetrical relationship honour an unspoken “pledge” to observe obligations and expectations, each can avoid being “discredited” (51). From failure to successfully negotiate such interactions, even greater risks can be incurred, such as instability, insubordination, and the threat of reallocation of power (60-61). This aspect of Goffman’s conceptualization of self pertains specifically to the interactions between the researcher and the Slovak participants at the Slovak Social Club, where different cultural and institutional assumptions were embodied, and where the morality of individuals and institutions was at stake.

Despite accusations that Goffman has failed to provide a convincing universal systematics for articulating social interactions, his observations can at least be tested empirically, as they were at the Slovak Social Club. His detailed analysis of the rules of interaction and the stakes for which they were managed means that evidence can be
sought for propositions about what Lúčnica’s visit meant, and explicated in terms of the language Goffman supplies. In particular, the proposition that honour, diplomacy, character, and the management of the risk of any shift in existing symmetries of power did constitute the discourse generated by the participants on that occasion can be formulated, to await comparison with findings from analysis of data from the second and third datasets of the research project.

*Ethnographic interview: Conversation Analysis*

For analysis of the ethnographic interview with Lúčnica’s manager, Conversation Analysis (CA), a methodology initiated and developed by Harvey Sacks, was co-opted as a way to study empirically how subjects interact systematically. The most basic difference between Goffman’s and Sacks’ approach, however, is that Sacks became fascinated with verbal interaction rather than non-verbal interaction, hence the adoption of his approach for analyzing the second piece of data for this study, a recorded interview with Lúčnica’s manager. The body of work which was to become known as CA was begun by Sacks as a doctoral student, whose advisory panel included Goffman for a time. Subsequently, Sacks lectured at UCLA, and shortly before his tragic death in 1975, published jointly with Emmanuel Schegloff and Gail Jefferson a seminal paper still cited in contemporary CA literature (Sacks et al. 1974). The study of language itself is not new, but has had a place in social science research since the 1920s, with relevance to several disciplines. Similarly, CA has become a lively sub-discipline with relevance to various branches of social science, including anthropology, sociology and linguistics.

CA has been criticized as being too formalistic, and although this charge could be made concerning early attempts to analyze speech-exchange systems, a CA approach is far from dry. At the outset, it must be understood that CA is concerned with the interactive aspect of language, not with the internal characteristics of specific language *per se*. Arguably, the ‘linguistic anthropology’ championed by researchers such as Dell Hymes (1974) attempts, for example, to typologize ‘stylistic modes’, becomes turgid beyond the point of usefulness. More moderate in their critical view, Bauman and Sherzer (1974) conceded, in the same year of publication as that of the mentioned paper by Sacks et al., that scholars with an “anthropological interest” in the ethnography of speaking had converged with sociologists who had become interested in “the socially situated use of language through a concern with the commonsense understandings that
enable participants to enter into and sustain social interaction”, going on to say that these scholars had carried this inquiry to a “finer” level than anthropologists (10). Regarding the examination of structural details such as how turns are organized in talk, Schegloff points out that “it may be by reference to just such formal features of the talk that action, and what is vernacularly termed ‘meaning’ are constituted and grasped in the first place” (1999: 418). So, far from being dry or formalistic, CA brings to life the local creation of meaning in context, and makes it available for analysis.

Although the most basic difference between the methodologies of Goffman and Sacks is the kind of data with which they sought to show the organizational skills involved in interactions, both considered that interaction was an ordered affair. Goffman mentioned turn-taking in conversation as being ordered subject to certain rules, but he privileged the non-verbal aspects of interaction, relying on vast numbers of anecdotal observations. Sacks, on the other hand, sought to enunciate such rules from detailed transcriptions of conversations. Sacks (1989) also showed that the methods employed in producing meaning by means of interaction in conversation can be observed, and described simply and scientifically. In this shared view, as Psathas states, both Goffman and Sacks put “situated co-presence” of individuals on the map (1995:10). Also, both men “marveled at the everyday skills through which particular appearances are maintained” (Silverman 1998: 33). However, whereas non-verbal interactions are made available for analysis by Goffman’s formulation, verbal interactions are made so by CA.

As well as being influenced by Goffman’s work, Sacks espoused basic concepts of Harold Garfinkel’s ethnomethodological approach (Heritage 1984; Hutchby & Wooffitt 1998; Silverman 2006). Besides being convinced of the orderly organization of interaction, Sacks shared with ethnomethodology an interest in the way in which a common understanding of the world was collaboratively created by participants (Heritage 1984; ten Have 2007). In this respect, CA differs fundamentally from discourse analysis (DA), despite various claims concerning convergence and divergence between the two analytical approaches. Whereas DA is concerned with the organization of rhetoric and argument in talk and texts, CA aims to identify the methods of interactants in organizing interaction through their exchange of language in real time (Silverman 2006). To underscore the difference, Schegloff points out that talk is never “the product of a single speaker and a single mind; the conversation-analytical angle of inquiry does not let go of the fact that speech-exchange systems are involved, in which
more than one co-participant is present and relevant to the talk, even when only one does the talking” (1982: 72).

There is also a crucial difference between the methodological tools of DA and CA. In order to access the data constituted by spoken discourse, rather than using texts or transcriptions of talk based on notes of a journalistic kind, sometimes relying on memory as in the case of DA, CA relies on an actual recording of the talk which can be replayed in order to generate a representation that can be refined and verified. Most importantly, the transcription convention developed by Gail Jefferson and still used in CA allows for non-lexical, non-syntactical phenomena to be available for analysis, enabling the methods by which a reciprocal understanding of the world is produced to be identified.

Regarding language, then as an ethno-method, means that in CA literature, the word ‘utterance’ is often used to designate what is in effect, language as action, for “utterances are not the syntactical entities that sentences are” (Ochs 1979: 67). Heritage sums up CA’s definition of language as action thus: “Understanding language is not, in the first instance, a matter of understanding sentences but of understanding actions – utterances – which are constructively interpreted as to their contexts” (1984: 139).

Furthermore, because the notion that “the actor himself is an irrational being” is rejected (Coulon 1995: 16), and because actors are seen to interpret social reality and “invent life in a process of permanent tinkering” (17), they can be held accountable for these actions. Regarding language as accountable action means that questions can then be sought by asking what was accomplished by whom, where and when, rather than asking what is true or false with respect to semantic content.

Using a CA approach is also consistent with assigning to the researcher a participating role rather than a scholastically fallacious one, to refer to Bourdieu’s warning. Sacks departed from mainstream sociology by insisting that assumed concepts sabotage the quest to discover the workings of the “machinery” of social behaviour, and that sociology’s task was to describe social phenomena as they happen, rather than using them “tacitly” as a resource (as cited, Silverman 1998: 46). Contemporary conversation analyst, Paul ten Have, explains: “What CA tries to do is to explicate the inherent theories-in-use of members’ practices as lived orders, rather than trying to order the world externally by applying a set of traditionally available concepts, or invented
35

variations thereof” (ten Have 2007: 31). Thus, any participant’s theoretical assumptions and how they are ‘lived’ become part of the topic. The status of the researcher is therefore implicated, and must be transformed (Silverman 2006; ten Have 2007). Therefore, taking a CA approach to analysing a recorded interview with Lúčnica’s troupe manager meant that the researcher’s identity and methods as a co-producer of meaning, by means of the interview were included.

Just as Goffman collected a vast number of observations on which he based his findings, Sacks, Schegloff and Jefferson used data from a vast number of recordings of everyday conversations on which to base theirs, providing a serious systematics of verbal interaction. They identified the following ‘grossly apparent features’ of ordinary conversation, still held to be true in contemporary CA:

1. Overwhelmingly, speaker change recurs.
2. Overwhelmingly, one person speaks at a time.
3. Instances of overlapping talk are common but brief.
4. Overwhelmingly, there is either no gap or overlap, or slight gap or overlap.
5. Turn order is not fixed.
6. Turn size is not fixed.
7. Length of conversation is not fixed.
8. What is said is not fixed.
9. Relative distribution of turns is not fixed.
10. The number of parties to the talk can change.
11. Talk can be continuous or not.
12. Turn-allocation techniques are used. The current speaker can select the next speaker, or parties may self-select, including the current speaker.
13. Turn-construction units vary in size; they can be one word long, or sentential.
14. There are ways available for repairs for turn-taking errors. (Sacks et al. 1974: 700)

Conversation analysts hold to the view that regardless of the kind of talk enacted, these features exert a systemic pressure for which evidence can be readily discovered.

Of course, in reality, all does not proceed smoothly in verbal exchange as per the features listed above. In establishing mutual understanding in communication, participants elaborate, re-design questions, and repair misunderstandings. But CA practitioners hold to the view that these conversational phenomena, too, are produced by the participants locally, and are not the product of a theoretical, prefabricated concept of what that order should be, or generally is thought to be. The production of that order can actually be discovered, described and analyzed (Psathas 1995). How participants produce order can be identified by analyzing how sequences are organized, how repairs are achieved, and turns designed by participants (Silverman 2006; ten Have 2007).
More detail concerning these structures of interaction is given in Chapter 5, where excerpts from the transcript of the interview are analyzed.

Not only does CA provide tools for explaining the “action and interactional import of particular episodes of conduct” (Schegloff 1999: 416, his emphasis), it includes an “enriched sense of context” (Drew & Heritage 1992: 16). This perspective is similar to that of Goffman, where larger social structures are built from interactions between people at the micro-level. However, whereas Goffman was somewhat ambiguous concerning the existence of a complex of signifying normative structures in the wider world, within which individuals interact at the micro-level, CA takes an unequivocal stance. From a CA perspective, the institution is not an “ontological entity” which shapes the behaviour of individuals by imposing norms (Psathas 1995: 54-55). It is defined as a characteristic speech-exchange system built up incrementally by participants as they orienting to the rules embodied in wider social structures, rather than having to follow them. Whereas Goffman also used the idea that social structures such as institutions are ‘built up’ from micro-social interactions, CA articulates the building process in detail, in terms of observable phenomena.

Since 1974, CA practitioners have accumulated a considerable body of research into institutional talk of various kinds, including interviews. While the ‘grossly apparent features’ of ordinary talk-in-interaction are context-free, in institutional talk, participants can be seen to be simultaneously orienting to context as they negotiate the systemic pressures of ordinary talk. In this way, characteristic institutional speech-exchange systems are produced which define context independently of the physical setting (Drew & Heritage 1992). The interview presented as data for this study, for example, was held in the passenger seats of a mini-van. In fact, participants in an institutional context may be using features of the turn-taking system as a resource, and modifying them in such a way as to “display and realize” a particular set of modifications, or “fingerprint”, which differentiates them from those of another institution. In the case of institutional talk, such as interviews,

(1)to the extent that the parties confine their conduct within the framework of some distinctive ‘formal’ institutional turn-taking system, other systematic differences from ordinary conversation tend to emerge. These differences commonly involve specific reductions of the range of options and opportunities for action that are characteristic in conversation, and they often involve specializations and respecifications of the interactional functions of the activities that remain. (Heritage & Greatbatch 1991: 95-6)
For example, these authors, using news interviews as data, are able to show how the longer turn size of news interviews is produced collaboratively by both interviewer and interviewee. In the case of the interview used as data for this inquiry into the discourse of Slovak music folklore production, a similar kind of longer turn management was identified, typical of longer accounts elicited and expected in such semi-structured, ‘information gathering’ interviews.

Creation of context is achieved because interview participants are “always embedded in and selectively and artfully draw upon broader institutional contexts” (as cited, Silverman 2006: 145). Schegloff explains that examination of such talk gives “a lively sense of the occasions on which who the parties are, relative to one another, seems to matter, and matter to them. And these include senses of ‘who they are’ that connect directly to what is ordinarily meant by ‘social structure’ – their relative status, the power they differentially can command, the group affiliations they display or can readily have attributed to them…” such as occupation, status, other categories of society (as cited, Drew and Heritage 1992: 105-6). They are embodying the social structure for each other, displaying the same, and showing that they understand the displays. Furthermore, by “embodying for one another the relevancies of the interaction” participants in institutional talk are reproducing that social structure (Schegloff 1991; 1992). In fact, in the course of accomplishing such institutional talk, people are “actively building the character of the states of affairs in the world to which they are referring” (Hutchby & Wooffitt 1998: 228).

In using the concept of ‘institutional context’, then, care must be taken to avoid its reification. From a CA perspective, participants in institutional talk are orienting to features of relevant institutions, using them as “enabling conditions for particular kinds of activities”, thus recreating institutional context, and either maintaining or altering it through their local interaction (Psathas 1995: 54-55). Furthermore, participants in institutional contexts can be seen to be holding each other accountable for knowing who they are and what the interaction is about (Schegloff 1992; Wilson 1991). They are not designing their actions for just anyone, but are addressing a particular person and have reasons for interacting. They are orienting to their own identity and biography, as well as what the occasion is about, and its connection to the past and the projected future (Hutchby & Wooffitt 1998; Wilson 1991). Such a definition of interaction means that how participants interact is identical with the knowledge produced.
But the practical achievement of a recognizable ethnographic interview was only one aspect of the work achieved at the Slovak Social Club. Similar to participants in interaction in Goffman’s view, moral work is being done, by means of accounts elicited and given that blame nobody, and preserve the integrity of participants and of the contextual social world. They are also doing local identity work, and telling cultural stories, all of which are poietic moral tasks (Drew & Heritage 1992). Nevertheless, in institutional talk, opportunities for such work are not necessarily equally available to participants. Ian Hutchby cites Sacks as having noticed that power struggles over rights and obligations regarding accountability are pervasive in certain forms of talk (Sacks 1989; Hutchby 1999). Referring to the fact that Foucault was concerned with the pervasiveness of power in “larger-scale historical trajectories”, Hutchby expands the possibilities for locating evidence of power: “I have located that form of power in some of the smallest details of social life; the relationship between turns at talk-in-interaction”, he writes, and refers to “the interactional power that threads through the course and trajectory of an argument” (587). In exploring arguments on a British talk show, for example, he shows how the participants design and organize their interactions in order to create a relationship “where discourse strategies of greater or lesser power are differentially available to each of them” (Hutchby 1999: 576). The resulting “agenda contest” can be traced through identifying how turns are organized in the struggle to control what may be said or not in the interview (1999: 580). While the type of interview he is discussing contains instances of overt argument, the ethnographic interview analyzed in this study bears some similarities. It will be shown in Chapter 5 that the interviewer and the interviewee were, indeed, engaged in a struggle over the agenda of the interview. The strategies for negotiating the struggle, furthermore, were inseparable from what meaning was produced, because the particular strategies were so rich in inference.

The over-arching view expressed by both Bourdieu and Foucault that the social field is agonistic is consistent with Hutchby’s claims, but CA adds the benefit that the focus of research can reach beyond the ‘armchair’ of theory to the micro-level where empirical evidence can be found. Secondly, CA can demonstrate a bias towards the avoidance of conflict, and “the maintenance of bonds of solidarity between actors” in many aspects of institutional talk (Heritage 1984: 265). On the one hand, power is invariably resisted in Foucault’s terms, and this resistance can be seen to be the case upon close analysis of interactions between individuals (Hutchby 1999). On the other hand, through the use of
mutually understood conversational resources, both the interplay between the need to maintain affilative understandings, and the obligation to account for departures from it, can be identified. While disaffiliative actions are common, interactants have an obligation to account for the departure from affiliation, and it is just in these accounts that the “strongly institutionalized” organization of interaction can be found (Heritage 1984: 267). When Foucault speaks of the strategies of “institutional crystallization”, and refers to “the various social hegemonies” (1976: 92-93), he may be right, but analysis of the organizational details of the interview with Lúčnica’s manager enabled empirical verification of his claims, and showed how Foucault’s institutions and hegemonies were reproduced by the local, spoken interaction that took place.

**Audience survey: Combining qualitative and quantitative methods**

To reiterate, the audience survey at Lúčnica’s performance at Hamer Hall was carried out as follows. First, the items on the questionnaire used in the initial approach to audience members were chosen with reference to previous immersion in the field, and theoretical literature. Results concerning ethnic breakdown of the audience were analyzed using appropriate statistical formulae. This phase of the survey was also used to generate a population for telephone interviews conducted over the following two months. The telephone interviews consisted of a questionnaire, some of whose questions generated results amenable to statistical analysis, and some of which were invitations to comment in an unstructured way. This format closely resembles several studies combining qualitative and quantitative methods (Kelle 2001; Silverman: 2006). As examples from these authors show, the generation of both qualitative and quantitative data allows for wider and deeper understanding as cross-references are made from one to the other.

Debates about the merits and limitations of qualitative and quantitative methods are necessarily concerned with the problem of validity. While quantitative research has merit where a particular dataset is very large, or in a controlled experimental situation, in both of which cases correlations between variables can be extracted, validity can be more or less established. However, a quantitative approach can “conceal as well as reveal basic social processes” (Silverman 2006: 43). One basic problem with surveys, for example, concerns ‘standardization’, since it wrongly assumes that the stability of words is equivalent to stability of meaning (Suchman & Jordan 1990). Validity is by no
means guaranteed simply because the same words are spoken across a variety of respondents. It can actually be enhanced by regarding the survey interview not as part of a neutral instrument, but as an “interactional event”, and recognizing that a degree of intersubjectivity was “essential to successful communication” (232-3). With such recognition, the resources available to both interviewer and interviewee in ordinary conversation, such as the freedom to re-design questions, or repair misunderstandings, proscribed in a standardized survey, can be seen as actually establishing relevance, hence increasing validity (237-8). Further, there are no grounds for predicting that all relevant questions have been thought of, and hence, validity of qualitative results is compromised (232). Silverman is right when he asserts that the dichotomy between qualitative and quantitative methodologies may be questionable.

Besides limiting the usefulness of questions as a tool in a ‘standardized’ survey, assumptions on the part of the quantitative researcher can also diminish validity of interpretation of statistical results because “the very common-sense processes of reasoning that science tries to avoid” are often involved (Silverman 2006: 42). Kelle also warns against the “limitations of a commonsense heuristic”, especially in the case of studying foreign cultures or sub-cultures, which has implications for compilation of research questions and interpretation (Kelle 2001: para. 41). However, in this study, immersion by the researcher in the studied field minimized this potential problem. Silverman pinpoints the problems that quantitative researchers can have in forming “operational definitions” without such immersion, in the same way as qualitative researchers (Silverman 2006: 42). Without immersion in the field, any researcher risks making invalid assumptions about the actions of subjects in the studied field, decreasing the likelihood of shared understandings in such an interactional event as a survey interview (Kelle 2001; Silverman 2006). In the present study, the researcher’s five years of living and participating in the community in a Slovak town, and subsequent immersion during six months of field-work in Slovakia, contributed significantly to an understanding of Slovak culture and history. Similarly, a lifetime in Australian society informed understanding of the context for the event. Each phase of the research was informed by these immersions, and intersubjectivity in executing the survey interviews was more easily established. Consequently, the validity of interpretations was enhanced.

The challenge to unify a multi-methodological study has been discussed, and the mentioned strategy of refocussing on the theoretical nature of the actual phenomenon
being examined equally applies here (Kelle 2001). Because the studied phenomenon, Lúčnica’s performance for a foreign audience, has been theorized in terms of social interaction, the results from both the qualitative and quantitative data collected by surveying the audience can be logically integrated. Unification can be helped by having an over-all heuristic trajectory, but the findings from each component need to be compared in some way. In the case of the audience survey, the results were found to be complementary. Neither the quantitative data nor the qualitative data alone would have revealed important aspects of the meaning of the event, as will be shown in Chapter 6. Furthermore, the notion of complementarity has been carried through to comparison of results from all three datasets collected and analysed with their various methodologies for this study, as they were carried out in chronological sequence. The rhetoric about Lúčnica was able to be circumvented, and findings that appeared counter-intuitive were able to be explained by interpreting them with reference to other findings, as will be shown. In this way, a more complete understanding of Lúčnica’s significance for Slovaks, and of what this kind of performance meant for members of the Australian community, was achieved.

**Thesis overview**

Chapter 2, ‘The discourse of history’, is devoted to the histories and cultures of two countries, Slovakia and Australia, and the ways in which their very different histories have informed their relationships with their music traditions. Differences in the significance of traditional music for Slovaks and Australians are discussed and compared, since this thesis begins by assuming the likelihood that expressions of music culture are informed by these discourses and reproduced interactively. The chapter summarizes how Slovaks imagine their relationship to their land, language and religion, to nationality, to their Czech ‘brothers’, to their history as a Nazi state, to their recent past as a member of the Soviet Bloc, and to their newly acquired membership of the European Union. The chapter also gives an overview of Australian history from the perspective of immigration policy, especially of the evolution and current status of multicultural ideology. The relevance of this is that from the point of view of the dominant Anglo Australian culture, Lúčnica’s performance was found to be an example of ‘ethnic’ performance.
Chapter 3, ‘Overview of Slovak musical life’, gives a broad overview of contemporary musical life in Slovakia, but in documenting this, the historical evolution of the genres of classical music and jazz, choral music, popular music, world music and traditional music folklore performance, and what each means for the defining discourse of each are compared. The aim is to give a picture not only of the place of music folklore for Slovaks in relation to musical life generally, but also to show how Slovak folklore proponents have weathered the struggles for survival and legitimation which mark Slovak history, including the manipulation of music culture during the 45 years of communism. Evidence is shown which demonstrates the Slovaks’ adaptation in many cases from dependence on the state for promotion and funding of music folklore activities to success with an entrepreneurial approach in a democratic state since the dissolution of the Soviet Bloc in 1989.

The next three chapters present evidence from the data generated at three sites during the event in question, the visit of Lúcnica to Melbourne in October 2007, to show what this performance meant to performers and recipients, and how they displayed their understanding. The data for Chapter 4, ‘Ethnographic account’, takes the form of observational notes taken during the welcome celebration for the troupe at the Slovak Social Club, two days before the scheduled performance at Hamer Hall. The manager, the dancers and part of the instrumental group, were in attendance, as well as club patrons from the Melbourne Slovak community. The interactions described in the notes are analyzed and interpreted in terms of Goffman’s model for how interactions are ordered in the context of such social occasions. The findings are evaluated on two fronts: understanding of the significance of Lúčnica for the Slovak patrons, and an appraisal of the effectiveness of Goffman’s model.

The data for Chapter 5, ‘Ethnographic interview’, consists of a recording of an interview with the manager of the troupe held during the celebration evening at the Club. The recording and a transcript of the whole interview are supplied, with selected excerpts used within the chapter to show aspects of the interaction. CA principles are applied to excerpts to show how understanding of the meaning of Lúčnica for its manager and for me as a foreigner and a researcher is displayed and recreated by the interaction itself. Again, understanding gained was not only about the significance of

---

7 See Appendix III: Transcription of ethnographic interview; Appendix IV: CD of ethnographic interview
this performance of Slovak music folklore, but also about the effectiveness of this methodological approach to analyzing interviews as data.

Chapter 6, ‘Audience survey’, provides a detailed description of how the survey was prepared and carried out. The chapter includes a description of the concert, but this is regarded as more than essential background information. As has been discussed, the actualities of the performance are crucial to interpretation of the results of statistical analysis of survey findings. Similarly with comments collected from the telephone interviews conducted with the population generated in the first phase of the survey, aspects of the performance were used to generate quantitative data, and interpreted in relation to unstructured comments elicited. In this way, not only elucidation of the research question was achieved, but also, the merits of using multiple methodologies could be evaluated.

The final chapter, ‘Conclusions’, presents the findings concerning what this performance meant, and evaluates the various methodological approaches used to analyze different kinds of data collected. Although claims that Lúčnica’s performance is an example of a genre of traditional music and dance folklore which can be negatively labeled as ‘folkloristic’ or ‘sanitized’, evidence was found to suggest otherwise. Its significance, however, was not something to be reified, but meant different things to different recipients. In general, however, for the Slovaks who participated in Lúčnica’s visit in October 2007, this was a deeply significant event by which they recreated themselves and their ethnic pride through traditional practice. For non-Slovaks, it had a multitude of meanings, but for the dominant Anglo Australians present, it was also traditional practice, in a sense. For them that practice involved nostalgia for missing outward signs of unity, envy for an ethnic group which does possess them, satisfaction in participating in an exotic entertainment event, bound up together with an over-all benign affirmation of the tiny Slovak Australian community represented, and the small, distant country from which they came.
Chapter 2: The discourse of history

Background

Because the heart of this thesis is the interactive interface between producers and receivers of Slovak music folklore in an Australian setting, it is vital to understand how members of each nation think of themselves ethnically. At the outset, relative ignorance concerning Slovakia in the Australian community must be acknowledged. But in Slovak schools, Slovak history is taught from elementary school through to high school, powerfully informing the way Slovaks imagine themselves (Bakke 1999). For both reasons, a comprehensive summary of the development of the Slovak nation, and hence, the idea of Slovak ethnicity, is warranted. However, caution has been exercised in selecting sources. As political theorist Stefan Auer observes, “there has been a growing consensus within contemporary Slovak historiography that those nationalist accounts of Slovak history which assume that the nation is eternal, or at least that its history goes back to time immemorial, must be replaced with more academically sound approaches” (2004: 135). The following summary of events from scholarly sources, however, includes discussion of some of those not-so-sound sources referred to by Auer, as these works themselves are regarded as manifestations of the Slovaks’ drive to consolidate their ethnicity and their nation.

The Slovaks: How do they imagine themselves?

Ancient origins: Ideas of autochthony and civilization

Belonging to the Indo-European language group, modern Slavs are generally divided broadly into western, eastern and southern groups. Czechs and Slovaks belong in the western group, along with Moravians, Poles and Wends (Sorbs). Scholarly research has revealed no clear evidence concerning Slavic origins before the Great Migrations of 500-600 AD (Bakke 1999). Nevertheless, constructions of ancient Slavic history have been built on previous “invention, imagining and labeling by Byzantine authors” (Curta 2001: 349). More recent attempts to fabricate Slavic history have continued the tradition of drawing upon the Russian Primary Chronicle, written in 1113 AD by Nestor, a Kievian monk. It has been used to support a recent ‘history’ of the Slavs, claiming that

---

8 Western Slavic minority inhabiting Eastern Germany, between the Oder and Elbe Rivers.
they have been literate since “at least 1800 BC”, and have evolved from a 20,000 year-old highly developed democratic civilization located in the once fertile land of Hyperborea near the North Pole (Harris 2004: 1). Harris describes the splitting of the ancient Slavs into ten tribes after migrating to the Ural plain, portraying them as fair, forgiving of enemies, and generally more admirable, even nobler, than non-Slavic tribes. But this account also appeals to the authority of the Book of Veles, the existence of which, let alone the content, cannot be verified. Harris has translated the Runic script from a photocopy of a Xerox copy of fragments of wooden planks from the Book of Veles, to further support her case. Another example of fanciful historical construction based on Nestor’s chronicle is S. Lesnoy’s ten-volume work, A True History of the “Russ”, a work whose lack of scholastic rigour has been unequivocally exposed (Gapanovich 1961). Another example of confabulation is the ‘discovery’ by Czech scholars in 1817 and 1818 respectively, of the Královédvorský and Zelenohorský documents, referred to by scholars as the RKZ documents. They consisted of ‘mediaeval’ poetry depicting the Slavs, conflated her with the Czechs, as peace-loving, loyal, culturally advanced, and valorizing of brotherhood and equality (Agnew 2003), virtues remarkably similar to those attributed to the ancient Slavs by Harris and Lesnoy.

However, the authority of the Russian Primary Chronicle itself is suspect. Linguistic and historical research done at Harvard University shows that it is composite and corrupted (Lunt 1988). With regard to the Slavs having a highly developed literary heritage, Lunt denies clear evidence of a written Slavonic language before 1015 AD. But belief in an ancient literary and democratic tradition has been characteristic of much Slovak historiography, and echoes of such rhetorical claims are central to Slovak identity. Speaking of the RKZ documents, ethnologist Andrew Lass sees such inventions of history as characteristically fuelled by the quest by an ethnic group to acquire a “sense of history”, and the success of a nationalist movement depending on such “meaning-fulfilling acts” (1988: 456). Lass is referring to the use of the ‘folk origins’ of the RKZ documents having been used as the basis for Czech cultural expressions in the visual and performing arts and in literature throughout the 19th century.

A specifically Slovak example of myth making was furnished by a Slovak American historian in the mid 1950s, Stephen Palickar. His stated aim in writing Slovakian Culture was to represent “a subject about which the world has no information
whatever in the English language” (1954: xiv). He conflates ‘Slavic’ and ‘Slovak’ to show that the Slovaks are the “[f]irst of the so-called Slavic races to be heard of in history” (10). He attributes to the Slovaks a list of virtues, again remarkably similar to those claimed for the ancient Slavs in the above examples. Nevertheless, he concedes the paucity of evidence: “Every attempt to unravel the remote origin of the Slovak people, like that of the whole of mankind, has been nugatory” (1). Palickar agrees that the earliest sources are the aforementioned Byzantine historians, but he asserts that although the names Callipedoe, Halisones, Scythians, Vinidai, and Sclavi were “disfigured” by these historians, they were all ancestors of the Slovaks (2). He claims that they were collectively known as Slavi, and attributes King Louis of Germany as having “reconstructed the name into its present form”, that is, Slovaks, in 860 AD (3). This enables him to conceptualize present-day Slovaks as being “aborigines of the land they occupy” (1). However, the name Slovak appeared for the first time in 1485, and its exact meaning remained obscure until the 18th century (Bakke 1999). It is doubtful that anything like a “Slovak consciousness” was strong even in medieval times, although it may have been evolving in some elite circles (87). Palickar’s equation of the term Slavic with the name Slovak is not entirely without precedent, however. According to Bakke, from the middle of the 17th century “the Slavs of Hungary” were specifically mentioned for the first time, and the terms were interchangeably used, at least in the Central European context (1999: 98). Nevertheless, historiography such as Palickar’s has informed Slovak consciousness to the point where the idea of autochthony is close to the heart of Slovak ethnicity.

Although Slavic tribes appear to have moved into the Carpathian basin from east of the Carpathian-Baltic area around the 5th century, perhaps already divided into western, southern and eastern groups, there is no historical record of any further differentiation of the Western Slavs into Czechs or Slovaks (Bakke 1999). But the first account of a Western Slav state describes the uniting of tribes in 658 AD under Samo, a Frankish merchant, against an attack by the non-Slavic Avars, but it disintegrated after his death. No more is recorded concerning a Western Slavic state until the Great Moravian Empire, centralized in the region incorporating present-day Moravia, the modern Czech Republic’s eastern province, and western Slovakia. Great Moravia lasted only seventy years; its first king, Mojmir I was instated around 830 AD, followed by Rastislav (846-870 AD), Svätopluk (870-894 AD), and briefly, Mojmir II. Christianity had been introduced to the region by missionaries in the reign of Mojmir I, but Rastislav, after
vainly entreating the Roman pope, persuaded the Byzantine pope, Michael III, to send the bi-lingual monks Constantine (later known as Cyril) and Methodius to preach the gospel in the Slavic tongue rather than in Latin. Their legacy included the emergence of written liturgical language, education of the clergy and the ensuing flourishing of culture, which largely explains the significance of Great Moravia for Western Slavs, and why it is remembered today with nostalgic pride by both Czechs and Slovaks.

Under Svatopluk, Great Moravia reached its furthest extent. In addition to present-day Czech Republic and Slovakia, it included part of southern Poland, part of the Hungarian plain, and the Tyrol region. However, Great Moravia’s dynastic and church organizations under Mojmir II were lost as a result of defeat by the combined forces of Bohemia, Germany and Hungary in 907 AD. The Bohemian centre of culture was relocated westward towards Austria, and the Slavs of the eastern part of Moravia fell under direct Hungarian rule. For over a millennium, until 1918 when Czechoslovakia was formed, the Czech and Slovak centres of administration and culture developed separately (Bakke 1999). In tracing these disparate histories, Bakke makes a powerful argument for explaining the distinction between the ethnic imagination of Czechs and Slovaks, despite their common Slavic bonds.

Although Greek Catholic Christianity was established in Great Moravia by the ninth century, the majority of Slovaks are Roman Catholic today. The decision to introduce the Slavonic language to the clergy of Great Moravia under the auspices of Pope Michael III was reversed by a joint papal decision after the death of the monk Methodius in 885 AD, and the Latin liturgy was reintroduced. Subsequently, Roman Catholicism became the official religion of the Empire rather than the Byzantine version. Statistics from the Population and Housing Census 2001 from the Slovak Bureau of Statistics reveal that currently, almost 69 percent of Slovaks remain Roman Catholic, with a mere 4 percent declaring Greek Catholic affiliation. Almost 7 percent of Slovaks are Lutheran, with 13 percent declaring no church affiliation. The contrast between this preponderance of religious affiliation and that in the Czech Republic, where 59 percent declare no church affiliation, is remarkable, articulating a fundamental difference in how the respective national groups imagine themselves. The decline of the Roman Catholic religion in the social fabric of the Czechs was partly due to the successful Protestant movement of the 15th century in the Czech lands, led by Czech priest, Jan Hus. The majority of Slovaks, on the other hand, remained affiliated with
Habsburg Catholicism. A continuing affiliation with the Roman church was strengthened by subsequent activity of the Jesuits in the territories inhabited by Slovaks, which also resulted in the growth of a literate elite amongst them (Bakke 1999). So, despite common claims to Great Moravia as their heritage, Czechs and Slovaks define themselves differently with respect to their religions today.

*The mountains: Ideas of awe, pride and gratitude*

Modern Slovakia has a national anthem, and a so-called national hymn, the texts of which are shown in Figures 2 and 3. In each of them, veneration of the mountains is the central image. In the first, the command for Slovakia to wake up comes from the mountains, and in the second, the protection of the mountains is acknowledged with ‘thankful tears’. *Aká si mi krasna* would have been preferred by the people of Slovakia as their national anthem, but they were not given a choice. However, it is the most frequently sung composition in the Slovak choral repertoire, and is sung *en masse* by choirs to conclude every choral festival. Its text references the history known by Slovaks, and their debt to the mountains for their survival, and is sung in that spirit, in a romantic, emotional style.

After the fall of Great Moravia, Hungarians had moved northwards, so that by the 12th century, the northern region of Greater Hungary had become its economic centre, mainly due to the mining of gold, silver and copper, and the establishment of the first mint. Many Hungarian nobles set up smaller states within Greater Hungary, and their rule marked the development of urban centres, which were probably not inhabited predominantly by Slovaks, who comprised the surrounding peasantry, remaining “dependent, illiterate and non-mobile” (Bakke 1999: 87). Although the mythical nature of any claims to a Slovak national consciousness existing at this time is confirmed by the fact that the lingua franca was Latin, and no texts in the local language before the 14th and 15th centuries have been found (85), the peasant Slovak population did become concentrated in the mountains to the north, which constitute present-day Slovakia. However, despite this region being an important centre of mediaeval Central European civilization, its wealth and culture did not belong to the Slovaks. On the contrary, their exclusion from the economic and cultural benefits of civilization of the
### Figure 2

**The Slovak National Anthem**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Slovak</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>Nad Tatrou sa blýska</em></td>
<td>Lightning over the Tatras</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Nad Tatrou sa blýska, hromy divo bijú.</em></td>
<td>There’s lightning over the Tatras, thunderclaps wildly beat.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Zastavme ich, bratia, ved’ sa ony stratia,</em></td>
<td>Let us stop them, brothers, they will pass away,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Slovaci ožijú.</em></td>
<td>Slovaks will live again.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>To Slovensko naše posiaľ tvrdo spalo.</em></td>
<td>That Slovakia of ours has been asleep so far.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Ale blesky hromu vzbudzujú ho k tomu,</em></td>
<td>But the thunder and lightning is arousing it,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>aby sa prebralo.</em></td>
<td>so that it will awaken.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Figure 3

**The Slovak National Hymn**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Slovak</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>Aká si mi krásna</em></td>
<td>How beautiful you are to me</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Aká si mi krásna,</em></td>
<td>How beautiful you are to me,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>ty rodná zem moja!</em></td>
<td>my native land.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Krásne i tie hory,</em></td>
<td>Beautiful are the mountains,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>kol teba čo stoja.</em></td>
<td>Standing all around you.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Krásne je i nebo,</em></td>
<td>And beautiful is the sky,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>nad tými horami.</em></td>
<td>high above you.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Žehnám ťa, vitam ťa vďačnými slzami.</em></td>
<td>I worship you, I greet you with grateful tears.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
times was reinforced.

Records of the following events fuel the familiar rhetoric of the brutal disinheriance of Slovaks from times past, and sustain the suspicion that the growth of their traditional music folklore practices is defensive ethnicity in progress. Retreat by Slovaks into the mountainous north of the territory of what had become Greater Hungary was further precipitated by resistance to the expansion of the Ottoman Empire in the early 16th century. The infrastructure of towns to the south of present-day Slovakia had been destroyed, and subsequently, more Hungarian nobles moved northwards to rebuild towns and occupy them (Bakke 1999). Hungary’s administrative centre moved to Bratislava, and church administration to Trnava in present-day western Slovakia. During this resettlement, the Slovak national myth of Juraj Jánošík had its beginning. Jánošík was born in Terchová in north western Slovakia on 25 January 1688. It is said that he was hung by his ribs until he died in Liptovský Mikuláš, a town in the Tatra foothills, on 18 March 1713. He lived in the mountains and his band purportedly stole from the rich, most of whom were Hungarian nobles who had fled the Turks in the south of Hungary, and gave to the poor in the style of Robin Hood. Palickar styles him romantically, a portrayal that survives to the present: “Instead of being a common robber, ‘Janosik’ was in reality an avenger of social and political injustice committed against his fellow peasants when Slovakia was a province of old Hungary” (1954: 123). The legend has been retold in nine Slovak, Czech and Polish films, and in an opera, Juro Jánošik, by the Slovak composer Ján Cikker. Ján Botto’s romantic poem telling the Jánošík story is considered a Slovak literary classic, and the story is the subject of numerous old songs from the Terchová region, and new songs by popular and folk music bands. A modern monument to him stands on a plinth in the village of Terchová.

Collective consciousness: Ideas of nation

Having survived the Turkish invasions, and still resisting Hungarian domination, the Slovak peasant class and the emerging Slovak literati had to respond to yet another kind of hegemony. In 1781, feudalism was finally ended by the Emperor Josef II. Many Slovaks, amongst other minorities, were encouraged to populate the eastern and south-eastern regions of the Habsburg Empire territories devastated by the Turkish incursions, which were to become parts of modern Hungary, Serbia and Romania. Josef and his
mother, the Empress Maria Theresia, envisioned an enlightened, educated people scattered over a modern Empire, and many administrative, religious and educational reforms were generated (Bakke 1999). Literature from the turn of the 19th century included “descriptive statistical works”, in which the characteristics of minorities within the Empire are recorded, in the quest to imagine the ideal citizen, who should have self-control, and the ability to live in a peaceful, industrialized, civilized society (Vári 2003: 41-50). Germans are portrayed “as symbols of cultural achievement, diligence, industrial undertaking, and orderliness” (44). Descriptions of Hungarians evolve: whereas past characterizations had emphasized their laziness, simplicity, wildness and warm-heartedness, they were now portrayed as “energetic”, a characteristic considered to be desirable, but lacking in Germans (44). But Hungarians were considered by yet another author to be less orderly than Germans or Slovaks. While both Slovaks and Germans were said to have well-built houses, Slovaks were lazier (43-50). Vári claims that such stereotypes were consolidated by the first decade of the 19th century, and the characteristics they described became associated with discreet groups, and such comparisons “helped construct a picture of more and less civilized nations” (46). Thus, stereotyping by the dominant German intelligentsia around the turn of the 19th century should be identified as an important antecedent to the imagined ethnic identity of Slovaks today.

The imposition of an ethnic definition by a dominant Other and the denial of history it involves can have powerful negative effects, as those thus marginalized struggle to resolve it (Pickering 2001). And yet the effect of such other-identification is remarkably tenacious. A century after these exercises in official stereotyping, Bartók refers to the “habitual laziness” of the Slovak performers in executing the rhythmic elements of the songs he collected, since he had difficulty transcribing them accurately (as cited, Suchoff 1997: 250). He complained that a crotchet followed by two quavers were executed like triplets by the Slovaks, and yet in contemporary live performances by Slovak professional or amateur musicians, and in commercial recordings, this rhythm pattern is executed thus to the present day. Although it is true that this rhythm pattern sounds different from how it is written, it is characteristically executed clearly by vocal or instrumental ensembles, and can justifiably be regarded as a stylistic feature of Slovak traditional music performance.
The strength of the Slovaks’ collective feeling today can be explained by another aspect of stereotyping, which can operate in reverse (Koester 2006). Despite being typically enacted by a dominant power in an effort to order the universe for itself, the discourse of stereotyping can create a space for the minority Other to define itself. Not only is the perpetrator of the insult powerful, but the insulted appears to be able to exploit this dynamic, using the space created to respond as “we” (10). Thus the production of the Slovaks’ national feeling can be seen as a collaboration of the marginalized and the dominant Other, as they continue to create stereotypical self-images and reciprocal images of each other.

In addition to their mountainous terrain and religion, Slovaks regard their language as sacred, particularly because the final codification of the Slovak language was so hard-won. In their quest for a civilized Empire, the Habsburgs had introduced German into all schools in the Empire above the elementary level, and made it the official language in all universities by 1784. By that time, German had also been instated as the language of administration, as efficiency was enjoined as an appropriate response to increasing industrialization (Auer 2004). Whether high ideals for citizens or industrial competitiveness had motivated this language policy, the ensuing battles over language were to prove important in Czech and Slovak imaginations of history, and central to national revival movements of both during the 19th century, as each group fought for its own identity. How the vicissitudes of history in the first half of the 19th century affected Hungarians and Czechs is also crucial to tracing the emergence of the Slovak language. After Napoleon’s defeat in 1815, the more enlightened Habsburgs were succeeded by the repressive Franz II and his Chancellor, Metternich. As a result, both the Czech and the Hungarian nobilities fought to reinstate their own languages, with the result that for Slovaks, the official language was now Hungarian rather than German. By 1844, the Magyar language was introduced into all middle schools in Greater Hungary, a major setback for the Slovaks, although in elementary schools the Slovak language was still being used. Any Slovak clergy, also, were required to know the Magyar language (Bakke 1999).

Not only did the Slovaks now have to contend with Hungarian rather than German language hegemony, but Czechs and Slovaks were in conflict with each other. For Slovaks, the need to communicate with the outside world was not as great as for citizens in urban centres to the west, because they had settled in the small valleys and mountains.
of present-day Slovakia since the Turkish incursions, evolving into semi-autonomous communities (Auer 2004). Thus, the task of claiming a distinct Slovak language lay in the hands of a few Slovak literati and clergymen. At the outset, one difficulty was that Slovak had been regarded by many Czechs as a dialect of the Czech language, and they regarded the Slovaks’ impulse to consider it separate as being the same as splitting from the Czechs (Bakke 1999). The next difficulty was that Protestant Slovaks had been schooled in the liturgical ‘Czechized’ Slavic language, so-called Bibličtina, and regarded that as their literary language. In fact, the first effort to codify a Slovak language failed, as it was based on cultivated forms of language similar to Czech. This proposal by the Catholic priest and linguist, Anton Bernolák, was rejected in favour of the language later proposed by a Slovak Lutheran man of letters, Ľudovít Štúr. He based the codified version of 1843 on the languages of the peasants of Central Slovakia, and that language constitutes the mainstream Slovak language today.

The name Slovensko [Slovakia] was also born in the mid 19th century, contributing to the national reification process already in train (Bakke 1999). Led by Štúr, a meeting of what are considered fathers of the Slovak nation was held in July 1861 in Turčianský Sväty Martin, now the town of Martin in the central north of Slovakia. Notably, the demands for recognition of Slovakia as a separate nation, and for Slovak to be the only official language in administrative and educational systems, were not answered by the Hungarian Diet, but by the Emperor in Vienna. Three Slovak high schools were established within the decade, and in 1863, Matica slovenská, the Slovak cultural institution still in existence, was established.

Slovaks were further marginalized by the Ausgleich, or compromise, of 1867, which, for them, was arguably the most significant political event of the 19th century (Bakke 1999). Habsburg Austria, weakened by defeat in the war with Prussia in 1866, was forced to share power with the Hungarian nobility, resulting in the so-called Dual Monarchy, Austro-Hungary. Whereas constitutional developments had rendered Austria’s Czech territory more democratically progressive, the politically dominant Hungarian nobility to the east proceeded to restrict severely the social and national aspirations of ‘their’ minorities, including the Slovaks. Hungarian was the only language permitted in Hungarian territories after the Ausgleich, with short-lived concessions for Slovak religious services and schools. This was particularly significant for Slovaks, considering that the codification of Slovak as a literary language, the
establishment of Slovak high schools, and the founding of Matica slovenská had been so recent. The schools were abolished, and by 1883, only the Magyar language was permitted in any institution. Slovak associations were disbanded, and Matica slovenská was closed down, its funds confiscated, and its archival collections appropriated or destroyed. The building was turned into a post office, and place names throughout the country were Magyarized.

From the Ausgleich up to 1918, the Slovaks in Hungary were subject to even more brutal Magyarization policies, with the result that roughly half a million Slovaks emigrated, most of them settling permanently in the United States. On the other hand, the Czech lands became more industrialized and democratic. Whereas only a few Slovak elementary schools survived, the Czech lands boasted a university and 63 high schools where Czech was the language of instruction. The Slovaks who remained at home were represented in activities of the Czechoslovak League, but it was preoccupied with efforts for Czech autonomy. After the turn of the century, some Slovak autonomist activity was noted, but not surprisingly, the Czechs no longer knew who the Slovaks were. The separation of Czechs and Slovaks during these thirty years allowed stereotypes from the previous century to predominate, so that Slovaks were regarded by the Czech intelligentsia by the end of the century as “rural, archaic, noble savages” (Haslinger 2003: 169-170). The role of the Czech nobility in this marginalization of Slovaks even late in the century should not be overlooked. Through intermarriage and political power, many Czech nobles managed to retain large estates, and to exploit the new meritocratic ethos in their fight against German hegemony. Although they had lost their legal privilege in 1848, they remained over-represented in the curial system, thus protecting their own interests against bourgeois and peasant classes (Glassheim 2005). This was primarily a class war, and since the majority of Slovaks were peasants, Czechs and Slovaks were further divided.

Following the collapse of Austro-Hungary after World War I, new national boundaries were drawn, uniting the Czech and Slovak lands, and Carpathian Ruthenia (now in Ukraine) to create Czechoslovakia. A bitter struggle began between mainly Czech, with a few Slovak centralists, who wanted a composite nation with Prague as the capital, and Slovak autonomists who wanted a separate Slovak nation. So, having survived German and Hungarian domination, the Slovaks faced a new challenge, to define their relationship with their fellow-Slavs, the Czechs. The following report was filed in
London on 6 November 1919 by the British minister in Prague, alarmed at what he had witnessed in the east of the new, composite nation:

1. Hostility to the Roman-Catholic Church is evinced by Czech soldiers and officials and includes the desecration and mutilation of crucifixes and holy images, interruption of marriages, and similar offences against the principles of culture and decency.

2. The country has been flooded with Czech officials and the Slovaks dismissed, or, if employed, they receive from one half to two-thirds less pay than the Czechs.

3. Corruption exists in public offices.

4. Attempts are being made to substitute the Czech for the Slovak language. (Vnuk 1964: 16)

However, the destruction of icons may not have constituted ethnically-directed persecution alone. Considering that the protestant Hussite movement had been reactivated for nationalist purposes with the demise of the Catholic Habsburgs, the two-headed eagles and crucifixes may have been for Czechs just as much symbols of the authority of Austria as of Rome. However, for Slovak Catholics, religious icons had no such political or nationalist connections, and their desecration was horrifying and personal (Judson 2005; Paces & Wingfield 2005). Regardless of its causes, this was not an auspicious beginning for the amalgamated nation, but rather, it underscores the differences between its two peoples, and adds to understanding of the Slovaks’ self-definition, as different from the Czechs.

Nevertheless, ten years after the foundation of the Czechoslovak Republic, erasure of Slovak culture had become policy, as a comment in the Yearbook of the Czechoslovak Republic of 1928 shows: “Thus far, there are great differences between the West and the East of our republic. These are likely to disappear within a couple of years, however, through the hard work of the intelligentsia and the people. But, as a result, the original folk culture and art that are so characteristic for these territories will slowly die out” (as cited, Haslinger 2003: 176). The majority of Czech politicians considered that the only differences between Czechs and Slovaks were ethnographic ones, which modernization would erase. Although Masaryk, first president of Czechoslovakia, had berated one politician as going too far when he had proposed a formula “for dissolving Slovakia ‘like sugar in a glass of water’” (176), the serious doubt that Slovaks actually constituted a distinct ethnic group became part of the Czechoslovak narrative.
The ownership of Great Moravia was hotly contested by Czech and Slovak historians as well as politicians in the struggle to establish national identities in inter-war Czechoslovakia. Bakke writes: “It was important in Czechoslovak historiography because this was the only time the Czechs and Slovaks (or their Slav ancestors) had ever united in one state prior to 1918, and in Slovak historiography because it was the first and (until 1939) Slovak state” (1999: 246). Palickar, for example, claims Great Moravia as “ancient Slovak possessions” (1954: 5) and “Slovakian Great-Moravia” (7). The Slovak autonomist politician, Škultetý, minimized the Czech claim by announcing in the parliament that “Great Moravia was a Slovak state, and there was beside Great Moravia an individual Czech state, dependent on it only in the last years of Svätopluk’s reign….the forefathers of today’s Slovaks, at the time called Slavs, … formed the memorable Great Moravian state in the 9th century” (Bakke 1999: 247). This comment is remarkable considering that the first written references to the ‘Slovaks’, or ‘Slavs of Hungary’ appeared only in the last half of the 17th century. Against the Slovaks’ claims, the centralist Czech politician, Chaloupecký announced: “The Great Moravian Empire became in our national tradition a prototype of our nation-state” (246). The significance of Great Moravia is thus demonstrated by these few examples, as central to arguments on both sides in the attempt to prove different versions of Czech and Slovak ethnicity.

In the light of these accounts, Palickar’s emphasis on the distinction between Slovak and Czech identity is understandable, especially with respect to his comments concerning Slovak folk-song. He points out that analysis of Slovak folk-songs “proves” that “cultural relations between the two people never existed” (1954:185). Furthermore, he claims that Czech musicians such as Dvořak and Smetana not only appropriated Slovak melodies in order to produce their art music, but were “forced” and “compelled” to do so by the lesser attractiveness of Czech folk-songs with respect to “substance” and “rhythm” (187). While Palickar, culturist and historian, may not necessarily be taken as a musical authority, these comments exemplify aspects of narratives of history and traditional music culture in the Slovak imagination.

Slovakia as a Nazi state

Enmities between Czechs and Slovaks was cleverly manipulated by Hitler in the months leading up to the outbreak of World War II. After World War I, Czechoslovakia had lost
border territories to Germany, Hungary, and Poland. Hitler exploited the consequent
demoralization, and the fight between the Czech centralist government and the Slovak
autonomists (Rothschild & Wingfield 2000). He occupied Bohemia and Moravia in
1938, and moved arms manufacturing plants into the region. He then offered Slovakia
autonomy. The change of name of the nation from Czechoslovakia to Czecho-Slovakia
on October 6, 1938 foreshadowed the granting of so-called full autonomy in mid-
March, 1939, whereupon Józef Tiso, former Catholic priest and Slovak autonomist
politician, was made president of Slovakia. Slovaks were guaranteed protection and
prosperity in return for goods and services, the right of Germans to settle in Slovakia,
and the transportation of Slovakia’s Jews to Auschwitz and Lublin concentration camps.
The numbers are disputed; Cameron (2007) claims that almost 70,000 of Slovakia’s
Jews perished in death camps, yet Judt (2005) cites 140,000 as nearer the real number.
Regardless, the question of national responsibility for this, together with Tiso’s eventual
capitulation to Hitler’s offer, is still the subject of debate today, and an attempt to
assuage the guilt is made through claims that 10,000 Jews were hidden by private
citizens (Cameron 2007). However, given that the number of Jews recorded in the 2001
census in Slovakia is 218 (Table 1), one is justified in wondering what became of them.
But the Slovak National Uprising of August 1944, an armed resistance against what was
seen by several factions as Tiso’s Nazi collaborationist government, resulting in the
death of 15,000 Slovaks, is celebrated annually on 29 August, and there is a museum
devoted to it in Banská Bystrica.

Nevertheless, fascist elements in Slovak society still exist, to the point where Slovakia’s
quest for membership in the EU was initially hampered by them (Green 1997). Vnuk
seeks to exonerate Tiso somewhat from charges of Nazi collaboration; referring to the
pre-war years, he describes Tiso as having “stood untiringly in the forefront” of the
struggle for autonomy, and social and economic progress (1967: 14). Further, he points
out that Tiso did not sign the Jewish Code, but then reveals his own ambivalence by
pointing out that not only had Slovak resentment of the Jews been nurtured by Austro-
Hungary’s having granted them brandy shop leases, but Jews had supported the
Magyarization policies of Hungary of the past (15). Defensiveness and ambivalence in
Vnuk’s account of the events of the Nazi occupation are palpable, and judging by the
recurrence of debates concerning it in the Slovak media, they still typify prevailing
attitudes in the Slovak consciousness towards Slovakia’s past as a Nazi state.
Slovak resistance to Hitler escalated only when he began recruiting Slovaks to work for the Reich and to fight on the Italian and Eastern fronts late in the War, turning Slovak affiliations eastwards. The extremity of Hitler’s brutalities, also, began to engender more pro-Russian feelings in Slovakia (Rothschild & Wingfield 2005). Also, the Red Army’s defeat of the Nazi forces at the Dukla Pass in northern Slovakia in 1945 had enabled the Russians to be styled as liberators by Czechs and Slovaks alike. This favorable attitude was not entirely new, as suggested by the fact that in 1935, the communist party had gained 10 percent of the vote in Czechoslovakia in free elections (Judt 2005; Rothschild & Wingfield 2005). Now it was the communists who supervised the distribution of the spoils of war, the assets of 3 million Germans expelled from Czechoslovakia (Rothschild & Wingfield 2005). Edvard Beneš, exiled president of inter-war Czechoslovakia, returned from England in May 1945, and began efforts to build a democratic nation, but the government had already been formed from Moscow. Not surprisingly, the communists won the first ‘democratic’ election in 1947, and Klement Gottwald became prime minister, watched over by his pro-Moscow premier, Zdenek Fierlinger. With the death of Beneš in 1948, Russia’s Deputy Prime Minister arrived in Prague to oversee the appointment of a new cabinet, and the communist coup in Czechoslovakia was thus completed with little resistance.

_Czechoslovakia as a Soviet State_

Accounts of the establishment of Soviet hegemony in the satellite states reveal another instance of Hitler-style initial seduction, and subsequent brutal oppression and loss of political autonomy for both Czechs and Slovaks. Stalin’s “Five Year Plans”, calculated to bring all institutions of the satellite states into line with Moscow and be ruled in turn by Moscow, were introduced gradually at first in Czechoslovakia. The rhetoric was not too Marxist-Leninist, but rather, it proposed transitional changes in the “people’s democracies”, until they were ready for mature Sovietization and “proletarian dictatorship” (Judt 2005; Rothschild & Wingfield 2005: 77). Although they collectivized banks, heavy industry, large factories, and redistributed landed estates to peasants, the communists initially respected private property and religious schools, and did not abuse police powers as in other people’s democracies. This enabled the Czechoslovak communists to believe they were being treated differently from other communists (Rothschild & Wingfield 2005). But on January 1, 1948, Stalin launched a plan to remove all traces of capitalism from Czechoslovakia. The crack-down on any
democratic pretensions was effected by sending bombs in the mail to non-communist party officials, removing non-communist police from their posts, and holding a single ticket election. By 1960, 90 percent of land had been collectivized, and the Catholic Church had been subdued by the removal of uncooperative priests and confiscation of church property.

From Stalin’s death on 5 March 1953, Czechoslovakia quickly became, arguably, the most Stalinist satellite state of all, as evidenced by the brutal purges later in that decade. The most infamous of these was the show trial of fourteen ‘traitors’ to socialism, described by Judt as “a criminal masquerade, judicial murder as public theater” (2005: 186). The trial was intended as public education for other satellite states, and so there was a dress rehearsal, which was supposed to be the version released to the media. The chief traitor was purportedly Party General Secretary Rudolph Slánský, who was a Jew. The fourteen men were accused of being “Trotskyist-Zionist-Titoist-bourgeois-nationalist traitors, spies, and saboteurs, enemies of the Czechoslovak nation, of its People’s Democratic order, and of Socialism” (as cited, Rothschild & Wingfield 2005: 136). Judt makes a case for Stalin having set in train the process of eliminating communist Jews by means of such trials (2005), but notably, pressure from Slovak autonomists also served as a catalyst for this one (Rothschild & Wingfield 2005). After being interrogated, and being forced to read ‘confessions’ in front of their families, three were imprisoned, and eleven were hanged, their bodies burned, and their ashes used as filler for a slippery road outside Prague.

Brezhnev’s crack-down on the ‘Prague Spring’ in 1968 was yet another lesson, meant not just for the satellites, but for the world. Its catalysts had been various, but all are indications of the refusal of Czechs and Slovaks to be destroyed, and of their experience of, and commitment to return to democratic principles. First, Alexander Dubček, a Slovak, had been appointed as first secretary of the Slovak section of the communist party in April 1963. Then, there was pressure from the legal profession, who agitated for a return to the rule of law, and recognition of the fact that in other satellite states some wrongs committed by Communist leaders had begun to be examined. Dubček had authorized public debate, honoured victims of the purges, and formally abolished censorship, coining the term ‘socialism with a human face’ to describe his goal, which was to take individuals, rather than the collective ‘proletariat’, into account. The spontaneous public energy generated by this, and the ‘Two Thousand Words’ of June
27, a public indictment of the events of the previous two decades, alarmed the party officials in Moscow, who feared that this spontaneity would lead to organized dissent (Rothschild & Wingfield 2005). The invasion of Czechoslovakia by Brezhnev on 20-21 August was their response, and its effect on the morale of Czechs and Slovaks was profound.

The 1968 crackdown succeeded in demoralizing Czechs and Slovaks from then until the 1980s, to the extent described as follows:

Citizens who refrained from political involvement, sought no sensitive data, asked no embarrassing questions, disseminated no awkward information, flaunted no countercultural symbols, meddled in no public affairs, participated mechanically in the annual May Day rally, and voted reflexively for the party’s slate of candidates, could reasonably anticipate being allowed to live their depoliticized and deideologized lives in peace, though as internal emigrants in their own country. (Rothschild & Wingfield 2005:209)

Life east of the Iron Curtain at this time was grim, with diminishing resources, and the virtual cessation of history for its people (Judt 2005). Judt poignantly refers to their perceived “double exclusion”, from their own history as part of the European community, and from the awareness of the West (202). Yet public dissent had not been entirely eliminated by the 1968 invasion; two civil liberties movements were crushed in 1977 and 1978, and when Soviet nuclear missiles were deployed in Czechoslovakia in 1983, massive petitions against it were signed by workers. By 1987, despite opposition to reform by the Party leader, Jakeš, and President and former Party leader, Husák, energy to revolt against the regime was generated by many factors. They cannot be discussed in detail here, but Gorbachev’s glasnost and perestroika, the election of a Slavic Pope in 1978, and celebration of the eleven hundredth anniversary of Methodius’ death at his burial site in Moravia were certainly some of the catalysts for the fall of the regime in Czechoslovakia. Václav Havel was made President by a unanimous vote of the Federal Assembly on 29 December 1989, and the ‘Velvet Revolution’ was successfully enacted.

Slovakia: A European state

Despite the enmities of the past, ordinary Czechs and Slovaks did not necessarily welcome the separation in 1993 into two nation states, the Czech Republic and
Slovakia. The so-called ‘Velvet Divorce’ was accomplished without bloodshed, but opinion polls over three years following the fall of communism showed a preference on both sides to remain united. As Judt claims, the separation was brought about by the men at the top, and if those men had not been Václav Klaus on the Czech side, and Vladimír Mečiar on the Slovak side, the outcome might have been different (2005). The difficulties faced by Slovakia in building itself as a nation are exemplified by the fact that they lacked, in the first place, a glittering capital to rival Prague. Before 1918, Bratislava had been named according to the ruling powers, called Pressburg by the Austrians, and Pozsony by the Hungarians. Like other urban centres of former Greater Hungary, it was not inhabited primarily by Slovaks, who had mostly belonged to the rural peasant class. Nevertheless, a new constitution and a new flag were agreed upon in July 1992, and Slovakia became a separate nation state on 1 January 1993, with Bratislava as its capital.

The idea of aboriginality in the Slovak national consciousness is sustained by the fact that the great majority of Slovak citizens in Slovakia remain ethnically Slovak, as shown in the figures for ethnic breakdown furnished by the 2001 census. This circumstance was strengthened by what was, in fact, ethnic cleansing after World War II. Amongst the 30 million people “uprooted, transplanted, expelled, deported and dispersed” by Hitler and Stalin across Europe, were the Germans, Jews and Roma removed from Slovakia (Judt 2005: 23). Due to post-war flights and expulsions, close to 86 percent of ethnic Slovaks currently comprise the Slovak nation, which continues to fuel the Slovak imagination, not only of nationhood, but identification with the land of present-day Slovakia. Despite the economic hardships suffered by many with the loss of the ties to the more economically advanced Czech Republic, Slovakia has survived economically, with foreign investment and the incentive to qualify for admission to the European Union, which was effected in May 2004.

How contemporary Slovaks imagine themselves is difficult to say, not the least because of the generation gap. The consequent differences concern orientation to the information highway, and knowledge of English language as the new lingua franca. The generations also differ with respect to connection with the past. Surveys show that young Slovaks have little knowledge of pre-1989 events, and cannot rely on their parents’ generation to help them as they face the modern world (Judt 2005). And yet connection with the land...
Table 1: Ethnic composition of Slovakia, 2001 (Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic 2003)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nationality</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Proportion as percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Slovak</td>
<td>4,614,854</td>
<td>86.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hungarian</td>
<td>520,528</td>
<td>9.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roma</td>
<td>89,920</td>
<td>1.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rusyn</td>
<td>24,201</td>
<td>0.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ukrainian</td>
<td>10,814</td>
<td>0.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Czech</td>
<td>44,620</td>
<td>0.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>German</td>
<td>5,405</td>
<td>0.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Polish</td>
<td>2,602</td>
<td>0.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Croatian</td>
<td>890</td>
<td>0.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Serbian</td>
<td>434</td>
<td>&lt;0.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Russian</td>
<td>1,590</td>
<td>0.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jewish</td>
<td>218</td>
<td>&lt;0.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others, or not recorded</td>
<td>63,379</td>
<td>1.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>5,379,455</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

9 The word “národnosť” translates literally as “nationality”: however, in the instructions for census commissaires at Census 2001 the term was defined thus:

“Národnosť je príslušnosť obyvateľa k národru alebo k etnickej skupine. Pre určenie národnosti nie je rozhodujúca materinská reťaz ani reťaz, ktorou občan prevažne používa alebo najlepšie ovláda, ale jeho vlastné rozhodnutie o príslušnosti k určitému národu, národnostnej alebo etnickej menšine. Národnosť detí do 15 rokov a uvedie podľa rodičov....”

English translation:

“Nationality is an affiliation of a citizen to a nation or to an ethnic group. Both native language and language mainly used or known by citizen is not important for the specification of nationality but his/her own decision on affiliation to a specific nation, national or ethnic minority. The Nationality of the children up to 15 years is appointed according to parents....” (Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic 2003).
and the mountains seems to have survived. Even the young turn to the mountains with
great devotion for recreation, and mountaineering skills are ubiquitous, even more so
than surfing in Australia or Hawaii.

But modernity has brought social problems such as homelessness, which was unknown
in Slovakia before 1991. Before admission to the European Union, Slovakia had to
address such problems as people trafficking, arms dealing, and abuses of human rights
such as discrimination of its minorities, in particular, the Roma (Human Rights Watch
2003). However, despite the adoption of a new Schools Act in May 2008 prohibiting
discrimination and segregation in education, Roma children are still placed without
assessment in special schools for the mentally disabled (Amnesty International 2008,
2009). Fascist elements still exist; the presence of skinhead groups must still be
controlled by security police at annual celebrations of the Slovak National Uprising on
29 August, and of the defeat of Fascism on 8 May. Nevertheless, Slovakia seems to be
succeeding as a European nation state as it grapples with the problems of a democratic
society, and there is a new optimism palpable on the streets of Bratislava and towns
throughout the country, at least in the western and central regions. In the east, the
demise of small rural communities and the loss of their younger inhabitants are still
highly visible. But in the towns of western Slovakia, even the formerly drab, Soviet-
built apartment blocks surrounding each ‘old town’ gleam with new cladding and
windows, and a two-cylinder, East German-manufactured Trabant, once the car of the
people, is now a rarity amongst the modern cars on the street.

The Australians: How do they imagine themselves?

In order to understand how Lúčnica’s performance was received, whether it served
simply as a neutral vehicle for cultural exchange, or whether the discourse generated
was informed by deep-seated cultural attitudes, the character of Australian society must
be articulated, and juxtaposed with that of Slovakia. The ethos of Australia, which has
been a federated, liberal, democratic society since 1901, contrasts starkly in important
ways from that of Slovakia.
Australia: Land of immigrants

In contrast to the relatively homogeneous Slovak population in Slovakia, contemporary Australia is defined by its multicultural character. This reality has not always been accepted as desirable by all governments or groups in the Australian community, as will be shown, and the charge of racism is periodically levelled at Australians. However, since Sydney Cove was staked out as a British prison two centuries ago, Australia has taken in waves of immigrants after both World Wars, the Viet Nam war, and increasingly after conflicts in countries on every continent. Chinese Australians, although marginalized, have been part of Australian society since being used as labour in the gold rush of the 1850s. Currently, the population of 22 million is comprised of over 250 different ancestries, with almost 400 languages being spoken in Australian homes according to the 2006 census (Australian Bureau of Statistics 2007). The contribution of immigrants during the 20th century to the making of modern Australia is summed up by the Chair of the Federation of Ethnic Communities’ Councils of Australia:

The dynamism and creativity that immigrants bring has taken Australia to a new level: economically, socially and culturally. Australia would not be the significant, prosperous and energetic middle world power it is today without the helping hand of the 7 million migrants from around the globe who have come to call Australia home since World War II. (Messimeri 2009: 1)

However, despite this reality, the course of the multicultural debate has not run smoothly. In his book, White Australia to Woomera, James Jupp (2002), Director of the Centre for Immigration and Multicultural Studies at The Australian National University since 1988, has documented the vicissitudes of Australian immigration policy over the last 150 years. He cites three bases on which this policy has been built: “the maintenance of British hegemony and ‘white’ domination; the strengthening of Australia economically and militarily by selective mass migration; and the state control

10 Since the 2006 census, ancestry has been defined thus: “A person’s ancestry, when used in conjunction with the person’s country of birth and whether the person’s parents were born in Australia or overseas, provides a good indication of the ethnic background of first and second generation Australians. Ancestry is particularly useful to identify distinct ethnic or cultural groups within Australia such as Maoris or Australian South Sea Islanders, and groups which are spread across countries such as Kurds or Indians. Country of birth alone cannot identify these groups. This information is essential in developing policies which reflect the needs of our society and for the effective delivery of services to particular ethnic communities” (ABS website: http://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/0/48BF800A0FAE89A7CA25729E0008A875?opendocument).
of these processes” (6). Because the character of contemporary Australia is still being defined in terms of increasingly rapid immigration, how those policies have evolved is central to understanding the time and place in which this study was conducted.

The Immigration Act of 1901 marked the formal beginning of serious social engineering in Australia, just over a hundred years after white settlement. The catch-phrase “populate or perish”, first uttered by Alfred Deakin, Australia’s second prime minister (1903-4, 1905-8, 1909-10), expressed the will of the government and the British majority, a will which was to prevail until after both World Wars (5). As long as the influx was kept British, all would be well, and similarly, the 1958 Migration Act, though not mentioning race explicitly, was geared to excluding ‘inferior’ races, using such devices as the infamous ‘dictation’ test, manipulated at will in cases of darker skin colour or language other than English (5). The first real challenge to this intent arose after World War II when the United States introduced a ban on the intake of European Displaced Persons, with the result that Australia became the next favoured destination for those Italians, Greeks, Poles, Czechoslovaks and other Europeans displaced after the War. Between 1947 and 1952, these immigrants were registered as ‘labourer’ or ‘domestic’, regardless of their previous qualifications or occupations.

Not only the former occupational and professional qualifications of Czechs and Slovaks were denied, but also, the variety of political affiliations they inevitably brought with them. For example, post-1948 migrants from both groups shared hatred of Austro-Hungary in one sense, but the Czechs’ hatred was concentrated towards Austria, and the Slovaks’ towards Hungary. There were also divisions corresponding with Czechoslovak centralist or Slovak autonomist leanings within both groups, and religious differences between Catholics and Protestants (Cigler 1973). Then, the ‘Yugoslav’ Slovaks were mostly Protestants, and did not associate with the Catholics. But perhaps the deepest gulf was between post-1968 migrants as a whole and the post-1948 Displaced Persons of 20 years before. As Cigler points out, whereas the latter remembered a democratic Czechoslovakia between the Wars, the post-1968 wave had lived through 20 years of totalitarian communist rule. But then, both Czechs and Slovaks who had escaped the communist crackdown understood each other, having had a common enemy.
Assimilation versus multiculturalism

To keep the proportion of British migrants high against this influx of people with variably swarthy skin and strange accents, ‘assisted passage’ for British migrants was introduced; by 1960, there had been 875,000 such assisted passages. The Australian Immigration Department’s lack of knowledge of, or respect for the complex histories of Displaced Persons may have been excusable in the case of Czechs and Slovaks from an amalgamated Czechoslovakia, but no excuse could justify the following case concerning immigrants from the former Yugoslavia from the mid-1970s. It was not until 1986 that the languages spoken by the in-coming Slovaks, Albanians, Bosnians, Slovenes, Macedonians, Croatians, Serbs, Romanians, and others were documented; since 1975 they had all been registered as ‘Slovene’ (Jupp 2002: 25). This regrettable erasure of linguistic identity reflects the fact that these waves of significant numbers of European migrants to Australia occurred during the assimilationist years of the Australian government’s immigration policy. The success of this policy, and possibly acquiescence to it, was borne out by evidence such as the following statement in a 1952 issue of Hlas domová [Voice from Home], the first Czech language newspaper to be published in Melbourne: “There are families here who are proud to say that their child does not speak any Czech or Slovak” (Cigler 1973: 120). But such concerns were not priority in immigration policy, as the population of Australia increased from 7.5 million in 1947, to 12.7 in 1971 (Jupp 2002). From the host nation’s point of view, these migrants were at least not too dark-skinned, and once they learned English, would be able to bend under the pressure to assimilate.

The frankly assimilationist policy of the Australian government for managing immigrants after arrival gave way to official aspirations to a multicultural model in 1972 (Jupp 2002: 22). Whereas up to the 1960s, the aim was for an immigrant “not to attract attention”, and physical features were still important as a basis for admission to Australia, it was not until Whitlam’s Labor government (1972-1975) that “race, creed or colour” were no longer officially used to control immigration (9). But old habits die hard; most immigrants between 1975 and 2002 were from Britain or Yugoslavia, and the nationality of the latter was still being registered as ‘Slovene’. But recognition of languages was never the Australian immigration department’s strong point. The languages spoken by Chinese immigrants were only documented as late as 1991 (25). So, although physical appearance and language were no longer the primary focus in
management of immigration, ‘acculturation’ became the new ideal for successful immigration. As Jupp says, “[m]any cultural manifestations were accepted within the limits of ‘pasta and polka’ activities’ in the form of choirs, dances, costumes and food, which made life “more interesting without challenging Anglo-Australian hegemony” (26-27). So, immigrants who could learn English and assimilate into Australian culture were welcome, and were now allowed to attract attention as long as they did so by means of performing their colourful folk music and dances and opening restaurants.

A precedent for denial of cultures other than British in Australia can be demonstrated by the status of Indigenous Australians from the beginning of white settlement. Half the Australian Indigenous languages being spoken in 1788 are now extinct, and Indigenous people were not included in the census until 1971. As recently as 2009, Australia has drawn a rebuke from Amnesty International (2009) due to decades of failure to achieve a satisfactory relationship with its Indigenous people. But recognizing and respecting cultures other than British was not the government’s main concern. Up until 1978, although the doors had been opened for European immigrants, the focus was on management of immigration rather than any model resembling Canadian-style cultural relativism, which did recognize the relevance of outcomes for subsequent generations (Jupp 2002: 83-84). The British majority culture still predominated in Australian institutions and organizations, despite the fact that in cultural studies, the influence of “a post-modern theoretical analytical view was being felt” (102). Despite the abolition in 1973 of the White Australia policy, established in 1901, and the subsequent creation of the Department of Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs, serious attacks on multi-cultural aspirations from important academics during the 1980s and 1990s and into the 21st century have persisted (Messimeri 2009). The right-wing Quadrant magazine, established in 1956, still includes in its charter the stated aim to turn “a sceptical eye on a range of intellectual fads and fashions including postmodernism, cultural relativism, multiculturalism and radical environmentalism” (Quadrant Online 2008). Then, the maiden speech of Queensland politician, Pauline Hanson in 1996, in which she called for the anti-Asian immigration sentiments of ‘ordinary’ Australians to be taken seriously, set the scene in the same year for the conservative Howard government to legitimize a “conservative, assimilationist, reactionary and nationalistic agenda” through the media (Jupp 2002: 139). Howard did not like multiculturalism, even refusing to use the word (Jakubowicz 2009; Smith &
Brett 1998). He successfully ‘dog-whistled’ to closet racists in Australia, and was able to roll back advances made to address the reality of Australia’s multicultural profile.

Nevertheless, the enduring impulse to acknowledge the existence, and meet the needs of ethnic groups with languages other than English was expressed in practical terms. From two experimental ethnic radio stations in 1975, and two television channels in 1980, the final establishment of Special Broadcasting Service (SBS) radio and television was achieved. SBS TV began transmitting from Canberra in October 1983, and SBS Radio, transmitting in over 50 languages, was launched in January 1994 (SBS Publicity and Annual Reports n.d.). However, their respective paths were fraught with obstacles; under the Howard government, full government funding for SBS was rolled back, forcing SBS to seek commercial backing. Advertising was approved by the SBS Board in June 1997, at least allowing SBS to continue to flourish.

Another manifestation of the will to meet the needs of ethnic groups in Australia was the establishment The Federation of Ethnic Communities’ Councils of Australia, celebrating its 30th anniversary in 2009. It flourishes despite the marginalization of multicultural Australia during the Howard years, and its publication, *Australian Mosaic* magazine, remains a forum for presenting and debating multicultural realities.

From John Howard’s election as Prime Minister in 1996, until his government was ousted from its fourth term in 2007, economic rationalism was the cornerstone of government policy. Whereas the Whitlam (1972-1975) and Fraser (1975-1983) governments had opened up immigration on family grounds, now skilled and business immigrants were favoured. Nor did the Australian people seem to object. Opinion polls showed that shortly after Howard’s election, immigration was not considered as important as the economy, employment, health and education (Jupp 2002). Jupp summarizes the Australian social climate by 2002 thus:

> Within an increasingly multicultural population, many Australians are still susceptible to assimilationist and exclusivist notions … A thrice elected national government has turned its back on many of the policies adopted by its predecessors. While making policy more rational in economic terms, Australia has witnessed an increase in hostility to immigration and multiculturalism with potent political force. (209)

The Right Honourable Malcolm Fraser, 22nd Prime Minister of Australia, also regretfully concedes the return of racist impulses in recent immigration policy. He
decries the new policy since the 1980s of detaining refugees from conflicts overseas, and points out that it had not been necessary after the Viet Nam war (Fraser 2009: 9). Anxieties stirred up by the arrival of refugees by boat to Australia have contributed to the view that multiculturalism is a failed experiment, and something that is outside Australia’s main concerns (Gershevitch 2009; Jakubowicz 2009). Not only anxiety, but confusion, marks Australians’ attitudes towards multiculturalism. A recent study showed that 40 percent of Australians felt that cultural difference is dangerous for a harmonious society, while at the same time agreeing that cultural diversity is a good idea (as cited, Babacan & Babacan 2009). However, despite the existence of SBS and *Australian Mosaic* magazine, ‘ethnic’ concerns are special rather than mainstream within the dominant British culture in Australia.

The success of the ‘assisted passage’ strategy introduced in the 1950s for British immigrants is demonstrated by the fact that in 1996, the number of migrants from the United Kingdom was surpassed only by the number of New Zealanders (Australian Bureau of Statistics 2007, August 7). New Zealanders still have an open door, working visas are given mainly to young British people, there are extra points for English language proficiency, and the London office of the Australian immigration department is its largest (Jupp 2002). The white supremacist views of Hanson’s One Nation Party have never been officially denounced, which suggests that ‘White Australia’ lives on. As recently as June 2009, an applicant for a job in Australia is more likely to be called back for an interview if he or she has an ‘Anglo’ surname, with the exception of a resident of Melbourne, where the chances are equal if he or she has an Italian surname (Booth et al. 2009). But by 2002, 100,000 new immigrants annually were arriving in Australia, and currently well over 200,000 annually call Australia their new home. Jupp rightly claims that the idea promoted by Pauline Hanson’s One Nation Party, that Australians all share the same values and attitudes, is “manifestly nonsensical”, because it denies the reality of Indigenous people, and the significant impact of post-war European immigration on Australian society (Jupp 2002: 210). The current rate of immigration, however, renders such claims even more nonsensical.

Not surprisingly, therefore, non-white newcomers do not always feel comfortable, or accepted as equals. This observation is echoed by Sneja Gunew, who viewed multiculturalism in Australia through a post-colonial lens. She, like Jupp, distinguishes between multiculturalism as a set of government policies, and the ability of ethnic
groups and individuals to use them to achieve “full participatory cultural democracy” (Gunew 2004: 5). Rather, the reality in Australia is that descendants of British settlers construct their English ethnicity as European modernity and civilization against the differences of not only the indigenous peoples and those in the surrounding Asia-Pacific but, as well, and paradoxically, those ‘multicultural others’ many of whom in the wake of postwar migration came precisely from what is traditionally cited as continental Europe or the West. (10)

Concerning ‘ethnic’ performances specifically, Gunew describes the thirst of Australians for the exotic, as being demonstrated nicely by the Demidenko case in the early 1990s. Helen Demidenko received an award and notoriety with her novel about the harrowing experience of Jewish immigrants, purportedly based on auto-biographical material. But it was later revealed that Demidenko was in fact Helen Darville, a young Australian with two British migrant parents. As Gunew explains, Darville claimed that she found her own ethnicity ‘boring’, and in writing the novel, had been intent upon producing a perfect ‘ethnic’ performance. The tacit contract between the disguised author and the duped readers of her novel was mutually satisfactory, since Darville “gave the Australian public everything it wanted, including the parade of pathologies – anti-Semitism and those festering wounds (old rivalries) that all right-thinking Australians know lie behind the costumes and the cooking which continue to be the acceptable face of multiculturalism” (74). And yet this acceptable face is reduced by Australians to a set of two-dimensional ‘identikit’ markers that bind a group together, and articulate differences. Citing David Marr, prominent Australian journalist, author and social commentator, Gunew explains how migrants bring with them exotic and foreign histories which are accessed as a “bargain tourist event” (76). Cultural difference, she claims, has been “thematized”, which “in turn functions to reinforce difference as a mechanism leading to marginalization since difference is always posited in relation to an implicit (and invisible) hegemonic norm” (83).

Ghassan Hage (1998) further articulates the multicultural discourse in Australia from a post-colonial point of view by unravelling the mechanism of tolerance in his book *White Nation*. Deliberately capitalizing the term, he defines ‘Whiteness’ as “an ever changing, composite, cultural historical construct” having its roots in European colonization, which “universalized a cultural form of White identity as a position of cultural power” (58). He identifies the yearning to be White as “a variation of yearning to be North European in its dominance over ‘Third World looking people’” (58). But importantly,
the power to decide the limits of these aspirations lies with those who have a sense of “governmental” belonging to the nation, as opposed to those who have merely a “homely” sense of belonging, bestowed on them by the former (64). This imbalance of power, he says, not only explains cultural dominance, but is hidden behind the discourse of tolerance, which is only practised by White Australians (84). Tolerance, he explains, implies the intrinsic ability to be intolerant (90-91). Therefore, “multicultural tolerance” is a strategy used to maintain relationships of power in society, and “a form of symbolic violence in which a mode of domination is presented as a form of egalitarianism” (87). When Hage attempts to articulate the reasons why White culture is incapable of breaking out of the tolerance trap, he is most incisive. He refers to the “fantasy of control” underlying the “fantasy of tolerance”, where “that which is living is positioned around the subject as an object, as something dead”, summing up his analysis in the following statement: “[T]he fantasy of White tolerance is a fantasy of national order occupied by ‘dead’ ethnics – ethnics as objects of the national will” (98). As such, ethnics provide fodder for the dominant culture, and the gulf between enriched and enriching cultures, usually denied, becomes visible. Such manifestations as multicultural fairs are seen by Hage as evidence of inequality between dominant and minority cultures, as places where the dominant become “feeders”, walking around “enriching themselves” (117). But assimilated migrants, he claims, can achieve a degree of Whiteness, in which case, they too can join those feeders on the exotic cultural expressions of Others.

Australian folk music: A map of ethnic relationships

The question of what Australian folk music is has many answers. It depends who is being asked, and mostly, answers reflect a social and political climate where the dominant culture has evolved from white settlement. One way for scholars to apprehend the reality and cultural significance of Australia’s complex folk music landscape is to divide them into genres: folk music, multicultural music, and country music (Smith & Brett 1998). So, the musics of those 7 million Europeans who have contributed massively to making Australia what it is belongs to a special genre, which is often viewed in scholarship and in the community as something other than mainstream folk music.
What Smith and Brett call “public folk” music grew from the 1950s on university campuses and in leftist communities, and established bush songs and ballads as constituting Australian folk music, with English, Irish or Scottish instrumental styles from the previous century for accompaniments. The corpus of this genre is largely male oriented, which can be confirmed by perusing the website of the current Australian Government Culture Portal (2008 June 2). Mentioned under the heading ‘Australian folk music’ are convict songs, bush ballads, and railway, war and union songs. The erasure of women’s music from the canon has been redressed only recently in scholarship. For example, Jennifer Gall calls for a redefinition of Australian folk music which includes women’s roles in perpetuating folk music traditions (Gall 2008). The Anglo-Celtic male trend is further reflected in the composition of the Board of Directors of the annual National Folk Festival, which began in Melbourne in the 1960s, and moved to Canberra, the national capital, in 1988. All eleven members have English or Scottish surnames, and only two are women (The National Folk Festival n.d.). The folk festival circuit scheduled for 2010 burgeons with 70 regional folk festivals, of which several have country themes in their titles (Folk Alliance Australia 2009). The Tamworth Country Music Festival rates a mention on every festival list, as it is the biggest and most famous of that genre.

On the Australian Government’s Culture Portal, Indigenous music is presented as being “part of the oral tradition” of Australian folk music, and the Indigenous artists mentioned and photographed in performance at the National Folk Festival in Canberra are contemporary, high profile figures such as Kev Carmody and Archie Roach (Australian Government Culture Portal 2008, June 2). The songs performed by these artists are composed songs with a country music feel and English-language texts, featuring themes of Aboriginal pride, removal of Aboriginal children and land rights. Traditional Aboriginal music itself receives little attention by comparison, and certainly constitutes a different genre for the community and in scholarship. Writing in 2004, Dunbar-Hall and Gibson point out that Indigenous music is “an often neglected aspect of Australian music”, and that thus far there had been disproportionately few publications treating Indigenous music specifically (2004: 15). This is especially sad, considering, as the authors explain, that traditional Indigenous music is also a “device” used by Aboriginals to enact their identity and will to self-determination, and to come to terms with the devastation of their culture by colonization (16).
By contrast, so-called multicultural music has a life separate from folk, country or Indigenous music on the Australian festival calendar. From when public performances of so-called ethnic music began in the 1980s to the present, it was sponsored by government and corporations, but the Howard government withdrew state sponsorship in 1996 (Smith & Brett 1998). Clearly the agenda is political at base, and does not take into account or empower the ethnic performers themselves (9). But public multicultural performance is popular; the National Folk Festival in the national capital, held around Easter time, draws almost 50,000 people and costs $85 for a day ticket, and the free-entry Multicultural Festival in Canberra each February is attended by around 160,000 people. Indigenous performances can be included in both kinds of festival. In the context of folk music festivals, they become ‘country’ or ‘folk’, and when they are included in multicultural festivals, they become just as exotic as the myriad ethnicities represented by performers. The entrenched British hegemonic culture of planners is reflected in the narrative surrounding multicultural events. For example, the word ‘celebrate’ is ubiquitous in the multicultural rhetoric, but, as Smith and Brett point out, in celebrating difference, multicultural expressions become “peripheral and decorative”, and part of the “rich cultural tapestry that enriches all of our lives” (1998: 15). These authors claim that each genre, folk, country and multicultural, has its own limited success, and while each speaks in some way to all Australians, the fact remains that there is no straightforward answer to the question of what Australian folk music is, and there is certainly nothing comparable to the virtually universal identification of Slovaks at home and abroad with a phenomenon like Lúčnica, as being iconic proponents of traditional Slovak music folklore.

Comparisons

The most compelling difference between the imagined histories of Slovaks and Australians concerns their respective ideas of authochthony. The Slovaks’ origins are lost in time, but they have dealt with the difficult history that is still in their collective memory, by constructing a belief in their aboriginality. On the other hand, the origins of white Australians in their land are recent, their migrations generally well-documented, and ideas of ancestry reach beyond Australia’s shores. Then, the autochthony of Slovak music folk culture is glorified as evolving from Slovak ethnicity. Australians, on the other hand, struggle to identify what Australian folk music is. Australians can claim English, Irish or Scottish folk music as their own if they are of one of those British
ancestries. Even folk songs and ballads, bush band or concert hall music performed after settlement are contiguous with British songs brought with the first white settlers, albeit with new texts expressing the tribulations of adapting to an alien environment and a punitive ruling class. Doubtless, this body of folk music has no connection with any Australian who does not have British ancestry. Although the musics of minorities are performed, they are not identified with or generally known by Australians with British ancestry. On the other hand, it is not uncommon for a Slovak to recognize and sing or play traditional songs from different regions, including those of minorities. Furthermore, Indigenous Australian traditional music is owned and performed only by Indigenous Australians, whose connection with the continent goes back at least 50,000-60,000 years, but it is not owned by the current resident dominant culture. On the other hand, Slovaks, who believe in their authochthony, ‘own’ their land and their traditional music culture.

Likewise, the relationship of Slovaks and Australians to their language is different, but complex. The Slovak language, for Slovaks, embodies their struggle for collective recognition by themselves and Others. Australians also appear to value their language, as evidenced by the fact that English is the mother tongue of the dominant culture, and is used as a measure for acceptability for an aspiring immigrant-citizen. Nevertheless, the teaching of English grammar was removed from Australian schools in the 1970s, suggesting that it is valued more as a means of social control rather than for its intrinsic value. This lack of investment in preserving a high level of English language literacy in Australian schools contrasts strongly with the Slovak education system’s investment in preserving the forms of the Slovak language. Referred to as slovenčina, Slovak language is taught from the beginning of elementary school in Slovakia. Another difference between Australia and Slovakia is that the vast majority of Slovaks speak only Slovak in their homes, but in Australia, the realities of widespread bi-lingualism remain hidden until revealed in a census.

Similarly with costumes, Slovaks know what their traditional costume is. The truth of this was demonstrated in Martin, Slovakia, during the Slovak cultural revivals of the last decades of the 19th century (Švehlák 1992). On one occasion described by Švehlák, women invited to a gathering from various regions rejected an attempt to contrive a unifying national costume by presenting themselves in regional costumes. With all their diversity intact, they made a claim for nationhood on their own terms. For contemporary
Slovaks, the details of regional costumes in Slovakia are also known and loved for their beauty and variety. The fact that there is no such phenomenon as any Australian national costume, let alone regional differences, is incomprehensible to a Slovak who has no connections with Australia. In Australia, our national costumes are not definable, other than in the colours of the national flower, the green and gold of the wattle, trotted out in the uniforms of sportspeople, or in khaki Akubra hats and Drizabone raincoats, worn by the Australian team at the 2000 Olympic Games in Sydney, a colour and style which reflect the geographic and climatic conditions of the Australian continent.

Another difference concerns the sources and targets of hegemony. In the case of the Slovaks, their history records hegemony as always emanating from an Other, from outside their ambit, but in close geographic proximity, and in the case of Hungarian and Czech hegemony, often within their midst. In Australian society, however, the hegemony thrives wholly from within the white British culture that still dominates the Australian ethos and character. Slovaks have endured repeated attempts to erase their existence by means of the destruction of their language, literature and folk culture, as well as having endured the horrors of two World Wars in their land, along with the rest of Europe. On the other hand, Australians have not had a war on their soil, apart from a series of Japanese bombing raids over Darwin, whose details, especially the reckoned number of casualties of between 900 and 1,100, were suppressed by the Australian government in order to save the morale of the majority of the population inhabiting the south (Australian Government Culture Portal 2009).

These differences are pertinent to this study, since such historical and political forces have honed not only different relationships with traditional song and dance culture, but for Slovaks, those forces have also conditioned its very essence. Similarly, within the Australian context, historical and political forces have defined Australians’ relationship with their own, and others’ songs and dances, but for the dominant majority, that relationship is ambiguous, and tinged with nostalgia and thirst for the exotic. Whereas Lúčnica embodies for Slovaks an entire ethnic imagining, encompassing the landscape of Slovakia, and the struggle against obliteration so often enjoined, their performance for Australians who are not Slovak migrants or their descendants is yet another exotic, colourful display of a particular variety, by people who are remembered as Slovak, or Czechoslovak, or Yugoslav, or even Russian. Similarly, the Slovaks performing cannot
imagine a people who find difficulty describing or identifying their traditional music or dance. The cultural divide is great, and the task of translation formidable.
Chapter 3: Overview of Slovak musical life and scholarship

Background

This chapter seeks to put traditional music culture, particularly the genre of staged folk music and dance, in perspective in the context of Slovak musical life, and to consider what inferences can be made concerning its significance for Slovak ethnicity. To say that traditional music and dance performance has been important for Slovaks is an understatement. Already it can be assumed to have evolved as a statement of resistance and of particularities that define Slovak ethnicity as unique. It is precisely because of that fact that it was targeted by the communist regime as being a most efficient vehicle for social manipulation in the course of building a socialist state. Classical music was also recognized as such, but traditional music was valued by the regime as an especially effective tool because it belonged to everyone regardless of locality, class, or level of literacy. But given that traditional folklore manifestations are proliferating, as Leščák’s question and observations of the reality on the ground aver (1992), how does its practice compare now with other musical genres on the Slovak musical landscape, and what can be inferred by this comparison concerning the discourse of Slovak traditional music production? In order to give an overview of how institutional energy is expended in participating in and promoting various genres of music activity in Slovakia, a summary of classical, choral, world music and traditional musical culture, follows.

Neither popular music in the media, nor jazz culture is included in this overview, although their importance for Slovak musical life is acknowledged. Both musical genres have been the subject of considerable scholarly work in Slovakia by František Túrak (2003), and Barrer’s mentioned doctoral thesis at Monash University (2007) examined popular culture and the media. Slovakia’s sporadic involvement in the Eurovision Song Contest should be mentioned, since it is often assumed that Slovakia is one of the former socialist states which, since the end of the communist era, have raised their profiles by reaching the final. Whereas Serbia, Croatia and the Czech Republic have reached the final rounds of the Eurovision Song Contest, Slovakia has participated only five times, in 1994, 1996, 1998, 2009, and 2010. In its first attempt in 1993, it failed to pass the qualifying round. In 2009, Slovakia’s entry was backed by Slovak Television (STV) for the first time, and reached the final round. Backed again by STV in 2010, Slovakia was the first country to announce its intention to compete in that year, and
reached the semi-final round. Deep research into the reasons for Slovakia’s troubled relationship with the contest has not been done, but superficial perusal of references to Slovakia’s earlier attempts to enter the contest suggest that it could have been due to poor organization and problems with entrepreneurial expertise.

Classical music

While the crossover between traditional music and classical music began early in Slovak lands, with the result that instruments such as violins, cellos and double basses are now considered as standard in certain genres of traditional music, the term *seriósna hudba* [serious music] is used by Slovaks to refer to classical music as opposed to other musical genres including popular or traditional music, or jazz, in which such instruments are also used. *Seriósna hudba*, corresponding to what is named as ‘classical’ music in the vernacular of western Europeans and Australians, is taken very seriously indeed by Slovaks.

If lack of entrepreneurial expertise has hampered Slovakia’s efforts to compete in the Eurovision Song contest, it certainly has not been evident in the documentation and promotion of classical music. These functions are located at the *Hudobné centrum* [Music Centre] in the Old Town in Bratislava, and its reading room is open to students and the public. Listening to audio-archival material or watching films and videos is possible for anyone, by appointment. The public accessibility of information concerning classical musicians and events attests to the mastering of organizational and promotional skills which were already in place. Classical music has been officially promoted and organized by the state since 1969, when *Slovkoncert*, the direct predecessor of the Music Centre was founded, twenty years after the communist takeover. *Slovkoncert* was replaced by the National Music Centre in 1997, and re-named as the Music Centre in 1999. Under the Czechoslovak socialist state, *Slovkoncert* had considerable resources, and classical music activities flourished at home and abroad in co-operation with other agencies. Although the ideological manipulations may have dissolved since the fall of communism, the Music Centre still espouses the same mission insofar as musical and artistic change are promoted and supported. As well as

---

11 Slovakia’s 2009 entry can be viewed on the website: http://www.bbc.co.uk/eurovision
contestants/slovakia.shtml
Slovakia’s 2010 entry can be viewed on the website: http://www.youtube.com/
watch?v=AwRxyf6AZk
12 The Music Centre website: http://www.hc.sk
being a valuable archive, the Music Centre publishes an annual catalogue of events through Akcent, its music production and publishing arm, and it also publishes a bimonthly magazine, Hudobný život [Musical Life], with articles and reviews of classical and jazz performers and performances around the country. The Music Centre is a member of the International Association of Music Information Centres (IAMIC), founded in 1986. That organization’s 41 members worldwide are committed to documenting the musical life of their own countries, and promoting festivals, concerts and conferences. International collective projects are also mounted, particularly concerning common areas of interest or concern. It is not known what place is given to traditional music folklore by the other 40 members of the IAMIC, but examination of the website’s members’ mission statements reveals a preponderance of information concerning classical music, and to some extent jazz and blues. The Slovak Music Centre’s coverage of ‘musical life’ is consistent with the general profile of other members, although it only recently included blues in its scope. Information regarding popular music other than jazz or blues, or regarding traditional music folklore cannot be found on the Music Centre website. The latter is found elsewhere, as will be shown.

Commonality with other European music and music institutions is a crucial aspect of the discourse of classical music for Slovak musicology, if explicit and passionate statements concerning it are any indication. Oskár Elschek, in documenting the evolution of classical music in Slovakian lands, emphasizes the common roots shared by Central and Eastern European cultures with Western Europe (Elschek 2002a). He argues plausibly that Germanophile historiography has produced a distorted view of European music history (16-18). Whatever Germanic literary hegemonies might explain this, it should also be remembered that Vienna is only approximately 60 kilometres from Bratislava, and the seat of Haydn’s patronage, the Esterhazy Palace, is in the Austrian Burgenland, close to the Hungarian and Slovak borders. Consequently, from the end of the 18th century into the first decades of the 19th century, Viennese music culture permeated Slovak musical life at all levels. Already, the music cultivated under the direction of Samuel Capricornius at the Lutheran church in Bratislava had been responsive to Viennese compositions and performance standards (Kačic 2002a). Mozart was also a major influence on musical life in the region; marionette and live performances of Don Giovanni, which had its premier in Prague, are still toted there as de rigeur for tourists. Hummel was born in Bratislava, Beethoven and Schubert are also

13 IAMIC website: www.iamic.net/about
celebrated as having informed the musical life of Central Europe, and Franz Liszt had
connections with Bratislava (Lengová 2002). While acknowledging regional
characteristics in the evolution of different musics, Elschek claims for Slovak classical
music the same ancient roots from Greco-Roman, Near Eastern and Arab cultures, then
from pre-Christian and Christian artistic ideals. Elschek’s further suggestion, that to
speak of national musical boundaries is irrational, makes infinite sense considering that
the boundaries of the Slovak nation itself have only existed under that name since 1993,
and yet Slovak musical life has been vital for as long as that of Europe generally. As is
the case with every other small European country, multi-ethnic processes have involved
the inter-weaving and unweaving of universal, national, and regional phenomena (Kačic
2002a). Over all, the emphasis in the discourse of Slovak classical music scholarship
and practice is more on its shared European history than its differences.

The observable robustness of contemporary classical musical life in Slovakia is, in
itself, evidence of a continuation of successful promotional infrastructure. A current
profile can be inferred from the following tally, taken from the website of the Music
Centre.14 There are two main symphony orchestras, in Bratislava and in Žilina, a major
northern city. Chamber ensembles are numerous, and encompass so-called early,
baroque, classical and modern musical eras. Of the more than twenty professional
ensembles, two are wind ensembles, one is a teachers’ group, one a female group, and
one includes vocal music. The instrumental quartets mentioned are quite various. Apart
from the internationally known Moyzes string quartet, of the 15 quartets mentioned,
there are two wind quartets, and one quartet each of horns, trombones, clarinets, or
guitars. One quartet includes bandóneon. Of the 7 quintets, there is one each consisting
of strings, and piano and strings, with one brass and 3 wind, one of which is the famed
Slovak Wind Quintet. Five of the 8 trios mentioned are conventional piano trios, with
one wind trio, one horn trio, one with six hands on one piano, and one combines flute,
piano and accordion. Duos are numerous, and again, varied. Four are guitar duos, three
are piano duos, with one violin duo, with the remainder combining instruments such as
flute and guitar, cello and harp, cello and accordion, or double bass and piano. So, while
European roots, and therefore European civilization, are explicitly claimed in the case of
Slovak classical instrumental music, variety abounds, but it is not an explicit part of the
rhetoric surrounding classical music in Slovakia. Rather, Europeanness, prolificity and

excellence characterize Slovak claims for recognition as part of European classical music history.

Choral music

Similar to classical instrumental music, choral music culture flourishes in Slovakia, although it no longer appears to share the same government support since the demise of socialism. Professional and church choirs are active, and amateur choral activity at the community level is prolific. Since 2004, major choral festivals have been organized by the Bratislava Music Agency,\textsuperscript{15} which has brought over 250 choirs from abroad to participate in competitions and festivals. Remaining active without the previous financial support for such events has not been easy, but the burgeoning of international festivals and competitions attests to the success of the directors in negotiating the passage to free enterprise. Participating choirs must find and finance their own travel and accommodation, and the Agency’s artistic director and his administrative team must “constantly be active in searching financial support”.\textsuperscript{16} Some government grants are available, but there is no guarantee of success, and alternative sources of financial and practical support must be found. For example, the International Sacred Music Festival held in Bratislava depends on success in applying to the Visegrad Fund,\textsuperscript{17} Bratislava city, or prospective concert hall owners and recording companies.

But the municipalities and towns are where amateur choirs are formed and conducted, and if their schedules and finances permit, they may register for participation in major events. One example is the Trenčiansky spievák zbor [Trenčín Singers’ Choir] an adult choir of approximately 30 members, with whom the researcher performed and toured while living in Trenčín, a university town of approximately 60,000 people. The choir was established in 1935, and customarily participates in a variety of events, from the first International Sacred Music Festival in 2006, where it advanced to the silver standard, down to the commemoration of a much-loved priest from the 19th century in a small village near Trenčín. It also performs complete programmes for the town of Trenčín and villages in the region, which typically include Gregorian chant, a

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{15} The Bratislava Music Agency: http://www.choral-music.sk/en
\item \textsuperscript{16} Dr Milan Kolena MBA, Artistic Director of the Bratislava Music Agency, personal communication, 4 February, 2010
\item \textsuperscript{17} The Visegrad Fund co-ordinates government bodies from Slovakia, Czech Republic, Poland and Hungary interested in educational and cultural programmes. More information can be found on the website: http://www.visegradfund.org/about.html
\end{itemize}
composition by Palestrina, arrangements of Slovak folk songs by prominent Slovak composers from baroque, classical and romantic eras, modern Slovak choral compositions, and arranged folk songs from a range of other countries. In 2005, the director of the choir established an ‘academic’ chapter of the choir at Alexander Dubček University in Trenčín, with similar repertoire, but also a teaching function for students.

Claims of European roots for Slovak choral music culture are shared with those for classical instrumental music, and in Slovak scholarship, its permeation of the amateur community is also closely documented and explained. Research reveals that polyphonic singing has been woven into the tapestry of musical life in Slovakian lands from mediaeval times. The Pauline order allowed it as early as the 13th century in the Kingdom of Hungary (Kačic 2002a: 61). Its presence can also be inferred from notes on liturgical manuscripts from Trnava, Spiš and Košice, dating from around 1500, specifying “organum” or “chorus” (62). It was not encouraged by the church, but neither was it disallowed. In the 16th and 17th centuries, polyphonic song flourished alongside the plainchant of the monastic orders, due to an increase in compositional activity and importation of composers. Evidence has been found to show that as early as the 1460s, music theory was being taught, even before the renaissance expressed itself in the next centuries (64). Towns became more important than the monastic orders in promoting polyphonic song in the 16th and 17th centuries, with church musical culture carried by the cantor and organist of the town church. Latin schools, also, taught music theory and the skill of reading from music manuscripts, and copying of scores as well as use of printed scores imported from Western Europe (68-71). This enabled choirs to combine with instrumental groups and perform in the churches. Congregational singing also flourished as a result of the Reformation, as German immigrants brought new ways of expressing their worship with them.

The foundations were further laid down for a rich choral culture in Slovakia by developments in the baroque era. Mainly in the church, polyphonic singing evolved to a high standard. The main centres were Bratislava, and Spiš in the north. The Lutheran church in Bratislava, under the direction of Capricornius, had trained choirs incorporating students from Lutheran or Catholic schools, and in Spiš, fragments of manuscripts have been found that suggest demanding choral music was performed there (Kačic 2002b). In Kremnica, a centre in the mining region of Slovakia, the Catholic church’s cantor, Móric Mukuláš Pollentarius, achieved similar results with trained
choirs. While Capricornius was able to benefit from nearby Viennese influences, the Piarist monastery in Podolíňec, being a mother house for the region, brought in Italian, Austrian, German and Polish influences, performing choral works by composers coming from abroad (95). This order was also important in the promotion of choral singing, since it invested much in teaching music theory and reading skills. Although the Franciscans were more closed, they, too, composed their own music which was often ‘figural’, suggesting a concern with choral composition itself, while the Jesuits’ role was more in the maintenance of musical activity in smaller towns and villages (91-92).

But it was not until the 1820s that social changes occurred which changed the place of music in Slovak social consciousness. The nobility and the church now shared patronage of the arts with the bourgeoisie, giving rise to much amateur music-making along with professional performances. With respect to choral music, the following decades saw the establishment of musical and choral societies, a process which accelerated in the second half of the century, to include towns and villages (Lengová 2002). The impetus was often patriotic, with composed nationalistic songs and arranged folk songs comprising the repertoire. Lengová cites a choral festival in Spišské Podhradie in the Spiš region in 1884, with 170 participants and nine choral societies, and a Hungarian choral festival in 1885 in Slovakia’s second city, Košice, with 300 singers and ten choral societies participating (232).

During the communist regime, the Ministry of Culture strongly supported choral activity. While children as young as five years may have been selected for special “people’s schools of art” in order to foster music education to a professional level, a project to involve amateurs in “art hobbies” was undertaken (Šimek & Dewetter 1986: 62-64). From 1975-1983, the number of amateur choral ensembles and the total of their membership were more than double those even for folk singing and dancing. The Ministry of Culture was concerned that citizens use leisure time “appropriately”, and that they develop “cultural and artistic values” (59). However, whereas the infrastructure and financial support for classical music have remained more or less unchanged since the communist era, these have required reconstruction in the case of choral activities. There has been a return to dependence upon the church parishes and towns, with supplementation by private sponsorship in many cases, and uncertain competition with other choirs for dwindling government support.
Now that the socialist regime has fallen, choral activity remains a vital part of musical life, but it has not attracted the same attention in scholarship as that for traditional music culture. Despite the 50 years of ideologically-based promotion and unprecedented financial support during the communist era, it could be said that choral music expresses a similar discourse to that surrounding classical music. Although contemporary choral activity is more community and church based than classical music making, it is a manifestation of an essentially European tradition, and an attestation of cultural and aesthetic refinement.

A ‘World Music’ festival

As well as three adult choirs, the town of Trenčín has a children’s choir, and the nearby spa town of Trenčianske Teplice was the place where the Slovak Teachers’ Choir, an all male choir with a long professional history of performing and recording, was established in 1921. Trenčín has its own school of music for children, its own chamber orchestra, and is the home of Aurelius Q, a jazz quintet which tours abroad and makes recordings. But the town is increasingly famous at home and abroad as being the site of the Pohoda world music festival. The organizing company is based in Bratislava, but co-operates closely with the town of Trenčín and the Trenčín airport, where the event is held. The first Pohoda festival in 1997 was held in the town’s sports stadium, with 140 tickets sold, attended by about 2,000 people, but by 2009, the three-day summer festival on the airport runway boasted 8 stages and 33,000 patrons per day. Despite a tragic bad-weather event in 2009 resulting in the collapse of a tent, with several people injured and one killed, the organization is of a high standard, with camping, shuttle transport around the 8 stages, child-minding and other necessary facilities provided.

The first Pohoda festival in 1997 fielded 4 Slovak, one Czech and one Russian band, but by 2009, the number had increased to 87 artists or bands. The festival now features alternative music, rock, pop, dance music, world music, house, techno, drum and bass, hip-hop, but also theatre, discussions, chamber music, dance and literature workshops. In 2009, for example, there were at least 12 renowned disc jockeys or remixers from Britain, the US, and Europe, with a preponderance of alternative rock, hip-hop, or electronic bands. Performers included Joan Baez, a Japanese Taiko group, groups from Tuva and Mali, the Blind Boys from Alabama, a Sami fusion group from Norway, Balkan and Indian brass bands, tango ensembles from Argentina and Brazil, Romany
bands from Romania, the British Choral Society and the virtuosic Hiromi. Most performers are renowned globally or in their own countries. It is a dazzling array of virtuosic music from a wide variety of cultures and musical genres, and for the full festival price of 39 Euros, it is enjoyed mostly by the young, who in attending, enact the meaning of Pohoda, which translates as ‘relaxation’ or ‘ease’. In order to finance the festival, the Pohoda company has secured powerful sponsors over the years such as Tatra Bank, Nokia, Semtex and Kofola, the company which manufactures Slovakia’s version of cola soft-drink.

In an interview with Dan Williams following the 2008 Pohoda festival, the originator and current organizer of the festival, Michal Kaščak, expressed the discourse succinctly. Referring to the previous year’s attendance of Vaclav Havel, former president of Czechoslovakia, then the Czech Republic, he sums up the purpose of the festival:

We started as a music festival and changed to an arts festival involving people like NGOs in discussions. Last year Havel’s speech attracted 9000 people. These things are very important for me as it gives me the energy to continue. It’s important because 20 years ago it wasn’t possible to do events like this. We want not just to have fun but to celebrate that we have the freedom to do it.

When asked concerning his plans for the 2009 festival, he replied:

This year we will mix the Slovak National Theatre Orchestra with Hungarian State Opera. It is very important at this time when our relationship with Hungarians are getting so much attention [nonpartisan Ivan Gašparovič was successfully re-elected as Slovak president on April 4th, backed by a coalition (including Slovak nationalists) who’s campaign was driven by anti Hungarian scaremongering]. It’s something that disappoints me as I love the differences in the people in Central Europe and I hate it when politicians abuse it for their own purposes. I am surprised that these problems exist in our times.

The realities of the Pohoda festival, together with these statements from Kaščak, a 38-year-old who from his early teens was engaging in dissident music creation and performance, express a fresh perspective. Besides explicitly rejecting the oppression of the socialist regime, he is comfortable with the globalized popular and world music scene, and with the extensive entrepreneurship required to succeed in the Pohoda

---

18 The full programme can be seen on the Bažant Pohoda website: http://www.pohodafestival.sk/index.php?page=program&hl=sk
19 A transcript of the interview can be read on the website: http://www.bratvegas.sk/articles/view/42/pohoda_interview.html
20 For biographical information on Kaščak see the website: http://www.sme.sk/c/3178139/muzikant-michal-kascak-medzi-mladymi-ludmi-je-to-lepsie-ako-horsie.html
venture. Kaščak also expresses a rejection of more entrenched historical enmities from the past, while embracing national and cultural differences. In this respect, the discourse expressed by the Pohoda Festival is certainly political, but celebration of freedom, excellence, and inclusiveness of Others appear to be the loudest notes.

**Slovak traditional music**

*Folk song*

Whereas literature concerning classical and choral music emphasizes a European perspective, and World Music is a pastiche of high quality performances from around the world, the rhetoric at scholarly and community levels concerning traditional Slovak music emphasizes its ethnic and national uniqueness. Since folk song is the source of all other forms of Slovak traditional music (Elschek 2002b; Elscheková 2002), a summary of Slovak folk song in support of these claims is warranted.

Central European scholars such as Béla Bartók responded to the same impetus to document the poetic and musical expressions of ‘the folk’ as Bishop Percy had in England, and Herder in mainland Europe (Melichorčík 1943). However, Bartók had written in a letter that Hungarian songs were “trivial” in comparison with Slovak or Romanian songs (Suchoff 1997: ix-x). Even an English musicologist writing in 1918, perhaps not so well-trained in Central European sonorities as Bartók, reported that there was something special about Slovak songs, albeit that she was writing about ‘Czecho-Slovak’ soldiers singing on their way to a memorial service at a bombed-out English cathedral (Newmarch 1918). Her research, however, went beyond this experience, because she discriminates between Czech (Bohemian) and Slovak songs. Concerning Czech folk songs, she writes:

> The songs of Bohemia are, generally speaking, more pleasing than arresting; for their modal and rhythmic angles have been rubbed away upon the rock of German Kultur; nor have they been able to escape altogether from its prescriptions, nor from some echo of Teutonic ultra-sentimentality. (1918: 495)
Regarding Slovak song, she writes:

In contrast to the songs of Western Bohemia, a large proportion of the Slovak folk-tunes are tetra-chordal, producing results that arrest and stimulate the ear trained to the use of ordinary diatonic scales … only among the folk who live under the lee of the Carpathians, and the still darker shadow of Hungarian rule, can we hope to recapture all the shy, essential beauty of the songs of Slovakia. And not the beauty only, but the intimate character of the songs is apt to evaporate in a more sophisticated execution of them: the queer, sometimes brutal humour, the note of cruel suffering; something which corresponds to the acrid odours of labour which hang about the clothes of the peasantry. (496)

Newmarch goes on to cite the predominantly binary rhythms, and the addition of church modal scales to archaic forms, apparently drawing on the musicological appraisal done by the Slovak scholar, Milan Lichard, and to the specific music elements identified by Bartók and Kodály (Suchoff 1997). To summarize, they also identified specific, uniquely characteristic binary rhythm patterns, the frequency of Lydian mode in mountain areas, and the most archaic forms in central Slovakia near Zvolen. Although Slovak scholarship owes much to Bartók and Kodály, more important for Elschek, as for his wife, a prominent Slovak ethnomusicologist, is the historically documented appropriation of Slovak folk music material by Hungarian scholarship (Elschek 2002a; Elscheková 1965). The Slovak scholars’ passionate objections to that appropriation refer to the demonstrable differences between Slovak song and other European folk songs, Hungarian folk songs in particular. Although Bartók himself was clear about the uniqueness of Slovak songs, not all musicians or musicologists have followed suit.

Typologization of Slovak songs has its own history, but suffice to say that the categorization of Slovak folk songs according to the headings supplied in Table 2 has been the most authoritative since the 1950s. Elscheková also gives a regional categorization of song types, summarized in Table 3, but points out that all types have co-existed for centuries (464-465). Categorizing Slovak songs on the basis of function, Elscheková begins with two broad categories, ceremonial and “life-situational” (466). Of the ceremonial songs, the largest group consists of Christmas songs, with winter also being rich in ceremonial activities, from St Andrew’s Day to Shrovetide. New Year celebrations and the Three Kings ceremonies are also rich in songs. The agricultural calendar is abundant with songs, including ceremonies associated with spring, Morena (the death of winter), St George’s Day, St John’s Day at the summer solstice, and invocations for good crops. The latter includes songs associated with plowing,
### Table 2

Styles of Slovak folk songs (Elscheková 2002: 459-464)

1. **Old Styles (40%)**
   
   a) **Magic-ritual (1.5%)**
   - **Musical features:** Recited, or second or third tonal melodies.
   - **Function:** Children's games, circle, spring, summer, other ceremonies, Western and southern Slovakia.

   b) **Agricultural (5%)**
   - **Musical features:** Quart-tonal strophic. Free form solo with 3 or 4 part polyphonic chorus.
   - **Function:** Hay-making songs. Among the oldest, from Great Moravia. Mountainous regions of central and northern Slovakia.
   - Special group of 6 part wedding songs with descending fifths.

   c) **Pastoral (32%)**
   - **Musical features:** Quintonal and third-quintonal. Lydian scale common. Polyphonic men’s and women’s singing. Broad, rhapsodic character. Most characteristic mediaeval songs.
   - **Function:** Shepherds' songs, resettlement of mountain areas by shepherds 14th-16th centuries. Originated in war against Turks in 17th, 18th centuries, but also against feudal plundering. Themes updated. Hajduk (virtuosic male dance) from beginning 16th century.

   d) **Pastoral-outlaw (1.5%)**
   - **Musical features:** Fujara songs, often beyond octave, myxolydian, special scales (Podhala). Structure in 5 or 6 sections, fanfare, wide free phrases, balladic or romantic or updated themes. Mountains of central Slovakia. Hajduk (virtuosic male dance). Originated in war against Turks 17th and 18 centuries, and against feudal plundering.

2. **Modal intermediate layer (20%)**
   
   - **Musical features:** Octave structures, church modes, especially Dorian, Phrygian, Aeolian, and combined Lydian and Myxolydian. Merged with pastoral-outlaw songs from 17th and 18th centuries. Modern tonality.
   - **Function:** Mostly balladic or romantic, some ceremonial.

3. **New songs (39%)**
   
   a) **Traditional types (20%)**
   - **Musical features:** Major-minor tonality, but some features of preceding layers. Romantic, humorous lyrics and dance songs. Ceremonial links weak.
   - **Function:** Used only for entertainment at weddings.

   b) **New Hungarian songs (8%)**
   - **Musical features:** Czardaš and verbunk from Kingdom of Hungary. Melody repeated at fifth, syncopated rhythms.
   - **Function:** Energetic dancing.

   c) **Songs of Western European type (8%)**
   - **Musical features:** Sequential harmony, triad cadences, parallel thirds and sixths polyphony.
   - **Function:** Romantic, tragic balladic themes.

   d) **Newly written songs with topical social themes (1%)**
   - **Musical features:** Features from a) - c) combined.
   - **Function:** Themes, nation-building, topical events.
Table 3

Regional categorization of Slovak folk song styles (Elscheková 2002: 464-467)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Break-down of types</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Western and southern regions of Záhorie, Kopanice, Trenčiansko, Trnavsko, Nitransko, Hont, Tekov: | Magic-ritual (8%) 
Agricultural (12%) 
Modal and new songs (80%) 
Pastoral missing. |
| Central and northern regions of Liptov, Orava, Kysuce, Podpol’anie, Pohronie: | Pastoral and pastoral-outlaw (60%) 
The rest consist of meadow, hay-making, mowing, wood-cutters, and ceremonial wedding, Shrovetide and Christmas songs. Harmonic-melodic polyphonic types predominate. |
| Eastern regions of Šariš, Zemplín, Abuj, Spiš, Gemer: | Archaic hypotonal forms, but closed formal structure and 3 part melodies common. Clear rhythms and dance which spread to other regions especially southern regions. |
| Northern and eastern regions of Spiš and Gemer: | Archaic central pastoral styles, often polyphonic, are combined with Eastern heterophonic singing styles. Archaic tonalities, eastern lyrical elements and expressive balladic forms from central Slovakia. |

The harvest, thanksgiving and processing of grains and other crops. Songs are associated also with ceremonies marking the cycle of human life, from children’s games, flirtation and courtship, marriage, christening and death. The “life-situational” songs are concerned with a broad variety of themes, including individual work activities, romance, stories, outlaws, recruiting for military service, and soldiering (466-467).

Pre-Christian music culture

The syncretization of so-called pagan elements into the church calendar in mediaeval Europe has been well-documented. Remembering that approximately 80 percent of Slovaks claim affiliation with the Roman Catholic religion, many Slovaks, along with Roman Catholic Christendom across Europe and elsewhere celebrate important calendar events such as Easter, Christmas, and St John the Baptist's day as part of the Christian church calendar, rather than in terms of the pre-Christian roots from which they grew.
Table 4

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pantheon of Slavic pagan gods</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Main Slavic Gods**

**Svarog**
- god of the solar principle (not the Sun itself), the creator of the Sun (by forging), god the father, the creator
- god of social laws, of monogamous marriage
- punisher of human transgressions with heavenly fire
- lawmaker (*deus otiosus*)

**Veles**
- god of the Underworld, connected with the Moon, night, magic, hidden knowledge, patron of traditional singers
- similar to north-Germanic Odin, the god of priests and sorcerers

**Perun**
- the thunderer, the rainbringer, holding the axe, bow and arrows
- the winner over the serpent Zmej
- the keeper and the ruler of the world, similar to vedic Indra

**Dažbog Svarožič**
- the god of the Sun and fire, of luck and wellness, “the giving god” (the son of Svarog)
- dying as an old man, immediately reborn as a child at winter solstice

**Mokoš (Lada / Živa)**
- "Mať syraja Zemľa" (Wet Earth Mother)
- goddess of fertility, agriculture, water, weaving
- ambivalent goddess of fate and punishment but also of love (both physical and spiritual) and healing

**Sem & Regl / Semargl**
- twin gods, sometimes griffon-shaped beings, squires and attendants of Mokoš
- functionally and etymologically connected with agriculture

**Jarovit / Jarilo / Jarun**
- young and strong solar warrior
- spring aspect of Dažbog, winner over the goddess of winter and death called Morena / Morana

**Svantevit, Triglav, “Radegast” (Dažbog)**
- multi-functional local western Slavic tribal gods

Lesser mythical beings (common to all Slavic folklore traditions)

**Vila / Samovila / Rusalka**
- the woman-like spirit of trees, places of nature (especially lakes and rivers), sometimes also considered the soul of the dead one

**Lešij / Lesovik**
- the spirit of woods and forests

**Domovoj / Domovik**
- the spirit of the house and family, often in the shape of a little man or white snake, dwelling under the door-step or oven

**Upir / Upior / Vampir**
- the revenant, person with incomplete, faulty funeral ritual, mostly a dead witch or a bad person; it terrorises the living, especially surviving relatives
But while Christians do not celebrate, for example, the summer or winter solstice *per se*, some Slovak groups do so, despite the unreliability of sources to verify their claims concerning pre-Christian Slavic culture. The 12th century Kievian Russian Chronicle has been shown to be unreliable, but neither can adherents to pre-Christian rites justifiably appeal to accounts of early pagan Slavic rites such as those found in the historical notes of a German bishop, Thietmar of Merseburg, written between 1013 and 1018 AD. These accounts, likewise, cannot be trusted, since “Thietmar was a militant Christian with a visceral hatred of pagans and the ‘cults of heresy’” (Warner 2001: 41). Nevertheless, the fringe minority of Slovaks who practise so-called pre-Christian rites and ceremonies prefer to enact their constructed versions, building on whatever they wish from these sources, vigorously rejecting the heavily Christianized syncretic versions.

The only reliable information concerning pagan Slavic cosmology, according to work done at the Department of Religious Studies at Comenius University in Bratislava, is the pantheon of Slavic gods and their functions listed in Table 4. The list was compiled from references in traditional songs, poetry and folk-tales, and comparative research into Indo-European mythology. The unreliability of other sources generally, however, does not seem to be a problem for neo-pagan groups, as they all engage in frank construction of ceremonies, including the rites and music performed in them. Other common features of neo-pagan groups are patriotic and pan-Slavic ideals, and the importance of rituals and feasts. The important celebrations shared by most groups are the summer and winter solstices, spring and autumn equinoxes, Perun’s Day, and Jarovit’s Day for celebrating the ancestors. Otherwise, there are differences according to background ideology, ranging from right-wing political affinities to new age concepts, sometimes with an ethnological impulse. Choice of one ‘favourite’ god from the list is another feature of individual groups. In Slovakia, there are four significant groups, as follows:

1) **Bratstvo Perúnové sekery [The Brotherhood of Perun’s Axe]**
   A group of young metal fans from central Slovakia, metal music orientated “free-timers”, but with certain ritual activities.

---

21 This list was supplied in person by Dr Tatiana Bušeková at the Institute of Ethnology of the SAV in Klemensová ulica, Bratislava, August 2008.
22 This list was supplied in person by Dr Tatiana Bušeková at the Institute of Ethnology of the SAV in Klemensová ulica, Bratislava, August 2008.
2) Perunov Kruh [Perun’s Circle]
A group of former (grown up) restrained skinheads; they have built a permanent shrine on top of a mountain in central Slovakia. They are focussed on the cult of Perun.\textsuperscript{23}

2) Paromova Dúbrava [Perun’s Oak-forest]
The core members are from the metal music underground and from historical fencing groups in Bratislava. They proclaim the way of pure and traditional myth and ritual, “without political (no skinheads or neo-hippies) or esoteric statements”. They are also focused on the cult of Perun. They make a sacrificial offering of a sheep once a year at Perun’s permanent shrine which they have built in the woods near Bratislava.

3) Miroslav Švický
Controversial but significant personality of the Slovak neo-pagan scene. He created spiritual teaching in one of his books, called Pôvodné Duchovno [Original Spirituality], a mixture of New Age esoteric ideas dressed in pagan Slavic terms and terms of Slovak folklore tradition of 19\textsuperscript{th} century respectively. He gathered a group of neo-hippies called Pôvodný kruh [Original Circle]. Nowadays he lives as a hermit in the countryside, and calls his group Rodný Kruh [Nature Circle].

There is some antipathy among the first three groups on one side and Švický on the other, because of differences in their conception of neo-paganism. For the first three groups, Perun, the god of thunder, is the favourite. In this, they are not unique; the favourite god for the pre-Christian western Slovaks was Perun, the god of thunder, and the Slovak national anthem begins with thunder rumbling over the Tatras. But for Švický, a whole pantheon of deities created by him are called upon and celebrated, such as Živa [Life], Roda [Ancestral family] and other frankly constructed personifications of his new age beliefs such as his neologistic transformation of Svarog [Sun-god] into an adjectival form for the expression, Bytosti svargy [Beings of the Sun]. However, he and members of his band, Bytosti [beings, entities] are accomplished musicians, proficient in playing several traditional instruments. Švický composes songs for the band, sometimes based on fragments of folk tunes, sometimes using a common melodic formula for songs of the Spiš region of his birth, a quintonal structure with Lydian scale, with texts composed by him combining so-called pagan spirituality and Slovak patriotism. On the one hand, the patriotism of the first three groups is associated with Perun, but for Švický, it is expressed more by his orientation to the spiritual dimension, and to his frequent didactic camps for children, where they learn traditional rural skills, including how to construct and play the koncovka (See Table 5). What all groups share, however, is patriotism built around a rejection of Christianization as an element of their ethnicity.

\textsuperscript{23} The musical preferences of this group are not known.
But perhaps the best example of the syncretic process in Slovak song is the genre known as *Janské piesne* [St John’s songs], still sung at the summer solstice, but not at church. Groups of young, otherwise Christian Slovaks enact the summer solstice traditions as folklore practice, and songs and chants from the genre are often included in staged folklore performances. Urbancová has compiled a collection of 373 songs from archival collections, published sources and her own field research in towns and villages of the regions. She analyzes them in terms of regional distribution, tonality, form, rhythm and metre, and text (Urbancová 1999). Although she concedes “a reduction of function and content” (13), she claims that rather than being essentially interrupted, this song genre has merely responded to evolutionary changes from pre-Christian times through to the present. The genre is by no means homogeneous, with variations in form, melodies and text, with most notable differences between lowlands and mountain regions (22). But many songs have a venal flavour, despite invoking the blessings of St John, and are associated with fire and fertility, whether in the form sun-like wheels of fire rolled down a hillside, or an effigy burnt in a fire in a field. There are themes of purification, incantations and spells for a successful harvest, or a successful seduction. The incidence of the St John’s song genre is concentrated away from border areas with Czech Republic, Austria and Hungary.

While the small numbers of neo-pagan producers of frankly constructed pre-Christian folklore are on the fringe of Slovak society, the more mainstream and scholarly work of Urbancová reveals that the discourse of ancient roots is nevertheless embedded in mainstream discourse. Her objective analysis of the St John’s song genre exposes these ancient roots, but also shows how syncretic processes have taken place. Another important component of her analysis of the genre is her demonstration of internal diversity, showing an alignment with the discourse of uniqueness of Slovak ethnicity, which trades on inner diversity and richness. But if ancient roots are an important discursive strand, modification also is necessary in order to keep claims to being civilized rather than barbarian, as the term pagan suggests, and the admission of the syncretic process allows this. An example of how the supremacy of Christianity over paganism is expressed artistically for mainstream consumption is the final medley in one of Lúčnica’s programmes, *Karpaty* [The Carpathians].²⁴ Entitled *Vianoce v Karpatoch* [Christmas in the Carpathians], this medley begins with the raw sounds of

²⁴ The items for the programme can be seen on the website: http://http://www.lucnica.sk/index.php?id=127,0,0,1,0,0
the natural horn, evoking the forest, the winter solstice and elemental forces, underscored by the chanting of spells by young girls. But the finale of this last item on the programme is a robust, mixed choral rendition of a Slovak Christmas carol with western European major harmonies and cadences, followed by the tolling of church bells as an imposing coda.

Music of minority cultures

To document at length the music of Slovakia’s ethnic minorities would be to venture outside the scope of this study, but it should be mentioned that scholarship in Slovakia over the last decade has been intensive in this area. Two publications edited by Urbancová contain papers by Slovak ethnomusicological specialists in the musical traditions of Hungarian, Roma, Rusyn, German, Croatian and Jewish communities in Slovakia, and Slovaks abroad in Hungary and in New York. The first, Music of Ethnic Minorities (Urbancová 2000), also contains a bibliography of further literature concerning minority musics, and the second, Traditional Christmas Songs of Ethnic Minorities (Urbancová 2006), is accompanied by a CD with samples relevant to the songs discussed in each chapter.

Diversity, again, defines the discourse here. It must be acknowledged that charges of xenophobia have been laid at the feet of Slovaks, as suggested by the European Union’s mentioned demands that Slovakia address discrimination problems with the Roma population, and by on-going problems with fascism. However, although research into minorities is young in Slovak scholarship, recent scholarship bypasses these social and political problems, and presses for modern civilization in exposing and embracing Slovakia’s minority cultures.

Traditional instruments

The folk music culture of Slovakia today has possibly the most researched and richest range of folk instruments in the European community, but this was not always so. In earlier times they were either considered secular by the church, and therefore profane, or else their importance was superseded by the revival of folk song during the 18th and 19th centuries (Elschek 2002b). An upsurge of interest in them by ethnographic and

---

25 See Table 1, p. 63
### Table 5

Traditional instruments in Slovakia (Elschek 2002b: 484-494)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aerophonic Instruments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>Fujara</em> 26 - This is the only Slovak traditional instrument unique to Slovak traditional music culture. It was added to the UNESCO Intangible Heritage register in 2005. The home of the fujara is the Podpol'anie region in central Slovakia, and it was traditionally used by sheep-herders. Some say that the sound of the fujara calmed the sheep, causing them to graze more efficiently. Fujara was also a solo meditative instrument. A whole genre of men’s solo songs has evolved from this, with singing interspersed with playing. The fujara is an overtone flute about 1.8 metres in length with three finger-holes, connected to a shorter tube of 50-80 centimetres. It is usually made from elder. The fujara has a range of two and a half octaves, and the scale produced is Myxolydian, and it has a soft, overtone-rich, haunting sound. Fujaras are decorated with ornate patterns, often with symbols from the old pre-Christian folk culture.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Koncovka</em> - Another shepherds’ flute, but used throughout the Carpathians as part of Goral music culture, a product of Slovak and Polish or Ukrainian elements. It is also associated with the meditative songs of a lone shepherd, with singing and playing interspersed, but it is also widely used in dance ensembles because of the agility and ornamentation made possible by its properties. It is half a metre to a metre in length, and hollowed out to give a narrow bore, with no holes. The end can be stopped with the finger, so that both an open and a closed series of notes can be produced. The Lydian scale is produced by the koncovka, generating a large Lydian song genre.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Pišťalka</em> - This 6 hole whistle is another shepherds’ flute. Because all notes of the diatonic scale are possible without over-blowing or half covering the holes, the intricacy and ornamentation possible is exploited throughout the regions in dance ensembles. Long “fluttering” of notes is a characteristic of music played by the pišťalka.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Dvojačka</em> - This is a double flute, combining the characteristics of the koncovka and the pišťalka, so that melody and drone can be played simultaneously. Sometimes the melody is stated with the tube with holes, and the drone is added.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Gajda</em> - Gajdy, or some variation of bagpipes, are considered as Pan-European, but can be found concentrated in some regions, often an essential instrument in dance music ensembles. The most complex variations in playing can be found amongst the central Slovak shepherds. An example is quoted by Elschek (2002b: 487).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Heligón</em> - This is synonymous with accordion. A modern addition to traditional ensembles especially in northern Slovakia, the heligón has given rise to a whole genre of humorous and flirtatious songs.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

26 Examples of the fujara and the other flutes can be heard on the website: http://www.fujara.sk
Chordophonic Instruments

*Cembalom* - A predecessor of the hammer dulcimer, the cembalom has forty-eight strings stretched over a large sounding board and sounded with small hammers. It is played all over the Central and Eastern European region, and is an important member of instrumental ensembles all over Slovakia. It is also a solo instrument, with virtuosic players who have become famous, such as Jan Berky-Mrenica27.

*Violin, viola cello, double bass* - These stringed instruments and versions of them are used in throughout the Central and Eastern European region. There is variation according to regions, in shape, size, and manner of construction and playing. The first violinist’s reputation is characteristically based on the virtuosity of ornamentation28.

Idiophonic Instruments

*Drumbľa* - This is the commonly known Jew’s harp, ubiquitous in traditional music worldwide. one of the oldest European instruments. It consists of a piece of metal on a small frame held against the teeth. The piece of metal is plucked with the finger, and although there is only one pitch, the overtones can be manipulated by altering the mouth cavity.

*Rattles, sticks, bells* - These are only a few of the instruments used in Slovakia as well as the entire Central European region. In the Gemer region, the manufacture of finely tuned sheep’s bells, exported to other Eastern European countries, has a long tradition.

Membranophonic Instruments

*Drums, combs, lures* - This is the smallest number of instruments in traditional Slovak music. All those mentioned come in many sizes and variations.

anthropological researchers marked the first half of the 20th century, but in the second half of the century, independent research into traditional instruments as integral to folk culture was undertaken in Slovak scholarship (482-483).

Of the 205 different instruments used in traditional music in Slovakia today, 50 percent are aerophones, 24 percent are chordophones, 18.5 percent are idiophones, and 7.3 percent are membranophones (486). Not all instruments can be mentioned, but Table 5 lists the main ones from each group. This summary from Slovakia’s foremost organologist almost stands alone, but some points should be made. First, when Elschek’s account places a certain instrumental genre as being performed to this day, he

27 A sample of Berky-Mrenica’s playing can be heard on the website: https://eee.uci.edu/programs/garfias/sound-recordings/slovak.html
28 A typical transcription of some ornaments played by Jozef Česláň-Kroka from a recording made in the 1930’s is supplied by Elschek (Elschek 2002b: 492).
does not mean that the heart-land of Slovakia is presently peopled, for example, with shepherds and peasants, but rather, he is espousing the concept that tradition evolves, a concept espoused in this study. In this sense, he speaks the truth, as Slovaks in myriad folklore troupes are indeed performing these musical traditions, as the following discussion of music folklore troupes will show. Another point, made by Elschek himself, is that in an important respect, Slovak instrumental folk music is as important as the song repertoire, in that it “mirrors” the same, adding important aesthetic aspects to them (2002b: 497). Furthermore, because textual limitations are not imposed by instrumental music, ethnic and national boundaries have been permeable, enabling Slovak folk music to inspire and be inspired by the music of European contexts.

Of the instruments used in Slovak traditional music, only the fujara is uniquely Slovak. In 2003, it was added to UNESCO’s Intangible Heritage register. The fujara is essentially a pipe instrument of mountain sheep-herders, has a haunting sound with a range of three octaves, and produces a myxolydian scale. Its main tube can be two metres in length, with a shorter tube of about 60 centimetres. It is typically a solo instrument, with singing by the player interspersed. Songs are balladic or meditative, traditionally played and sung by men. Combining with other instruments is sometimes attempted by contemporary fusion groups, but because of its overtone richness, blending is problematic, and rarely successful. Typically, fujaras are made of elder from the forest, although other timbers are used, but all are ornately decorated with emblems, many of which are claimed to be ancient pre-Christian motifs. The importance for Slovaks of the fujara is that it embodies claims of ethnic uniqueness, and autochthonous roots in the mountains, and in rural culture. Without the fujara, Slovak organology would possibly have to rely on the discourse of diversity and Pan-European connections, but because of the fujara, a discourse of ethnic distinction can be supported.

Staged music folklore

The case has already been made for regarding staged folklore as traditional practice, and the truth of that claim is supported by Kiliánová’s work with Zuzana Selecká, a Slovak woman born in 1899, and who died in the 1980s (Kiliánová 1992). The author shows how this devotee of traditional Slovak song and dance folklore embodied it, while

meeting the challenges of changing historical and political pressures with respect to folklore through the Czechoslovak Republic between the Wars, through Slovakia’s years as Hitler’s protectorate during World War II, through to the extraordinary growth of performed music folklore under the socialist regime. As Švehlík points out, however, not only external pressures from outside have been implicated in transforming folkloristic phenomena, but forces from inside the culture have also contributed to modification of their forms and functions. For example, Štúr and his fellow awokeners, in reviving Slovak folk culture in the 19th century for autonomist reasons, were promoting folklorism as defined by Švehlík (1992). Zuzana Selecká’s witness cannot give insight into music folklore’s evolution since the fall of the socialist regime, but in examining the contemporary status of staged music folklore production in Slovakia, it is tempting to wonder if the same attestations of beauty she expressed concerning Slovak folklore, and her enduring creative impulse until her death before the regime’s collapse, are enough to explain the continued flourishing of staged manifestations up to the present. If so, then aesthetic and emotional commitment by individuals performing and witnessing them must be included in the discourse beside the strands of defensive ethnicity, and collaboration with nationalist impulses, supporting the case for regarding Slovak staged music folklore as traditional practice.

Claims of diversity are also central to scholarly discourse concerning staged music folklore in Slovakia. Figure 4 shows the culmination of 90 years of research published 2005 concerning regional micro-cultural boundaries. The findings of 13 contemporary ethnologists, authored by Zuzana Beňušková (2005), describe the diversity of micro-cultures in Slovakia in terms of geography, culture-forming historical elements, ethnicity, religion, folk arts, traditional occupations, dress, architecture, “spiritual” culture and folklore, and music folklore troupes (8-9). The regional boundaries indicated in Figure 4 show how the on-going practices of these cultural phenomena have crystallized into recognizably discreet regions.

In Table 6, the music folklore troupes and main folk cultural events mentioned by Beňušková and her team have been extracted and collated, to show the extent and diversity of contemporary activity in this genre. However, a number of further points can be made from exploring this information. First, the publication was found in 2006 while searching the shelves of the retail shop front of Veda, the publishing arm of the SAV. In 2008 the shop could no longer be found at its previous location, close to the
main Bratislava train station. It may have been possible to search for it, as to whether it has been moved, or is still in existence, but the point is that access to this kind of information was no longer straightforward for a searching foreigner in 2008. Rather, information about performances of music folklore troupes is limited to travel and touristic websites about Slovakia. The second point is that the list of troupes and activities given by Beňušková is by no means exhaustive, as acknowledged by the authors. Frequently, the text indicates that those specifically named are only examples of the best-known or most popular. Also, the list does not include well-known, high quality troupes such as Technik, established in 1953 at the Slovak Technical University, Ekonóm, a troupe attached to the School of Economics, or Devín and Studienka. The third insight which can be drawn from Table 6 is that an impression can be given of how successfully the listed music folklore proponents have negotiated the passage from full financial support from the socialist era’s Ministry of Culture, to a more entrepreneurial approach. In order to get an impression of the entrepreneurial spirit, an asterisk was added if the troupe has its own web page, and if the site was up-dated since 2003. Of the 22 in that category, 16 were up-dated in 2009 or more recently, or have no date but are current, in an online journal format. This suggests that approximately one
Table 6

Regional categorization of music folklore troupes and activities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Music folklore troupes</th>
<th>Festivals or special features</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Záhorie a oblast' Myjavské pahorkatiny</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skaličan*</td>
<td>Brezová</td>
<td>Vienok* (children)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brezová</td>
<td>Kopaničia*</td>
<td>Grbačieta (Croatian, children)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vienok* (children)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Centre of Great Moravia 8th</td>
<td>Western Slovakia Folk Festival</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preponderance of ironic,</td>
<td>Humorous songs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Croatian Festival</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Podunajsko</td>
<td>Zitnoostrovský súbor piesni a tancov Hajóš</td>
<td>Island culture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Žitnoostrovský súbor piesni a tancov Hajóš</td>
<td></td>
<td>Shrovetide festival with King of Whitsun and helpers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Many children’s troupes under CEMADOK (cultural organization for Hungarians in Slovakia)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Days of Culture of János Bihari, gypsy musician</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medzi Malými Karpatmi a Váhom</td>
<td>Slnéčnica*</td>
<td>Mixed, peasant wine culture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Striebornica</td>
<td>Dudváh</td>
<td>One of Slovakia’s oldest troupes (from Čataj, 1928)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Un-named troupe from Cifer</td>
<td>Un-named troupe from Chorvatský Grob (Croatian)</td>
<td>Humorous verse and song depicting peasant wisdom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children’s folklore festival</td>
<td>Island culture</td>
<td>Sacred music</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mixed, peasant wine culture</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One of Slovakia’s oldest troupes (from Čataj, 1928)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Humorous verse and song</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sung and wise</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sacred music</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ponomie</td>
<td>Ponitran*</td>
<td>Unique, archaic songs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zobor*</td>
<td>Furmani</td>
<td>Folklore Competition at Nitra Academy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Borinka</td>
<td>Inovec*</td>
<td>Days of Christian Slovak Carols</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inovec*</td>
<td>Janošík*</td>
<td>Sacred music</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vtáčnik</td>
<td></td>
<td>University of Constantine the Philosopher in Nitra: Departments of Musicology and Ethnomusicology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tekov</td>
<td>Vatra*</td>
<td>Bagpipe festival</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inovec</td>
<td>Zlatňanka</td>
<td>Accordion festival</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Groups from Vrabel and Kozárovce</td>
<td></td>
<td>Zlaté Moravce children’s festival</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enactment of Hungarian migrations</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stredné Považie a Kysuce</td>
<td>Považan</td>
<td>Mníchová Lehota festival</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Váh</td>
<td>Trenčan</td>
<td>Days of National Culture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Družba*</td>
<td>Vršatec</td>
<td>Days of Goral Culture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stavbar*</td>
<td>Rozsutec*</td>
<td>Beskydské celebrations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kysučan*</td>
<td>Jedľovina*</td>
<td>Seniors’ Folk Festival</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kelčovan* (children)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Biennial countrywide</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mníchová Lehota festival</td>
<td></td>
<td>competition for film, television, video representations of folk culture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Days of National Culture</td>
<td></td>
<td>Muchovci brothers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Days of Goral Culture</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beskydské celebrations</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seniors’ Folk Festival</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biennial countrywide</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>competition for film, television, video representations of folk culture</td>
<td></td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Region</td>
<td>Music folklore troupes</td>
<td>Festivals or special features</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------</td>
<td>------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orava</td>
<td>Oravan</td>
<td>Mountain calls (500-1,000 metres)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pilsko (children)</td>
<td>Accordion music</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Podohráčský folk celebrations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Folk music (strings) festival</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Bagpipes festival</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turiec</td>
<td>Turiec</td>
<td>Turčianska Folk Festival</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tiesňavan</td>
<td>August celebrations in Martin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Many children’s troupe (un-named)</td>
<td>(national historical culture)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liptov</td>
<td>Liptov</td>
<td>Východná Folk Festival</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Váh</td>
<td>One of Slovakia’s oldest troupes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tatrín</td>
<td>(from Sliačov, 1932)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Many children’s troupe (un-named)</td>
<td>Folk embroidery and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>needlework school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Podpoľanie a Horehronie</td>
<td>Marína*</td>
<td>Podpoľanie Folk Festival</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Poľana*</td>
<td>Days of song and dance (Heľpa)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Urpín*</td>
<td>Days of church and Old Slavic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bystrín*</td>
<td>music in Telgárt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Partizán</td>
<td>Eurofolklore Festival in Banská</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mostár</td>
<td>Bystrica</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Heľpa</td>
<td>Art school in Detva for</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hriňovčan</td>
<td>manufacturing folk instruments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Kýčera (children)</td>
<td>Men’s polyphonic singing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Očovan* (troupe est. 1936)</td>
<td>Virtuosic string and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Datelinka (instrumental)</td>
<td>cembalom ensembles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hrončekovcov (instrumental)</td>
<td>Fujara and mountain pipes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Palľáčovcov (instrumental)</td>
<td>Gipsy string music of Julius</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pecníkovcov (instrumental)</td>
<td>Bartoš-Šuka</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Bethlehem rites</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Expulsion of Morena</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Storytelling of Zuzana Selecká</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Young men’s sled races</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hont</td>
<td>No named troupes</td>
<td>Similar to Novohrad and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>northern Podpolanie</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Hontianské celebrations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Hontianska parade celebrations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Bagpipes music</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Accordion, cithara, 6-hole flute</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>music</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Traditional mining culture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>workshops</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Novohrad</td>
<td>No named troupes</td>
<td>Similar to Hont and Podpoľanie</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Traditional mining culture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gemer a Malohont</td>
<td>Gemer</td>
<td>Hungarian and Roma influences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Vepor</td>
<td>Klenovská rontouka</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rimavaňa Háj</td>
<td>Folklore celebrations in Rej dová</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 6 continued

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Music folklore troupes</th>
<th>Festivals or special features</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Spiš</td>
<td>Magura</td>
<td>Spišské folklore celebrations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Čečina</td>
<td>Pieninský National Park celebrations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Europe-wide peasant culture celebrations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Zamagurské celebrations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Rusyn culture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Roma cembalom music</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>German minority culture celebrations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Sailing on the Danube celebrations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Šariš</td>
<td>Sarišan*</td>
<td>Celebration of Rusyn-Ukraine culture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Torysa</td>
<td>Šariš festival to honour Jožko Príhoda, Rusyn singer (biennial)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sabinovčan</td>
<td>Šariš Folk Festival</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Čerhovčan</td>
<td>Hornotoryský Folk Festival</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PULS (Rusyn)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Karpaťanin (Rusyn)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Makovica (Rusyn)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Many children’s troupes (un-named)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abovsko-turnianska oblasť</td>
<td>Zeleziar*</td>
<td>Sariš and Hungarian influence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Čarnica</td>
<td>International Folk Festival (Košice)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Jahodná</td>
<td>Anthology of Children’s Folklore celebration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hornád</td>
<td>Days of Košice Folklore, performance and pedagogy sessions for teachers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Torysa</td>
<td>Abov Folk Festival (triennial)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Romathan (Gypsy)</td>
<td>House of Folk Dance Bethlehem in Hungarian micro-region</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zemplín</td>
<td>Zemplín</td>
<td>Zemplín Celebrations (international)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Laborec</td>
<td>“O Šaffovu ostrohu” competition for troupes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Kalina</td>
<td>Folklore festivals in Toplianská Dolina, Humenné, Sedliska-Podčiela</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Vihorlat</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Vranovčan</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Many children’s troupes (un-named)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

third of the troupes named appear to be thriving on their own by means of successfully applying for grants made available by the Ministry of Culture or local cultural organizations, together with private sponsorship. For example, Železiar, the troupe based in Slovakia’s second city, Košice, currently names Termostav-mráz Ltd, an industrial thermal insulation company, HPK Engineering, Hutné montáže, a mining construction company, and Gold Piano Service, a piano and keyboard instrument servicing and sales advisory company amongst its sponsors.
Of the remaining forty or so troupes listed, at least 13 have been taken up and promoted online by the JankoHraško.sk organization, a portal for gathering and dispersing information about folklore activities online, and co-ordinating radio and television programmes. The name of the organization references one of Slovakia’s favourite folk tales about a pea-sized boy, Janko Hraško [Johnny Little Pea] who, after outwitting adversaries in the course of his adventures, ends by marrying the princess (Dobšinský 2001). The portal lists amongst its many partners Akcent, the mentioned music publishing and recording company, Slovak Radio, Patriot television, cultural organizations from Záhorie and Orava regions, the Tourism in Slovakia online organization, and online organizations such as the gipsy online radio site, gipsy.sk and heligonka.sk for co-ordinating accordion music activity. A catalogue of large and small festivals and competitions can be accessed from the JankoHraško website.

While entrepreneurial skills have been taken up by proponents of Slovak music folklore, and while the foregoing information shows a healthy music folklore culture, a person foreign to the Slovak cultural environment may first need to know the name of a troupe, or have prior interest in the genre, unless a tourist site had accidentally succeeded as a conduit for this information. For example, a search based on search-words ‘Slovak music folklore’ leads to travel websites, or a haphazard selection of websites of individual troupes from regions most probably unknown to a foreign searcher or tourist. The suspicion is confirmed that Slovak music and dance folklore is important for Slovaks. If it is to be important for foreigners too, the skills for disseminating information about how to access it are not as well-developed as for internal communication of information to sustain Slovak music cultural life.

Conclusions

This overview represents a tangle of discursive strands, but some important ones can be identified. In the case of classical music, the claims to European civilization are the strongest threads. Add to this the fact that this genre has the most unequivocal government support, and the thread is stronger. While the prolificity and excellence of the choral culture, and its embedded history also attest to claims of European civilization, backing by the government is much reduced since communist times, and yet from the church and the community those notes are nevertheless sounded vigorously, as they were before and during the communist era. The entrepreneurial
success and high level of organization also attest to the discourse of modernity having been embraced in the practice of these musical genres, by the Ministry of Culture and the Bratislava Music Agency respectively. The high participation rate of musicians and singers confirms the importance of classical and choral music in Slovak musical life.

The success of the Pohoda World Music festival also shows the will to embrace modernity with a global dimension. Entrepreneurial competence and the inclusion of recognized virtuosi from many countries and cultures worldwide characterize the reality of Pohoda. However, a reactionary theme can be seen to underlie the vitality of the discourse, in that rejection of oppression, and rejection of old enmities is explicitly professed by the originator and organizer of the festival. Since the festival is mostly attended by young Slovaks, this could represent the most important discourse for Slovak society in the future in counteracting fascist and xenophobic trends.

But while these genres also express variety and richness, the discourse around them is not primarily concerned with difference. The flourishing traditional music culture, on the other hand, includes the claim of uniqueness, whether in the scholarly domains of organology, folk song analysis, or staged music folklore. Even the richness and diversity proven by the data supplied in documenting these genres is used to claim uniqueness, in the sense that they are ‘richer and more various’ than the musics of others. In this, an indirect route to claiming European civilization can be identified, but the argument hinges on difference. A more direct expression of modernity and civilization is the recent emergence of the study of the folk music of minority cultures within Slovakia, which serves to redress the exclusivities of the past, developed as a reaction to marginalization and oppression from outside.

The discourse of history and politics permeates all genres, including staged music folklore. But claims to uniqueness are more central to it than to that of other genres, and in all respects, staged music folklore could be said to represent the discourse of defensive ethnicity for Slovaks. If others have enticed Slovaks from their so-called natural surroundings in order to perform their folklore, then Slovaks appear to have embraced this form of traditional music making, and Slovak ethnological scholarship is deeply concerned with questions of its significance. Despite a degree of resistance during the communist era resulting from perceived political manipulation, its incidence is now increasing. Much of the rhetoric surrounding it still advertises its virtuosity,
richness and diversity, and archaic forms, but the explicit socialist ideology has disappeared. It should also be mentioned that contemporary efforts to inculcate Slovak children and young people with the skills for staged music folklore appear to be successful, even if the proportion of participating children on stage may be higher than the proportion of children in audiences for performances, exemplified by the photograph in Figure 5, taken by the researcher at an annual regional festival held in the village of Krivosúd-Bodovka, where groups from towns and villages around Trenčín participated.

Figure 5
Young participants at Seniors’ Festival, Krivosúd-Bodovka, June 2006

Within the staged music folklore genre, however, Lúčnica has a special place. It was established for students to achieve professional folkloric performance skills to a standard fit for export abroad, a mission which remains intact. Although its performing members are not full-time professionals, it is still being supported by the Ministry of Culture. The conflation of Professor Nosál with Lúčnica as an entity also contributes to its uniqueness, in that the artistic component of Lúčnica’s performances has evolved through the continuous dedication of one man, in whom the pride and trust of Slovak
audiences is invested. The artistry and excellence of Lúčnica, as a result, is expected to earn the approval of audiences worldwide. So, Lúčnica represents not only traditional music folklore for Slovaks, and thence Slovak ethnicity, but also underpins their claims to excellence and civilization. While dissemination abroad of actual knowledge concerning the importance of this genre of Slovak music in Slovak society is not well-organized, Lúčnica has been entrusted with an ambassadorial role, so the onus for having claims of uniqueness and modern civilization accepted abroad is left to them.

However, gatherings and performances are an interactional event. In Melbourne in October 2007, the co-participants in the events selected for data collection were not domestic Slovaks, and the meaning created was different from that produced by performances at home, where performers and audiences collaborate in traditional cultural practice. The question is whether Lúčnica’s visit to Australia could be explained in terms of the rhetoric of ‘spreading culture’, or whether the traditional Slovak folk music and dance culture was lost in translation. An even more epistemologically correct question, according to the model adopted for this thesis, concerns the meaning collaboratively produced in real time at the sites where data were collected.
Chapter 4: Ethnographic account

Background

The first phase of research into Lúčnica’s performance in Melbourne was conducted at an evening celebration organized to welcome the troupe at the commencement of the Australian leg of their Oceania tour in 2007. They arrived in Melbourne from Taiwan on the morning of Saturday 6 October, attended the welcome celebration at the Slovak Social Club of Ľudovít Stúr in Laverton the same evening, and performed at Hamer Hall two days later on Monday 8 October. The welcome event on 6 October was listed on the club’s calendar as ‘Fun with Lúčnica’. The evening at the club was regarded in the light of Goffman’s assertion that such an occasion is “a social reality in its own right” (1963: 196). The focus of this occasion was Lúčnica as an embodiment of special and important meanings for those assembled, and on what evidence might be found for understanding how these meanings were created. First, Lúčnica embodies the rhetoric of Slovak traditional music folklore, of beauty, richness, diversity, historicity, and pride in Slovak ethnicity. They also carry an ambassadorial tradition, whose genealogy can be traced from Hungarian balls, from world fairs in the time of Herder, through to regular tours abroad during the communist era and since its demise. In these respects, Lúčnica could be seen as the unifying factor, as giving the occasion at the club on October 6 special significance.

The chapter begins by giving a profile of the participants in this event. Information about the migration of Slovaks to Australia, and more detailed information concerning the Melbourne Slovak community and its history is given. The importance of this is that the Slovak participants in the event examined in this chapter brought their own discourse with them, embodied in their personalities, their histories, their building and their activities. Then, since the researcher was a key participant, previous immersion in Slovak music culture in Slovakia, and also the process of becoming involved with the Melbourne Slovak community are described and discussed. The implications of these contextual features for the methodological approach adopted for analyzing the data collected at this event are then discussed. The data in the form of ethnographic notes taken at the ‘Fun with Lúčnica’ celebration are then presented, and analyzed in terms of Goffman’s unfocussed and focussed interactions, two main pillars of his writings concerning the order of interaction. These results are then interpreted in relation to
Goffman’s model. The conclusion is presented in two parts. First, the conclusions concerning what this event meant in terms of the discourse of Slovak ethnicity are given, then the effectiveness of the application of Goffman’s methodology for answering such a question is evaluated.

**The participants**

The 200 or so club patrons in attendance at this gathering were exclusively members of the Slovak Australian community, except for me and three or four who were connected by marriage or friendship to Slovak Australians. Virtually all of them were Lutheran Slovaks, having migrated from the former Yugoslavia. A personal conversation with a fellow patron for the evening revealed that there was one table of ‘Catholics’, which meant that Slovak migrants from Slovakia itself were under-represented at this gathering. The following summary of Slovak migration to Australia serves to explain the relationship of this gathering of Slovaks to the wider Australian Slovak community.

**Slovak migration to Australia**

From its beginning, the migration of Czechs and Slovaks to Australia was dogged with ambiguities. Before World War I, those from the western part of Austro-Hungary were registered as ‘Austrian’, and those from the east as ‘Hungarian’ up until the collapse of the Empire after the War (Cigler 1983). During the 17th, 18th and 19th centuries, economic and social hardship had driven many ethnic Slovaks from the east of the Empire to settle in the south-eastern regions, now Serbia, Croatia, Montenegro and Romania. But many Slovaks went further abroad, so that by the last decades of the 19th century, the United States of America was home for 20 percent of existing Slovaks worldwide (Vnuk 2001). It was not until the United States restricted immigration after World War I that significant numbers of migrants from the newly amalgamated Czechoslovakia went to Canada, France, Belgium, Argentina and Australia. By the end of the War, it is estimated that there were 1,484 Czechs and Slovaks in Australia. However, the first big wave of Czechoslovak immigrants to Australia arrived between 1948 and 1950, being Displaced Persons fleeing from the communist takeover of Czechoslovakia after World War II. They were able to take advantage of free transportation from refugee camps in Europe to their country of choice, so that by the 1954 Australian census, 12,680 were identified as Czechoslovaks (Cigler 1973; Vnuk
Vnuk claims that between 2,500 and 3,000 of these were ethnic Slovaks, who settled mainly in Melbourne, Sydney and Brisbane, with smaller numbers settling in Newcastle and Wollongong, Geelong and Benalla, and Launceston, Tasmania.

However, perhaps Vnuk’s estimation was too conservative, or hampered by the fact that Czechs and Slovak were not distinguished from each other when registered by Australian immigration officials. During the 1950s, Australia had opened its doors to refugees from Hungary and the former Yugoslavia, of whom between 3,000 and 4,000 were those ethnic Slovaks who had been populating the south-eastern regions of the Austro-Hungarian Empire for 250 years, regions which had become Yugoslav territories after World War 1, and these immigrants would not have been registered as Slovak. The Báčka (part of modern Hungary and Serbia), the Voivodina (in modern Serbia), and the Banát (in modern Romania) regions were those with the highest concentration of ethnic Slovaks. It is estimated that 67,000 Slovaks live in the former Yugoslavia today, mostly in modern Serbia, and especially since the fall of the Miloševic regime in October 2000, strong links have been forged between these communities and Slovakia through the still active Slovak cultural organization, Matica slovenská (Immigration and Refugee Board 1994).

The third wave of Slovaks was, like the first, from modern Czech and Slovak territories, Czechoslovakia at the time, rather than from the former Yugoslavia. It followed the quashing of the Prague Spring in August 1968, when Russian tanks rolled down the streets of Prague. The upshot of these movements is that by the 1996 Australian census, of a total of 17,293 self-identifying as Czechoslovak, Czech or Slovak, there were between 6,500 and 8,000 ethnic Slovaks, with the largest communities in Melbourne and Sydney (Vnuk 2001). By 2002, those numbers swelled to 12,000 self-identified Slovaks, 5,000 of whom were, once again, from the former Yugoslavia. The gathered patrons on 6 October at the Slovak Social Club were mainly representative of this group of ethnic Slovaks from the former Yugoslavia, having migrated over the last half-century.
The Slovak community in Melbourne

From 1949 to 1950, there was an upsurge in the establishment of cultural organizations amongst Czechoslovak Australians, with marginalization of specifically Slovak organizations, reflecting the situation at home. Nevertheless, the Czech language newspaper, Hlas domová [Voice from Home] devoted 20 percent of its space to articles in the Slovak language. This concession was helped by the political reforms of the Slovak, Alexander Dubček, who had become Czechoslovak president, and who had achieved recognition of Slovak claims to autonomy in the home country (Cigler 1973). Many clubs were short-lived because they were too specific in their focus, but two that survived were branches of the Association of Australian Slovaks in Melbourne and Sydney respectively. These associations were affiliated with the Slovak Association in Pittsburgh, because Slovaks in Australia had brought their Slovak autonomist aspirations from the past into the present, and refused to cooperate with the Czechoslovakist Australian organization. By 1973, there was also a Slovak Club in Melbourne, with a mainly social function, and soccer clubs in Adelaide and Sydney. But as Cigler observed, religion was equivalent to patriotism for Slovaks, and because there had been many Catholic priests amongst the Slovak Displaced Persons, the Slovak Catholic churches in Melbourne and Sydney became hubs of social activity (1973: 51). Although there were few Protestant clergy to begin with, this changed dramatically with the mentioned influx over the next decades of ‘Yugoslav’ Slovaks, who mainly gravitated to the western suburbs of Altona and Laverton in Melbourne, about 22 kilometres from the city centre, where the Slovak Lutheran church was established. The church and its large hall were built in Point Cook Road, a pleasant, residential part of Laverton, providing a meeting place where ‘Yugoslav’ Slovaks could worship and have regular social gatherings.

The welcome celebration for Lúčnica was held at the Slovak Social Club of Ľudovít Štúr in Laverton, which was built in the same suburb as the Lutheran church. Writing in 1973, Cigler observed that the Lutherans still did not talk to the Catholics (58). But in Melbourne at least, the Lutheran Slovaks made a huge investment in establishing a cultural centre for the Slovak community, which increased after the 1980s. The planning and building of the Slovenský Dom Ľudovita Štúra [The Slovak Social Club of Ľudovít Štúr] was achieved with volunteer labour. Built in the style of a large Slovak chalet, the clubhouse is now a lively centre for Slovak activities, with an impressive annual
calendar of social and cultural events. Sadly, the green fields once surrounding the clubhouse are now built out with warehouses and factories. In a personal conversation at the club in September 2007, a patron had explained that whereas the Catholic Slovaks in Melbourne had not often associated with them in the past, a small but increasing number of Catholic Slovak Australians from Slovakia had begun attending events at the club in Laverton over the last 10 years.

The intercession of Matica slovenská in helping the Slovaks in the former Yugoslavia to preserve their Slovak culture and identity in those territories up until the present is noteworthy, though it is impossible to prove how great an impact that organization has made on the retention of their ethnic identification. Despite the problem of unfathomable causes, however, it is said by Slovaks from both Slovakia and from the former Yugoslavia, that the Slovak language spoken by these Melbourne ‘Yugoslav’ Slovaks remains most grammatically and prosodically similar to the clear, refined Slovak of Central Slovakia codified by Ľudovit Štúr in 1843, and personal experience bears out this fact. The naming of the club after him further demonstrates their investment in their Slovak heritage, and acknowledges Štúr, the Lutheran awakener of Slovak national consciousness in the 19th century, as their champion. The style of the building embodies a representation of Slovak ethnicity that belongs to the mother country. It resembles a chalet in the mountains of Slovakia, with solid, glowing timbers, roofed with wooden shingles.

The foyer of the building opens into a hall in which a dozen or so round tables are distributed when not pushed to the side to clear the dance floor, each capable of seating about 10 people. In the foyer a calendar of events is posted. Above the doorway are photographs of earlier events, and gatherings of the community, including Slovak sausage-making activities and special events. There is a proscenium stage, with stairs behind it leading to a library above the stage. Beside the stage is a kitchen where Slovak food such as schnitzel, sausage, gulasch, potatoes and salad is prepared. At the back of the hall is a well-stocked bar. In all these respects, the clubhouse exudes the ambience of a small piece of Slovak social life, whether remembered from life in Slovak territories, or from the Slovak settlements in Yugoslavia, or a conflation of both.


The researcher as participant-observer

Previous immersion in Slovak society and in Slovak musical life for five years inevitably informed my selection of which questions to ask, where to direct my attention, and how I introduced myself to members of the Slovak community. As mentioned, the behaviour of Slovak friends and other audience members at music folklore performances in Slovakia had caught my attention. I was intrigued as to the reasons for these performances being so well-attended, and pondered over the certain hushed tone often accompanying suggestions by friends and colleagues when recommending the ‘best’ ones for me to attend, as a foreigner and a musician. Other implications of previous immersion were the fact that I was able to converse to some extent in Slovak with some participants, and had knowledge of and sympathies for Slovak culture which I would not otherwise have had. Then through conversations with Slovaks and increasing absorption of historical context, I became sensitized to the complexities of Slovak ethnicity construction, in Slovakia, in the former Yugoslavia, and especially in Australia, where I have lived my life. These considerations necessarily shaped the questions and organization of this entire project. Another crucial aspect of my identity was that in order to satisfy ethical requirements as prescribed by my university, I had to include in my introductions the fact that I was engaged in academic study at an Australian university.

Methods of data collection: Issues and problems

My entrée into the Melbourne community was fraught with ambiguities. In the first place, my introduction as someone wishing to study Slovak traditional music performance was, understandably, translated as being interested in study of the music itself. One of my first contacts was the Lutheran minister, who immediately invited me to attend Fathers’ Day celebrations at the Slovak club in September, a month before Lúčnica’s visit, and a special service at the Slovak Lutheran church the following day. He explained that the children’s group would be performing musical items on both occasions. On those occasions, I was formally and unexpectedly introduced to the respective large gatherings by the minister and the Club president, as someone “studying Slovak folk music”. Given this inevitability, a certain disjuncture between my perceived role and my actual purpose was prescribed. Nevertheless, my hosts were eager to provide me with opportunities to conduct whatever research I
intended. Possibilities for data collection according to my own observations and questions were allowed to emerge, and I was able to plan to take ethnographic notes, to record an interview with Professor Nosáľ at the planned welcome celebration for the troupe a month later, and to conduct an audience survey at Lúčnica’s performance at Hamer Hall.

Carrying this identity, on the evening of 6 October, I joined the same group at the same table at which I had been welcomed the previous month. Greetings were cordial, and much food, drink and conversation were shared. I was aware that the majority of people present had been either in the congregation at the Lutheran church or the gathering at the Fathers’ Day celebrations at the Club in September. Nevertheless, as participant-observer, I took time out to take notes in a small note-pad. My interest was in watching interactions amongst individuals, and between main speakers and performers and the gathered patrons as a collective. The notes were transcribed into coherent sentences, and remembered details added, immediately after returning to my hotel.

**Ethnographic notes and analyses**

In Goffman’s view, occasions such as the welcome celebration evening are occasions in their own right, having a distinctive *cosmology*, defined by certain features at a primary level. For example, such defining features as the venue for the occasion can be considered what Goffman calls *guided doings*. The physical attributes and ambience of the club were integral to the primary framework which bounded this event, forming and being formed by the aims and will of participants who were members of the Melbourne Slovak community, and therefore, spoke to all assembled, including myself and the Catholic Slovak newcomers, of the Slovak ethnicity of the predominantly Lutheran Slovaks from the former Yugoslav states. Secondly, the title of the evening as advertized in newsletters at the Lutheran church, in the Czech newspaper, and by word of mouth was ‘Fun with Lúčnica’, joining expectations regarding Lúčnica, the quintessential face of staged Slovak music folklore, into the primary framework of this occasion, and as such could be considered as an important *guided doing* that defined the *cosmology* of the occasion.

However, the *cosmology* of an occasion is not regarded by Goffman, at least in this body of his work, as prescriptive of the behaviour of participants in those occasions.
Figure 6

Ethnographic notes

1. Upon my arrival at the club at 7pm, the club president informed me that
2. Professor Nosáľ had not flown to Australia with the troupe that day, but had
3. returned to Slovakia from Taipei. I was told I would be able, however, to
4. conduct a recorded interview with the troupe manager at some time during the
5. evening. The library above the stage was offered as a venue. I asked him
6. how the programme would proceed, and he told me that after some speeches
7. I would be able to interview the troupe manager. Having integrated these realities
8. I remained open to the possibilities of the next few hours, and was kindly
9. invited to join the same table at the back of the hall, by the same patrons
10. with whom I had spent the Fathers’ Day celebration the previous month.
11. These were Slovaks of late middle age who had migrated from the former Yu-
12. slavia. I decided to observe the behaviour of the patrons at large and accept
13. opportunities as they unfolded. By about 8.30pm, an hour and a half after the
14. evening had begun, the clubhouse was filled with approximately 200 patrons,
15. twice as many as on the previous occasion of the Fathers’ Day celebration.
16. There were people at every table, talking, laughing and eating, some still
17. queuing for the dinner being served from the kitchen beside and behind the
18. the stage, or making their way back to their table with plates of hot food,
19. avoiding the children running around. The resident rock-band was on the
20. stage, playing what could be described as soft Slovak-rock ballads, many of
21. which were composed by a self-taught musician from the ‘Yugoslav’ Slovak
22. community. Young adults and teenagers stood in the entrance way or outside
23. talking and smoking. At about 8.30pm, while I was chatting outside with a
24. young Macedonian couple with Slovak family connections, whom I had met
25. previously at the club, three white mini-vans pulled into the parking spaces
26. left vacant for them right in front of the entrance. The first van contained the
27. tour organizer, who had travelled with the troupe from their hotel in the city
28. centre, and their manager. The club president, who was waiting outside,
29. met these men as they emerged from the van, and there was much hugging
30. and animated talk. Meanwhile, the troupe members slowly climbed out
31. of the vans and wandered inside. Most of the 27 young dancers wore taupe-
32. coloured T-shirts with a Lúčnica logo and jeans. The boys were handsome,
33. with the trim, fit bodies of professional dancers, and the girls were beautiful,
34. again with trim, fit dancers’ physique. The five musicians who had come to
35. the club (three were absent) wore red T-shirts and black trousers. The leader,
36. Martin Sleziak, is a big man, and on this occasion showed a gruff, un-
37. smiling demeanour, except when greeting people he knew. Tables inside had been
38. reserved for the whole troupe, and they slowly found their way to a place to
39. sit, with a few stopping to be greeted by what appeared to be old friends or
40. individuals with previous connections. The majority of patrons at tables or
41. standing near the bar did not show any obvious signs of having noticed the
42. troupe’s arrival, but continued eating, drinking and socializing with fellow
43. table-members or passing friends. After about half an hour the band stopped
44. playing and the club president went to the microphone on the floor
45. in front of the stage and began speaking. Most patrons stopped talking
46. and watched the speaker, with just a few at the periphery continuing to buy
47. drinks from the bar, or conversing quietly between themselves. The club
48. president spoke continuously in Slovak for about five minutes, too quickly for
49. me to understand much more than the gist of what he said, but the following
50. was clearly understood. When he named Lúčnica as “najlepší súbor na
51. Slovensku” [the best troupe in Slovakia] the patrons applauded wildly, some
cheering and whistling. After a tiny pause he then said, “a najlepší v Europe”
and the assembled patrons hesitated for another tiny moment then erupted into louder applause, whistling, whooping, and stamping. The second speech, also about five minutes and in Slovak, was given by the Melbourne-based tour organizer. Again, I was able to understand the gist of what he said, which was to summarize the promotion he had organized, naming the TV and radio station, and mentioning the coming performance at Hamer Hall, which he described as prestigious as a performing venue. He urged people to buy tickets for the show on Monday, as ticket sales were low. He then introduced the troupe manager.
Taking the microphone, he accepted the welcome, and introduced each dancer individually by name. Each was loudly applauded. The five musicians then played a short programme of five or six pieces, some of which were built around known folk-songs. Sometimes patrons would sing along, but when the music was not singable, they went on eating and socializing with table companions. Next on the programme was a performance by the resident children’s troupe of about a dozen children ranging in age from mid-teens to a small boy about six years old. There were only two boys. Some attention was paid to the performance, although some patrons, mainly men, continued animated conversations around the edge of the space cleared for this performance in the centre of the room. Some of the female Lučnica members paid close attention to the performance of songs and dances. When the two boys performed solo athletic moves as part of the dance, the whole assembly applauded loudly and some whistled. Then it was Lučnica’s turn to dance, which they did with a more free and humorous style than I had seen in three of Lučnica’s theatre performances I had attended in Slovakia. The behaviour of the audience as a whole changed when Lučnica began to dance. Now all eyes were focused on them, and peripheral chatting and socializing stopped. Wild applause followed each dance. At about 10pm, when patrons had finished eating at their tables, the tables were moved back against the walls, the rock-band began playing on the stage, and patrons of all ages, and some Lučnica members began dancing. My table companions asked if I had been able to secure my planned interview. After telling them I had been asked to wait, but would try again, I approached the president again, and was introduced to the troupe manager. I asked the president if it would be possible to use one of the mini-vans to conduct the interview, as there were no places away from the very loud music, especially in the library above the stage, where the sound level was amplified. The weather outside was cold, dark and windy. He readily agreed and gave me the keys, and the troupe manager and I retired to the van for about half an hour, and I recorded my interview with him. After 20 minutes, the tour manager knocked on the window of the van, making comical faces and pointing inside. Inside the van, we laughed and continued the interview. About five minutes later he did it again, and we laughed and continued the interview. When it was finished, I returned to my table companions, who asked whether I had managed to secure my interview, and said that they were happy that I had done so. I asked them if I would see them at the performance at Hamer Hall and they told me they had not bought tickets, as it was too expensive. Many patrons, of all ages, and the Lučnica members, danced until midnight when the raffle was drawn, after which most people, including myself, left.
Here, he regards such an occasion as an “opportunity” rather than an “entity” (1963: 196). Given the freedom of participants to organize their interactions and orientation to the occasion, the first key to divining the meaning of their choices lies in distinguishing which behaviours were situated, rather than merely situated, in other words, which interactions could only have taken place within the bounds of this occasion, and which would have taken place regardless of the time and place (1963: 21-22). Goffman further differentiates interactions into how messages that are given off are understood, and these he calls unfocussed interactions which occur simply by virtue of co-presence. To reiterate, they include what Goffman calls body idiom (dress, bearing, movement, position, sound level, gestures and emotional expressions), and how involvement is allocated, termed involvement idiom. Interactions in the second category are called focussed interactions, by which individuals are actively seeking to give and receive information.

The complete body of observational notes of events and interactions during the evening is given in Figure 6. In selecting and reporting, every effort was made to be as non-inferential as possible, and to include only publicly observable and reportable phenomena. Proper names were removed for ethical reasons. The numbers were added later in order to facilitate analysis and discussion of them. For this study, only actions that were considered to be situated have been extracted from the notes above and collated below, then interpreted as to their meaning. First, the findings from situated unfocussed interactions are presented, followed by those that were considered to be situated focussed interactions.

\textit{Situated unfocussed interactions}

Lines 13-15: By about 8.30pm, an hour and a half after the evening had begun, the clubhouse was filled with approximately 200 patrons, twice as many as on the previous occasion of the Fathers’ Day celebration.
Lines 28-30: The club president, who was waiting outside, met these men as they emerged from the van, and there was much hugging and animated talk.
Lines 30-31: Meanwhile, the troupe members slowly climbed out of the vans and wandered inside.
Lines 31-32: Most of the 27 young dancers wore taupe-coloured T-shirts with a Lúčnica logo and jeans.
Lines 32-34: The boys were handsome, with the trim, fit bodies of professional dancers, and the girls were beautiful, again with trim, fit dancers’ physique.
Lines 34-35: The five musicians who had come to the club (three were absent) wore red T-shirts and black trousers.
Lines 35-37: The leader, Martin Sleziak, is a big man, and on this occasion showed a gruff, un-smiling demeanour, except when greeting people he knew.
Lines 40-43: The majority of patrons at tables or standing near the bar did not show any obvious signs of having noticed the troupe’s arrival, but continued eating, drinking and socializing with fellow table-members or passing friends.

Lines 45-47: Most patrons stopped talking and watched the speaker, with just a few at the periphery continuing to buy drinks from the bar, or conversing quietly between themselves.

Lines 63-67: The five musicians then played a short programme of five or six pieces, some of which were built around known folk-songs. Sometimes patrons would sing along, but when the music was not singable, they went on eating and socializing with table companions.

Lines 67-70: Next on the programme was a performance by the resident children’s troupe of about a dozen children ranging in age from mid-teens to a small boy about six years old. There were only two boys.

Lines 70-72: Some attention was paid to the performance, although some patrons, mainly men, continued animated conversations around the edge of the space cleared for this performance in the centre of the room.

Lines 72-74: Some of the female Lúčnica members paid close attention to the performance of songs and dances.

Lines 74-75: When the two boys performed solo athletic moves as part of the dance, the whole assembly applauded loudly and some whistled.

Lines 75-78: Then it was Lúčnica’s turn to dance, which they did with a more free and humorous style than I had seen in three of Lúčnica’s theatre performances I had attended in Slovakia.

Lines 78-80: The behaviour of the audience as a whole changed when Lúčnica began to dance. Now all eyes were focused on them, and peripheral chatting and socializing stopped. Wild applause followed each dance.

**Interpretation**

As a guided doing in Goffman’s terms, the physical attributes and ambience of the club were integral to the primary framework which bounded this event. The physical attributes of the building described previously were considered to have been formed by the aims and will of participants who were members of the Melbourne Slovak community. In turn, they spoke to all assembled, including myself and the Catholic Slovak newcomers, of the Slovak ethnicity of the predominantly Lutheran Slovaks from the former Yugoslav states. Secondly, the title of the evening as advertised in newsletters at the Lutheran church, in the Czech newspaper, and by word of mouth was ‘Fun with Lúčnica’, which placed Lúčnica, the quintessential face of staged Slovak music folklore, into the primary framework of this occasion, defining for all the cosmology of this occasion.

Then, expressions of body idiom could be read in terms of this cosmology. The unusually large number of patrons in attendance for this particular celebration invested it with importance at the outset, being another basic way in which their will could be expressed. The dress of participants in the occasion was also eloquent in these terms.
On the one hand, patrons, including myself, were dressed in what could be described as ‘smart casual’ attire, but the visiting Lúčnica members were distinguished from the rest by their dress. Their dress for even this informal occasion identified them unequivocally as Lúčnica members, as the name was printed on their T-shirts. Also, they were distinguished by the uniform colour of their T-shirts, which was different from that of the musicians’ T-shirts, despite the informality expressed by jeans and T-shirts themselves. The dancers were further distinguished by their actual bodily characteristics of almost uniform size, fitness and beauty. So, while their distinction as a group was clearly conveyed by their dress, it also homogenized them, transforming their bodies into a collective icon, as did their uniform beauty and visible fitness. Messages sent through just these visible aspects of body idiom showed deference to the defining elements of this occasion, and recreated it in turn. Lúčnica members defined themselves as the carriers of the expectations of the gathered Slovak community members by virtue of their uniformity, and as an important institution, while at the same time, the informality of their uniforms signaled their accessibility to the community on this occasion.

Bearing, emotional expression and sound level as attributes of body idiom also conveyed information concerning the meaning of this celebration evening. The club patrons’ behaviour before Lúčnica’s arrival informed the cosmology significantly. The atmosphere was lively, with a lot of energetic socializing, talking, smiling, eating and drinking. Likewise, the greetings exchanged by the club president when he met the tour organizer and troupe manager as they climbed out of the first mini-van, were energized by hugging and laughter. By contrast, the troupe members were languid and slow-moving as they emerged from the van and entered the hall. But when they performed later in the evening, their movements and expressions were lively and humorous, yet relaxed. The demeanour of the chief musician, on the other hand, was gruff and un-smiling, yet others around him did not appear to be surprised or unsettled by this. After all, this man is famous as a first violinist and exponent of traditional music. Goffman claims that these attributes convey information about the participants’ conception of self and others, and of the occasion. If he is right, then from these unfocussed interactions also, a significant degree of emotional investment by the hosts of this meeting of Lúčnica and the Melbourne Slovak community could be read, and the social structures recreated. Lúčnica became part of the celebration, but wase set apart by the dress and bearing of its members. The fact that they had just completed a long flight from Taipei
could explain their apparent languidity, but nevertheless, other aspects of their bearing and their physical attributes spoke for them. They embodied Slovak ethnicity, and along with it, the qualities of beauty, youth, vigour, humour, and confidence, information given out and received merely by co-presence, and were accepted and celebrated as such by the gathered Slovak community.

In the case of what Goffman refers to as the \textit{involvement idiom}, enactment of the rules which operate with respect to eye contact according to Goffman was also eloquent. As Lúčnica members wandered into the hall, there was little observed acknowledgement of them by assembled patrons. While the apparent nonchalance of the patrons at this time seemed puzzling, in Goffman’s terms it can be explained. By hardly indicating that they had noticed Lúčnica’s arrival, and continuing to socialize within face-to-face encounters all over the hall, patrons visibly demonstrated that they, as individuals, were not totally consumed by the main event. Goffman’s view is that by visibly demonstrating that they remained in possession of themselves, they were maintaining deference towards the main focus in a “muted, intermittent manner, thereby showing respect for the occasion” (1963: 60). If patrons were showing respect for this occasion by demonstrating self-possession, then central to that definition of self was deference to the bonds that exist for them as members of the Melbourne Slovak community, as this was visibly a collective stance. If this was an example of Goffman’s \textit{civil inattention}, then they were collectively displaying the result of a “chronic attention to detail” (Giddens 1988: 263), and were, in fact, noticing everything. The purpose of such apparently counter-intuitive behaviour, in Goffman’s terms, is to indicate safety within the confines of the situation, and in this case, this would have been information intended for Lúčnica, sent by and on behalf of the Melbourne Slovaks. If this interpretation seems fanciful, then it should be remembered that the likelihood that the assembled patrons were indifferent to Lúčnica’s arrival is minimal, considering that there were twice as many patrons in attendance as on other occasions at the club. This lends some credence to Goffman’s explanation of this rule of allocation of involvement in this instance.

When the president took the microphone and began speaking, most of the assembled patrons focused their attention on him. This elicited a change in patrons’ allocation of involvement to the main focus located in the primary framework for this event, so that when eyes and ears were collectively focused on the speaker, a heightening of “mutual relevance” would have occurred (Goffman 1963: 92). This would also have served to
heighten the group ethos, and a sense of moral responsibility for the activity, in Goffman’s terms (96-7). The fact that some patrons on the periphery of the hall continued talking amongst themselves during the president’s speech was reminiscent of such behaviour frequently observed at performances of classical, choral or folkloric music and dance in Slovakia, where a long, monotonous preamble by the master of ceremonies was routine. Audience members were often observed chatting until it was finished, and the real show began. While reasons for this custom are unknown, this peripheral chatting during the president’s speech was not surprising to me in terms of my previous immersion in Slovak musical life, nor did it appear to attract anyone’s attention or approbation. Whether those patrons were showing deference to the occasion by means of civil inattention or not is difficult to say, but the possibility exists when taken with the rest of the data collected on this occasion.

Similarly with the chatting, eating and drinking during the next part of the evening, when the Lúčnica musicians performed a series of musical pieces, a division in the allocation of attention by patrons was evident. When a piece of music happened to be a recognizable folk song, some patrons would stop eating or chatting and sing along. Otherwise they continued to give their eye contact to table companions and their food. Since music does not require eye contact, being pervasively audible, it is feasible to conclude that once again, patrons were actually paying close attention to the performance, since they knew when to sing along. In this respect, their interactions with the performers could be interpreted as an appropriate display of deference to the visitors, and to the occasion.

The performance of the resident children’s group elicited visibly different responses from patrons on the one hand, and Lúčnica members on the other. Whereas chatting continued at the periphery, and amongst some Lúčnica members, some of the female troupe members watched intently as the children performed their moves. It was not until the two boys, one a young teenager and the other about six years old, performed their more athletic movements, that audience members focussed collectively on the children’s performance and responded with clapping, whoops and whistles. Similarly with the collective response to the musicians’ performance, patrons must have been paying attention despite the lack of visible eye contact at times, in order to know when to respond in this way. It could be that the children’s group, especially the only two boys in the group, were being shown the same deference as that shown towards the
musicians earlier, where display of self-possession sent messages of safety and acceptance.

When Lúčnica danced, however, undivided investment of involvement by all those present in the main focus, Lúčnica, was clearly demonstrated by shared eye contact. The visual information conveyed by dancing as opposed to aural information given out by music alone required visual attention. The interaction between Lúčnica as they danced and the gathered patrons was especially rich in significant inferences. The ‘performance’ was relaxed and informal, and as such was a playfully transformed version of their professional performances on world stages. Goffman’s remark, that a humorous rendition of a tradition such as this derives its humorous effect from the seriousness of the original (1975: 46), lends a deep insight into this exclusive allocation of patron’s attention to Lúčnica’s performance in this club setting. In this light, the discourse of ethnicity could be seen as most explicit during this phase of the evening, with messages of respect, pride, and pleasure, and joint ownership nuanced with gentle self-parody, thereby joining these attributes into the definition of that ethnicity.

From the unfocussed interactions on the occasion of the ‘Fun with Lúčnica’ celebration, then, the discourse of Slovak ethnicity, and the deep significance of Lúčnica as an entity and an institution for these Slovaks could be readily discerned. Through managing Goffman’s rules pertaining to unfocussed interactions within the confines of this occasion, the visitors and the members of the Slovak community present mutually expressed pride in Slovak ethnicity through showing respect for and enjoyment of the occasion. However, in examining the observed focussed interactions recorded below, the contours of this ethnicity discourse can be further unraveled, revealing an intricate connection between what was at stake for individuals as well as for the Slovak community represented.

Situated focussed interactions

Lines 1-7: Upon my arrival at the club at 7pm, the club president informed me that Professor Nosáľ had not flown to Australia with the troupe that day, but had returned to Slovakia from Taipei. I was told I would be able, however, to conduct a recorded interview with the troupe manager at some time during the evening. The library above the stage was offered as a venue. I asked him how the programme would proceed, and he told me that after some speeches I would be able to interview the troupe manager.
Lines 8-12: (I) was kindly invited to join the same table at the back of the hall, by the same patrons with whom I had spent the Fathers’ Day celebration the previous month. These were Slovaks of late middle age who had migrated from the former Yugoslavia. Lines 47-55: The club president spoke continuously in Slovak for about five minutes, too quickly for me to understand much more than the gist of what he said, but the following was clearly understood. When he named Lúčnica as “najlepší súbor na Slovensku” [the best troupe in Slovakia] the patrons applauded wildly, some cheering and whistling. After a tiny pause he then said, “a najlepší v Europe” [and the best in Europe] the assembled patrons hesitated for another tiny moment then erupted into louder applause, whistling, whooping, and stamping. Lines 55-61: The second speech, also about five minutes and in Slovak, was given by the Melbourne-based tour organizer. Again, I was able to understand the gist of what he said, which was to summarize the promotion he had organized, naming the TV and radio station, and mentioning the coming performance at Hamer Hall, which he described as prestigious as a performing venue. He urged people to buy tickets for the show on Monday, as ticket sales were low. Lines 62-63: Taking the microphone, he accepted the welcome, and introduced each dancer individually by name. Each was loudly applauded. Lines 83-84: My table companions asked if I had been able to secure my planned interview. Lines 85-86: I approached the president again, and was introduced to the troupe manager. Lines 86-90: I asked the president if it would be possible to use one of the mini-vans to conduct the interview, as there were no places away from the very loud music, especially in the library above the stage, where the sound level was amplified. The weather outside was cold, dark and windy. He readily agreed and gave me the keys… Lines 90-92: … and the troupe manager and I retired to the van for about half an hour, and recorded my interview. Lines 92-95: After 20 minutes, the tour manager knocked on the window of the van, making comical faces and pointing inside. Inside the van, we laughed and continued the interview. About five minutes later he did it again, and we laughed and continued the interview. Lines 95-97: …I returned to my table companions, who asked whether I had managed to secure my interview, and said that they were happy that I had done so. Lines 97-99: I asked them if I would see them at the performance at Hamer Hall and they told me they had not bought tickets, as it was too expensive.

Interpretation

Three sets of interactions observed were selected for analysis. The first set involved respective speakers who addressed the gathering as a whole at the microphone, and the audience’s collective responses. The next complex of interactions considered involved the president of the Slovak Social Club, the Melbourne-based organizer of Lúčnica’s Oceania tour, the manager of Lúčnica, and me, the visiting researcher. The last interactive relationship considered was that between me and my table companions, who were members of the Slovak community.
Some time after the troupe had arrived at the club, exchanged greetings with various members, and settled themselves, the club president went to a microphone that had been set up in front of the stage on the same level as the patrons. He began his speech by welcoming Lúčnica to Melbourne, explicitly referring to what was, in fact, the central element in the **cosmology** of this gathering. Just as explicit was the collaboration of the assembled patrons in celebrating this central element. First, most of them gave their attention to him. However, there was no doubt about the main constituting element of this occasion when he described Lúčnica as the best troupe in Slovakia, eliciting a huge response from the audience. After a measured pause, he added the comment that they were the best in Europe. The response was greater than before, with whistling and stamping. For this audience, who embodied a turbulent history characterized by marginalization within the context of Central European history, significant claims of civilization were implicit in their outward affirmation of Lúčnica’s excellence relative to that context. But another nuance was added to Lúčnica’s identity when the troupe manager took the microphone to respond to the president’s welcome. He began by introducing each individual performer by name. The patrons applauded each enthusiastically, suggesting that being a member of Lúčnica, “the best troupe in Europe”, is grounds for individual congratulations. What this individualization of the troupe members meant for each of them or for audience members cannot be known for certain, but perhaps it could be interpreted as resistance to the kind of homogenizing rhetoric of socialist collectivism. In this respect, naming and applauding of individuals could be read as a more European convention than a socialist one, where individual adulation was not encouraged. If so, then the significance of Lúčnica in giving Slovakia a deserved place on the European cultural map was further strengthened. This individuating procedure could also be interpreted as iconoclastic in a playful way, especially in the light of the lightness and humour with which the dancers performed, almost as self-parody. This would be entirely consistent with the Slovak character, where sardonic humour can be invoked to deal with authority of any kind, whether from political manipulation or the requirements of uniform balletic discipline in staged performance.

Goffman’s more detailed analysis of what might be at stake for participants in gatherings where cultural representation defines the primary framework is particularly pertinent to the speech of the third speaker at the microphone, the Australian Slovak tour organizer. If Goffman is correct in stating that honour, diplomacy, and moral
character are at stake, then the actors during this part of the evening stood to be judged in those terms (1975: 22). The greater part of his speech concerned the poor ticket sales, and efforts to convince patrons who had not done so to buy tickets for the coming performance. Referring to the excellence of Lúčnica, he emphasized the appropriateness of the prestigious Hamer Hall as a performing venue, which he had spent a great deal of energy in securing. Much was at stake for him, a conclusion supported by a personal conversation with him previously, when he had expressed anxiety about the low rate of ticket sales.  

He had described the difficulty with which he had convinced the promotion company that the Lúčnica concert would be a financial success for the company and for the theatre. In the light of Goffman’s comments regarding honour and character, it is logical to infer that the tour manager’s honour personally with respect to the rest of the Slovak community, and the character of the community with respect to the promotion company, the theatre, and the prospective Melbourne concert-going community was at risk. The club patrons were quiet during this speech, but according to Goffman’s view, they were acting as “bystanders” in a framed activity, and so were just as “deeply involved” with aspects of the primary framework (1975: 38). Interpreting their silence as judgement on the basis of observed behaviour alone may be equivocal, but subsequent information from personal contacts and the only published review of the performance confirm that the price of tickets had been the subject of complaint for many members of the Czech and Slovak communities. This supports the interpretation that the apparent reluctance of many to spend the ticket price was a significant component of the interface between this event and the concert-going public, and in Goffman’s terms, threatened to diminish in turn the status of Lúčnica itself, the welcome by the Melbourne Slovak community, and hence, the character of Slovak ethnicity itself.

The tour organizer’s worst fears were later realized when attendance at the performance at Hamer Hall was poor. However, the depth of his anxiety about ticket sales before knowing the outcome were commensurate with what, in Goffman’s terms was at stake at the “rim of the frame” (1975: 82), defined as the outer lamination where the status of the event in the “real world” (82) can be inferred. The quest to successfully promote Lúčnica with limited capital was a gamble with high stakes, not only for the Slovak community but for him personally as the organizer. Such action as his in this

---

30 In a telephone conversation on 5 September, the organizer told me only about 800 tickets had been sold. The Hamer Hall seats 2,267 people.
31 See Chapter 6
circumstance is well-described by Goffman’s metaphorical use of gambling games, where the notion of “consequentiality” is introduced, and defined as the “capacity of a payoff to flow beyond the bounds of the occasion in which it is delivered and to influence objectively the later life of the bettor” (1967: 159-160, his emphasis). Such games according to Goffman are a two-sided coin, with opportunity and risk, and no-one appeared more keenly aware of this than the tour organizer, judging by the content of his speech, and the worried manner in which he delivered it. The fact that it was received in silence also suggested that the audience was orienting to their awareness of the stakes for him, and possibly, for themselves.

The tour organizer’s dilemma was also an important dynamic in the three-way interactions between him, the troupe manager, and me. For the tour organizer, the success of the tour included the success of this occasion at the club. For me as the researcher, the stakes included being able to conduct and record an interview with Professor Nosáľ, and then in his absence, the troupe manager. For the troupe manager, the stakes were to succeed in representing Lúčnica and all it embodied in an appropriate manner in that interview. But for all three, there was evidence that the maintenance of character for our individual selves and each other was a guiding principle. Goffman expresses both the imperative and the complexities of such interactions, saying that it behoves the actor to “ensure that the expressive implications of all local events are compatible with the status that he and others present possess” (1967: 168-9). In this sense, the interactions have a symbolic component through which an actor shows how worthy of respect he may be, and how worthy he feels others to be. The following interactions between me, the tour organizer and the troupe manager during the accomplishment of a recorded interview demonstrate how these dynamics as described by Goffman were operating. Detailed analysis of the actual verbal interaction is reserved for the following chapter, but the non-verbal component of this part of the evening’s activities had its own eloquence.

The first interaction having relevance for this interlude occurred before Lúčnica’s arrival at the club, when the president had informed me that Professor Nosáľ had not accompanied the troupe to Australia. He had assured me, however, that I would be able to interview the troupe manager after some speeches, in the library above the stage. While this offer was interpreted as recognition by him of the status possessed by me as an academic researcher, and someone interested in Slovak music culture, it also
presented me with risks on two fronts. First, I had to trust the president to factor in my meeting with the troupe manager and to communicate with me as the evening proceeded. Then, I had to investigate the offered venue for the interview and test the recording equipment there. The result of discovering that the library would be unsuitable because of the noise of the band below was that my priorities had to be rearranged. From that moment until after Lúčnica’s arrival, the challenge to find a suitable venue was my main concern. Having to secure both a suitable time and place for an interview with the troupe manager, who represented Lúčnica, demanded considerable ingenuity and diplomacy on my part, especially in my interactions with the club president. It can be confidently inferred that other tasks had higher priority for him, as he was responsible for the success of the occasion in all its phases. He had already acted towards me and my endeavour in a generous manner given the complexities of his task. But the fact remained that although the stakes for me were high in terms of achieving a recorded interview, the stakes for the president were also high in terms of accomplishing a successful occasion to welcome Lúčnica, and it appeared that the success of my venture was not necessarily part of that success for him.

The quest to construct and display character during this interlude in the mini-van could be observed as the opportunities and risks were played out. After twice very politely reminding the president of my task, I asked him whether I could use one of the mini-vans. He was more than happy to give me the keys, as he had not been able to apply himself to solving my problem. I was introduced to the troupe manager, and he was happy to climb with me into the bench seat behind the driver’s seat in the van parked in front of the porch, where the light would be sufficient, and we would be protected from noise and the cold wind. This was a practical solution, and to all appearances was taken in good part by the president and the troupe manager, preserving the dignity of all as far as circumstances would allow.

However, for the tour organizer, retirement of the troupe manager and me to the van represented what Goffman would call an infraction in terms of the defining component of the primary frame of the occasion, the presence of Lúčnica at the Slovak Social Club. For the duration, we, in effect, were relegating the main focus of this occasion to a disattend track from the point of view of the tour organizer (1975: 111). Such an infraction would incur the threat of a loss of “face” for him as the one responsible for the success of Lúčnica’s visit, as a representative of the Melbourne Slovak community,
and for him personally. Arguably, when he interrupted the interview after 20 minutes by knocking on the window, making a comical face and pointing inside, he was acting to avoid such a threat. And yet, as Goffman asserts, in fateful games, the adage “nothing ventured, nothing gained” applies (1967: 260), and here was a chance to make a play and minimize the negative impact. The fact that the tour organizer made faces that were very comical could be interpreted as indicating this quest to show character in taking a risk, and the result was that interviewer and interviewee laughed, understanding his dilemma, taking both his interruptions in good part, and displaying a mutuality of concern not to discredit anybody or the occasion. The troupe manager, whose responses were being recorded, was beginning to embark upon a serious answer to my question concerning implied erasure of negative elements in Lúčnica’s performances, to which he was giving thoughtful consideration. When the tour organizer repeated his actions a few minutes later, I was in the process of asking a question concerning political interference in Lúčnica’s activities, and the troupe manager was listening intently, and the interruption was managed similarly. On both occasions, the troupe manager joined with me in acknowledging the tour organizer with laughter before continuing the interview. The stakes for him were also high, and the challenge to maintain face was complex, and, as Goffman says, “the greater the fatefulness, the more serious the action” (260-1). On the one hand, he had the opportunity to maintain character as an exponent of the excellence and high moral character of Lúčnica and its artistic director, on the record for academic purposes, and at the same time display his willingness to assist both his co-participants in maintaining their dignity, all of which gave our laughter serious intent.

While the stakes for the tour organizer and troupe manager were demonstrably high, they were also high for me, since I was engaged in securing an interview as a vital piece of data for the purposes of academic research. In such a scenario, it could be said that the troupe manager was caught in the middle of a “battle by and for character” (1967: 240). At the first interruption from outside the van, seen first by me and met with a small burst of laughter, the troupe manager then glanced back at him, stopped speaking, and laughed with me in a good-natured fashion. While we mutually preserved the dignity of all by this laughter, at the same time, we both preserved the integrity of the interview, he by continuing with his serious answer, and I, by continuing to pay close attention to his answer, displaying this with nodding gestures and eye contact. At the second interruption, I had begun to ask a question about how Professor Nosál had
handled interference in the past from the Ministry of Culture, and though both of us again responded to the action outside with mirth, I continued the question, and the troupe manager continued listening. However, taking into account Goffman’s claim regarding character contests, that each contestant uses the other’s expressions as the “field of action” (240), the fact that I allowed the troupe manager to complete his answer to my question, then initiated the closing of the interview before exploring the topic of the last question as thoroughly as I had intended, could be interpreted as giving up an advantage in order to allow my ‘opponent’, the tour organizer, to maintain his display of character (1967: 247). It could be said that the troupe manager, by completing his answer despite the tour organizer’s apparent impatience with the situation, managed to maintain simultaneous orientation to his primary frame and mine. His investment in completing his answer was evident, as it was an impassioned, detailed account, with reported speech, of how Professor Nosáľ had resisted political pressure during the socialist times. All three participants, if this was a situated character contest, in desiring to “receive his due”, was obliged to exact it, and to “police the interaction” (247) to credit character to each, and to what he or she represented. In so doing, we enacted Goffman’s prescription of what the stakes were for such a series of interactions in the context of an occasion.

Interactions between me and my table companions could also be interpreted in terms of Goffman’s notion of character, and the imperative to maintain it. During the evening I sat, ate, drank and socialized with the same group I had met a month previously at the club. Knowing that one of my goals had been to conduct an interview with Professor Nosáľ, they showed an investment in my success in securing an interview with his substitute, the troupe manager. Also, they had witnessed my concern as to whether the club president had remembered or factored my request into the programme. It was almost 10pm, after the formal speeches and performances by Lúčnica and the children’s troupe, when they asked whether I had been successful in getting a commitment from the club president and the troupe manager to make time to conduct an interview. Their expressed pleasure at my eventual success supports the interpretation that for them character was at stake, too. If the evening for me was framed in terms of conducting research into the significance of Lúčnica’s visit, then for them, my success was their success whatever the content of the interview had been, since co-operating with my goals as an academic researcher reflected on the character of the organizers and the community itself.
Conclusions

For the topic

Findings from examining this occasion, dubbed ‘Fun with Lúčnica’, support the notion that this genre of cultural performance is deeply significant for Slovak ethnic identity, whether at home or abroad. The primary anchor for this claim is the fact that Lúčnica constituted the primary framework for what Goffman defines as a multi-focussed gathering, and Lúčnica powerfully and iconically embodied what it means to be Slovak for the Slovaks in attendance.

In collaborating with this defining aspect of Slovak ethnicity by their presence, and by the management of their interactions, the Slovak patrons at the club were engaging in traditional practice, albeit on Australian soil. By virtue of the way they managed unfocussed and focussed interactions, what might have appeared as ordinary social phenomena were transformed into serious discourse. But while Goffman’s interactive perspective means that this occasion was able to be seen as a complex of practices bounded by time and place, this is not the whole story.

In Goffman’s view, the occasion was a complex construction of the moral character of the institutions referenced and recreated, with high stakes for all participants, made possible by its locally bounded nature, and the particular cosmology elicited and constructed by the interactions that could be observed. Citing Goffman, Silverman defines these stakes unequivocally:

In doing whatever people are doing, they take into consideration the moral standing of themselves and their co-interactants that their doings project. In the ordinary course of events, this consideration entails the protection of the positive moral standing of the self and others. (2006: 208)

The mutual protection of individual integrity was demonstrated convincingly by the kinds of interactions presented and interpreted above, where parties collaborated to preserve character and dignity for all participants, while still achieving their practical tasks.

To follow Goffman’s thought, the stakes could be said to encompass the venerability of Lúčnica as an institution, the status of Slovak ethnicity within Australian society, and
how both might be perceived and represented by an Australian academic researcher. Character and moral status of these institutions were contingent upon the struggle to ensure that all parties won rather than lost in that battle, and remain morally intact. It can be concluded from this that the struggle to reinstate the civilized, European yet uniquely Slovak, morally respectable character of Slovak ethnicity was undertaken by the participants in the event studied. This struggle was enjoined by Slovaks from Slovakia within the troupe, by members of the ‘Yugoslav’ Slovak community in Melbourne, and by the researcher.

However, if the struggle was won, then it is by no means clear that it was won on all counts. Because the attributes of youth, beauty, vigour, humour and confidence were embodied by Lúčnica, they were claimed for Slovak ethnicity by those Slovak Australians present, and understood as such by the researcher. But these Slovaks are also Australians, and a shadow remains over their battle for the moral status of the Slovak community within the context of Australian society. This aspect of the discourse was not resolved on this occasion, but awaited the playing out of further interactions between the researcher and patrons at the performance two days later, and during the months following.

For the methodology

The single aspect of Goffman’s analysis agreed upon by his critics and supporters is the acuteness of his observational skills (Williams 1998: 157). Even Kendon, who levels some serious criticisms of Goffman’s work on the grounds of the paucity of cross-cultural comparison, concedes that Goffman’s innovative and detailed descriptions of social interaction facilitate research into aspects of sociality that are not usually reported (1988: 38-39). In doing so, Goffman also provides a language in which these phenomena can be discussed. For these reasons, Goffman’s analysis of non-verbal social interaction enabled identification and discussion of the discursive strands constituting Lúčnica’s welcome celebration at the Slovak Social Club, adding depth and detail to inferences made.

Another advantage of using Goffman’s method of analysis is that it is applicable to naturally occurring data. His claimed rejection of premature theorizing, and preference for “specimen collection” methodology constitute an appropriate method for examining
this event (Williams 1998: 157). Nevertheless, as Collins convincingly points out, while his approach has “a very strong streak of empiricism” (1988: 46), Goffman did display a theoretical bent, in fact, and was aligned with the Durkheimian view that society is basically a moral reality (43), and this aspect was just as valuable. However, once again, Goffman’s inconsistency must be taken into account. For example, in theorizing the self, and in articulating the meaning of interaction between individuals, Goffman risks entering the psychological realm. On the face of it, his claim, as expressed by Waksler, that information is not what was intended by an actor in giving or giving off information, but how it is received (1989: 5-6) seems to be quite enlighten.

But besides risking venturing inside the heads of individuals by including ‘intent’ in his formulation, he reifies ‘information’ by taking such a view. Goffman’s saving grace, however, is that he does privilege observable interactions as constituting social reality, and does theorize social interactions as highly moral phenomena.

In fact, the morality of the discourse inferred from applying Goffman’s view to the micro-interactions observed at Lúčnica’s welcome celebration serves to counter criticisms of Goffman on the grounds of the lack of generalizability. It may well be that comparative studies are too few for confident generalization, as Kendon claims, but as Waksler points out, Goffman did not claim that they were (1989). Nevertheless, what societies possibly do have in common is the “highly moralized world” conceded by Giddens in discussing Goffman’s underlying theoretical orientation (1988). After all, the morality of every society is constituted by face-to-face interactions, and these phenomena were the focus of Goffman’s attention. Collins articulates this point succinctly when he points out that the Durkheimian model identifiable as informing Goffman’s perspective is not an absolute, but is a set of variable conditions whose strength or weakness in a given situation may generate commensurably strong or weak results in participants in that situation (1988). In this respect, Goffman’s account of the moral construction of society is “micro-empirically grounded” (45). Given these comments, Waksler’s remark is a fitting conclusion to the generalizability debate when he says that with respect to Goffman’s work, it awaits resolution.

Criticisms have also been leveled at Goffman’s work on account of his lack of detailed analysis of verbal interaction. However, he did acknowledge the importance of words as being the best way for joining interactants into an “intersubjective, mental space” (as cited, Kendon 1988: 37). But as Kendon points out, Goffman held to the view that
words are not the only means of creating intersubjectivity. In fact, verbal interactions do not constitute “the resulting social organization” alone (as cited, 37). Whereas interactions may involve talk or not, they always involve non-verbal interactions, and this is why Goffman’s approach was especially valuable. Collins also points out that Goffman defined speech acts as being “only particular kinds of moves in a social situation” (1988: 54). Again, Kendon mentions unfinished business, stating the problem as articulating the place given by Goffman to talk in interactions (1988). But this task has been taken up by others, notably Harvey Sacks and his colleagues, and his analysis of talk-in-interaction is discussed in the next chapter.

However, Kendon’s assertion that Goffman failed to provide a complete systematics for analyzing social interaction is possibly the most serious problem with applying Goffman’s approach. For example, it is difficult to accommodate civil inattention, one of his most valuable contributions to understanding the dynamics in multi-focussed gatherings, into the category of either unfocussed or focussed interactions. Then, an example such as the dancing of Lúčnica might seem to belong to the unfocussed category, yet, when all eyes are concentrated upon them, the interaction has a definite focussed quality. Taking a broader view of Goffman’s work can be even more confusing. For example, while Goffman’s statement concerning the relationship of such micro-phenomena and institutions at the macro-level is straightforward in his work on the interaction order, much of his prolific writing in Frame Analysis is impossible to apply to empirical data. While frame analysis also purports to articulate the relationship between the individual and the wider world, it is a complex of highly abstract, confusing ideas, considered for this thesis as an unfortunate regression by Goffman from the field back into the armchair. For example, considering the physical frame and “higher mental life” as the extremities of a continuum of frames, Goffman explains the transformation by individuals, who may consciously transform their interactions downwards into a constructed reality, and also transform the physical frame upwards (Collins 1988). But Giddens expresses Goffman’s stance more clearly than Goffman himself. While Giddens criticizes the normative function ascribed to institutions in some of Goffman’s work, he concludes that over-all, wider social structures do not stand outside of social interaction, but neither do individuals create them in a relativistic way. Rather, through examining the localized practices of individuals, and analyzing empirical evidence of how their interactions are displayed, the interplay of individuals and institutions can be articulated, as it was indeed, in this instance.
Perhaps the most serious limitation, however, for this study, is summed up by Watson’s comment regarding the role played by Goffman himself in amassing his data and drawing his conclusions concerning the ritual aspects of human interaction. Ten Have cites Watson as pointing out that Goffman used metaphor to collect huge number and variety of phenomena, and used literary style to “capture” imagination of the reader, but essentially was still positioned as “an onlooker, an outsider to the interactions he observes among ritually obsessed persons trying strategically to project a favourable image of themselves” (as cited, ten Have 2007: 30). This remains as a flaw in Goffman’s vast body of research. In the last instance, applying Goffman’s methods is still a subjective exercise.

Nevertheless, using an ethnographic account as data served to give a deeper understanding of the discourse of Slovak ethnicity, because Goffman’s findings concerning human interaction were used to analyze it, despite the glaring inconsistencies evident in his writings, and the inevitable subjectivity involved in putting his methods into practice. Without Goffman’s work on the interaction order and the language it provides for discussing social phenomena identified by him, conclusions about the meaning of this event would be shallow, even banal. While the subjectivity of noticing, taking observational notes and interpreting them cannot be denied, Goffman’s interactive view facilitated the inclusion of this researcher as co-producer of meaning, even if Goffman forgot to include himself. To this extent, the methodological validity of using an ethnographic account can be taken seriously, despite remaining ambiguities. Application of Goffman’s work to this ethnographic account of the welcome celebration for Lúčnica rendered it fertile for empirical verification of meaning creation because Goffman’s approach was used.
Chapter 5: Ethnographic interview

Background

The recorded interview with Lúčnica’s manager constitutes the second body of data collected in the search for evidence concerning the meaning of the troupe’s performance in Melbourne. It was recorded during the welcome celebration at the Slovak Social Club, and the transcription was refined according to the conventions of Conversation Analysis (CA) over the following months. In contrast to the naturally occurring phenomena used as data as discussed in the previous chapter, this recorded interview constitutes frankly “researcher-provoked data”, the legitimacy of which has been debated (Silverman 2006: 201). However, any debate concerning the legitimacy of using such data is a red herring, because in either case, it is necessary to address theoretical and epistemological questions. Naturally occurring data may not be provoked by a researcher, but all data are selected and rated by a researcher in terms of potential for elucidating questions formulated by the researcher in the first place. If a positivistic view is taken towards any data, the problems of subjectivity and denial of inevitable theoretical infusion remain. However, for analyzing this interview, interaction was understood as the means by which realities were created, and so these problems were no longer insurmountable, but became part of the topic.

This shift in perspective is crucial, because it makes a fundamental difference to what knowledge is taken away from an interview, and the consequentiality of that knowledge. The following statement serves to reiterate CA’s epistemological base, and to explain why such consideration ought to be taken seriously:

This has very important implications for any social science research which employs people’s accounts as investigative resources. It means, for example, that when people are asked to provide reports of their social lives in ethnographic research projects, or when people are required to furnish more formal answers to interview questions about attitudes and opinions, they are not merely using language to reflect some overarching social or psychological reality which is independent of their language. Rather, in the very act of reporting or describing, they are actively building the character of the states of affairs of the world to which they are referring. This raises serious questions about the status of findings from social science research projects which trade on the assumption that language merely reflects the properties of an independent social world (Hutchby & Wooffitt 1998: 228).

32 See Appendix II: Transcription glossary
In the present case, the past and present character of Lučnica, mutually produced by means of the attitudes, opinions, and cultural stories expressed in the interview by its participants, had potential consequences for them, for scholarship, for Lúčnica, and for Slovaks at home and abroad. This knowledge was deeply significant, and is hereby available in the academic domain as a basis for further research.

The chapter begins with an overview of the participants, followed by discussion of issues and problems connected with planning and conducting the interview, and with its analysis. The data presented consists of excerpts taken from the transcript of the interview, which lasted 28 minutes and 14 seconds. Analyses are presented after each excerpt, infused with specific explanations of CA theory and methodology as required. The chapter concludes with findings concerning the question of Lúčnica’s significance for Slovak ethnicity, and an evaluation of CA methodology for examining such a question.

The participants

The interviewee

As I was relying on my Slovak Australian hosts’ hospitality and expressed willingness to co-operate with my research endeavour, my specific goals were inevitably modified by unpredictable circumstances. In September, the Melbourne-based Slovak organizer of Lúčnica’s Oceania tour had offered me the opportunity to record an interview with Professor Nosáľ himself during the welcome celebrations to be held at the Slovak Social Club the following month. However, I learned from the club president upon arriving at the club on 6 October that Professor Nosáľ had not accompanied the troupe to Australia after all. The reasons are not known, nor is it known when this had been decided. I was immediately offered the opportunity to interview the designated manager of the troupe for the Oceania tour, an offer I gratefully accepted. Some agenda items were thereby modified, because I knew nothing about the history of my new interviewee (IE) with Lučnica, and so the need to establish his credibility became important. This new aspect of my inquiry would not have been necessary for the planned interview with Nosáľ himself, because his history with the troupe is publicly known. Nevertheless, because of

33 See Appendix III: Interview with Július Jackuliak.
See Appendix IV: CD recording of the interview
the analytical approach taken, this interview was regarded as a significant specimen in its own right, and the interactions that occurred in it were rich in inference. In any case, the world of Professor Nosál as artistic director of Lúčnica was not absent from this interview, as will be shown.

The researcher as interviewer

In searching for empirical evidence for knowledge production, the ‘armchair of theory’ must be transcended, but this is not to say that the researcher’s choices of analytical approach, selection of the research question and of fertile fields where answers might be found, and interpretation of findings were not theoretically infused. The difference between a CA approach to an ethnographic interview and a conventional one, however, is that co-presence, which inevitably included the researcher, was recognized for this study as essential to meaning production. This acknowledgement enabled Bourdieu’s ‘scholastic fallacy’ to be avoided, and the researcher’s theoretical bias to become part of the topic, rather than merely a resource that remained invisible. Also, participants bring with them the task of constructing identities, for which the product of the interactions matter. In this instance, the identity of the researcher as undertaking the academic study of the meaning of Lúčnica’s performance defined her relevance and the relevance of the interaction to her, along with understandings formed by previous immersion in the Slovak community. The sense of this view is confirmed by considering that language is redefined as accountable action from a CA perspective, and so the researcher was regarded as a co-participant, organizing and interpreting the interactions in real time together with the interviewee.

Translating the person of the researcher into language for the sake of analytical discussion, however, demanded consideration. In the case of this interview, the researcher and the interviewer were identical, and so a reflexive attitude had to be adopted. The saving grace in what could have been a conundrum of identities is that the recording and transcript remain as faithful and objective empirical data as is possible, and analysis does not rely on subjective interpretation. For this reason, it is justifiable to refer to myself in the formal analyses following each excerpt, in the third person, as the interviewer (IR).
Methods of data collection: Issues and problems

Such a challenge as the last-minute change of interviewee nicely demonstrates Bourdieu’s advice to regard research of social phenomena as a complex of practical tasks to be managed in real time. The next practical task was to secure the offered interview while co-operating with the evening’s programme, and to find a suitable venue for the interview. The club president had generously offered the library above the stage as available, but when I examined the library before the troupe’s arrival, it became apparent that the continuous live music being played on the stage below by the resident rock band was magnified by the room itself, rendering it unsuitable. The recorded interview was eventually accomplished as a result of my ingenuity in proposing one of the vans used to transport the troupe from their city hotel as a suitable place for conducting it, away from noise inside and bleak weather outside. The club president was happy to give me the keys, and the troupe manager was happy to be interviewed in the van. The timing of the interview was more difficult to arrange, as politeness demanded that I tread a diplomatic path, not appearing importunate, but at the same time having to remind the president that my prospective interviewee needed to be invited to meet with me.

For the Melbourne-based Slovak organizer of the tour, the removal of one of the key guests of the club for half an hour presented a problem, prompting him to remonstrate non-verbally three times through the mini-van’s window. How these interruptions were managed diplomatically from the perspective of Goffman’s interaction order was considered as part of the data in Chapter 4. These events were important for the analysis of interactions in CA terms, too, and have been incorporated into the topic. There was an ever-present, demonstrable sense of having to achieve the interview within a given time frame, but this is also part of the topic. The understanding was that it would take no more than half an hour.

If a conventional, journalistic approach had been taken to the use of this interview for research purposes, the task of transcription would have been relatively straightforward. However, the adoption of a CA approach meant that a new method of transcription had to be mastered. This process was supported by attendance at the Discourse Analysis Group, which is, in fact, a CA workshop, at The Australian National University. Sacks himself criticized conventional ethnographic methodology which assumes a positivistic
stance towards journalistic accounts reproduced from notes, sometimes relying on memory, and altered to make them grammatical. CA, on the other hand, relies on an actual recording which can be replayed, allowing for refinement and verification of the transcript. By and large, CA practitioners still use the transcription conventions developed by Gail Jefferson, Sacks’s colleague in the 1970s, as collated by Hutchby and Wooffitt (1998: vi), and reproduced in Appendix II.

Because language in CA is defined as action, the transcription method must take account of non-lexical phenomena, such as breath intake, pauses, overlapping speech and prosodic features. Symbols such as full-stops and question marks do not have their usual function as punctuation marks. They are used to indicate intonational patterns or short gaps in the talk. For example, a full stop simply means a clearly recognizable downward intonation, such as that heard at the end of a question beginning with a question word like ‘where’ or ‘who’. Colons are used to show elongation of a syllable, and capitals can show a rise in volume. Precise gaps in the talks can be measured either by counting, or by using a software programme such as Audacity, as in this study, but the other features shown in the transcript were captured as a result of many repeated listenings, and use of feed-back from colleagues. The format of transcripts also has its conventions, with a particular font that allows for exact alignment of overlapping talk in particular, and for non-lexical phenomena to be visually clear. The transcription technique in CA is inseparable from its theoretical underpinnings, just as in the case of conventional orthographic procedures, but in the latter case, it must be said that this matter is rarely considered outside of the linguistics discipline. It follows, nevertheless, that in each case, the theoretical approach, the analytical approach, and the meaning taken away, are fundamentally different.

Another challenge was to integrate CA’s theoretical stance and its specialized methodology with the aims of this thesis. While ‘pure’ CA aims to add to the body of knowledge that identifies and explains the structures of spoken interaction, the aim for this thesis was to rest on the already established findings of CA in order to discover the meaning of a cultural manifestation. This meant that some excerpts had to be selected, and some omitted from discussion, given the scope of this thesis. Then, aspects of CA were called into service that would demonstrate the efficacy of a CA approach for discovering what meanings concerning Lúčnica and its performance were created by participants in this interview, conceptualized as an episode of institutional talk. The
following series of excerpts were selected from the complete transcript in order to show how knowledge concerning Lúčnica’s significance for Slovak ethnicity was created by the interviewer (IR) and interviewee (IE). Analysis shows that the attributes evidently embodied by the troupe itself as shown in the previous chapter, such as youthful vigour, beauty and confidence, while being important for Slovak ethnicity, do not constitute a complete picture. The stories collaboratively produced by IR and IE in this interview bring negative elements such as the repeated historical and political struggles for existence, along with resilience and determination, into the present, underscoring Lúčnica’s deeper significance as performers of Slovak music and dance culture.

The following key aspects of verbal interaction according to the findings of CA were selected because they show most convincingly how IR and IE produced the interview and constructed Lúčnica’s meaning. The conversational resources they used enabled them to achieve the institutional task of accomplishing an ethnographic interview, and at the same time to create opportunities for the cultural stories they wanted to be told. The resources referred to for the purposes of showing how the significance of Lúčnica was constructed are summarized as follows.

*Adjacency pairs*

In ordinary conversation, face-to-face actions are characteristically paired, with relevant first and second pair-parts, such as greetings, or invitations and acceptances, or agreements and disagreements. These so-called *adjacency pairs* are derived from the *grossly apparent features* of ordinary conversation, which provide “the minimal constraints required for orderly, mutually intelligible talk” (Suchman & Jordan 1990: 233), or an “enabling institution for orderly commerce between people” (Schegloff 2000: 1). The pairs in interviews are characteristically constituted by questions and answers. Regardless of the type of talk, such related paired utterances are “produced as the methodical and accountable product of the shared orientations and expectations of the speakers” (Heritage 1984: 264), and from this we can infer the nature of the work being done.

34 See p. 35
The generic features of *adjacency pairs* have been summed up by Psathas (1995: 18):

1. They are at least two turns in length
2. They have at least two parts
3. A first pair-part is produced by one speaker
4. A second pair-part is produced by another speaker
5. Sequences of first and second pair-parts are in immediate next turns
6. The two pair-parts are relatively ordered, in that the first belongs to a class of first pair-parts, and second belongs to a class of second pair-parts
7. They are discriminately related: A first pair-part type is relevant to a second pair-part type
8. They have conditional relevance: A first pair-part sets up a possible kind of second pair-part which is dependent on the type of first pair-part

Remembering the overwhelming prevalence in ordinary talk of the absence of a gap between turns, even small pauses between pair-parts can be indications of interactional trouble. This point in the interaction, when the selection of the next speaker by a current speaker is displayed and recognized because of its semantic, prosodic and sequential features, is termed a *transition relevant place*, or TRP. Whereas the characteristic sequential features of *adjacency pairs* are often far from straightforwardly delivered, breaches of the systemic order of things are usually accountable. For example, absence of a second pair-part, or failure to take a turn, are especially noticeable (Hutchby & Wooffitt 1998). Such contraventions allow important differences between organizational procedures of ordinary talk and institutional talk to be identified, and reveal wider social structures to which a participant may be orienting.

*Modification of the turn-taking system in institutional talk*

The collaborative modification of the system, particularly the kinds of accounts given for contraventions of the default turn-taking system, provide ways for achieving local and institutional tasks and constructing knowledge. Because the details of turn management in ordinary conversation can be systematically described, examination of departures from the features of that system can “reveal the procedures by which participants in institutional interaction display for one another their mutual understandings and their corresponding sense of context” (Hutchby & Wooffitt 1998: 151). In the case of institutional talk they indicate orientation to institutional context. Drew and Heritage make the observation that sequence organization is the most frequent way in which institutional speech-patterns are displayed (1992), which provides an analytical framework for examining their management.
Preferred and dispreferred action

An overwhelming bias towards agreement between participants in spoken interaction has been observed (Heritage 1984). Such local maintenance of social solidarity and conflict avoidance depends on continuous updated understandings throughout the spate of talk being considered, in this case an interview. At the same time, as Hutchby (1999) found through his analysis of radio interviews, a struggle for control of the agenda in such interviews can be identified, as participants manage the inherent asymmetry of the interviewer-interview relationship. Like Foucault, Hutchby and Wooffitt point out that power is bi-directional, because it can always be resisted (1998: 170). Strategies of resistance include the display of preference or dispreference for various actions, and especially ways of accounting for displays of dispreference for a particular action. Examination of the management of the question and answer turns shows how these differentials are oriented to and resisted, while at the same time affiliation necessary for the accomplishment of the institutional task, in this case an ethnographic interview, is maintained.

It is not the case that a pre-existing hierarchy causes participants to act in a certain way, but that by orienting to it, they can hold each other accountable for departures. Heritage has identified what he calls preferred and dispreferred action as being most powerful as an “inferential device” (Heritage 1984: 46). Preferred action, he noticed, is carried out straightforwardly, but the shape of dispreferred actions can be changed by delays and qualifications (Heritage 1984; Hutchby & Wooffit 1998). It must be understood that these preferences are not considered to express private wishes of participants, but that institutionalized ways of speaking are being displayed and understood, and that an institutional world “known-in-common” is being oriented to, and maintained or altered (Heritage 1984: 266-7). Rather than looking for motivations, the interest is in how different designs of parts enable institutional tasks to be accomplished.
Interview excerpts and analyses

Excerpt 1

This excerpt is particularly important, because it would not have been included in a conventional transcript. The first ‘interview’ question had not yet been asked, but it is in the management of just these turns that IR and IE can be seen to be setting up, maintaining, or incrementally negotiating a scheme for how the interaction should be conducted and for interpreting action (Hutchby & Wooffitt 1998; Schegloff 1991; Wilson 1991). The scheme can be seen to include the achievement of the institutionally appropriate task of conducting an interview, a collaboratively produced bias towards affiliation and avoidance of conflict, and at the same time, an attempt to negotiate the inherent asymmetries of the interview and control the agenda. These features of such a spate of institutional talk are already being oriented to and used as resources by IR and IE to create the meaning of Lúčnica’s existence even before the interview ‘proper’ began.

The excerpt begins from when the recorder was switched on by IR, and proceeds up to the point when the first interview question was asked. IR had preceded IE in climbing into the mini-van, and had taken the passenger seat behind the driver’s seat. While IE was still settling himself beside her, IR switched on the recorder, said she was doing so, and placed it on the seat between them. As can be inferred from the transcript, IE did not respond to this. Instead, he can be seen to have been reading IR’s question sheet while she filled out the consent form. He had inadvertently knocked the question sheet onto the floor as he was settling himself, and was busy scanning it, before handing it to IR:

1 IR: ↑n::owp. >;we’re recording here I’ll sign it.<
2 IR: as well,? in your presence,? (.) >wh(h)at’s the date.<
3 IR: hm f(h)ourth.=
4 IE: = "it’s the sixth" =
5 IR: = hmm >yes oh yes it is it’s the sixth,?<
6 (0.2)               ((IE retrieving question sheet from floor))
7 IR: wh(h)atdy do. (.) six (.) ten (.) oh ↑seven, (.) Laverton, ? (.)
8 IR: ( ) ‘n this’s you,
9 IR: (0.4)              ((IR writing))
10 IR: [    Jackuliak,?    ]
11 IE: [¡er ¡ah ¡er ¡ah ¡er] yep = ((IE reading question sheet))
IR: = hehehe =
143
IR: = ’nd I will [si::gn ]
13 IE: = [“here’re] some political questions” =
14 IR: = ↑OH ↓YEAH? (. ) >but doesn’t matter?< (. )
15 IR: < i- if you don’t wanna answer them > that’s fine too? =
16 IE: = [ “OK” ] =
17 IR: = [no problem.]
18 ((IE hands question sheet to IR))

Analysis

In this preamble, the rhythm of the expected interview question and answer format has not yet been established. In fact, the interaction is sequentially chaotic, characterized by what Schegloff calls “hitches and perturbations” in the flow of the talk (2000: 42). But two all-pervasive components of the scenario are the question sheet and the consent form, to which both IR and IE can be seen to be orienting explicitly in this initial episode. Because of this, a strong inference of collaboration in the achievement of the interview can be made concerning the interaction in the first five lines, despite the fact that first and second relevant pair-parts, in this case questions and answers, are not immediately adjacent. IR answers her own question in Lines 2 and 3, then IE makes a correction, ratified by IR in Lines 4 and 5. However, commonsense knowledge informs the judgement that this is appropriate, mutual ‘form-filling’ practical action. The small gap in Line 6 could be seen in a similar light, including even the following utterance by IR in Line 7, where IR inserts a small laugh (shown by an inserted ‘h’) in responding to IE’s knocking a sheet of paper onto the floor of the van. A display of affiliative intent can be inferred from that small laugh, as showing understanding that the incident was accidental.

The larger gap in Line 9, however, must be interpreted in the light of what has immediately preceded the gap, and what follows. The dropped sheet contained the list of prepared interview questions. During IR’s ‘form-filling’ noises from Line 7 through to Line 10, IE is in fact reading IR’s questions, making comical sing-song ‘reading’ sounds indicated by the small up and down arrows in Line 11, simultaneously orienting to the system of ordinary talk as evidenced by his immediate ‘yep’ in response to IR’s pronunciation of his name in the previous line. IR follows with convergent laughter. But in Lines 13 and 14, IE cuts into IR’s ‘form-filling’ utterance, overlapping with her. It is evident from the semantic content of IE’s remark that he has just read the following
three questions on the sheet, which are concerned with political interference with Lúčnica’s activities, past and present:

8. What kind of interference was there from Slovkoncert during the Soviet era, and how did you deal with it?

9. Did cultural policy change after 1989 with Mečiár’s, then Dzurinda’s cultural policies, and what impact has it had on Lúčnica? How about after 2006, with Fico in power?

10. Has Slovakia adopted the policies of the European Union Culture 2000 program? Does it impinge on your activities with Lúčnica? Are you familiar with the “arm’s length” policy in some European countries such as the UK?

In the case of overlaps, for example, Shegloff points out that they are “co-constructed by reference to one-party-at-a-time as its targeted design feature”, and therefore, are understood as a clear departure from the default system of talk (2000: 3). As Schegloff points out, not all instances of overlapping talk belong to this category. For example, the overlapping action in Lines 10 and 11 belongs to a category of “convergent and consensual, not competitive” utterances (2000: 6). But overlaps that signal trouble are often accompanied by changes in the volume of one of the speakers, exemplified by the noticeably reduced volume of IE’s remark in Line 14, shown by the small dots. Then, IR immediately responds with a sudden rise in pitch and volume, a device characteristically used to force a backdown of one participant by another (2000: 15). IE indicates deference to the show of force by allowing IR to continue her turn rather than trying to continue his. The work done by IR’s turn from Line 15 through 18 is complex. She claims the floor, shows IE that he may resist the inherent hegemony of the prepared questions, and manages to include the proviso that now is not the time to allow him to do so. IE then displays acceptance of loss of the small battle by handing the floor over to IR, inferred by his quiet ‘OK’ in Line 17.

However, the question of whether these ‘political’ questions will be dealt with or not is left open, but IE is accountable for his reluctance to answer them, and displays awareness of his accountability 21 minutes later as will be shown in discussion of Excerpt 5, when the problem questions are revisited. Delay and qualification are two devices used by respondents in order to account for not fulfilling the obligation to answer, as will be shown. But even at this point, it is possible to draw likely conclusions about Lúčnica’s significance because of the way in which IR and IE have managed their
interaction thus far. They have already demonstrated investment in sustaining the interaction in order to produce a respectable institutional context in the form of an ethnographic interview. They have achieved this by skillfully managing the interplay between affiliative action, and the inherent asymmetry of the interview, in order to make substantive aspects of the topic explicit.

Regarding the topic of Lúčnica’s significance, then, it can already be inferred that political aspects of Lúčnica’s past and present are problematic, not only for this interview, but beyond its ambit, because of Lúčnica’s representative, ambassadorial role. This understanding has been demonstrably established, and projected as an unresolved matter of accountability, even before the first ‘interview’ question is asked.

Excerpt 2

For the time being, the ‘political’ problem has been set aside, but the battle for the agenda remains forefront, especially noticeable because IR’s questions challenge a variety of aspects of Lúčnica’s meaning. However, the task of establishing the credentials of IE as a satisfactory substitute for Professor Nosáľ is now first on IR’s agenda. IE, on the other hand, answers her question concerning his involvement with Lúčnica by launching into a formulaic, descriptive account of Lúčnica and Professor Nosáľ. At this point, it would not be counter-intuitive to ask whether the limitations of IE’s English language proficiency could explain this. However, this can never be known, and besides, how this possibility is managed is part of the topic. What can be examined is the development of the action, and what this apparent lack of relevance between the question and answer means in relation to how understandings were sequentially and incrementally created over the whole interview. In this early stage, the struggle for control over these competing agendas can be articulated by examining the use of a conversational device characteristic of interviews, namely, the group of utterances known as response tokens, such as ‘uh huh’ and ‘mmm’:

19  IR: .hh what I was gonna ask you ↑first ↓though? (. .) because I
20  IR: already (. .) knew, (. .) what (. .) Professor Nosáľ’s role was,?
21  IR: .hh could you (. .) briefly explain to me your history with (. .)
22  IR: Lúčnica? (. .) and what you do.
23  IE: (0.3)
24  IE: we recording,? =
25  IR: = yah.=

145
IE: = OK.
IE: (.) so (.) ah (.) >Lúčnica is< (.) >we can say that ( )
IE: Slovakia< (.) ah (.) >Slovakia is really rich of< of tradition
IE: of- (.) of .hh >traditions also in songs music and every-
IE: thing< (.) very unique (.) er (.) in all around the world .hh
IE: but er (.) >you know in Slovakia exists many many many hundred-
IE: maybe hundreds of ensembles groups< who are .hh making er
IE: traditions on stage and er =
RI: = yep. =
IE: = errr ↑so ↓but ↑only one er in Lúčnica (.) ah is this tradition
IE: created to .hh really (.) worldwide themes and successful
IE: sho[w, ] =
IR: [mmm,?]
IE: = and that’s because er Professor Nosáľ who is artistic
IE: director choreograph or from < of- of this ensemble > .hh
IE: from > [ errrrigh ] =
IR: [>nineteen forty-nine]<
IE: = n(h)ineteen forty-nine,? (.) >.hh he started as dancer and
IE: then continued as choreographer studied choreography and
IE: and created< .hh ah >most choreographies of Lúčnica most
IE: programmes.?< and because his errr his his errrr creations
IE: in this ensemble .hh Lúčnica established as er (.) one of
IE: the best ensembles maybe (.) the best one of ensembles what
IE: about traditions. .hh we can- ↑we can compare with (.) err the
IE: best ensembles from Russia or East Europe Bulgaria .hh or ah
IE: Georgia, or something, .hh ↑is also beautiful. ↓but er in (.)
IE: in never of ↑this countries so richness of of different
IE: traditions. (.) because [ .hh ] you know Georgian folklore is
IE: [“;yep”]
IR: [↓choreographed. ↓yep,] ↓yep .hh so (.) ↑how did you get involved
IE: (.) in Lúčnica. (.) ↑how long have you been involved. =
IE: = me ( ) =
IR: = yeah.
IE: .hh a:h ↑so I started ↑dance since I was= when I was six or
IE: seven years (.) young,? (.) and like child and child’s ensemble,?
IE: (.) and then errrr ↑if it started to be really serious,< .hh
IE: I (.) had (.) just (.) one (.) reason to go to >Bratislava ( )
IE: from capital ( ) of Slovakia Bratislava,< (.)( >me from middle
IE: of Slovakia, to go for study for university to this city where Lúčnica is established, to have a chance to try. hh IE: to get into ensemble and hh be successful, so- so I err I try to go to economics university of Bratislava, IE: go to Lúčnica and dance seven years long, career there, travel, all- all around the world and err had this this thing going to to be on the stage in many countries different culture, and try to feel it like the (. ) people from other- other cultures, err (. ) get to get to be happy to see us, you know = IR: yep yep (. ) yep good so what year was that

Analysis

IR makes explicit her preferred agenda item, the establishment of IE’s history with Lúčnica, in Lines 19 through 22. When her ‘identity-establishing’ question reaches a recognizable end, with downward intonation in Line 22 indicated by the full stop, IE inserts a noticeable pause. From this, and what follows, it can be inferred that IE has not understood IR’s question, but rather, is orienting to the recording machine before accepting the obligation to answer. In this respect, he displays recognition of the institutional identities of IR and himself, which she acknowledges in Line 25. In Line 27, IE embarks upon a long, general description of Lúčnica, delivered with bursts of fast, monotonous speech. In fact, the semantic content of Lines 28 through 63 is similar to promotional material and reviews of performances which have remained unchanged for two decades on Lúčnica’s website. In other words, it looks and sounds like a ‘spiel’.

IR’s management of this account by IE can be traced by examining her use of response tokens. However, it must be understood that conversational features such as response tokens do not have a fixed function. Their operation, as Schegloff explains, “is designed in a detailed way to fit to the ongoing talk”, and is “fitted to the details of the locally preceding talk” (1982: 86). Their potential uses are exploited by IR in order to show preferred and dispreferred action for her, and to get the kind of response she is looking for, in the following way. In Lines 34 and 38, she utters two different tokens, variation in tokens being characteristic of a display of interest (1982: 85). In these instances, the tokens are working as continuers of preferred action. The inference is that IR has allowed IE to continue, because in so doing, he is showing his hand, allowing IR to
monitor his action. She also collaborates by supplying the date which IE is fumbling for in Line 41.

But IR’s next token, ‘yep’ in Line 54, is noticeably lower in pitch and volume, inserted into a continuation of IE’s formulaic account. Evidence that this can be interpreted as a signal of dispreferred action is strengthened by the fact that in Line 64, IR quickly repeats the same token twice, after more of IE’s ‘spiel’. This kind of action is aptly named by Shegloff as a ‘rush-through’, typically indicated by repetition of the same token, acceleration and a reduction in pitch and volume (Schegloff 2000: 15-16). Such ‘rush-throughs’, which appear to ignore what is presently going on in the talk, can indicate the intrusion of a cognitive object (Schegloff 1982: 72). In this instance, pre-existing institutional pressure for IR to establish IE’s professional credibility, in the context of an understood time limit, then to cover all the prepared questions, constitutes that object. IE provides the wanted account of his experience with Lúčnica, over Lines 68 through 83, but IR delivers another ‘rush-through’ in Line 84, this time delivering the same token three times. Again, the lines following reveal the intrusion of a cognitive object, the apparent need to place IE’s years as a dancer with Lúčnica chronologically, and to get to ask the first prepared question.

Even at this early stage in the interview, completed within four and a half minutes, it is possible to identify displays of preference and dispreference, made not only by means of response tokens, but by means of prosodic features such as breath intake and volume. Having established in Lines 66 and 67 that he has understood IR’s question, IE delivers what transpires to be a marker for preference for him, for readiness to give the required account; he utters a small intake of breath followed by a stretched out ‘ah’ with arching intonation in Line 68. This inference is confirmed by the following collection of IE’s beginnings for eleven of his thirteen long answers over the duration of the interview, comparison of which shows a similarity of prosodic and semantic configuration:

68  IE: .hh a::h ;so I started ;dance since I was~ when I was six or
114  IE: .hh "a::h. (.)you know (.) this er (.) maybe this is a good
179  IE: ;"a::h >it’s normal because< you ;kno:w >Professor Nosál
221  IE: a::h yes,?
290  IE: .hhh of course.
348  IE: = a:h ;yeah
361  IE: = mm yes,? that’s er (.) good question. .hh >Professor Nosál
442  IE: = ;a::h I’m sure he has,?
The two exceptions are the beginnings of the dispreferred spiel-like account examined in Excerpt 2, and the first ‘political’ question, to be revisited in Excerpt 5. The former began as follows:

27 IE: (. ) so (. ) ah (. ) >Lúčnica is< (. ) >we can say that ( )

IE’s answer in Excerpt 5, when IR brings the political questions back onto the agenda near the end of the interview, begins thus:

562 IE: (. ) so ↓you ↓know generally (. ) that times (. ) was (. )

Both these answer beginnings share a lack of prosodic commitment that is evident in the eleven examples above, from which it can be inferred that he is reluctant to visit this topic, or, in CA terms, this question was dispreferred action for him.

At Line 68, however, when IE has recognized the relevant semantic content of the question concerning his involvement with Lúčnica, he accepts the obligation to answer, and delivers what transpires to be his marker for readiness to give a long account, and for displaying preference. Furthermore, the body of his account is infused with emotion, inferred from two prosodic features, as he tells a personal story. The first is the placement of small gaps in Line 71, where IE describes his strong motivation to get to Bratislava as a student and become a member of Lúčnica. He uses this manner of delivering utterances concerned with determination several times, as will be discussed with respect to later questions concerning the erasure of negative elements from staged music folklore, and political interference in Lúčnica’s activities. The second noticeable prosodic feature is the accent placed on syllables in Lines 75 and 80, where IE describes his aspiration to be accepted into the troupe, then to make audiences around the world “happy to see us”.

Despite the termination of IE’s account by means of IR’s rush-through in Line 84, already understanding of Lúčnica’s essence and purpose has been expanded. If it is true that preferred action can be confidently identified by examining the way in which the interaction thus far has been collaboratively organized, then IE’s account concerning
IE’s motivation for dancing with Lúčnica as a young man, and touring abroad, was characterized by preferred action by IR and IE. The poignancy of IE’s personal account of his desire to cross cultural boundaries in Lines 79 through 83 by means of performing with Lúčnica cannot be missed. Such substantive aspects of Lúčnica’s significance demonstrably mattered to both participants, and can thereby be added to its image. Rather than being described in terms of a promotional formula, Lúčnica begins to come to life, as being comprised of young Slovak performers of traditional music and dance folklore, eager to aspire to its excellent performance standards, to show that virtuosity and the beauty of Slovak songs and dances to audiences abroad, and to see their audiences’ pleasure. These attributes are no longer phenomena to be observed, but they are aspects of a tradition being lived.

Excerpt 3

The following question and answer sequence is the first of two specifically concerned with the issue of the authenticity of Lúčnica’s claim to represent traditional Slovak music and dance. The first addresses the implications of the much-fêted blend of tradition with balletic artistry for which Professor Nosáľ is famous. The second concerns the erasure of negative elements from this kind of staged performance.

After the interview has proceeded for just over 15 minutes, IR asks the first of these two questions, and IE supplies a long account:

357 IR: (.) how does he know [(.)] >what is original.< =
358 IE: [he-]
359 IE: = >what is original.< yah. (..) so.> =
360 IR: = mmm. =
361 IE: = mm yes,? that’s er (..) good question. .hh >Professor Nosáľ
362 IE: comes from< (..) >yeah really poor village middle Slovakia.<
363 IE: a::nd his childness was .hh er really poor but er full of
364 IE: tradition, full of .hh songs, and er maybe .hh from wi:ld er (.)
365 IE: _life in the villages and montains and .hh where the people lived
366 IE: er hard hard life,? .hh but (..) >in this hard poor life they
367 IE: didn’t forget< (..)to (..) >sing and dancing and< (.)
368 IE: >celebrate everything what< =
369 IR: = yup,? =
370 IE: = what er life bring er (..) to them,? .hh and from this er (.)
371 IE: from >to this part of Slovakia he came< (..)to .hh ;bigger city,
372 IE: >and ;that’s Bratislava the ;capital,< .hh a:nd er visited er
special performances new created this time Slovak National Theatre, and it was really unique performance in Slovak National Theatre, really unique, in the theatre and (. ) came to the (. ) sure, that’s what I want to do. (. ) and I try to do it the best as (. ) I (. ) can. and so it’s try (. ) so he try to do it professional, (. ) and nobody knew (. ) that time that (. ) so successful he (. ) just try to (. ) to bring his (. ) feeling and his experiences on stage. (. ) and do it as = so are you [saying] that he was drawing on his own (. ) childhood experience[es. ] =

[uh huh? ]

= authentic (. ) traditions (. ) =

= yep, =

= .hh and the- he [knows,? ] =

= [but but]<

= >and because of that he knows< (. ) what (. ) original is,? =

= yep. =

= what authentic is,? ]

= [uh huh,? ]

= that’s only the roots.< (. ) >because he’s he’s just< (. ) coming from (. ) one of (. ) regions =

= of course. =

= but then. after after he started to .hh >interested about<

= (. ) >choreography and everything,< .hh he >travelled a lot

= of all parts of Slovakia. .hh visited people [who was ] =

= [uh huh,?] =

= .hh living in these villages. who was created these fantastic costumes. .hh who who singing these songs er like

= spontan’ous. (. ) by the party or by by the (. ) normal li::fe

= after the wor::k or or before the work or after the er

= .hh spring and (. ) er he just (. ) try to- try to- >to put

= everything into his soul.< and (0.5) put it (. ) [through] =

= his genius on the [stage. ]

= ["that’s beautiful." ] =

= yeah. =

= y(h)eah. .hh I didn’t know this.

= = and its alot alot hundreds of days weeks and maybe years

= .hh what he just travelled a- a- across [Slovakia.] =

= [ uh huh,?] =

= doing his own =

= yep primary research. =

= >yep because [he- he have to understand ] =

= [how much does he go to archives.] =

= so< (. ) so (. ) < because he ca- can’t just for (. ) er >one of part of Slovakia,? he just says< .hh if !you !want !to created
From the beginning of IE’s account in Line 359, where he begins by repeating the question, until IR interrupts his flow in Line 383, identifiable features of the talk indicate preferred action. IR supplies different tokens in Lines 360 and 369, characteristic for displaying preference for the long account being supplied by IE, displaying her willingness as recipient of the same (Schegloff 2000: 15-16). This preferred account by IE is characterized by prosodic variation, far from the monotonous spiel-like quality seen in Excerpt 2. In this account, he emphasizes and stretches the word “wild” in Line 364, and puts extra stress on “life” and “mountains” in Line 365.

As he tells the story of how Professor Nosáľ developed his professional goals, IE becomes more and more passionate, until in Line 377 he has taken on the voice of Professor Nosáľ, the revered and famous artistic director of Lúčnica for 60 years, and who is considered a living national treasure in Slovakia. In using reported speech, IE invokes a resource available to participants in giving the account they want to give, to strengthen his claim to the validity of the cultural story he is telling. As Hutchby and Wooffitt point out, “[t]he status of one’s claims can be very effectively undermined if they can be portrayed as simply reflecting personal interest” (1998: 219). In these authors’ terms, IE is raising the stakes by using this resource, displaying action rich in inference. He further compounds the strength of the claim in Line 378 by using a device he used in Line 71, when relating his determination to dance with Lúčnica in his student days, separating each word to give emphasis. Simultaneously, he imputes this way of speaking to Professor Nosáľ as he explains the Professor’s commitment to do his best to
portray the traditional music and dances he had witnessed in the theatre when he was a young man.

At Line 383 IR interrupts IE’s flow with what can be called a ‘top-up’ question, and an interlude of shorter, but collaborative turns follows. During the sequence of short turns, both the uses of tokens and accented syllables work to confirm affiliation, serially displaying understanding that the story being produced is preferred by both IR and IE. IE’s tokens in Lines 385, 387 and 391 work as relevant second pair-parts to IR’s questions, confirming that she has understood what he is trying to say, and working to show preference, as he continues his account. In Line 389, IE clearly displays his intention to continue with his account, but backtracks in order to satisfy what looks like IR’s need to confirm that she has understood what he is trying to portray about Professor Nosáľ's intent. A growing momentum can be seen and heard as he continues in Line 394, and IR goes along with it, varying her continuers. In overlapping with IR in Lines 389 and 393, IE is, in a sense, challenging IR’s position as interviewer, but the challenge is accepted by IR in that she collaborates by backing down. From this point through to Line 431, when the answer is displayed by both IE and IR as being complete and satisfactory, IR shows him that he has the floor. She declines to take the floor even when there is a significant gap in IE’s flow in Line 405. She explicitly shows that he is supplying preferred action by means of a variety of tokens. Notably, the quiet ‘yeah’ tokens in Lines 423 and 425 supplied by IR are not fast and lowered in pitch as her previous tokens for showing dispreference for IE’s action in Excerpt 2. Rather, they are collaborative and affiliative, and they are interspersed throughout IE’s utterance from Line 419 through Line 427.

IR’s question in Line 417 is ignored by IE, as his momentum, in hindsight, is carrying him on to the climax of this spate of talk. He is about to deliver the ‘punch-line’, and although this could not be predicted by IR at that point in the talk, at line 419 IE begins its delivery. The inference that it is a passionate outburst is confirmed by the fact that he uses several conversational devices at once. First, in Line 419 he uses a pronoun to indicate that he is using the voice of Professor Nosáľ once again. Secondly, he separates each word with small gaps in Lines 420 and 421, used previously by him for the purpose of showing emphasis. Thirdly, in these lines, and in the continuation of his utterance up until Line 424, albeit interspersed with IR’s quiet continuer, he introduces his ‘up-down’ sing-song intonation. When he is finished the account, recognized by IR
by means of his downward intonation at Line 427, IR echoes his word emphasis, and a completion of the account is mutually reached.

The work done in this climactic part of the interview by both participants exposes an important finding with respect to Lúčnica’s significance. Nosáľ’s strong emotional connection between the land, the villages, and the variety of traditional forms he experienced in his early research, has informed the image of Lúčnica being created, strengthening its traditional and authentic nature.

Excerpt 4

The second ‘authenticity’ question, concerning the erasure of negative elements in Lúčnica’s staged portrayals of Slovak music and dance, was asked just over two minutes after the climactic phase in the talk presented in Excerpt 3. The intervening questions revisited the matter of archival research, but limits of space cannot allow detailed analysis of that question and answer sequence, except to say that it looks as if it is working something like an intermission from the emotional intensity of the sequence presented in Excerpt 3. However, with the asking of this second “authenticity” question, the passion returns:

481 IR: (. ) this one. .hh you know how a lot of the reviews also (0.1)
482 IR: describe (. ) Lúčnica’s performances as ______lighthearted (0.5) they
483 IR: say this all (. ) l(h) have l( ) lighthearted (0.1) and one show
484 IR: is called ahh ahh (. ) >Forever Young.< (. ) another one is
485 IR: called er >Youth and Beauty. =
486 IE: = yeah, =
487 IR: = .hh does he ever,? (. ) in the >in the village< he must have
488 IR: ______known. the hard life, (. ) the tragedies, the murder the rape,
489 IR: the (. ) love triangles, illegitimate, er >the problems that
490 IR: every society has.< (. ) any of these songs (. ) ever (. )
491 IR: part of (. ) >Lúčnica’s performance?< or is it always just
492 IR: (. ) the lighthearted.
493 IE: .hhh a:hh. >I don’t think so it’s [this< er hehehe]=
494 IR:

495 [ hehehe ]
496 IE: er >songs and music and dances,?< .hh a:::hh I also this- this
497 IE: dance (. ) er but er, =
498 IR: [hehe ↑( )]

35 See Appendix II, Lines 431-481
IE: [hehe ‘Janko’]
(tour manager gesticulates with more energy))
IE: .hh yeah ah you know (.). I just try to also explain by words
IE: of Professor Nosáľ.=
IR: = mmmhmm, ?=
E: = the ;just (.). is telling that ah the art (.). generally and (.).
IE: >especially his art on the stage,< .hh he try just to bring
IE: to the >audience and the people< (.). beauty, (.). a:nd er (0.2)
IE: and to be happy and (oh) (.). >if I was a ↓dancer. < he= he
IE: alwa- always say to us (.). yes. (.). ↑it’s ↓really hard. .hh you
IE: you have to practice a lo::t, (.). do hard work and er (0.5)
IE: = prepare these hundreds many hundreds errr hours and .hh no
IE: free time just >work ’n work< but (.). the audience ca::n’t
IE: see that just ↑they ↓just have see the ↑beauty ↓and er =
IR: = “uh huh,?° =
IE: = an and (.). ↑laughing ↓and =
IR: = “uh huh,?° =
IE: = everything what is (.). nice.
IE: not what is hard. if they say. if they say " ↑it was ↓hard
IE: Job it was bad." =
IR: = “yeah" =
IE: = ↑he ↓have to say< =
IR: = “yeah" =
IE: = ↑it was so [{ }]
IR: = ↑but what] about the tragedy of life. (0.3)
IE: = {in the village.< (.). =
IR: = ↑a:hh. =
IE: = n all the songs that come from that. (.). [c’se I know they]=
IE: = ↑maybe, maybe this is the point. (.). so (.). the- the- the
IE: life was so ↓hard ↝ and full of tragedy and full of work .hh
IE: so the people .hh like just celebrate in the free time.
IE: = [it was] not so many times in the year .hh and they (.).=
IR: = [mhm, ]
IE: = they was so hard work and they just try to (.). celebrate
IE: = and [be ] =
IR: = [yah.]
IE: = happ[y and] .hhh forget everything and just [er put their]
IR: = [yep ] [understand, ]
IE: = feelings out of them. =
IR: = ↑uh hmm,? uh hmm,?<=
IE: = and maybe that’s [the]
IR: = [OK ] yep maybe it is,? .hh and the only
IR: one I think I have left .hh ahm are- are those political
IR: questions.
Analysis

In this kind of institutional talk, the interviewer can design a question for its recipient in order to project a certain kind of response by inserting information into the question. It is referred to as a “question preface” (Heritage & Greatbach 1991: 99). This spate of talk begins with such a question preface, delivered by IR in Lines 481 through 492. Then, when IR’s intonation goes down at Line 492, indicating a recognizable TRP, IE displays his readiness to supply the elicited account by uttering his unique readiness-to-answer marker:

493 IE: .hhh ↘a:hh.

Immediately following this utterance, the tour manager appears at the window, making comical faces and pointing inside. IE and IR supply convergent laughter, but in Line 496, IE restates his readiness marker, and continues his narrative. His pause of 0.5 seconds in Line 497 is not taken as an opportunity to take the floor by IR. Instead, both IE and IR again acknowledge the antics of the tour manager outside in a collaborative manner, with overlapping laughter. In Line 501, IE continues his answer, and at Line 503, IR supplies a continuer.

For the next minute of his narrative, from Line 504 through to Line 524, IE delivers a story concerning the erasure of signs of arduous rehearsal from the final performance on the stage, as required by Professor Nosáľ. IR collaborates in the production of the story by supplying continuers, and helping out with vocabulary in Lines 510 and 511. IE’s account displays the use of similar resources to those used in Excerpt 3, characterized by accented words, and the borrowing of the voice of Professor Nosáľ again in Lines 519 and 520. But IR resorts again to using tokens as indicators of dispreferred action. Two pairs of tokens uttered quietly in Lines 515, 517, 521 and 523, each pair consisting of repeated tokens, work to display a lack of interest in what is being offered as a response, despite the fact that IE is telling it with such strength.

In order to harness IE’s account and bring it back to addressing the item explicitly put on the agenda by IR’s question preface, concerning tragic and violent aspects of village life and the songs that come from it, IR inserts another ‘top-up’ question at Line 525. The work done by the ‘top-up’ question examined in Excerpt 3, however, is different from that done by this one. The former was concerned with verifying and displaying
preference for IE’s account in progress, but this one is more concerned with asserting control over the agenda. The work done by this ‘top-up’ question is understood and displayed as understood, as evidenced by IE’s production of another cultural story about the importance of music and dance in dealing with the difficulties of village life in the past. IE meets the challenge again using his ‘readiness-to-answer’ marker, and proceeds to deliver the kind of answer IR wants.

IR displays satisfaction with the answer at Lines 538 and 540, working to wrap up this question. However, in Line 541, IE attempts to continue, but is cut off by IR’s ‘rush-through’ in Line 542, where she erases whatever he might have said in continuing his account of the relationship between the tragedies of village life and the joy of traditional dancing and music making. This is another example of a cognitive intrusion into the interaction. The unfinished business of the ‘political questions’, and the shortness of time, are the culprits.

In hindsight, the erasure for all time of whatever IE might have added is regrettable. Nevertheless, the two-part story produced by means of the interaction of both parties adds more important dimensions to a picture of Lúčnica’s meaning. In fact, the two sections, the first about the rigours of balletic training and the second about the rigours of village life, are analogous, and told with such passion and eloquence. The first enriches the second, even though it was demonstrably dispreferred at the time of its delivery, and may have been omitted from a journalistic account because its semantic content is not literally related to the question. And yet, by means of the available cultural, conversational and institutional resources at the time of the interview, Lúčnica is constructed as much more than the apparently ‘sanitized’ entity portrayed in its formulaic promotions, and by its critics. The turbulence of the past, and the courage to hide suffering of painful rehearsal are embodied in the same kind of performance, and have been brought into the present. Perhaps this explains the reverence in which such performances are held, as witnessed by the researcher while living in Slovakia, because this cultural knowledge is also available to a large proportion of Slovak audience members.
With time running out, and having dealt with two non-verbal appeals by the tour manager to end the interview and allow IE to rejoin activities inside the clubhouse, IR explicitly introduces the postponed 'political questions':

542 IR: [OK] yep maybe it is, .hh and the only one
543 IR: I think I have left .hh ahm are- are those political questions.
544 IR: (. ) because (. ) I wondered (. ) .hh because there is a lot of
545 IR: documentation. .hh about how .hh er Slovkoncert and the
546 IR: >Ministry of Culture< used to (. ) >keep a very close ↑eye. on
547 IR: diferent programmes< (. ) and censor,? "I have five minutes
548 IR: hehe" =
549 (( tour manager gesticulates at the window))
550 IR: = .hh and censor things,? make sure there was not anything
551 IR: that they didn't like,. (. ) ahmm (. ) and so on. .hh
552 IR: "d(h)id he have to d(h)eadl with th(h)at?" (.1) did they
553 IR: ever, (. ) what was it like for Ľúčnica and Professor Nosál.
554 IR: (.2) >with this pressure from (. ) Slovkoncert.<
555 IE: err (. ) Slovkoncert doesn’t exist more,. =
556 IR: = I know,. >but I’m talking about during the
557 IR: communist years.< =
558 IE: = uh huh.=
559 IR: = was it [a pressure]=
560 IE: [ahh, ]
561 IR: = for him? or how did he deal with it.
562 IE: (. ) so ↑you ↓ know generally (. ) that times (. ) was (. )
563 IE: >really hard< and .hh ahh art was really under pressure.
564 IE: but (. ) >maybe this was the luck< (. ) for traditional music
565 IE: that it wasn’t political. .hh a::nd maybe also the government
566 IE: that time like it because (whole) ideology and nothing,. .hh
567 IE: but er (. ) >the right way of Professor Nosál was< .hh he never.
568 IE: (. ) never, .hh er (. ) co-operated with po:itical. (. )
569 IE: ↑till [now. (. ) ] =
570 IR: ["mnhnmm,?" ]
571 IE: = >not just [only in this time,?<
572 IR: [>so he stuck to his own artistic vision.<>]
573 IE: = yeah. ↑he ↓ just (. ).↓did ↑his ↑work (. ) >as good as he
574 IE: [can,?< ] =
575 IR: = [and they let him. ] =
576 IE: = yes, >and they they< let him,? (. ) >sometimes yes it was
577 IE: hard time,?< .hh they try to (. ) make push on some thi:ngs,?
578 IE: .hh >but he say< (. ) >we just doing our wor:k,? and< er
579 IE: (. ) you let us do it,? ↓or (. ) I (. ) get (. ) out. =
He was also usually a bit of a politician, but he was also a bit of a politician. He was part of the Slovak political life, difficult in the last 16 years. He was an artist, and we are doing our job perfectly. It didn't make any difference. Many many years ago everyone can see that it's good and it's good for Slovakia. The position of Professor Nosáľ is so high that you know like many many years of he is like a national hero. His performances, because they are proud. It's good because it doesn't matter if it's left or right of government.

He has always had the same look on this, we are not political, we are artists and we are doing our job. I will without complain, he said. He always has the same look on this. We are not political, we are artists and we are doing our job.

He was always a bit of a politician, but he always had the same look on this, we are not political, we are artists and we are doing our job. He has always had the same look on this, we are not political, we are artists and we are doing our job.
Analysis

From Lines 543 through 457, IR inserts information into her question which she knows that IE already knows, because now both know he had read the questions before the beginning of the interview ‘proper’. The inference here is that IR is saving her and IE’s face by preserving her advantage as IR. But during her delivery of the long question, the tour organizer appears for the third time, interrupting IR’s flow. On this occasion, only she responds in Line 547, showing him five fingers as she claims five more minutes, accompanied by a weak, small burst of laughter. She continues delivering her question turn. It can be inferred that the reason for IE’s failure to join in with IR’s laughter this time is that the ‘political question’ is dispreferred, an inference confirmed by what follows. First, he does not fulfill his obligation to take his turn at recognizable TRPs in Lines 552 and 553. Finally, in Line 554, when the question intonation and semantic content indicate a definite question ending, he accepts the obligation to respond. However, instead of supplying an answer, he supplies what looks like a correction, challenging IR with a so-called ‘other-repair’, stating that Slovkoncert no longer exists. In fact, it is an account for the missing response that would have been relevant to the question. In the next turn, IR rejects the correction or account, delivering her own ‘other-repair’, reclaiming the relevance of the question, with added emphasis. The inference drawn from this exchange is that discussion of Slovkoncert, the Ministry of Culture’s agency for organizing and monitoring performances during the communist regime, is strongly dispreferred action. From a semantic point of view, IE’s ‘repair’ is not logical, as he already knows that she knows it no longer exists. Rather, this exchange looks like a move in a floor-fight, similar to examples observed by Hutchby in the case of talk-back radio shows, where the respondent has a chance to take apart the interviewer (1999: 578). However, at IR’s emphatic utterance in Line 556, IE backs down, displaying acceptance of the question. His token in Line 558, and his readiness marker in Line 560 indicate that he will deliver. Given his already established commitment to achieving a satisfactory interview, to representing Lúčnica favourably, and to preserving the dignity of all, he has little choice.

Despite IE’s acceptance of the obligation to supply an answer, dispreference for the question is still evident, because his answer begins with some subtle but important prosodic features. As mentioned in the analysis of Excerpt 2, IE does not inject energy into his ‘ah’ as he does when showing readiness to respond to preferred questions. The
character of the beginning of IE’s account of political matters is similar to the beginning of his spiel-like delivery shown in Excerpt 2. Significantly, in that instance, the debacle where IE had read the political questions on the sheet had occurred only seconds beforehand. The fact that this prosodically similar answer beginning occurs 24 minutes after the first constitutes evidence for the mentioned accountability of displays of dispreference being managed by means of delay.

Nevertheless, IR displays her preference for this answer, which looks as though it will explain the stance taken by Professor Nosáľ towards political interference. IE proceeds to use word stress and repetition by way of emphasizing his action in Lines 567 and 569,\(^{36}\) and IR collaborates by supplying a quiet token of convergence in Line 570, and a paraphrase in Line 572. Then IE delivers an utterance in Line 573 which has the features he has used before, separating each word, and using an up-and down intonation pattern. IR finishes his sentence for him in line 575, displaying understanding of, and preference for this story-as-action, and IE converges with this understanding by means of repeating IR’s words after delivering an emphasized ‘yes’ in Line 576. Then IE uses the voice of Professor Nosáľ again in Line 579, emphasizing the word ‘let’ and separating his words with small gaps as he did previously. This part of the answer is collaboratively wrapped up in Lines 582 and 583.

However, in Line 583, having looked as though he has collaborated in completion of the answer, IE segues into an answer for the next political question that he has read on the sheet over 24 minutes earlier, before IR asks it. In effect, he is supplying two consecutive second pair-parts, or answers, indicating a disturbance in the default adjacency pair system, thus confirming the dispreferred nature of discussion of political matters. The inference is that the relevant first pair-parts, the political questions, have been like ‘the elephant in the room’, and are being dealt with in one fell swoop by IE. But although IR expresses explicit preference for IE’s answer in Line 587, she proceeds to re-establish her role as questioner by enunciating the second political question before allowing him to continue his answer. Her action here demonstrates her orientation to and reconstruction of institutional context, as she re-establishes the commonly understood default question and answer sequence of such an interview by repeating the question, although it is already known in common.

\(^{36}\) It should be understood that IE’s use of the phrase “till now” means “through to and including the present” in Line 569. This is a characteristic Slovak/English phenomenon, confirmed by IR’s knowledge of Slovak language.
IE’s next turn in Line 589 serves to qualify IE’s reluctance to include political matters in this interview, evident from the beginning of the interaction, and re-enacted when IR reintroduces the problem questions 26 minutes later. He says:

589 IE: [I w(h)ill without c(h)omplain,? hehe]

First, he is accounting for having delayed the honouring of an IE’s obligation to respond to a question. Then, in acquiescing to IR’s immediately preceding re-establishment of her authority regarding both the appropriate institutional context, and the agenda with an apologetic laugh, he qualifies his departures and displays affiliative intent. Both delay and qualification of the delay, as mentioned, are common features associated with dispreferred action (Heritage 1984: 269). Remembering that the eighth question concerned political interference in Lúčnicá’s activities by the Ministry of Culture’s cultural arm, Slovkoncert, and that the ninth question concerns political interference by post-communist governing parties, it is clear that IE does not want to talk about it regardless of the time frame, nor does he consider that this topic is relevant to Lúčnica as an ambassadorial performing group. Nevertheless, he has accepted IR’s determination of the agenda finally, after a show of resistance, and supplies the kind of response she is seeking.

Prosodic features are also noticeable in IE’s response to the ninth question, in which he builds on his valorization of Professor Nosáľ. Having described a man unafraid to reject political manipulation during the communist years in answering the eighth question, he now describes him in heroic terms. He uses word stress, and stretches syllables to give emphasis, particularly in Lines 614 and 616, describing how current politicians wanting to be seen with and be photographed with Professor Nosáľ, sharing in his glory. He continues until his momentum is reigned in by IR, whose tokens begin to accelerate from Line 610 through to Line 624 and 626, where she cuts him short by repeating ‘absolutely’, showing that completion has been decided by her, if not by him. At this point of the interview, the ‘cognitive object’ which intrudes is awareness of the plain fact that time is running out.

There is little investment evident for the third political question concerning the stance of the European Union, as both parties are deferring to the fact that time really has run out, and to the importance of the occasion in progress inside the club, from which IE
has been noticeably absent. The interview ending is abrupt, but within the institutional constraints of time, IR and IE manage to display agreement that this institutional task has been satisfactorily finalized, and that the relationship is intact.

Conclusions

For the topic

From analysis of the non-verbal data observed during the ‘Fun with Lúčnica’ celebration, it was strongly inferred that Lúcnica constitutes a living icon of Slovak ethnicity for whoever can ‘read’ that particular icon. It was also inferred that by participating in celebrating Lúčnica, the gathered Slovak patrons were engaging in the traditional practice of celebrating their ethnicity. In particular, from the perspective of key concepts of Goffman’s interaction order, it can be inferred that the troupe embodies uniquely Slovak claims to morally respectable, civilized character, and to the valorization of youth, beauty, vigour, humour, confidence, and even self-parody.

However, analysis of this interview meant that more specific understandings could be constructed. The question of what tradition means for Slovaks, for example, was elucidated and brought to life. Because of the Professor’s intensive and impassioned research into village folklore and all its diversity, and because these activities and their visible results in Lúčnica’s performances are known by troupe members and Slovak audiences, the past is embodied for them in the institution of Lúčnica. Professor Nosáľ's prominence in the media for several decades, and the packed audiences for Lúčnica’s performances in Slovakia also attest to this. In terms of McDonald’s definition of ‘traditioning’, the celebration of Lúčnica and their performance in Melbourne must be admitted as being traditional on the grounds that the Slovak performers and audience members were found to continue to valorize them, bringing the past into the present and projecting into the future.

However, while the added richness of this ‘traditioning’ practice was made available by analysis of certain question and answer sequences in this interview, an even richer picture emerges, which would not have been made available just from ethnographic notes taken at the welcome celebration, let alone the customary promotional ‘spiel’ so often encountered. The energetic agenda contest enjoined by the participants in this
interview enabled more multi-dimensional cultural stories to be told. The discourse engendered by Lúčnica now includes the past, for this researcher and the reader, with all its bloodshed and struggles for survival of the Slovak nation, reaching back even before the concept of nation was common currency in such discourse. The memories embodied and read in what otherwise would appear to be a sanitized image, include memories of courage and fortitude on the part of key Slovak historical figures and ordinary Slovak people. In particular, the synonymity of Lúčnica and Professor Nosáľ for Slovaks enables this courage to be owned, especially since his triumph over political interference occurred within the lifetimes of many Slovak individuals in Slovak society and in Slovak communities abroad, including Australia. The disjuncture between the ‘spiel’ and this meaning is considerable. For example, in his monologue for commercial consumption on the cited DVD, Nosáľ describes negotiations concerning Lúčnica’s agenda during the communist years thus:

Contemporary themes were also applied in the dancing repertoire. Some were more successful than others. But after some discussions, we agreed that Lucnica should be inspired only by traditional Slovak folk art, which is so rich. We had achieved a lot of success with that. Contemporary topics should be left for other groups. And that’s what we did.37

There is an enormous gulf between this tacit reference to ‘discussions’ and the cultural story produced by IE, where the stakes for Slovak ethnicity were high and the struggle keen, and Nosáľ was, in fact, heroic in his insistence on following his own convictions, and on maintaining the freedom to determine the shape and direction of Lúčnica’s activities. This is not to say that Nosáľ should have provided a different account on such a publicly accessible medium as a commercial DVD, but this example shows how the true significance of events can be masked by a discourse of commodification. The result is that Lúčnica’s iconic significance is far deeper than evidence gained from observational notes alone would have indicated, now including both the bright, clean images presented in performance on the one hand, and also past struggles for the survival of those very images on the other.

Also, these findings confirm the fact that ethnic Slovaks’ tradition of celebrating themselves and their history through identifying and engaging with Lúčnica’s performances is a morally loaded activity. For them, the erasure of anything that is not beautiful and youthful is only virtual, carrying in itself inferences of mastery over

37 See Appendix I: Transcription of monologue of Professor Nosáľ, p.2.
adversity, and the right to claim the positive aspects for which the price has been paid. Slovak school children are taught Slovak history, albeit with its built-in uni-lateral biases, and knowledge concerning past suppression of Slovak ethnicity is part of the Slovak psyche. Also, the discourse is by no means static, as the analysis of the interaction around the ‘political’ questions showed. Censorship by the Ministry of Culture was a problem, but again, moral victory was ascribed to Lúčnica and its director. The question remains as to whether it is being used politically now, in the light of its exploitation for the media by current politicians in Slovakia who like to be photographed with Lúčnica. From the interviewee’s ironic tone when describing this, it could almost be inferred that he knows that this is still a power struggle, but now the tables have been turned, and this, also, is known by Slovak audiences.

In short, Lúčnica is a mirror in which Slovaks read their own ethnic identity. They see beauty, youthful vigour, courage and resilience, and unity in diversity, triumph over adversity, and fellowship with their fellow Slovaks. And this discourse is collaboratively created by Lúčnica’s producers, performers, and Slovak audiences, past and present, with each new performance, as it was created in this interview.

For the methodology

There are several reasons why the application of CA to this ethnographic interview meant that more robust conclusions could be drawn than for interpretation of observational notes. First, CA is a methodology that examines specimens in great detail, identifying incrementally and serially constructed objects of interest for CA over an episode of talk. It must be admitted that this study uses only excerpts from a long interview. Nevertheless, the excerpts selected contain sufficient empirical evidence of these processes for some important claims and inferences. The second reason is that the specific transcription methods employed minimize the inevitable subjectivity implicated in qualitative analysis, because the recording itself, and the transcript, are both publicly available. Thirdly, because the most basic underlying theoretical tenet of CA is that knowledge is created in conversation through collaborative management of the interaction, the part played by the researcher in this endeavour is not hidden, as would have been the case if a positivist view of the interview had been taken. Fourthly, the relationship between individual actors and institutional context is clearly articulated as being mutually poietic.
Because language was considered as the means of interaction rather than only non-verbal phenomena, the semantic content of the interactions enabled a far greater amplitude of meanings to be constructed. However, the depth and breadth of those meanings was achieved because of key concepts upon which CA methodology is based, enabling a shift from a limiting positivistic view of interviews as a research tool. Perhaps the most fundamentally important concept for this study was the redefinition of language as accountable action, enabling the relevance and significance of the semantic content to be unearthed, rather than guessed at. More confident inferences were able to be made, therefore, than would otherwise have been the case, because the management of these actions could be traced in the transcript.

Closely related to the concept of language as accountable action is the claim that moral work is being undertaken in such an interview, and this is what revealed the embodiment by Lúčnica of the darker side of Slovakia’s history. Findings from CA research concerning an overwhelming bias towards affiliation on the one hand, and the play for control over elicited and provided stories-as-action on the other, meant that powerful inferences could be drawn concerning the inseparability of positive and negative aspects of Lúčnica’s significance for the performers and Slovak audiences. Because the construction of identities in institutional talk is central to construction of moral character for participants and institutions referenced, further inferences as to the meaning of Lúčnica beyond the interview were able to be made. This interview, through the application of CA methodology, was thus understood as local and institutional work, both with consequential moral significance.

The concept of consequentiality was particularly valuable for this study. In constructing identities for each other and for the institutions they represent in the course of interacting, the participants in this interview could be seen orienting to the consequentiality of their actions in this regard. IR embodied a prestigious research institution, and so the stakes included success in accomplishing a task that was appropriate to her role and fruitful in answering her research question. Inferences can be confidently made from the analysis of her preferences with respect to action on the part of IE. For example, she was demonstrably unwilling to accept a spiel-like, formulaic narrative to explain Lúčnica as purveyors of Slovak music culture. With IE’s cooperation, however, it was possible to produce a deeper understanding through management of preferences. In this way, her stakes were won in terms of a deeper
understanding of Lučnica with respect to questions of tradition and art, and how their performances embody a long and often bitter struggle for ethnic identity despite apparent erasure of all that is not clean, beautiful, young and virtuosic.

The consequences for IE were also laden with risk. He was representing iconic institutions, namely, Lučnica and Professor Nosál'. The stakes were raised further by the fact that this interview would be on record, and available for unknown third parties to hear or read in the form of a transcript. Despite his dispreference for stories about political relationships, IE, in collaboration, was able to tell a story as evidence of superior moral strength. Similarly, although IE showed a dispreference for speaking about the trials of village life over millennia of oppression and poverty, he was willing to allow IR to design a response from him that did explicate the relationship between the ‘sanitized’ portrayals onstage and the erasure of any references to that violent past. Again, for Slovaks, who share his historical awareness, that difficult history is palpable in the happy, exuberant onstage performances, bringing the past into the present, and again, a moral victory can be claimed, since the triumph of music and dance over adversity became a story that IE wanted to tell, and that IR wanted to hear. Because of this aspect of CA theory and method the stakes for each party to the interview were able to be articulated with confidence, and cogency lent to inferences made.

While Silverman is right when he says that all we have are stories (2006: 136), the stories told and selected for this study constituted a discourse concerning significant meanings, and by using a CA approach, robust evidence for their production was found. Furthermore, the stories were the product of an identifiable power struggle over the agenda of the interview, investing them with significance, and affirming Foucault’s assertions that power threads through society at all levels, creating and altering social structures through discourse. For example, through resistances to the power of ‘spiel’, and to inherent asymmetries in an institutional form such as an interview on the part of participants, understanding was made extant concerning the connection between artistic excellence and the struggle between Professor Nošál and the Ministry of Culture’s censors during the communist regime. It can be inferred further that for Slovaks, the triumph of art over that manipulation and possible oppression is implicit in Lučnica’s performances. This story was not preferred by IE, but he was willing to tell it, and did so with conviction. He was able to tell it by drawing on available cultural, conversational and institutional resources. The inference can be drawn that both IR and
IE could say what they wanted to say by virtue of the institutional context they reconstructed, as they serially displayed that understanding for each other.

Because CA methodology allowed systematic examination of the detailed management of the turn-taking in this interview, some of the contours of the institution of Lučnica were redrawn. But the question remains, ‘for whom?’ Just as IR and IE designed their utterances for each other, Lúčnica’s onstage performances are designed for recipients, too. In the next chapter, the interactional interface between Lučnica in performance and members of the audience in attendance is explored.
Chapter 6: Audience survey

Background

For Slovak audiences, it has been shown that Lúčnica’s performances are occasions for celebrating ethnic solidarity and diversity, resilience, and triumph over oppression, and for identifying with Lúčnica’s virtuosity, youth, beauty and humour. Furthermore, this can be justified as a Slovak traditional practice. From analysis of the recorded interview with the troupe’s manager, the potential for an on-going political agenda can also be inferred. But if these meanings are produced through interaction between performers and Slovak audiences, the question of what meaning could possibly be generated by performing for foreign audiences begs to be asked. For this reason, the receptive interface was explored by means of an audience survey when the troupe performed at Hamer Hall two days after their arrival in Melbourne.

Events preceding, during and following the performance itself inevitably informed the implementation of the survey, and analysis of findings from it. For this reason, the promotional activities and the concert itself are described, and the only published review, reproduced in Figure 7, is discussed. A profile of the participants follows, and issues concerning the logistics and methodological tools are discussed. The survey is described in detail, and results from analysis presented and interpreted. The conclusion is once again divided into two parts, with conclusions for the topic, and for the adequacy of the methodology used.

Promotion of the performance

Lúčnica’s 2007 ‘Oceania’ tour began with three performances in Hong Kong on 21, 22 and 23 September, followed by nine more performances in China, including two each in Shanghai and Taipei. The tour ended with one performance each in Melbourne and Sydney. The organizer for the whole tour was a member of the Melbourne Slovak community, with considerable experience in covering international sporting events for SBS radio, referred to in previous chapters and henceforth, as the ‘tour organizer’. Organizing the Australian leg of Lúčnica’s Oceania tour, however, had been quite a challenge for him. The promotion company he had employed was not easily convinced,
because the troupe was virtually unknown in Australia except by Czech and Slovak communities. The promoter was finally convinced by a DVD of Lúčnica performing, and copies of the same set of reviews as discussed in Chapter 1. He had also provided contacts for advertising in regional newspapers rather than in the mainstream press, in order to cut costs. There had been concern expressed that the term ‘ballet’ might be misleading for Australian audiences, because they might expect classical ballet. In the end, the risk was accepted, and they were promoted under their usual title as ‘Lúčnica: Slovak National Folklore Ballet’.38

Besides the advertisements in regional newspapers, there was one small advertisement in *The Age* newspaper, one on Channel 7 television, one on SBS television, and the standard promotions on Melbourne’s Arts Centre website, in their calendar brochure for September and October, and on posters outside the Hamer Hall. In the brochure they were styled as ‘Lucnica - The Rolling Stones of Folklore!’ a headline taken, again, from the mentioned set of reviews, specifically a review reported in *La Marsaellaise* newspaper in 2002 after a European tour. Over all, promotion was quite spare, severely limited by lack of funds.

*The performance*

The performance took place on 8 October 2007, a Monday night. This modern, well-equipped concert hall seats 2677, but only 880 seats were sold. The upper balcony area was closed, with most of the audience accommodated in the stalls, and a smattering of patrons towards the front of the dress circle above. For the half-hour preceding the concert, the noise level in the foyer was considerable, as patrons met and greeted each other. It was observed that many of these groups of patrons were speaking Slovak. The difference between the level of sound in the foyer before the concert, and the sound inside the hall during the minutes before the concert began was remarkable. Inside, the huge vaulted ceiling of the Hamer Hall seemed to swallow up the conversations amongst members of the relatively small audience, despite the fact that many could be seen to be having animated conversations.

There was no printed programme brochure available for the audience, so non-Slovak patrons would have had only the information and images sparsely presented in the

38 Personal communication, 8 September 2007.
Melbourne media or the Arts Centre brochure and website available to them, or no information at all. Slovak patrons, on the other hand, would not have needed a printed brochure in order to know what to expect. In fact, the programme for the Oceania tour was the so-called ‘Representative Program’, described on Lúčnica’s website thus:

Representative program is a collection of the most successful programs. It represents the most characteristic folklore areas of Slovakia. Dramaturgy is modified so that it shows various artistic expressions of plenteous national tradition in dance, in music and in costumes, from the fine women’s dances through playful and humorous to vivacious pair and virtuosic men’s dances. (Lúčnica 2006)

This programme usually employs 45 dancers, 14 orchestra members and 5 choral members, but for the Oceania tour, there were 27 dancers, 13 male, 14 female, and an 8 piece orchestra (3 violins, 2 violas, 1 double bass, 1 flute, 1 cembalom, or ‘hammer dulcimer’). Other instruments, employed more as introductions to dances than being featured for themselves, were a fujara and natural horns, although one item was purely instrumental, with three men playing small clay pipes somewhat like ocarinas. This travelling troupe was smaller than the one performing for the mentioned commercial DVD of the Representative Programme, which has the full complement of dancers and orchestra, and professional camera-work, editing and sound production.  

This live performance began with the eight musicians quietly walking onto the dimly lit downstage right area, sitting and taking up their instruments. The principal and first violinist took his position in front of them, back to the audience, legs planted wide apart, exuding authority. The musicians wore red and black embroidered vests. A moment later, in the silence, a spot upstage left followed a young female troupe member dressed in an ornate costume with a large flower and gem-encrusted headdress, as she quietly walked to a centre-front microphone. She addressed the audience for about a minute in Slovak, then rendered an English translation of this introduction, complete with small English grammatical errors, typical of the Slovak-English language interface. Her message was almost verbatim with the information on the Lúčnica website, to the effect that Slovakia is a beautiful country, with mountains and valleys, that Lúčnica was going to show Slovak culture, and that their rendition of this culture “is spreading” around 5 continents for 60 years. She invited the audience to enjoy the show then left

the stage. The orchestra launched into the first polka, the dancers paraded diagonally across the stage in pairs from upstage left, and the show began.

The first dance was a fast polka from the Šariš region in the north-east, employing all dancers in pairs, with a lot of whooping and whistling from the young men, and much spinning and characteristic high-pitched squeals from the girls. The programme ended with an excerpt of this dance, and it was replayed for the three curtain calls. Dances for just men or women were interspersed throughout the programme, and the pace was varied, with the predominant fast, acrobatic items alternating with slower songs and dances. The second to last item was a Roma song and dance, Olaská [About love] which differed in many respects from the rest of the items on the programme. The dancing was done mostly by women, in a seductive, coquettish style, and only when the men joined, it became fast and furious. The costumes, too, were quite different in style from those for the rest of the show, being characterized by long, flounced dresses typical of such gypsy dances, with the men’s shirts having many bright colours and full sleeves.

The colours of the girls’ costumes over-all were visually spectacular. The design of the default costume for most dances was identical for each individual dancer, except for variations in of colour combinations of skirts, vests and scarves. The colour yellow was predominant for skirts and vests, followed by red, with cream blouses. There were two blue skirts, and sometimes a blue-grey coloured trio of skirts was introduced. These costumes bear little resemblance to any actual regional costumes in Slovakia; rather, they were dancing costumes which, I was told, were new.40 The men’s costumes were closer to those displayed in folklore museums, and worn by dancers in other troupes around the regions of the country. The only dramatic change of costume, apart from the Roma piece, Olaská, was seen in a dance showing the harvest and processing of cabbages; all dancers wore ecru coloured ‘working’ clothes, with golden yellow overskirts for the girls added for the last part of this item. This was the only item, besides Olaská, where the costumes appeared to have been deployed to express a specific scenario, rather than being primarily colorful and spectacular, and appropriate for lots of spinning and athletic moves. Nevertheless, only weeks after the performance that was I able to discover exactly what was being ‘harvested’ and ‘processed’, as even

40 Personal communication, 8 October 2007, supporting my own observations from previous attendance at Lúčnica’s performance in Slovakia, and from viewing photographic records of the troupe. Early versions of costumes for performances can be seen behind Professor Nosál’s monologue on the DVD footnoted on the previous page.
my Slovak contacts in the audience thought it may have been cheese, or flax. There was no set to speak of; the backdrop was flooded with a uniform colour, usually blue, but changing to red, or yellow, or white light, for different dances.

Each half of the programme featured an instrumental performance, the second being a cameo for the virtuosic playing of the cembalom. This cembalom ‘concerto’, joined by the first violinist’s virtuosic and collaborative playing, brought a huge response from the audience, with a standing ovation. This was reminiscent of similar performances in Slovakia, when the mandatory cembalom solo often receives the most applause, with a standing ovation. The curtain calls at the end of the concert were repaid with some characteristic Central European unison clapping as well as much calling out and whistling from the audience.

After the performance, members of the Slovak community milled around the main foyer area socializing energetically as they had before the performance, staying for almost an hour longer than other patrons, who had streamed past them towards the parking station.

On the way home afterwards, one of my Anglo Australian assistants volunteered a remark concerning the hardness of the sound of the girls’ singing, the amateurishness of the introduction to the show by the female troupe member in ornate costume, and the lack of a printed programme. This frankly anecdotal observation is interesting, because she was unaware of the contents of the questionnaire waiting to be used for interviewing willing patrons by phone in the ensuing months; it already contained specific questions concerning performance elements, and I had already decided to add a question about the missing brochure, and many responses from non-Slovaks turned out to match hers.

*The review*

Although the review reproduced in Figure 7 has not been analyzed formally as data, it demonstrates the blurring of boundaries for this study between context and data. The fact itself, that it was the only one, as well as the fact that its semantic content concurs with findings from formally ‘labeled’ data, means that it contributes to the validity of findings from observational notes, and findings discussed later in this chapter. Published after the performance in the autumn edition of the Czech newspaper *Melbournský Kvart*
It could be expected that the performance of the best Slovak and perhaps even Czech folklore music and dance ensemble, Lucnica, on the stage of the greatest Melbourne theatre – the concert hall of the world-renowned Arts Centre – will represent a huge occasion and event for the Czechs and Slovaks living in Australia. I thought that the whole Czecho-Slovak community of Victoria would meet in Hamer Hall. I was hoping that, because of interest of the Melbourne public, that likes to boast about its cultural standards and outlook compared to people in other Australian cities, the great hall with the capacity of 2700 seats, would be filled to its capacity.

What a disappointment it was when, on the 8th of October at 8pm, I was seated in the auditorium which was one third empty. In my head I could still hear the comments of my fellow countrymen that the price of admission tickets was ‘unreasonably high’ and, therefore, would not go to the performance of Lucnica. The ticket price ranged between sixty and eighty dollars, which is quite normal for the Arts Centre. But how often does one go to the Arts centre and how frequently does a group of high artistic value such as Lucnica come to our shores? Where was the audience? Was it sufficient to advertise the show by printing one picture in the newspapers with the description ‘Lucnica’? – ‘Lusnajka what?’ – asked those Australian friends to whom I showed the picture. They reacted as I would too if someone asked me to look at Kazakh Cossacks or Chinese opera. Perhaps if they had seen advertisements on television about an ensemble that had just completed a tour of China and Hongkong, they would have been better motivated to explore the beautiful Slovak culture.

The initial disillusionment brought by the partially empty auditorium disappeared with the first tones. My heart literally quivered at the sound of the violin. It felt like a sudden and surprising caress of the soul caused by the memory of the old homeland, all that is dear and forever remembered. Then followed a cornucopia of bright feats for the eyes and joy for the heart.

One dance followed another, each more creative than the previous one. The performance of forty young artists was precise, performed with bravado yet with an incredible illusion of lightness that reflected the ingeniously conceived choreography. The combination of exquisite folk costumes, embroidery, skirts, ribbons and dances of varying character and mood, meant that the spectator didn’t know what to admire first – the life-affirming rhythms, poetics or the wit. Both my daughter and I smiled constantly. ‘How wonderful’, she said during the intermission, ‘it is absolutely the best thing I have ever seen at the Arts Centre’. And this, is after ten years of taking her there to see all the performances.

Even just a few pieces performed by the six musicians, without the dancers, were well worth the price of an eighty dollar ticket; I would pay even more. The charismatic primas (conductor/soloist) with his violin solo and an enrapturing dulcimer was also worth every penny.

I was trying in vain to identify the girl in the ensemble who could have been the noted Miss Slovakia. Any of the girls could have been her – all were equally beautiful. The blondes and brunettes with large eyes, wide smiles, dimples in their cheeks, danced, sang and shouted with joy, so that one was compelled to exclaim with enthusiasm at the end of each song. I have always had a weak spot for zbojnik compositions, verbunky, dances with cepiky (flails) and valasky (Valachian hatchets). There is no parallel to the energy displayed in these men’s performances. Lucnica really belongs on the grand world stages.

Finally, it didn’t matter that the hall wasn’t full. The applause that filled it was equally enthusiastic as that of a full auditorium. ‘Standing ovation’ showed the appreciation from the grateful audience. We feel sorry for those, who missed the chance to experience a breath-taking and once-only cultural experience.

Barbara Semenov

Reproduced by permission of the author.
Translated from the Czech newspaper, Melbournský Kvart [Melbourne Quarterly], listopad [autumn] 2007, by Elena Gartner, certified translator.
[Melbourne Quarterly], the review demonstrates the fulfillment of the misgivings expressed by the tour organizer about poor ticket sales. It is even more poignant, in that it laments the fact that the hall was a third empty. In fact, it was a third full, an even worse state of affairs than the author has reported. The atmosphere of disappointment and embarrassment at the emptiness of the hall mentioned by her was also felt by me. But in waxing lyrical about the mesmerizing effect of the performance once it began, she is not inaccurate. The performance was dazzling, and the audience responded with great enthusiasm, so that the emptiness of the hall seemed to be forgotten, at least from the beginning of the first item, and for the duration of the concert.

The participants

The performers

The troupe members shared several attributes. First, they were young Slovaks, then, they were students from many regions, bringing with them experience and knowledge about diverse dances and songs. Also, they had been members of children’s troupes in their childhood, and had shared aspirations to be members of Lúčnica, the iconic proponents of this form of traditional performance. The competition to be accepted to fill positions left vacant by graduating students is fierce, and this keeps the quality of the vocal and balletic performance high. Another element of their identity was their almost uniform size, balletic shape, and beauty. One troupe member on this tour was Slovakia’s candidate for the Miss World competition to be held in The Philippines the following year, but it could have been any of the dancers, as mentioned in the review.

Although not bodily on the stage, Professor Štefan Nosál's presence permeates every performance, and in that sense he can be thought of as a performer. Although non-Slovak audience members would not be aware of his ‘presence’, the troupe members and Slovak audience members valorize him, and share his passion for the phenomena displayed, and for performance of the choreographic moves he has been developing for 60 years. Similarly, the Ministry of Culture’s presence, although virtual, is very strong, as they are the traditional sponsors for these ambassadorial tours.

The musicians are seasoned performers of Slovak traditional music with professional training. The ensemble has its own identity as Zlaté husle [Golden Violin], with its own
performances and tours independent of Lúčnica. The principal, Martin Sleziak, is arguably as famous as Professor Nosál in Slovakia and in Slovak communities abroad.

All of the performers on stage exuded an air of having brought with them the best that Slovakia had to offer in making this genre of traditional music available to foreign audiences. Their pride and confidence was palpable.

*The audience*

As mentioned, the audience was far smaller than originally anticipated. Only 880 of a possible 2,677 tickets were sold, including complementary tickets. The ethnic composition of the audience was mixed. Despite the problems discussed below, analysis of data gathered enabled an estimate to be made. Roughly half the patrons were Slovak, Czech or Czechoslovak Australians, roughly one fifth were Anglo Australians, and roughly a third of them were of ‘Other’ ethnicity. The Other category encompassed a wide variety of self-identified ethnicities including: Scottish, Irish, Croatian, Mexican, Polish, Hungarian, European-Jewish, ‘Fruit salad’ (Central European-Israeli), Peruvian, Australian, German, Chinese, Bulgarian, and Korean. Any more detailed articulation of these diverse designations is impossible. The Other group’s chief characteristic that was important for this study was not its heterogeneity, but that fact that its members were neither Slovak nor Anglo.

**Methods of data collection: Issues and problems**

The audience survey was carried out in two stages. For the first, the intention was to approach every fifth patron who entered through each of three main doors into the theatre on the night of the performance, and ask the questions as per the questionnaire shown in Figure 8. This phase of the survey aimed to achieve three objectives: to establish whether interviewees had been previously exposed to Slovak music culture, to establish the ethnic breakdown of this audience, and to generate a willing population of interviewees with contact details for the second phase. The second phase involved setting up a convenient time for a telephone interview, and conducting the interviews over the next two months using the questionnaire shown in Figure 9.
There were several challenges to be overcome in the first phase of the survey. Far fewer patrons were able to be approached than had been anticipated because two volunteers from the Czech community failed to appear on the night. This meant that there were three instead of five team members to take advantage of the small window of opportunity, approximately 45 minutes, as patrons streamed into the theatre. Nevertheless, approaching every fifth patron and interviewing them quickly meant that this limitation was offset somewhat by the fact that the non-return factor for the first phase of the survey was eliminated. As a result, despite the non-appearance of two helpers, the proportion of the audience approached in this first phase was 10.57 percent, just over half the target of 20 percent. The extent to which this low figure compromised the statistical validity of the ethnic breakdown findings is discussed in the conclusion to this chapter.

Then, the responses to Question 1, concerning previous exposure to Slovak music, were discarded when it was discovered that helpers were paraphrasing the question, so that the meaning of the response was sometimes reversed. The question was: ‘Is this the first time you have heard Slovak music?’ Frequently my helpers were asking: ‘Have you heard Slovak music before?’ Consequently, it was not possible to know how many ‘yes’ or ‘no’ responses meant, in fact, the opposite.

In designing Question 2, concerning ethnicity, the heterogeneity of all three groups was acknowledged, with every effort made to avoid embedded assumptions in choosing the ethnic categories. The vicissitudes of history in Slovakia and in migrant Slovak communities have been discussed, and yet despite the differences between them, all sub-groups in the first category know and identify with Lúčnica, justifying that category. Even in the days of Czechoslovakia, Lúčnica was owned by all as their premier troupe, as there was not, nor is, a Czech equivalent. Also, the meanings of ‘Anglo Australian’ are, arguably, even more multifarious, including descendants of Australian-born English aristocracy, military personnel, convicted deportees, and assisted English migrants since white settlement, to name some categories. None of the broad ethnic categories used for this survey are intended to imply homogeneity, but are used as a workable starting point, based on common geographical and ethnic origins according to recorded history, and present-day national boundaries. Importantly, patrons designated themselves into these categories without hesitation, minimizing the effect of the researcher’s subjectivity in assigning ethnic categories.
Audience Member Questionnaire

1. Is this the first time you have heard Slovak music? (Circle one): Yes / No

2. To which of the following ethnic groups do you identify yourself as belonging? (Please tick one or more boxes):
   - Slovak Australian
   - Czechoslovak Australian
   - Czech Australian
   - Anglo Australian
   - Other (Please specify ……………………………………)

3. If you are willing to be interviewed further, please enter contact details:
   - Name: ________________________________
   - Tel: _________________________________
   - Mob: ________________________________
   - Email: _______________________________
The non-return problem did impinge on the second phase of the survey. The number of respondents from each self-designated ethnic group successfully contacted and interviewed, and the proportion of each ethnic group to the population of telephone interviewees is shown in Table 7.
Table 7

Population for telephone interviews

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Self-designated ethnicity</th>
<th>Indicated willingness to be contacted and interviewed</th>
<th>Successfully contacted and interviewed</th>
<th>Proportion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Slovak</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>56.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anglo</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>68.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>35.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Despite agreeing to be contacted within four weeks of the concert, and supplying contact details, almost half the subjects did not respond. This further reduction of the population for the second phase of the study, from a possible 93 subjects down to a final population of 49, confirms the impossibility of claiming statistical validity of findings from quantitative analysis of data gathered from interviews with these subjects. However, analysis of the data by means of the formula used, which is specifically adjusted for application to small populations, allows for rough estimates of the respective proportions of responses, and comparisons between groups to be made. Only to that extent does this aspect of the analysis purport to be quantitative.

**Audience survey: First phase**

In order to generate the data concerning ethnic background, patrons were asked to self-designate to one of the following three categories:

- Slovak, Czech or Czechoslovak Australian
- Anglo Australian
- Other

For ease of tabulation and discussion, the first category is referred to henceforth in Figures, Tables and interpretation of results, as ‘Slovak’.
Results for self-identified ethnicity

The results for ethnic self-identification of the Melbourne audience were tabulated, and the proportions of ethnicities were calculated. The Standard Error was calculated using the formula:

\[ SE = \sqrt{p \times (1-p) \times (1 - N / \text{pop'n}) / \sqrt{N}} \]

(\( p \) = proportion of responses, \( N \) = sample number)

The \( \sqrt{1 - N / \text{pop'n}} \) in the numerator is an adjustment factor for small populations. To give a feeling of the precision of each estimate, ±2SE can be used as a window around each estimate, tabulated as Confidence Index (CI), shown in Table 8.

Table 8

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>City</th>
<th>Seats sold</th>
<th>Surveyed</th>
<th>Ethnicity</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Proportion</th>
<th>CI</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Melbourne</td>
<td>880</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>Slovak</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>49.46%</td>
<td>4.90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Melbourne</td>
<td>880</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>Anglo</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>20.43%</td>
<td>3.95%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Melbourne</td>
<td>880</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>Other</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>30.11%</td>
<td>4.50%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Because the samples were so small, precision in these results cannot be claimed. Nevertheless, even allowing for the large Confidence Indices shown in the last column of Table 8, the general picture of the audience’s ethnic composition furnished by the graphic representation in Figure 10 can be claimed, and comparisons and inferences can be made:
Figure 10 shows that Slovaks comprised almost half the audience, and only one fifth was comprised of Anglos. It is tempting to explain this discrepancy in terms of the relatively sparse promotion of the Australian leg of the Oceania tour. After all, the media would have been the only means of exposure for most Anglos, whereas knowledge of Lúčnica’s impending visit had spread throughout the Slovak community in advance. However, the fact that the number of Others was half as much again as the number of Anglos weakens that supposition.

In view of the earlier discussion of the Australian multicultural context, it is even more tempting to explain the lower numbers of Anglos in the audience in terms of the inequalities of white, dominant feeders on the fare provided by ethnic groups. If, as Gunew and Hage claim, members of the dominant group in a multicultural society become feeders on exotic fare, and they become jaded, then that is a more convincing interpretation of this low number. An anecdote concerning a Russian performance belonging to the staged folklore genre serves to distill the essence of this conviction. Reported in the *Sydney Morning Herald*, Graham Hutchison, “veteran Australian promoter” of Russian “entertainment acts” for 17 years, described how he was convinced to bring the Flying Tzars to Australia for a 12 week tour. Hutchison, based in Moscow, having been approached by the Russian Ministry of Culture to take the Flying Tzars “Down Under”, tells the reporter of his response at the time: “We thought, ‘the
last thing we need is another dance company.’ But we had a look. We found something very different, totally unique” (Kellar 2007: 26). If such remarks are made by someone who knows the appetites of Australian consumers so well, then perhaps a lack of awareness of the social context of Australian audiences on the part of the sponsors of the Lúčnica tour could be supposed. Certainly, a more energetic entrepreneurial spirit and a wider vision than that demonstrated, and much more money, would have been necessary for whetting the appetites of a greater number of Anglo Australian concert-goers. Without a more robust promotion strategy for the Australian leg of the Lúčnica tour, the likelihood of reproducing the marginal profile of Slovakia and Slovaks for the dominant Anglo Australian group would be high.

The higher rate of ‘follow-through’ of Anglos as compared with the other two groups in Table 7 could also be explained as indicative of a thirst for the exotic, not just in the sense of entertainment, but of being a ‘cultural’ experience, to be taken seriously at some level, even, perhaps, to be ‘managed’ responsibly. At least, there is evidence that the opportunity to evaluate was more enthusiastically taken up by Anglos than by each of the other groups. Whereas over half the Slovaks and over a third of the Others responded to their emails to negotiate a time for a telephone interview, almost 70 per cent of the Anglos were successfully contacted and interviewed. This effect might also have been enhanced by the fact that all subjects had been personally approached by me or one of my two Anglo Australian assistants, and the invitation to participate nuanced differently according to the perceived cultural background of the invitee according to their spoken English language.

**Audience survey: Second phase**

Data for the second phase of the survey was collected by means of interviews by telephone, using the standardized questionnaire in Figure 9.

For the first question, respondents were asked to rate each performance element on a scale from 1 to 5, or ‘don’t know’, with 1 designating ‘poor standard’, and 5 designating ‘exceptionally high standard’. Results were tabulated and analyzed using the formula:

\[ SE = \text{SQRT} \left( \frac{k}{G} \times \left(1 - \frac{k}{G}\right) / G \right) \]

\[(k = \text{number of responses}, G = \text{number interviewed}) \text{ for that group}\]
The formula above was applied to the raw responses for the rating of performance elements, and results for the three ethnic groups represented on the same graph to facilitate comparison, and provide data for qualitative analysis. Comments were also written down verbatim as closely as possible during and immediately after each phone call, to provide nuance for interpreting the data.

**Results for rating of the singing**

Question 1: Please rate your experience of the singing in the Lúčnica performance (circle a number for each):

[1=poor standard, 2=worse than average, 3=average standard, 4=better than average standard, 5=exceptionally high standard.]

**Interpretation**

Comparison of the rating for the singing by each ethnic group shows the greatest divergence of any performance element. Most of the singing in this programme was done by the girls, and added responses by interviewees indicate that the female voices were the ones being rated. It is crucial to recognize at the outset that from the Slovak
perspective, the vocal production of Lúčnica’s performers supports a discourse of
efficiency, and the vocal timbre is produced specifically to conform to standards
appropriate to the genre. Since 2003, the principle conductor of Lúčnica’s vocal
ensemble has been Elena Matušová, who graduated from VŠMU [Higher School for
Musical Arts] in 1993, having studied choral conducting under the leadership of
Professor Peter Hradil, himself a previous choral director of Lúčnica. But the Lúčnica
Chorus, with its own link on the Lúčnica website, and its own commercially produced
CDs, performs the traditional choral repertoire, sometimes collaborating with orchestral
ensembles, and participating in international choral festivals in its own right, with
notable success. The vocal timbre produced is appropriate to the choral repertoire, and
the skill of director and performers in production of the vocal style appropriate for each
genre is of a high standard.

The traditional vocal timbre appropriate to female singers of Slovak folk music,
however, exploits the high frequency core of vocal sound in a similar way to the vocal
technique used in ‘belt’ singing. The sound is comparatively thin, but powerful, so that
it is difficult to tell the difference between the singing of an older woman or a young
girl. For Lúčnica’s performance of traditional music and dance folklore, the singing
style was not modified in the sense described by Kirschenblatt-Gimblett in order to
please modern audiences who expect a more rounded, operatic sound in a modern
theatre. It can be inferred that the land, history and aesthetic values of Slovakia are
embodied in the more strident sound that they characteristically produce for singing
traditional Slovak songs, and in this light, these divergent results are not surprising.

And yet, there was a further discrepancy even within the Slovak group between the
rating by number and the comments made by individual respondents. Despite the fact
that responses peak at ‘exceptionally high standard’, five of the respondents mentioned
the amplification as being a problem. They targeted the poor ‘sound production’ as
being the reason for the singing being too loud, one of them being dismayed enough to
ask, “Didn’t they do a sound check?” The answer to that question is not known, but the
researcher can attest to the fact that the timbre of the voices was unusually harsh
compared to a previous performance by Lúčnica witnessed in a modern theatre in
Slovakia, and that the sound production on this occasion in Hamer Hall may have been
less than perfectly managed. Perhaps the largely unambiguous rating as excellent by
Slovaks was a rating of what they know the sound to be, rather than what it was on this occasion.

The Anglos were the only group with ratings for singing of less than ‘average’, with just over 11 percent rating it as either ‘poor’ or ‘worse than average’. Two respondents could not remember the singing, and one ‘forgave’ the troupe for the poor quality of the singing on the grounds that it was typical of groups comprised ‘primarily’ of dancers. A young Anglo female described the sound as ‘piercing, nasal’ and ‘a bit of a shock’. One Anglo male from the 56-75 age-group was concerned with the ‘poor diction’, assuming that the words of solo songs had been English (they were all in Slovak language). Another male in the same age-group said they sounded more ‘oriental’ than he had expected, and he wondered if the sound had been pre-recorded.

The responses of the ‘Other’ concert patrons peaked at ‘better than average’, with positive and negative responses symmetrically distributed on either side. One female respondent in the 56-75 age bracket, who rated the singing as ‘better than average’, praised the ‘freshness’ of the sound, adding the observation that ‘that they were obviously not trained’, an ironical comment considering the pride taken in Lúčnica’s vocal versatility and appropriateness of vocal style by its exponents. Another in the same age bracket said it was ‘infectious’, and another mentioned the excellence of the ‘young’ voices. On the other hand, one male, 36-55, referred to their ‘squeaky, little voices’, and a female in the same age bracket missed the ‘full harmony’ of Russian choirs.

These responses by Anglos and Others suggest a lack of previous exposure to the vocal sounds they heard, but they also have in common a suggestion of confusion in evaluating this aspect of the performance. This would not be surprising, given the distinctiveness of the vocal timbre of Slovak female folk ensemble singing, and the variability in the respondents’ own cultural backgrounds, and consequently in their aesthetic standards, not to mention their expectations. If that is the case, in not taking into account electronic amplification required for a huge theatre, Lúčnica’s production team, or the sound technicians at Hamer Hall, or both, may have deprived non-Slovaks of the opportunity to respond to the sound as it should be. They may have sacrificed the chance to communicate the beauty of this kind of singing that might be reminiscent of a mountain village context, or a meadow, by neglecting to take the sound production
issues in the Hamer Hall into account more carefully. Perhaps more effort in balancing what seems to be the need to retain something of the vocal quality integral to these songs, while taking into account the sensitivities of non-Slovak ears, might have achieved a result closer to what was intended, to keep its authenticity and to show its beauty.

Results for rating of the dancing

Question 1: Please rate your experience of the dancing in the Lúčnica performance (circle a number for each):

[1=poor standard, 2=worse than average, 3=average standard, 4=better than average standard, 5=exceptionally high standard.]

Figure 12

**Rating of dancing**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rating</th>
<th>Slovaks</th>
<th>Anglos</th>
<th>Others</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>poor standard</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>worse than avg</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>avg standard</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>better than avg</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>exceptional std</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>don't know</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Interpretation

This performance element was rated with a far greater degree of convergence than the rating of the singing, with all groups’ responses peaking at the maximum. However, the Slovak respondents were in accord with each other in rating the dancing if numbers are the only index of praise. All gave it the maximum except for one, a Slovak female from Yugoslavia who said she had expected more because they had been
dancing for 60 years, and gave it a 4. Apart from this response, few Slovaks chose to add a comment, only using general terms such as ‘beautiful’, and ‘energetic’ in two instances. One exception was a 73-year-old Slovak who said, with great emotion, they danced ‘like angels’. The most notable aspect of their responses was the lack of hesitation when awarding the maximum in all cases except the one rating of 4.

The Anglos’ responses to the dancing also peaked at the maximum, although not as sharply the Slovaks’. Five Anglos were reluctant to award the highest rating, giving it a 4. One of these had been confused about what to expect, and was ‘relieved’ that it was not classical ballet, and another thought the men’s dancing was not as ‘creative’ as that of the girls. Two Anglos were comparing the dancing to their previous experience of Russian or Cossack dancing when they awarded the maximum, but another, who said it was not what she was expecting, gave it only a 4. Of those who awarded the maximum rating of 5, the most common responses mentioned energy, movement and variety. One of these specifically pinpointed her index for excellence. She said it was excellent because it was ‘professional, not folksy’. A male in the 56-75 age-group particularly liked the ‘joyousness’ and the smiles of the girls. The most pervasive index for excellence was the high energy and virtuosity of the dancing, but another pervasive aspect of the Anglo responses was that they were more analytical than those of Slovaks, who were mostly happy just to give a number.

This analytical bent was also seen in some Other responses, suggesting that for this aspect of the performance, Anglos and Others had their ‘otherness’ in common, rather than having experienced the dancing as their ‘lingua franca’ as the Slovaks had. The only respondents giving a rating lower than ‘better than average’ were from the Other group. Nevertheless, none of them rated the dancing lower than ‘average’. One of these, an Irish male in the 56-75 age-group, found the ‘moves’ repetitive, and another, a Peruvian male in the same age group, missed the ‘vibrancy’ he had seen in Russian dancing. Another, a European-Jewish female in the same age-group, pulled back from awarding the highest rating, giving it a 4, saying she was used to the higher Russian standards used in ‘Edgley’ performances, adding the explanation that the Lúčnica dancers were ‘obviously not trained’. A Scot, on the other hand, thought that the training ‘stood out’. ‘Infectious’ and ‘superb’ were two other responses from the Other group. Without further information being available, these heterogeneous remarks by Other respondents can only be explained in terms of variation in experience and
knowledge of Slovak folklore performance, cultural background and related aesthetic taste.

Nevertheless, in common with all groups were the positive responses to the energy, joyousness and athleticism of the dancing, and that is what made it ‘excellent’ for a high proportion of respondents over all.

Results for rating of the instrumental music

Question 1: Please rate your experience of the instrumental music in the Lúčnica performance (circle a number for each):
   [1=poor standard, 2=worse than average, 3=average standard, 4=better than average standard, 5=exceptionally high standard.]

Figure 13

*Interpretation*

The rating of this performance element showed the highest degree of convergence between ethnic groups. Only one Slovak failed to give the maximum rating for excellence, giving it a 4. For four of them, their rating doubled as a comment, because they wanted to rate it higher than the maximum. Two of them said ‘6’ when asked to
give a number, and two of them said ‘5 +++’. In commenting on his maximum rating, a male Slovak in the 56-75 age-group paid them the highest accolade by describing the instrumental performance as ‘diabolical!’, a tribute to the virtuosity of the ‘Diabolical Violins’, the acclaimed ‘gypsy’ ensemble founded by Martin Sleziak as a precursor to the smaller ensemble known as ‘Golden Violin’, which now accompanies Lúčnica. This respondent had played French horn in the Lúčnica orchestra as a young man. ‘Fabulous’, and ‘excellent – I love it!’ were the only other comments added.

The peak for Anglos was almost as sharp as for Slovaks, with one giving a 4, and one who could not decide. This last respondent ‘could not remember it’, but this same respondent could not remember the singing, either. She explained that the music ‘fills in a space behind the dancing’, which she had rated at the maximum. The rest of the Anglos, who awarded the highest value to the instrumental music, delivered similar superlatives to those given by respondents from other groups, albeit in a noticeably more staid manner than respondents from the other two groups. None of them, for example, joked about giving more than the maximum rating. For an Anglo male in the 56-75 age-group, however, the instrumental music was the ‘highlight of the evening’. For a female in the 36-55 age-group, the cembalom was ‘sensational – a marathon’. Another older male loved the violins, especially the playing of the first violinist, who had collaborated so closely with the cembalom soloist.

Two of the Others wanted to give a rating of at least 6 for the instrumental music, and they also used superlatives such as ‘exquisite’, ‘outstanding’ and ‘amazing’. One of those who wanted to give a 6 mentioned that the playing was ‘rhythmically, melodically, emotionally outstanding’. A female Other in the 36-55 age-group singled out the first violin, saying it had almost made her cry. Either the cembalom or the first violin, or both, were mentioned specifically by six respondents, similar to some Anglo respondents. A male Scot in the 36-55 age-group, who thought the cembalom was ‘sensational’, loved the ‘gypsiness’ of the music.

The fact that so many Anglos and Others singled out the cembalom is not surprising, considering that the instrument is exotic for them, not part of the repertoire of any musics outside Central or Eastern Europe, let alone Australia. Also, the playing was visually spectacular, with the hammers blurring as they were wielded with such speed and virtuosity. However, the sound was also spectacular, especially when teamed with
the violin, which echoed and complemented its melodic and rhythmic lines. It is significant that not only the acrobatic aspects of the cembalom playing attracted a high evaluation, but the musicality of the first violin, and the close musical collaboration between them, which moved some respondents emotionally.

By contrast, the fujara, the only uniquely Slovak traditional instrument, attracted little comment, and then, only concerning its appearance and its identity, not its sound. One Anglo had wondered what it was, and a female other in the 36-55 age-group, who had designated herself ethnically as ‘fruit salad’, wondered if it was an oboe or a digeridoo. Visually, it may resemble either of those instruments, but its sound is quite distinctive, decidedly different in range or timbre from either of them. The weakness of the interest shown may be explained by the fact that the fujara was used only as a token to introduce a dance, so was seen and heard for only a short interval of time. On the mentioned DVD of this programme, the camera begins by focusing on the classical musicians in the orchestra pit, then pans up to a lone fujara player in the spotlight surrounded by darkness. Significantly, the fujara is characteristically a solo instrument used for meditative or balladic songs, rather than being spectacular in an acrobatic sense. Furthermore, it does not combine easily with other instruments due to the fact that it is an overtone flute, presenting tuning problems for other instruments. For this reason, ensembles including fujara are rare. In this programme, it would have had specific references for Slovaks, but for non-Slovaks, it could only be used to create an ambience in introducing a dance from a particular region, and apparently, it supplied some visual and intellectual interest for them.

Results for rating of the costumes

Question 1: Please rate your experience of the costumes in the Lúčnica performance (circle a number for each):

[1=poor standard, 2=worse than average, 3=average standard, 4=better than average standard, 5=exceptionally high standard.]
Interpretation

Although the Slovaks’ rating for costumes peaked at the maximum, their comments revealed some disparity over the issue of authenticity. This was the only group assigning ‘don’t know’ responses to the rating of costumes. Comments accompanying responses across the range of values suggested that the respondents were grappling with the modifications of the new costumes for the stage, with some deciding that this was acceptable, and others deciding that it obscured regional differences. Perusal of the pictures in Figure 15 gives an idea of the kinds of differences they might have been remembering, where variety in colours, embroidered motifs, garment design, hats and footwear is immediately accessible to any observer. Concern over regional
Figure 15

Seniors’ Festival at Krivosúd-Bodovka June 2006
differences was expressed by older male and younger female Slovak respondents. Two forgave the lack of regionally authentic details in costumes because they were ‘bright’, but one older male unequivocally downgraded them because they were ‘not pure’, and did not show clear differences between villages. Another older male specifically mentioned the ‘inauthenticity’ of the headdress of the girl who introduced the show. Her headdress, he said, was ‘not quite right’, and ‘too much’. On the other hand, one younger female recognized Moravian elements in one item because that region was near her village. An older Czech respondent ‘understood’ the need for modifications for dancing purposes, but thought that they had ‘stuck to the regions’ anyhow.

Confusion on the part of Other respondents can be inferred from both the graph and comments made. The graph peaks twice, at the maximum, and also at ‘average’. Comments showed that the issue was whether the costumes were authentic or not, but the concept of authenticity hinged upon whether costumes looked ‘tailored’, rather than rustic. The female ‘fruit salad’ respondent specifically mentioned ‘rayon-pleated’ skirts as unfortunate, but still gave a maximum rating because they gave a ‘nice visual impression’. She did, however, notice differences in footwear for different dances, and assumed this was because of differences in climate between regions. A female
European-Jewish respondent did notice differences, but named them as ‘Hungarian’ and ‘Carpathian’, rather than by regional differences in Slovakia.

Not unexpectedly, the authenticity according to micro-region issue was overlooked by the Anglos, and it can safely be assumed that this was largely due to lack of knowledge. In the case of Slovaks, that was the important marker of authenticity, together with the ‘tailored-or-not’ index used by the Others. Despite the lack of the mention of specific indices for authenticity, the Anglos were more unequivocally positive. No Anglos mentioned regional variation, although they noticed differences, nor did any Anglos mention the modified, ‘tailored’ aspect picked up by the other two groups. For the Anglos, none of whom awarded less than ‘better than average’ to the costumes, the most frequent index of excellence was how they compared with memories of other ‘ethnic’ performances they had seen, and whether they were colourful. An 85-year-old female Anglo commented that the costumes looked Russian, whereas she would have preferred to see Slovak costumes, and one female in the 36-55 age-group remarked that ‘Slavic and Russian performances are always colourful’. It could be inferred that the lack of an Australian national costume informed the Anglos’ approval of the costumes, too. One older male remarked that it was sad that we Australians do not have a national costume, because it ‘binds people together’. This same respondent noticed small colour variations, but these were, in fact, artistic choices, and not related to regional differences. Possibly, for the Anglos, the fact alone that there were costumes evoked positive responses, and the spectacular colour combinations and variations were rated for their visual appeal, rather than for cultural authenticity. An inevitable homogenizing dynamic can be clearly seen in the responses from Anglos, and lack of knowledge from exposure to Slovak folk costumes seems to be a likely explanation.

Results for rating of the production

Question 1: Please rate your experience of the production of the Lúčnica performance (circle a number for each):
   [1=poor standard, 2=worse than average, 3=average standard, 4=better than average standard, 5=exceptionally high standard.]
Interpretation

Respondents were asked to evaluate ‘the way the programme was organized, and the stage setting’. Despite the Slovaks’ high rating of the organization of the programme and the stage setting by number, some commented that the backdrop was ‘too plain’. Two of these, a Czech female in the 36-55 age-group, and a Slovak female added the recommendation that pictures of the region for each dance should have been included. On the other hand, just as disparate a group of respondents within the Slovak group said that no set was needed, or that they hadn’t noticed this aspect because the singing, dancing, music, and costumes were so good. An older Slovak male specifically downgraded the production on the grounds of the ‘poor lighting’, which detracted from the dancing, and a young male Slovak from Bratislava said that the acting was ‘down’, and acting ‘shows the culture more’. For the rest, the question seemed puzzling. Perhaps this is because ‘production’ is a more abstract phenomenon than the other four elements rated, and did not attract as much attention as more concrete phenomena.

The Anglos responses were spread, with the highest peak at the maximum, but a lesser peak at ‘average’. Comments clustered around the issue of the absence of any set other than a uniform colour being projected onto a plain backdrop. For a male in the 56-75
age-group, the lack of anything more elaborate was ‘a downer’, and for another, a backdrop was needed on the grounds that the set was supposed to create a ‘sense of expectancy’. Only one mentioned the organization of the items, assuming that it had been telling a story, and guessing that it was an ‘emotional narrative’. A positive rating by an older male was accompanied by the observation that the pace was good, and there were no ‘dead spots’.

The Other responses showed similar equivocation, although the profile of the graph varies from that of the Anglos. One Other respondent thought that images would have been distracting, yet another missed regional scenes being projected onto the background for each item. For one, the organization of the programme was ‘a bit dated’, and another ‘did not understand the story line’.

It is difficult to draw any inferences with confidence from this rating of ‘production’ as a performance element in isolation from the rest of the data, but the Anglos’ and Others’ responses are more analytical overall than the Slovaks’. Although substantial conclusions cannot be drawn from these responses alone, they have a bearing on results for Questions 2 and 3.

Question 2: Do you think this performance represented Slovak culture?

Figure 17
Interpretation

The most striking result from this graph is that over 80 percent of Slovaks immediately, and sometimes enthusiastically, answered ‘yes’, despite the fact that when commenting on costumes in particular, there had been some equivocation over their authenticity. Close to 70 percent had rated costumes at the maximum, but comments revealed that issues of cultural authenticity had nuanced these responses. Likewise, in answering this more general question concerning ‘Slovak culture’, the comments introduced some qualification to the numerical ratings. Seven respondents gave an unqualified ‘yes’. Whether the qualifications were positive or negative, all provide insight into what constitutes authenticity for the respondent. Positive qualifications were the following:

I noticed particularly Moravian elements from near my region.
Definitely, as it used to be last century.
Definitely yes. I was so happy going home.
Absolutely. I loved fact that they included the gypsy number because that is a part of Slovakia too. Culture is still there in villages – the young people have lost it of course…the reason they have survived for this long is that they have stayed related to the culture.
It was better than expected. By better, I mean modern, and therefore entertaining. I really enjoyed it, it was a good idea. It’s great that Slovak culture is being shown.

In these few comments, the indices of authenticity can be seen to include connection to the past, recognition of diversity, not just of regions but including the Roma piece, modernity, the importance of folklore culture for ethnic survival, and most importantly, pride and joy.

The Slovaks’ negatively qualified ‘yes’ responses below confirm the importance of diversity for the idea of authenticity, but the inclusion of the Roma piece, and possible references to Hungarian culture are singled out as problematic, suggesting some concern about the boundaries of the idea of diversity:

Yes, but I missed regional nuances.
Yes, but for people not from Slovakia???
Yes, but Anglos wouldn’t know, for example about the gypsy piece.
Absolutely yes. But the men’s trousers were Hungarian.

Amongst the 20 percent of Slovaks who were less sure whether the performance had portrayed authentic Slovak culture, a Czech female made the comment that she had been confused because the show was ‘quite modern’. She had been expecting something
more ‘old sounding’. An older male Slovak immigrant thought that the performance was probably representative of Slovak culture, ‘maybe 80 percent’. One, however, was sure that the Roma piece should not have been included, as ‘it is not Slovak culture’. Other sites of confusion were suggested by one respondent’s complaint that many of the songs were not the ‘famous’ ones, and two others who missed an identifiable ‘theme’ for the show. One of the latter added:

A theme would have been better for Australians.

Even from the responses to just this question, concern over whether Slovak culture would be recognized at home or in Australia by Anglo Australian audience members is evident. This suggests the will to be known as uniquely Slovak, and infers concern that this performance may not have been regarded as successful in achieving that aim, in the opinion of Slovak Australian respondents.

In one sense, the Slovak respondents need not have worried. Only approximately 23 percent of Anglos responded to this question, whether they had witnessed Slovak culture, with a straightforward ‘yes’, as compared with over 80 percent of Slovaks. The Anglos’ ‘don’t know’ response to the question was highest by a significant margin. The majority of Anglos gave a ‘don’t know’ response in a considered, thoughtful manner, an impression gained from the perceived nuance in timing and tone of voice used, some adding that they would need to know more in order to give an answer. Perhaps Anglos were displaying the same impulse that made more of them respond to emails asking for a suitable time for this telephone interview, as shown in Table 7, where analytical discussion and dissection of an experience is more central to the cultural milieu. At least their ‘don’t know’ responses indicated that they would not ingest uncritically all that was portrayed.

In the case of the Other responses, 40 percent responded similarly to the Anglos, saying that there is no way they would know because of lack of knowledge. A female European-Jewish respondent added that the question was ‘inappropriate’, because there is no way of knowing, but she did say that the performance had ‘authentic style’. More unequivocal ‘yes’ responses were given by 60 percent of Others, who trusted that what they had seen did represent Slovak culture. A Korean male assumed that the performance was authentic because of the reaction of what he perceived as Slovak
audience members’ enjoyment. An Armenian male picked up on this theme, saying that the performance was authentic because ‘they enjoyed themselves, doing what they love’. A Scottish female was moved to tears by the ‘obvious pride’ of a Slovak gentleman across the aisle from her. Some Other responses concurred with Anglo responses in their appeal to reason, and yet others joined the obvious joy and enthusiasm of performers and Slovak audience members into their notion of authenticity.

The responses to the next question, whether the respondent had been bothered by the absence of a printed programme at the performance, enabled further elaboration of the divergence between recognition of Slovak culture between the Slovak group on the one hand, and non-Slovaks on the Other.

Question 3: Did it bother you that there was no printed programme?

Figure 18
Interpretation

Counter-intuitively, over 60 percent of the Slovak respondents were bothered to varying degrees by the lack of a printed programme. The comments in Figure 19 serve to illustrate the reason why.

Figure 19

Slovak respondents: Comments

It would have helped, you would know what is coming next … for other people it would be good idea, or they could introduce each item.

Definitely it would be a help. They should have talked more to the audience… me and friends remarked on it after the concert.

They should have explained something. We heard people outside asking ‘were they Russian? And I had my Anglo wife and son.

Programme maybe was missed. For foreigners it would be better.

I missed it, it was unforgiveable! It would be like Chinese hieroglyphics for outsiders.

It would have been good to have a programme for others to know what it was about.

I was bothered a little, explanations were missing for non-Slovaks.

A programme would have been good to read beforehand for me, for information about the performers about performers, and for my ‘Aussie husband’, information about the country, regions etc.

Even a sheet of paper would be better than nothing. It would be better.

It maybe sometimes would be better.

Definitely it would have helped, or a verbal introduction.

Definitely missed – a real mistake. Or, a spoken verbal introduction…
It was missed. They should have had it to follow what was happening, and for the regions… or a pamphlet.

I was disappointed that there was no programme. You expect it these days. It needed explanation of each thing. For an audience like this it would be better. I would like to see an introduction for each piece. Guidance was a bit missing. Spoken words for information about the regions for people not from Sk would have been good.

Information would have been better. I only visited Slovakia.
Just over half the Slovak respondents who were bothered by the absence of a programme added a comment spontaneously and with a degree of emphasis, the remainder being satisfied with giving an unqualified ‘yes’ response. But they were not expressing a thirst for knowledge. All but the last three responses were made by former Czechoslovaks, Czechs or Slovaks over the age of 35, who had migrated to Australia, so were familiar with the music and dance referenced onstage in this performance. They were not referring to their own ignorance of background knowledge, but that of non-Slovaks in the audience, and implying that such knowledge would be mandatory in order to fully appreciate the performance. Only one Slovak explained that the missing knowledge would be good for her as she had been born in Australia, and had ‘only visited’ Slovakia. Nine Slovak respondents explicitly mentioned the non-Slovaks’ difficulty in ‘understanding’ the performance in their comments, and two of them mentioned ‘Anglos’ specifically. Of the 40 percent who did not see the absence of a programme as a problem, only one, an older Czech female, offered a comment. She explained that she was ‘just so happy going home’, so her emotional satisfaction was forefront for her. Also, 20 percent had not thought about it, so did not know. But 60 percent of Czechs, Slovaks or Czechoslovaks, who did not know the break-down between Anglos and Others, but who certainly were aware that a visible, significant proportion of the audience members were non-Slovaks, had thought about it. For them, success in portraying the richness and meaning of Slovak folklore culture for an audience ‘like this’ without supporting information was seriously limited, and this was a problem for them.

In the light of the fact that over 60 percent of Slovaks’ wished their culture to be recognized and appreciated, and that they saw information as making this possible, the results for the Anglo respondents are quite revealing. Far from thirsting for extra information beyond the performance itself, close to 70 percent of Anglos answered ‘no’ when asked if they had missed having a printed programme, as shown in Chart 8. Most responses were unqualified by comments, but one Anglo respondent giving a ‘no’ explained that ‘there were very few English speakers’. Without further information, it is impossible to interpret this enigmatic remark, but a possible inference is that she saw the issues in terms of language alone, and thought that the point of the performance was something other than communicating cultural knowledge to non-Slovaks. Of the three respondents who qualified their ‘yes’ responses, two said they needed a printed programme because it is important to have a ‘memento’ as well as information, and one
was affronted because ‘for that price you require a programme’ and not providing one was ‘unprofessional’.

Only one Other respondent was similarly affronted by the lack of a programme, saying that it was ‘notable in its absence’. Of the 40 percent who were also bothered to some extent by its absence, few showed any energy for explaining their responses, although two suggested that spoken introductions might have helped. Similar to the Anglos, 60 percent of the Other respondents answered ‘no’ to this question. A young Korean male from the ‘no’ group said the performance had been ‘like a roller-coaster’, and that any information would have interrupted his enjoyment of the show.

Juxtaposition of the results for Questions 2 and 3 as shown in Figure 20 supports the inference that by and large, for the majority of Slovaks, this performance meant a chance to consolidate and celebrate ethnic identification, and also to be recognized and understood by non-Slovaks. But non-Slovaks, especially Anglos, appreciated it more frequently in terms of how well it qualified as high quality exotic fare for consumption, regardless of information, or cognitive appreciation of what they were experiencing.

Figure 20

In the case of the Slovaks, the vast majority considered that the performance had portrayed authentic Slovak culture, but roughly the same proportion of them would have preferred that a programme had been supplied. This confirms the inference that for the large majority of the Slovak group in this audience, success in having their cultural
heritage displayed was high priority. Providing printed or, to a lesser extent, spoken information would have assured more success in achieving this cross-cultural communication, in their view. For some of them, a set loaded with information might have helped non-Slovaks to understand the richness they themselves already knew. On the other hand, only one fifth of the Anglos thought they might have witnessed authentic Slovak culture, but almost 70 percent of them did not see the lack of information as a problem. For them, and to a lesser extent Others, the quality of the entertainment in terms of colour, energy, and virtuosity was paramount, despite this lack, and like half the Others, they did not want ancillary information. When pressed, Anglos were ‘reasonable’ about the authenticity question, but this was not really what they had been looking for in buying tickets for this show. The majority of the Anglos and half the Others were looking for entertainment by choosing to attend a ‘cultural’, scintillating performance, for which information would have been superfluous.

Results for age distribution

Question 4: Please indicate your age bracket:
15-25 years □ 26-35 years □ 36-55 years □ 56-75 years □

Figure 21
Interpretation

The age distribution of the willing interviewees from the Slovak group attending this performance echoes the history of Australian migration in a rough sense, in that the most significant waves of European migration in the 20th century brought the preponderance of those respondents to these shores. These immigrant Slovak or Czechoslovak Australians comprise the 36-55 age-group, the 56-75 age-group, and above. Whereas the more sparsely represented younger interviewees were more likely to have been second generation Slovak Australians, born in Australia of Czechoslovak, Czech, or Slovak parents, the older groups represent a diversity of immigration histories. But whether they were Displaced Persons, arriving after 1948, or Czechoslovaks fleeing the Russian invasion after 1968, or Slovaks from the former Yugoslavia from the 1950s onwards, they share experience and memories of their past in regions of Slovakia where song and dance performance was part of life, and would be keenly aware of the diversity and vitality of song and dance traditions, often participating themselves in children’s troupes. Then, because Professor Nosáľ has resisted incursions into the style and content of programmes attempted by the Ministry of Culture during the communist years since the 1950s, they have been able to access portrayals of the culture that they know and love, in visits to Slovakia or abroad. Also, they have lived in Australia through years of assimilationist immigration policy as a small minority group, further strengthening their investment in what distinguishes them ethnically from their fellow Australians, especially from the dominant Anglo Australian culture, despite outward conformity. This demographic aspect of the survey means that the results from questionnaires are powerfully skewed from a statistical analysis perspective, and yet it can be said that for these respondents, this performance was deeply nostalgic, and invested with significance as a medium for confirming and recreating ethnic identity. Also, if the interactional interface is poietic, then these are the Slovaks who contributed towards co-producing the unique discourse of this event.

The demographic profile of this small interviewee population is similar for Anglos, suggesting that more respondents in the 56-75 age-group may be thirsty for the exotic than younger Anglo Australians by and large. Reasons can be only guessed at without further research, but perhaps, similar to younger Slovak Australians, who have not lived through oppression and the struggle for ethnic survival to the extent of their parents and
grand-parents, the smorgasbord of popular music and dance culture is more satisfying for them.

The more even age distribution of the Other interviewees cannot be explained from the data collected. The diversity of their histories renders these results opaque, but it can at least be said that any preference for this kind of performance did not appear to be as clearly age related as for the Slovak and Anglo groups.

**Conclusions**

*For the topic*

The adoption of an epistemological stance that privileges interaction as generating knowledge means that this performance by Lúčnica had as many meanings as audience members. And yet, some significant patterns emerged in the data generated by the audience survey.

For most Slovak audience members, watching and listening to Lúčnica was like looking into a mirror, where they saw and heard their ethnicity performed. Further, it can be said that they co-created their experience with the Lúčnica performers and producers themselves, because of their shared experience of Slovak lands, life and history, and for them this was a celebration, and as such, it was also traditional practice. It fulfilled McDonald’s criteria for ‘traditioning’, in that it was a shared, repeatable activity, with shared emotional power fulfilling and renewing a desire for the activity. It must be admitted that the preponderance of the Slovak audience, however, were at least 36 years old, with a concentration towards the 56-75 age group. Despite comments like the one made by the daughter of the author of the review in the Czech newspaper, as reported, it is reasonable to assume that what she saw in that mirror was not the same as for her mother.

But non-Slovaks, whether Anglo Australians or Others, did not co-operate, *nor could they have done*, to produce the same meanings as those mature-age Slovaks. Although adulation for some performance elements, such as the instrumental music performance was common across all groups, comments showed that the vocal timbre of the girls in particular divided the recipients according to their ethnicity. For Slovaks, this
phenomenon was included in the markers signifying Slovak ethnicity, and celebrated accordingly. But for non-Slovaks, this aspect of the performance was too exotic, falling outside the boundaries of their cultural and aesthetic paradigms, and was rejected to varying degrees. Unlike the Slovaks, who rated it highly despite their own complaints about sound production, non-Slovaks could not compensate for technical problems with an image of what it should sound like.

Comparative analysis of the audience members’ appreciation of the costumes of the dancers also divided the ethnic groups in the audience to some extent, but the distribution of positive and negative ratings was reversed. Whereas Slovaks equivocated over the diversity of details, non-Slovaks, especially the Anglos, rated the costumes highly. Again, Slovaks forgave the lack of what they thought would be more authentic costumes because they had images of what they should be, and many forgave the lack on practical grounds, given the athletic moves required for much of the performance. But they considered that this is something that could have portrayed their ethnic uniqueness more successfully for foreigners. They need not have worried whether non-Slovaks bestowed approval and derived a great deal of enjoyment from the performance, and yet again because of lack of knowledge, it is reasonable to assume that their pleasure derived from the inevitable homogenizing impulse that results from that lack, and that this is what worried many Slovak audience members. They wanted to be known for who they are specifically, defined by them in terms of details that were missing. But from comments by Anglos, the colourful picture produced by the artistically modified costumes was enough to please, and enough to elicit regret that there is no such thing as a national Australian costume. This suggests that for Anglos in particular, thirst for the entertainment value of the exotic was forefront, rather than the matter if knowing who the Slovaks are specifically, and the thirst was partly slaked by witnessing this performance, although a suggestion of envy for their ethnic solidarity could not be hidden. The remark by the non-Slovak who was moved to tears by the ‘proud’ demeanour of a Slovak gentleman across the aisle from her can be interpreted as part of that discourse.

This is not to say that moral work was not being collaboratively achieved. On the one hand, the results showed that when Lúčnica performs outside of Slovakia or neighbouring regions where the group and its history are known, an extra moral imperative is created. The concern for Slovak audience members, as stated, was to be
recognized and understood as beautiful, unique, yet diverse, and special because of that
diversity. Slovaks in the audience expressed concern that information presented in a
programme or expressed in spoken introductions for items would have achieved this
result, but it was missing. The moral nature of this concern was summed up by a Slovak
audience member who found the lack ‘unforgiveable’, suggesting that character had
been compromised. On the other hand, in enjoying an ‘ethnic’ performance, and being
moved by the obvious pride of the Slovak attendees, Anglos and Others could be doing
all that was possible to assign moral character to them in the face of ignorance
concerning them, while at the same time assigning moral character to themselves for
being interested in ‘cultural’ performance, and taking pleasure in their pleasure.

However, an even more significantly divisive element than missing information about
regional diversity or the ‘meaning’ of individual dances and songs, is that non-Slovaks,
due to their ignorance of Slovak history, would not have been able to celebrate the
achievements of Lúčnica as a triumph over the extreme adversity suffered by the Slovak
people. This would be especially true for Anglo Australians, most of whom have never
witnessed war at first-hand, and certainly not on Australian soil. Furthermore, they
represent the dominant culture in this land, and have the freedom and power to be
curious, and to thirst for ‘cultural’ experiences and entertainment. Likewise, they, and
the Others, were unaware of the struggle by Professor Nosál, who, because of his skill
and courage was able to resist interference in Lúčnica’s artistic autonomy by a
totalitarian communist regime, the like of which most Anglos, and many of the Others,
have never experienced. These representational nuances of Lúčnica’s performance were
necessarily lost to them, but mattered little, and thus were existing power relationships
within Australian society maintained.

However, in terms of claiming civilized character through excellence in performance,
the Slovaks could be happy. The discourse of excellence was alive and well if Anglos
and Others’ responses was any indication. Performers and all ethnic groups colluded in
producing this meaning for the performance. The virtuosity, youth and beauty of
Lúčnica as an icon of Slovak ethnicity was mutually celebrated according to the results
of this survey. The instrumental music, the dancing, the colourful costumes, and the
general ambience of joyful energy worked together to generate an ambience of fun-
filled, superb entertainment, and was enjoined by virtually all participants. If Slovaks
were left frustrated by the lack of deeper understanding of Slovak ethnicity which extra
information would have made possible, most Anglos and Others did not mind. For them, the entertainment value was supreme, as it traded on sufficiently present generic standards of aesthetic and athletic excellence more than upon unique markers of Slovak ethnicity. The former were there in abundance, and there were just enough of the latter understood to satisfy, even if the performance might have been remembered, sadly, as ‘Russian’ by some.

For the methodology

Given the purpose of this thesis, which was to explore the meaning of Lúčnica’s performance in Melbourne, the use of survey methodology was valuable, because it provided a way to compare groups of recipients, and therefore, different interactional spaces. These comparisons bear directly on the question of the discourse produced by such an event as this in a multicultural Australian setting. Nevertheless, serious problems were confronted, and these are discussed first.

The potential value of findings was limited by shortcomings in the logistic preparation. While practical methods for data collection were included in preparation in consultation with the Statistics Consulting Unit of The Australian National University, the unreliability of helpers was not predicted, and when two of them failed to appear, there was no back-up plan. The statistical validity of the results for ethnic composition of the audience was compromised as a result, with only 10.57 percent of the audience surveyed rather than the desired minimum of 20 percent. Even more so, the statistical validity of results from telephone interviews was compromised, since those numbers depended on the population generated from the first phase.

Nonetheless, results are useful because of the formulae used for analysis of both phases, because a confidence index (CI) was generated. For example, in Table 8, if the CI is used to extend the given proportions upwards and downwards, the following range of possible percentages for ethnic composition of the audience is as follows:

Proportion of Slovaks:  (44.56% – 54.36%)
Proportion of Anglos:  (16.48% – 24.38%)
Proportion of Others:  (25.61% – 34.61%)
While the possible proportions of Anglos and Others may overlap, the fact that the possible range for proportion of Slovaks far exceeds the range for either of the other two groups singly or added together, enables likely conclusions about the ethnic composition of the audience to be drawn. Also, the minimum proportion possible for Others is still higher than the possible maximum for Anglos, which suggests that Anglos did comprise the smallest of the ethnic groups in this audience.

Possibly, because ethnic discrimination is a sensitive issue, the categorization of ethnic groups may draw comment. They may be seen as an example of the rarely acknowledged issues in forming “operational definitions” in quantitative research mentioned by Silverman. But the conceptualization of these categories was derived from previous immersion in both Slovak and Australian society, and after careful consideration and discussion. Then, respondents were asked to self-designate according to the categories, and all respondents complied without hesitation.

Perhaps the greatest limitation would have been to conceptualize the survey as a standardized procedure. Because the second phase was regarded as an interactional event, despite the collection of numerical values which were subjected to analysis with statistical formulae, possible explanations of the trends were suggested, which would not have been the case without them. It is true that survey methodology involves a higher level of abstraction, and may be considered less ‘empirical’, by virtue of the fact that numerical operations are performed upon raw results. However, provided the statistical analysis is regarded as a way of visualizing the differences in responses from members of different ethnic groups, rather than a way of providing statistical validity, it can be recognized as providing validity when held up against the whole body of findings in the quest to discover the meanings generated from this performance.

The inclusion of comments to facilitate qualitative analysis of results also minimized the potential problem with so-called standardized survey methods, where the questions might be the wrong ones, or where questions that might be relevant are not included in the questionnaire. The interactional approach taken in the course of conducting the telephone interviews enabled potential gaps to be filled in. The most telling example of this was the question concerning the missing programme. Without the explanation given by the Slovak respondents, that they were concerned because ‘those Anglos’ would not have understood the performance, the figures alone would not have yielded their real
significance. Likewise with the nuanced remarks of the Anglo respondents who explained that they would need more information before deciding if what they had seen was Slovak culture. The reasonable tone of their voices when explaining this contrasted with the concern in the voices of the Slovaks in responding to the same question. On the other hand, Anglos’ and Others’ responses, when they gave an explanation for not wanting information because it would have ruined the entertainment factor, matched the energy of those frustrated Slovaks who wanted to be understood. Without comments and qualitative analysis, important inferences concerning the meanings of the performance would have been lost.

So, while deep meanings for Lúčnica’s performance were able to be claimed from analysis of ethnographic notes in terms of Goffman’s interaction order, and those meanings could be augmented significantly by applying CA methodology to the ethnographic interview, the use of an audience survey was able to generate important propositions concerning comparative meanings for Slovaks, and non-Slovaks, and especially Anglo Australians, all of whom attended the same performance. In spite of its limitations in terms of the standards of quantitative methodology, the audience survey generated valuable findings concerning cross-cultural meanings, enabling important comparisons to be made, and underlying theoretical assumptions about Australian society to be tested.
Chapter 7: Conclusions

The significance of Lúčnica for the discourse of Slovak ethnicity

Lúčnica’s performance in Melbourne was certainly a spectacular event from the point of view of any observer. In this, it fulfilled some of the rhetorical claims by the writers of past reviews from New York, London, Canberra, and other capital cities of the world, and by its chief progenitor, Professor Nosáľ. Acrobatic precision and vitality, youthful beauty and energy, colourful costumes and captivating music were abundant. Even a successful marriage of art and tradition must be admitted. Yet, as closer analysis shows, these are mere generalizations, and do not explain the deep significance of this performance. In particular, the claim that Lúčnica is spreading Slovak culture around five continents through its performances is questionable.

The alternative claims made in this thesis concerning the meaning of this performance rest on results from a number of sites of inquiry: the researcher’s lifetime in the Australian field where this performance was manifested, followed by immersion in the field where this troupe was born, in Slovakia; adoption of a Foucauldian theoretical framework that provided a discursive, interactional perspective; an examination of the discourse of history of the Slovak people and nation; consideration of the part played in Slovak musical life by this kind of performance, Lúčnica in particular; collection and analysis of as great a variety of empirical evidence during the troupe’s visit to Melbourne as the spatial and temporal scope of this research endeavour would allow; and selection and evaluation of appropriate methodologies in order to address epistemological concerns.

Analysis of the meaning of this performance from these sites exposed the ‘spiel’ trotted out in promotional material as formulaic and one-dimensional. Even claims to uniqueness seem bland, considering that all folkloric companies, such as the Russian troupe, The Flying Tzars mentioned in Chapter 6, include the idea of uniqueness in their rhetoric. Considering the array of such performances offered on the cultural performance calendar in Australia, these claims become examples of ‘protesting too much’ in that context, and have little impact. Furthermore, such rhetoric fuels judgements of the genre of which Lúčnica is iconic as banal or irrelevant to younger Slovaks, who are orienting more and more to a globalized popular music culture.
However, adoption of a broadly Foucauldian theoretical perspective through to close analysis of micro-interactions occurring at those sites at the time of the performance in Melbourne, enabled the deeper significance of Lúčnica’s performance to be revealed. In stating conclusions, meaning is not reified, but can only be expressed in terms of the interactions between participants as identified. Any more general or positivistic explanation leads to contradictions and confusion. For the same reasons, regarding the meaning of this performance in terms of a communications or semiological model does little to explain it. Neither Lúčnica, nor its performance over all, nor the details of performance, had fixed meanings that could be communicated via symbols. Rather, multiple meanings were generated, depending on the identity and consequent interactions of the co-participants.

The most general conclusion, but no less important for that, is that Lúčnica’s performance was understood as a vital, moral phenomenon. Character stakes were played out at all sites examined, and Foucault’s generalizations concerning the power-knowledge dynamic of cultural performances were borne out. At a more particular level, consideration of the history of the Slovak people and music folklore’s place in Slovak cultural life, followed by analysis of interactions at the Slovak Social Club, and of an interview with Lúčnica’s manager, revealed the deep significance of Lúčnica and their performances as homologous with Slovak ethnicity, with the production of pride in triumphing over millennia of brutal marginalization, including the destruction of cultural symbols and attempts by a totalitarian regime to manipulate the forms of folkloric performance, and the psyche of its participants.

At an even more particular level, the meaning for Slovak Australians in the audience of this performance can be explained as follows. For them, Lúčnica embodied the turbulence of the past, together with celebration of triumph over it, and projection of aspirations to be recognized and appreciated. Analysis of their interactions with the troupe and its representatives at the Slovak Social Club welcome celebration showed that Lúčnica is highly valued by these Slovak Australians. Then, in attending the performance, they further joined with Lúčnica and each other in celebrating all that Lúčnica embodied for them, fulfilling McDonald’s definition of traditional practice. Yet for them, the discursive strands were multiplied by the fact that they, as evidence showed, were frustrated in their wish, not just to be celebrated, but to be celebrated by others as who they consider themselves to be. Satisfaction of that wish was evidently
thwarted by what they considered to be the lack of organizational expertise in promoting the performance in the wider Australian community, providing programme notes for non-Slovaks, and also by the erasure of symbolic details in costumes, which they thought would have signified the richness and diversity claimed as specifically Slovak. By virtue of these short-comings, as they saw them, their power was diminished, and character threatened. The threat was already foreshadowed at the welcome celebration two days previous to the performance, as evidenced by the quality of interaction between Slovak patrons and the tour organizer, and then by the small size of the audience relative to the Hamer Hall. Considering their pride in their own traditions, these short-comings constituted a threat to the power of these Slovak Australians to make their mark on this occasion, and perhaps, in the Australian multicultural community at large.

The moral realities were different for the non-Slovak Australians in this audience, however, but no less grave. The majority of Anglo Australians and those Australians from a variety of other ethnic backgrounds had bought tickets, thereby expressing the will to engage with this performance of Slovak folkloric performance, but the terms of engagement were not the same as for the Slovak Australians in the audience. Non-Slovaks were not creating Slovak ethnicity to the same specifications as the Slovaks on stage or in the audience, nor could they have done so. For them, Lúčnica and the performance embodied other realities. Their responses supported Kirschenblatt-Gimblett’s assertions concerning what aims to please when ‘ethnics’ perform for foreigners. They responded positively according to their rating of their own appreciation of performance elements such as those specified by Kirschenblatt-Gimblett, except for the vocal timbre of the girls, which departed too far from an aesthetic associated by them with such performance, further supporting this view. The discourse the Anglo Australians were creating, in collaboration with the performers, was one of one of consumption of exotic fare, supporting Hage’s and Gunew’s assertions. By and large, this was satisfactory for them, as the quality of the fare presented was high in terms of the spectacular. The play of power in instating a moral reality was thus expressed, in which this interesting troupe, with obscure origins and colourful costumes and dances, were maintained in their place as entertainers in this multicultural context. For Anglo Australians, the discourse was nuanced also by nostalgia for symbols of ethnic solidarity that do not exist in Australian culture in a form that could be performed in such a spectacular way.
It is true that some respondents evidently moved beyond mere tolerance of this ethnic performance, recognizing ‘pride’ in Slovak Australians’ demeanour at the performance, but they could not have understood just how ‘proud’ those Slovak Australians were from the performance alone. Because of their identities as non-Slovak Australians, they would not have been able to recognize Lúčnica and its progenitor, Professor Nosál', as heroes in the struggle against hegemony at home, for example, due to sheer lack of relevant knowledge and experience. The depth of emotional engagement possible for Slovak Australians, especially of the older generation who had experienced the hardships of oppression from a variety of regimes, and often, double migration, was denied to non-Slovaks simply by virtue of their identities.

This point is strengthened by evidence from analysis of the interview between the researcher and the troupe’s manager. In that instance too, identities were crucial in specifying the knowledge produced. The interviewee had had similar aspirations to join Lúčnica as a dancer as had Nosál' himself, and shared his passion for Lúčnica’s form of folkloric performance. The interviewer brought two aspects of identity to the interview. On the one hand, as an Anglo Australian, she brought sensitivity to the signs of formulaic spiel honed by a lifetime in an Australian society where bombardment by advertisement and political spin is ubiquitous, and was able to reject it within the dynamics of interaction made possible by the interview. On the other hand, she also brought a depth of empathy for the difficult past of the Slovak people, and the awareness, from immersion in the field of the Slovak community for five years, of Lúčnica’s evolution as a powerful, often subtle, reactive phenomenon in the drive to maintain ethnic solidarity. By virtue of these particular identities, the moral realities produced when Lúčnica performed for fellow Slovaks were able to be articulated. By contrast, the difference between that discourse and the discourse of consumption produced in collaboration by Lúčnica and non-Slovaks, especially Anglo Australians, was most poignant.

Evidence confirms that this performance was a concentrated site for construction of moral realities. In that construction, at all sites examined, power play, whose stakes were for respectable, civilized, moral character, was manifested. The performance was the field for a battle for character between players who shared the same kind of stakes, but who had to accept variable outcomes. Situated, as it was, in an Australian multicultural context, the outcomes simultaneously encompassed traditional practice for
Slovak Australians, the expression of the will to be known, and the reinstatement of the freedom of the Anglo Australians and other non-Slovaks to consume ‘ethnic’ fare at will, whether they know the purveyors for who they are or not. In this way, Lúčnica and their audience collaborated in maintaining a discourse of morality, power and hegemony, bringing it from the past into the present.

Evaluation of the methodologies

The use of multiple methodologies proved to be the most rational way to address such a complex question as the meaning of a cultural performance. However, it could not have been productive without careful and thorough theorization of the phenomenon studied, in this case, Lúčnica’s performance in Melbourne. That having been done, an heuristic paradigm was able to be adopted, within which specimens of social interaction could be examined empirically in the search for patterns of meaning. Theorization of the topic in interactional terms also meant that the researcher’s immersion in the field, a standard ethnomusicological method of research, could be exploited in order to show its importance in producing findings. Furthermore, it was logically aligned with the particular methodologies chosen for analysis of field data, namely, analysis according to Goffman’s non-verbal interaction order, and Conversation Analysis. The special value of using these analytical approaches is that ethnographic observation and recording of ethnographic interviews are standard data collection methods in ethnomusicological research, but are often not recognized as fertile data in themselves. Rather, they are used as descriptive, ‘contextual’ background, inviting the risk of hidden assumptions or erasure of crucial insights.

Taken separately, each of the specific methodologies used in this research had strengths and short-comings. One short-coming of Goffman’s approach was the problem posed by his apparent inconsistencies. Sifting through Goffman’s rhetoric and coming to terms with them may have been a daunting exercise, but the results speak for themselves. Despite his claimed rejection of prior theorization, the dynamics he describes as taking place in face-to-face interaction are patently theoretical, and did enable an analysis that moved beyond mere documentary description, yielding results that could address the question of the meaning of Lúčnica’s existence and performance. Especially, the suspicion that Lúčnica’s significance was, for Australian Slovaks, a morally loaded, power-driven phenomenon, was able to be posited, and further explored. But the special
value of using Goffman’s approach to analysis of interaction is that it brought the non-verbal details of such interaction into the light, and provided a vocabulary for discussing them.

As for the limitations of Goffman’s approach with respect to the generalizability issue, its use enabled yet another specimen to be examined, with the double benefit of making possible the testing of claims against the findings from analysis of the other kinds of data, and the deepening and widening of understandings about the topic itself. In fact, it enhanced the validity of the endeavour, enabling innovative, insightful inferences to be made about Lúčnica’s significance for Slovak ethnicity, thus providing propositions for comparison with findings from the other sites.

The inferences made possible by the application of Conversation-Analytical methodology, however, were more robust in themselves, as well as allowing comparison with findings from ethnographic notes and the audience survey. CA’s great value was that a common ethnographic tool, an ethnographic interview, was able to be taken as more than a documentary report. Applying CA to the interview data in this study yielded epistemologically respectable results, because theory and method in CA are so closely aligned and articulated. For example, the method for transcribing recorded talk, though prescriptive, is aligned with CA’s redefinition of language as an interactive medium, and the data can be publicly observed and analyzed. This also allowed for stronger inferences to be made than in the case of Goffman’s method, which is in greater danger of being subjectively interpretive, since it relies on the subjective, descriptive notes of the observer.

The use of CA for this inquiry was also valuable because it took the agency and identity of the researcher into account in a concrete way, not just as a theoretical recommendation as in the case of Bourdieu’s admonition or Goffman’s approach. Knowledge production by both participants was able to be empirically examined and analyzed by means of CA’s theory and method. Similarly, while Goffman’s description of his interest in the way larger social entities such as institutions are ‘built up’ from tiny face-to-face interactions is a valuable insight, CA enabled actual articulation of how this was done at a significant interactive site, and provided a method for showing it.
Most importantly, analysis of the interview using CA yielded strong evidence of the power dynamic inherent in Lúčnica and its performances, strengthening the hypothesis that the performance was a mutual celebration, for the troupe and Slovak Australians, of triumph in a battle, not only for survival, but for the character of Slovak ethnicity. Moreover, evidence of the power dynamic in the construction of such a moral reality was able to be empirically identified. The construction of personal and institutional identities, including that of the researcher, could be demonstrated, as could the conversational, cultural and institutional resources both participants used in order to tell the stories they wanted to be told. Inferences, therefore, were richer and more robust. Moreover, this provided empirical validation at the micro-level of the over-arching theory for the study, that meaning is generated at the interactional interface. This lent more cogency to the inference made from comparison of ethnic groupings surveyed at the performance itself, that this performance was also a field of moral contestation for them.

As discussed, the size of the survey population was small, but it still allowed comparisons to be made between ethnic groups, and provided results that were complementary to findings from ethnographic observations and the interview. In fact, if the audience survey used in this study had been regarded as a standardized exercise, interpretation of results would, in fact, have been highly subjective, especially those generated by asking ‘rating’ questions. However, despite the limitations of ‘operational definitions’, this part of the survey questionnaire was valuable, because it was regarded as a method for generating and organizing results for interpretation in the light of invited comments. For example, it cannot be known in a positivistic way what respondents’ parameters for excellence were, but taking into account their comments, the inference could be made that pleasure and emotional energy were important indices for high value. Another example of the value of including comments is that without them, the will of the Slovak Australians to be known for who they are by the ‘Anglos’ in the audience would have been lost. Regarding this survey tool as an interactive method enabled gaps to be filled in, avoiding the loss of some of the most important insights.

It must be conceded that in qualitative research some truths will be discovered and others missed. However, the use of these methodologies for exploring the meaning of Lúčnica’s performance in Melbourne was valuable because they were different, and
regarded as yielding complementary findings. Their power to generate insights was enhanced by the fact that their theoretical underpinnings were mutually consistent. Despite the limitations of each, their use enabled rich interpretations to be made concerning the significance of such performances as this, a Slovak ‘ethnic’ performance in a multicultural Australian social context.

**Future directions**

Considering that Australian society is becoming progressively more multicultural, and that the subject of its ‘success’ is never far below the surface in media coverage of the political agenda concerning legal and illegal immigration, the findings from examining what this Slovak troupe performance meant raises questions fertile for exploration. While there has been no lack of scholarly inquiry into the multicultural discourse in the Australian context, it would be fruitful to apply methodologies in a similar way to how it has been done in this study to other ‘ethnic’ performances, because this approach is, arguably, innovative. Adoption of a theoretical model where knowledge is produced by collaboration through non-verbal and spoken interaction would enable Goffman’s method of observing details of face-to-face interaction, and CA’s method of recording, transcribing, and analyzing both naturally occurring interaction, and institutional talk such as interviews, to find evidence of the discourse as it is, and to penetrate beneath the rhetoric. The jury is still ‘out’ concerning whether multiculturalism in Australia is a success or not, but findings from empirical data may indicate what bodes for success or failure.

A subsidiary question is raised by the mentioned report in the Slovak Spectator of Lúčnica’s visit to Macao in 2006. The question is whether the ‘educational turn’ adopted by Lúčnica, as reported, was deemed a success, and in what terms. The question concerns whether this approach was ancillary to their staged performance, or whether the discourse of spectacle and consumption was side-stepped altogether. A related question concerns low ticket sales in Australia, in Melbourne and also in Canberra in November 2010. Whether this is indicative of reluctance to outlay capital for advertising, or if there is another explanation, would be of interest for both Lúčnica’s creators and promoters, and also for the discourse of multiculturalism in

---

41 See p. 5
42 Box offices staff were reluctant to divulge numbers, but did say that the seats taken were mainly complementary, either ‘promotional’ or for embassy officials.
Australia, and for the small cohort of Slovak Australians amongst the 22 million Australians inhabiting this land. The question is whether Lúčnica’s artistic excellence and virtuosity on stage are considered to be the only parameters in the character stakes, or whether money, and the presence or absence of efficient, productive infrastructure and organization are also currency for that discourse.

Another avenue of inquiry generated by the research in this thesis concerns the fact that of the performance elements chosen for evaluation by audience members at Lúčnica’s performance, the instrumental music was the least problematic across all groups. Whereas details of costumes and vocal timbre were sources of confusion or rejection, most respondents, regardless of previous exposure or ethnicity, commented on the instrumental music with positive emotion, as expressed by their words and affect. Further exploration of that finding in a variety of inter-ethnic contexts, in which Australia abounds, would contribute to the contemporary body of inquiry concerning music and emotion, notably active at the University of Western Australia, for example. The fact that the sonic phenomenon of the music itself was the most collectively ‘enjoyed’ aspect of the performance raises a fascinating question that could not be explored within the scope of this study, but which is pertinent for studies concerning how music is configured in human existence and relationships.

---

REFERENCES


Dobšinský, P. (2001). *Janko Hraško a iné slovenské rozprávky podľa Pavla Dobšinského* [Johnny Little Pea and other Slovak folktales according to Pavol Dobšinský]. Bratislava: Kriván RaKK.


Harris, Z. (2004). *Pre-Christian Slav civilization*. Sydney: Archival manuscript, Division of Humanities, Department of European languages, Macquarie University.


Kačic, L. (2002a). From the Middle Ages to the Renaissance. In O. Elschek (Ed.), *A history of Slovak music from the earliest times to the present* (pp.54-79). Bratislava: Veda.


Transcription of monologue of Professor Štefan Nosáľ

After World War 2 a new era began for our people. We finally felt liberated and free, which made us extremely happy. This environment led to the creation of new groups supporting traditions. And Slovakia is very rich in traditions, called Podpoľanie, from the village of Hriñova in Detva, central Slovakia where folk traditions have always been very strong. It is a region famous for its outlawed folk heroes. The region is rich in folk songs and dance as well as ancient musical instruments of shepherds, such as the ‘fujara’ which my father also played. I grew up in such environment, I started seriously thinking about it when I saw the play ‘A year in a village’ at the Slovak National Theatre by Zachar and Teren (directors). When I saw that something similar is also in the theatre, I said to myself, “I will dance here. That is what I want.” And that was my decision. A humble, but strong decision that made my destiny. I was 22 and was already attending the Building Faculty of university, because the war was over and a bunch of us thought it was time to start rebuilding what had been destroyed so we enrolled in this faculty. No-one really founded Lucnica. It formed gradually, spontaneously. I guess we can say that this was in the last century, in 1948. It formed from a group of students at university in Bratislava that were interested in presenting something purely Slovak. So, they put together a few dances. Back then Mrs Chodakova and Mrs Bakova, who was more oriented on singing, were putting the dances together. Soon after, Professor Plicka from Prague, a great lover of folklore and film maker, invited the group to perform at an agricultural trade fair in Prague, that was back in 1948. The group performed a short program and we, the older ones decided that the year 1948 would represent the official birth of Lucnica…

(Speaking to the performers at rehearsal before a performance)

Yesterday, you had a very good contact with the audience, and they with you. It was nice and intimate, very good. Look at me now when I am speaking. When you are this close, you seem to have too much make-up. From the back of the amphitheatre it’s OK, but here it seems too much. It’s about the over-all impression. Some of you like to flaunt (sic) with the audience. It’s not right, I don’t like it. Russians do that. They go into the audience winking and smiling. Your hands more like an Indian dancer. It is a serious issue if care about the outer superficial side so much. I guess you try to sell it like this, but you look like old ladies from a musical comedy instead. You can’t force an exaggerated folk style. You need to approach it with respect. You have to feel what you’re doing. You have to do it so the audience believes in what you are doing, and feel it.

…I joined them after a year, in 1949. ‘Ethnographical Group on the Railway of Youth’. It was about the construction of the railway by youth. Lucnica was also invited. It was like a cultural brigade. We worked and travelled around, following the youth. After those years, I tried my hand at choreography. My first attempt at choreography was a dance about the outlawed hero Janosík. Ondrej Zelník and I started work on it. I picked a group of pretty talented guys and we started preparing them for the Outlaws’ Dance. It was a difficult job. Duro Kubanka, who had led a small group of boys with Lucnica, also helped us. Somehow we managed to bring it to life. Then we revised and improved it. I also started co-operating with musical composers because an orchestra had joined us on the railway. And this is how the Outlaws’ Dance was born. It was received well by the other members, and so my path as a choreographer had begun. After two years, I became the leader of the dance ensemble. Later, I also became the artistic director and tried to advance. The next dance was the Detva festival. It was from my home region. It was an environment in which I grew up, so it was very close to me. With a show like that, men could be bossy and could be rough, but they could also dance and sing. I tried to reflect all this on the stage. I starred in it too. I can sing a little. The whole performance started with the song:…..(song sounded) At the amphitheatre in Banská Bystrica, the auditorium filled with muttering when we started the show. The people felt that this was it, this was our national character, self-confident, fearless and not afraid to show it by dancing and singing. Through
knowledge and a sense of the traditions of my home region, I also tried to get to know the traditions of the Slovak regions because they are also very rich and diverse. The whole problem has always been how to dramatize the traditional song, or dance, or art form, and how to bring it onto the stage so that it doesn’t lose its own style and character. If it lost its own style and character, which every folk art possesses, that would not be good. After some initial successes, I also tried to approach more serious topics, for example, the image of Radvan marketplace. It already had a plot and covered several regions. Radvan near Banská Bystrica, Central Slovakia, and a traditional market would be held there each year. Many people would congregate there, including Romany and Hungarian traders. It was full of attractions. The young would come too, so many conflicts arose there. This is what I tried to show in this thematic picture – the Radvan Marketplace – which was quite a big picture, containing also a choral ensemble and an orchestra. That was the beginning of narrative drama, as well as merry dances. Today it might be compared to a folk musical.

Lucnica achieved such a high standard in the 1950s, that we could export it. Among other countries, in 1956 Lucnica visited some states in South America. The tour lasted almost half a year. We travelled by ship, which was very unusual for us ‘terrestrials’. We were a little afraid, but got used to it in the three or so weeks. It was the first visit to these countries by Czechoslovaks in a very long time. Many of our ex-pats had moved there at the beginning of the century and again in the ‘30s – to countries like Argentina, Uruguay or Brazil, and we met with them. We got to know their folklore, Argentinian folklore, and singing with the guitar. We were also popular because of our girls – pretty young women are admired everywhere. Men even came with guitars to our hotels and sang serenades. We envied the girls, but we also enjoyed it very much. While we were in South America, the second part of our ensemble, together with a part of the choral ensemble, and a small orchestra, travelled around Scandinavia. They experienced a different atmosphere. They presented us in Europe. But their discipline during the trip was harder. We chose much freer system in South America because I was worried people might not last for such a long time, so we opted for a much more liberal atmosphere. Performers had to be fit and ready two hours before the performance, but the rest of the time they were free. And this worked out well. After the tours, it was time to think about our artistic direction again. The structure where the choral ensemble alternates with the dance performances, now seemed too old, and I was looking for something new. I suggested splitting the ensemble into two programme bodies. The dance ensemble with orchestra was one group, and the choral ensemble and part of the orchestra the other. The choral orchestra was developing differently anyway. This is how we decided. It wasn’t readily accepted at first, but in the end it proved to be the right decision.

Contemporary themes were also applied in the dancing repertoire. Some were more successful than others. But after some discussions, we agreed that Lucnica should be inspired only by traditional Slovak folk art, which is so rich. We had achieved a lot of success with that. Contemporary topics should be left for other groups. And that’s what we did.

The individual programme bodies had their own leaders. The choral ensemble was led for many years by Dr Klimo. The orchestra was conducted by Miro Smid, who also worked with the dance ensemble. And that’s how it worked for many successful years. I started producing also so-called evening programmes with one main theme in order to make it more interesting again. Individual dances stayed independent, but they were linked by the same theme. That worked out very well. We had programmes like Welcoming the Spring, Songs and Work, or Games and Work, as well as many other programmes. But that brings us nearer the present day, when we have two kinds of programmes. On one hand, we have a dancing repertoire, and these thematic programmes on the other hand. For example, the last thematic programme we did was The Carpathian Mountains, where we gave a broader regional picture. I wanted to show the similarities and differences between Slovak folklore with the neighbouring countries such as Balkan states, folk traditions of the Ukraine in the East, the Czech Republic in the West, Hungarian in the South, etc. Of course, we showed their influence on our folklore, but the Slovak folklore was dominant. We showed that all of these countries have enriched our folklore. Co-operation with music composers was very intense. For 30 years I mostly co-operated with
the composer Svetozar Stracina, who could feel the essence of folksongs and he could express it well. He could do what I appreciated most – keep the style so that it had a strong artistic value…

(Speaking again to the performers)

You look around too much to see if they are watching you and you don’t watch your foot. You have to watch your foot more or you’ll hit your nose. At the end of the fight, the third time round, when you group into pairs, call for the horses. You are quiet there.

…When we are preparing a programme for performances abroad, I try to use the most interesting and the most characteristic regions from all over Slovakia. Our programme comprises newer choreographed elements together with older ones. There are some older dances that represent, I think, the regions on a high quality level, eg, the Detva Festival, the Festival in Zemplin, or the potter’s suite, which is a more difficult topic. The good thing is that when we put these programmes together, we don’t have problems to put the older dances next to the newer ones. They all have, I would say, one main style and even after so many years, all of them are still contemporary. We have more or less been around the world with Lucnica. We have visited many countries in the past – last year it was the 55th anniversary – so that is a lot of years. We have also been to 60 or 70 countries and all 5 continents with Lucnica. I think we can say without boasting that Lucnica has done very well in international competition. Of course, I wouldn’t have done all this myself, without all my assistants, colleagues and the management. All those parts have to co-operated together, especially the dancers. People – students from all over Slovakia – have joined Lucnica. That’s why the choice offered a higher level of quality, and we could also present the folklore and national dances from the whole Slovakia. Those are our demands. We, as professionals, have strong professional demands. Maybe not all of them are professionals yet, but some of them will be. We also give them some financial reward, something like a stipend, but the demands we make on them are professional. All over the world and at festivals, they regard us a highly professional ensemble. Even the critics say so. Our pedagogical preparation together with the assistants is very intense. And we are successful. Over the years, I have learned that the combination of a professional approach with, in a good sense, amateurish enthusiasm, is very good for presenting folklore on the stage…

(Here the review from the New York Times 24/11/94 is shown)

... Stefan Nosal, the artistic director and choreographer, scenically arranged the dances with bold variations and sudden changes of rhythm. Mr. Nosal’s great gift is his ability to create dances with high artistic spark while keeping their originality.

THE NEW YORK TIMES
(USA)

…The amateurs bring spontaneity, naturalness, explosiveness of lyrical expression to their interpretation. And that is very precious. Because there is a danger in many popular ensembles, maybe not all of them, but it’s often the case when something is repeated too often, people get tired of it and lose the spirit when doing it, unlike Lucnica’s people. When our people grow up, they leave Lucnica, they don’t get old here, they don’t retire here. Sometimes they leave when they are at the top of their artistic abilities, which is a pity, I think. But then more young ones come, bringing healthy rivalry and competition. And we always look at their availability. We try to use them to the maximum so they don’t lose the desire to do it. But to make sure they don’t lose their appetite for it, because that is also one of the features of the traditional art forms, that it is spontaneous, natural and honest. I am personally happy, yet my lifelong effort and the effort of all the other people who have danced, sung or played in Lucnica, has reached such a high standard at both home and abroad. Folklore has therefore been put on a high pedestal and is comparable with professional other kinds of art. Proof of this also can be seen in the fact that two years ago, Lucnica performed at Royal Opera Covent Garden for three performances. Now we have a tour to Italy ahead of us, where we are expected to perform at the Rome opera too.
This all proves that the world, the cultural world, has acknowledged it as a highly professional art. It is specific because it is inspired by its national traditions, which Slovakia has always been very rich in.

Transcribed from the DVD:
APPENDIX II

Transcription glossary

(0.5) The number in brackets indicates a time gap in tenths of a second.

(.) A dot enclosed in a bracket indicates a pause in the talk of less than two-tenths of a second.
The ‘equals’ sign indicates ‘latching’ between utterances. For example:

S1: yeah September [seventy-six=
S2: [September
S1: =it would be
S2: yeah that’s right

[ ] Square brackets between adjacent lines of concurrent speech indicate The onset and end of a spate of overlapping talk.

.hh A dot before an ‘h’ indicates speaker in-breath. The more h’s the longer the breath.

.hh An ‘h’ indicates an out-breath. The more h’s the longer the breath.

(( )) A description enclosed in a double bracket indicates a non-verbal activity. For example ((banging sound)). Alternatively double brackets may enclose the transcriber’s comments on contextual or other features.

- A dash indicates the sharp cut-off of the prior word or sound.

: Colons indicate that the speaker has stretched the preceding sound or letter. The more colons the greater the extent of the stretching.

! Exclamation marks are used to indicate an animated or emphatic tone.

( ) Empty parentheses indicate the presence of an unclear fragment on the tape.

(guess) The words within a single bracket indicate the transcriber’s best guess at an unclear utterance.

. A full stop indicates a stopping fall in tone. It does not necessarily indicate the end of a sentence.

. A comma indicates a ‘continuing’ intonation.

? A question mark indicates a rising inflection. It does not necessarily indicate a question.

* An asterisk indicates a ‘croaky’ pronunciation of the immediately following section.

↓↑ Pointed arrows indicate a marked falling or rising intonational shift. They are placed immediately before the onset of the shift.

| \ | Less marked falls in pitch can be indicated by using underlining immediately preceding a colon:

| a: | S: we (.) really didn’t have a lot’v ch

| a: | Less marked rises in pitch can be indicated using a colon which is itself underlined.

J: I have a red sh\_\_irt

Under Underlined fragments indicate speaker emphasis.

CAPITALS Words in capitals mark a section of speech noticeably louder than that surrounding it.

° ° Degree signs are used to indicate that the talk they encompass is spoken noticeably quieter (sic) than the surrounding talk.

Thaght A ‘gh’ indicates that the word in which it is placed had a guttural
pronunciation.

‘More than’ and ‘less than’ signs indicate that the talk they encompass was produced noticeably quicker (sic) than the surrounding talk.

APPENDIX III

Transcription of ethnographic interview

Interviewer: Di Roy
Interviewee: Július Jackuliak
Date: 6 October 2007
Venue: Slovenský Dom L’udovita Stúra, 105 Triholm Street, Laverton, Victoria.

1  IR: ↑n::ow. ↑we’re recording here I’ll sign it.<
2  IR: as well,? in your presence,? (.) >wh(h)at’s the date.<
3  IR: hm f(h)ourth.=
4  IE: = “it’s the sixth” =
5  IR: = hmm >yes oh yes it is it’s the sixth,?<
6  IR: (0.2) ((IE knocks questionnaire onto floor, then picks it up))
7  IR: wh(h)atdy do. (.) six (.) ten (.) oh ↑seven, (.) Laverton, ? (.)
8  IR: ( ) ’n this’s you,
9  IR: (0.4) ((IR fills in form, IE reads questionnaire))
10  IR: [Ja:cku:lia:k,? ]
11  IE: [↓er ↑ah ↓er ↑ah ↓er] yep =
12  IR: = hehehe =
13  IR: = ’nd I will [si::gn ]
14  IE: = [”here’re] some political questions” =
15  IR: = OH YEAH? (.) >but doesn’t matter?< (.)
16  IR: >i- if you don’t wanna answer them< that’s fine too? =
17  IE: = [ “OK” ]
18  IR: = [no problem.]
19  IR: = [hh what I was gonna ask you ↑first ↓though? (.) because I
20  IR: already (.) knew, (.) what (.) Professor Nosál’s role was,?
21  IR: = [hh could you (.) briefly explain to me your history with (.)
22  IR: = [hh Lūčnica? (.) and what you do.]
23  IE: (0.3)
24  IE: = we recording,? =
25  IR: = yah.=
26  IE: = OK.
27  IE: = (.) so (.) ah (.) >Lūčnica is< (.) >we can say that ( )
28  IE: Slovakia< (.) ah (.) >Slovakia is really rich of-< of tradition
29  IE: of- (.) of .hh >traditions also in songs music and every-
30  IE: thing< (.) very unique (.) er (.) in all around the world .hh
31  IE: = but er (.) >you know in Slovakia exists many many many hundred-
32  IE: = maybe hundreds of ensembles groups< who are .hh making er
33  IE: = traditions on stage and er =
34  IR: = yep. =
35  IE: = errr ↑so ↑but ↑only one er in Lūčnica (.) ah is this tradition
36  IE: = created to .hh really (.) worldwide themes and successful
37  IE: = show[. ] =
38  IR: [mmm,?]
IE: = and that’s because er Professor Nosáľ who is artistic
IE: director choreograph or from < of this ensemble > .hh
IE: from > [ errrrrgh ] =
IR: >[nineteen forty-nine]<
IE: = nineteen forty-nine,? (. ) >.hh he started as dancer and
IE: then continued as choreographer studied choreography and
IE: and created< .hh ah >most choreographies of Lúčnica most
IE: programmes.?< and because his errr his his errrr creations
IE: in this ensemble .hh Lúčnica established as er (. ) one of
IE: the best ensembles maybe (. ) the best one of ensembles what
IE: about traditions. .hh we c- we can compare with (. ) err the
IE: best ensembles from Russia or East Europe Bulgaria .hh or ah
IE: Georgia, or something, .hh :is also beautiful. .but er in (. )
IE: in never of this countries so richness of of different
IE: traditions. (. ) because [ .hh ] you know Georgian folklore is
IR: [º 
IE: for example, .hh just one or two types. >Russian is also maybe
IE: from Si- Sib- Siberia European part is< (. ) just one type but
IE: Slovakia (. ) you know each programme contains (. ) ch:ren’t
IE: contains all regions of Slovakia? .hh it’s one point maybe
IE: one one (0.2) one point was (. ) confirmed but another one,
IE: (. ) maybe most important is (. ) Professor Nosáľ (. ) choreography,
IE: choreograph,
(0.2)
IE: ( . ) and has created the material =
IR: = choreographed. yep, yep .hh so (. ) how did you get involved
IR: (. ) in Lúčnica. (. ) how long have you been involved. =
IE: = me ( ) =
IR: = yeah.
IE: .hh aaaa !so I started !dance since I was- when I was six or
IE: seven years (. ) young,? (. ) and like child and child’s ensemble,
IE: (. ) and then errrr >if it started to be really serious,?< .hh
IE: I (. ) had (. ) just (. ) one (. ) reason to go to >Bratislava ( )
IE: from capital ( ) of Slovakia Bratislava, < (. ) ( >me from middle
IE: of Slovakia,? < ) .hh !to go for >study for university to this
IE: city where Lúčnica is established,? < to have a chance to try .hh
IE: to get into ensemble and .hh be successful,? so- so I errr I
IE: >try to go to economic< (. ) university of Bratislava,?
IE: >go to Lúčnica and dance seven years long [career there]< =
IR: [ uh huh ]
IE: = .hh travel, all- all around the world and er had this this
IE: thing going to to- be on the stage >in many countries different
IE: culture,?< and try to feel it like the (. ) people from other-
IE: other cultures,? (. ) err (. ) get to- >get to be happy to see
IE: us. < you know =
IR: = y(h)ep y(h)ep (. ) y(h)ep >yep good ;so what year was that
IR: what year did you join.<
IE: (0.3)

IE: er >what [what.< ]

IR: [ >what- what< year was it. (.) nineteen, = =

IE: = err >what time.< =

IR: = yah =

IE: = .hh it was er nineteen eighty er (. ) [four till] =

IR: [ uh huh. ]

IE: = nineteen ninety-[nine.] =

IR: [ mmm ]

IE: = of er what. =

IR: = excellent. [OK] =

IE: [()]

IR: = .hh now .hh when you’re talking about (. ) >the richness

IR: of the culture how it represents< (. ) different (. ) things (. )

IR: [{} ] =

IR: [yeah,?] =

IR: = on the (. ) album cover,? (. ) on the CD cover (. ) of

IR: Karpaty =

IE: = yeah,? =

IE: = Professor NosáI wrote the notes.? .hh and he has written

IR: how for example, the mountain culture, (. ) very diverse,? (. )

IR: and it came down to us,? (. ) >meaning the Slovaks,? on the

IR: (. ) on the plain,?(. ) it came down to us from the hills.? (. )

IR: and it and that’s why it’s so rich. (. ) so (0.1) some of that

IR: was (. ) Romanian,? (. ) some of that was Ukrainian, (. ) some of

IR: that was Lemko, and (. ) some errr like some of it (. ) Moravian,

IR: an it’s ( . ) so (. ) how do you see (. ) Slovak culture. (. )

IR: °is it Slovak?°

IE: .hh :a:h. (. ) you know (. ) this er (. ) maybe this a good er- er

IE: (0.4)

IE: >er good things to see in this programme Karpaty because< err

IE: >Professor NosáI has- has created this programme< er as one of

IE: his latest,? (. ) after many many (. ) successful

IE: pro[grammes,? ] =

IE: ["that’s my favourite."

IE: = and er (. ) just want to show (. ) the influence of the (. )

IE: other cultures from Middle Europe of all the Europe .hh in

IE: Slovakia .hh ;and er ;why it is so (. ) >maybe not the question

IE: for me it’s maybe the question for- < for (. ) for really (. )

IE: er (. ) people who- who (. ) can (. ) think about it (. ) really .hh

IE: errr better than me,? .hh but err you know ;Slovak hhh

IE: >territory of er Slovakia is lying in the middle of Europe in

IE: heart of Europe< but the but the routes cross[ing]=

IE: [yep]

IE: = a hundred years ago (. ) and ;one point is ( ) the mountain

IE: culture and it’s going down to the .hh [lowlands but] (. ) =

IR: [ "mmhmm" ]
IE: = I- I don’t think so it is just- just this- this way,? .hh ;it
134 IE: is (. ) >nobody know why is it so< .hh but er - er yes you can
135 IE: see influence >from Ukraine from Romania from Hungaria from
136 IE: Poland,< .hh but (. ) ;you can just- if you- if you- if you’re
137 IE: looking for,? (. ) ;you can see that.< (. ) but (. ) it’s so unique
138 IE: that (. ) you c- you can see that er you ca - you can you cannot
139 IE: ergb >say that in northern part of Slovakia it’s Poland dances<
140 IE: ;it - it’s ;not ;true,? .hh it’s Slovakian dances? .hh but- if-
141 IE: if you’re looking for you c- you can see the influence from
142 IE: Poland (and (. ) but] =
143 IR: [mmhmm ]
144 IE: = but as unique as in Slovak region (0.2) created this to
145 IE: (. ) really unique (. ) ;Slovak culture [.hh]
146 IR: [yep]
147 IE: and many many .hh >regions I I think so is more than
148 IE: twenty-five different [regions ] in the small Slovakian country
149 IR: [*yes* ]
150 IE: and< .hh each region is different and different customs
151 IE: different [er ] =
152 IR: [I’ve got { })
153 IE: = sometimes er (. ) nearby village[s] speaking different ac[cents]
154 IR: [yep] [ yep ]
155 IE: have diff- different dances and [|that’s] why it’s so impor-
156 IR: [*yep* ]
157 IE: unique,? =
158 IR: = yah. =
159 IE: = and =
160 IR: = yah. =
161 IE: = interesting. =
162 IR: = "I know (. ) I know." (. ) ;yep (. ) yep (. ) good. (. ) OK.
163 IR: .hh ;let me ask you this. .hh I noticed that on their repertoire
164 IR: for two thousand and seven,? .hh on the internet,? .hh (. ) the
165 IR: Slovenský Tryptych (. ) is the programme (. ) right until you leave
166 IR: Slovakia [>( )]<
167 IE: [uh huh,?] ]
168 IR: and from then on, (. ) it’s Representational Progr[amme.] =
169 IE: [yes,?]
170 IR: = .hh is this (. );by the way. (. ) this Representational Programme
171 IR: Programme that your gonna perform here,‘ n that you performed
172 IR: in China,? (. ) is it the same as the CD? Representational
173 IR: Program[me? (. ) ] =
174 IE: [uh hnm,?] ]
175 IR: = it’s the same pro[gramme? ] ahah. .hh ;tell
176 IE: [>uh huh,? ( ) uh huh,?]<
177 IR: me why Professor Nosáň (. ) does that. (. ) ;why doesn’t he take
178 IR: Slovenský for example Slovenský Triptych (. ) abroad.
179 IE: = a::h >it’s normal because< you ;kno:w >Professor Nosáň Nosáň
IE: just< er is looking for- is looking- >many many years ago to<
IE: .hh to- ask the best er his er (. ) students (. ) >to creating
IE: some choreography for Lúčnica.< .hh >;and it’s not so easy
IE: because (. ) you know one- < one of his er best er students says
IE: er it must be ( .) fool who- >w(h)o w(h)ill be doing something
IE: after Nosáľ in üLúčnica.< (. ) be)cause it’s perfect
IR: [ “yeah,?” ]
IE and (. ) Iwhat can (. ) bring (. ) >some- someone
IE an [other one.< ] =
IR: [ “yep yep” ]
IE: = but erm he try to- to >to ask the choreographer< (. )
IE: and ;this really (. ) >that is was a good-< good idea to-
IE: >to ask his choreographer Ján Blaho,<? and errrr (0.3)
IE: >I don’t remember the other one,?< ah they- they are
IE: bringing some things new,? maybe new view,? on ah on ah
IE: errr dances an on er these pr[ogrammes ]
IR: [which ones.] >that’s in
IE: that’s in er< the Tryp[rich ] =
IR: = right. =
IE: = yeah so- so >Professor Nosáľ asked to programme for<
IE: to- >to created the programme< .hh it (. ) was (. ) under
IE: his [er ] =
IR: [”(direction)”]
IE: = supervising,? you know,? .hh but they was free what about
IE: the- the (0.2) stuffs and the music and everything,? .hh ah
IE: a:nd er we was ;really surprised how this er how this
IE: is er working- >working in Slovak[ia,?< .hhh]
IE: = ”uh huh” ]
IE: >he perform more than forty performances in the ye[ar,? < ] =
IR: [”mmhmm”]
IE: = like premier performances,? and err ;people are really critical
IE: in Slovakia,? because Lúčnica is something like (. ) national (. )
IE: treasure you know,? .hh and they just want see (0.2) er any-
IE: anyway the best [one so it] was (. ) er =
IR: [”mmhmm,?” ]
IE: = so is (. ) the Tryptich is popular,? in S[lovakia?] =
IR: [>( )<] =
IE: = it- it looks like [it was judging by the]
IE: [{ ] =
IR: hh r(h)epertoire. .hh do they like it? [have you heard?]
IE: [ a:::h yes,? ]
IE: >because before the first performances< we was ;not ;sure,?
IE: because (. ) in er in art of any kind you are not sure
IE: [till ( .) ] =
IR: [of course,? ]
IE: = you see on the st[age. ] and perform it,? [;and ]
IR: [yeah,?]
[mmm,?]
IE: = waiting what about audience (. ) tell you. =
[mmmhm,?]
IR: = of course. =
IE: = and after first performances er we was more and more sure
that that was good way (. ) the right way,. =
IR: = and people said yes it’s different it’s Lúčnica, (. ) it’s
different programme like before, (. ) but (. ) still Lúčnica. =
IR: = and they like it. that interests me a lot. .hh because when
I was there,? Lúčnica was always (. ) the best (. ) i- in the
opinion of all the people I knew.< [.hh ]
IR: = and they like it. that interests me a lot. .hh because when
I was there,? Lúčnica was always (. ) the best (. )>
IE: = ↑it’s not that that question (. ) >it’s not question for me
because you know< .hh this colleague from SLUK from
IE: [as ] = er many friends there. .hh I worked there for [(.)]
IR: [↑mm↓mm] [mmm]
IE: = one year and er .hh >I know ( ) about it but< < err
IE: >Lúčnica and SLUK was the (. ) same level ensembles for many many
years,< .hh and >it it was never competition it was< err
IE: the- the side way was about tradition and folklore (. ) music and
dances,? .hh >and both ensembles had er (. ) nd (. ) er displays
on- on the market and in Slovakia people like this< .hh but (. )
IE: what is the different is ( ). that er (. ) >Juraj Kubánka who was
er< (. ) >choreographer artistic< (. ) director of SLUK,? .hh
IE: and in his career in SLUK,? (. ) many years ago and from this time
IE: is (0.3) is er going er maybe er too many di[rections]=
IR: [uh huh,?]
IE: >in artistical< leading but >Lúčnica have ah have Professor
Štefan NosáI who is provid[ing]< .hh er the the the ] =
IR: [↑mmm (. ) interesting. cos ] =
IE: = ↑that sort [of reflects] the kind of comments I have heard.
IE: = [right way. ]
IR: that’s- I can understand why said that =
IE: = yeah. and =
IR: = more than before.
IE: = and maybe maybe that’s the way why er why (. ) why they-
IE: they lose maybe audience [and ]but (. )] =
IR: [↓y(h)eah ]
IE: = ↑we- we- we’re lucky if SLUK will also (. ) so so successful
IE: like years before. ]
520 IR: [*;yep *] yeah (.). yeah (.). ↑I saw them once
521 IR: and I thought they were wonderful. (.). they were =
522 IE: = [yah yah ] =
523 IR: = [very good] yeah. .hh >but anyhow< (.). so that was one
524 IR: question at at the end. so- so we’ve finished [that] =
525 IR: = [OK. ]
526 IR: = uh huh .hh >I ↑just wanted to ↓know< (.). when:
527 IR: = does he take advice,? (.). or does he just
528 IE: = yes ↓but you know the- the promoter (.). >local promoter<
529 IE: = >many many many times,< and so (.). ah we know that (.). what
530 IE: = (.) ah (.). how to- to ( ) what is >good for the audience
531 IE: ↑just ↑we ↓try to explain them.< .hh that the show like (.).
532 IE: = like other successful shows >not just only from< (.).
533 IE: traditional musical folklore,? .hhh and he know about it, (.).
534 IE: in last sixty years a lot a lot, he perform it in er ↓more than
535 IE: (.). seventy countries, =
536 IR: = yeah I’ve[got the list,]
537 IE: = [performed it ] =
538 IE: = >many many many times,< and so (.). ah we know that (.). what
539 IE: traditional are better, (.). [↑oh (.).the { } ] =
540 IR: = ↓generally generally >programmes of Lúčnica< are working (.).
541 IE: everywhere. =
542 IR: = yup. =
543 IE: = just (.). some- some >small changes are in South America maybe
544 IE: [mo::re< ] =
545 IR: = [what kind of changes.<]
546 IE: = >more (.). >people maybe South America m::ore<
547 IE: = (0.2) express you know more more dy[namic  ] =
548 IR: = [uh huh,? ]
549 IE: = .hh and er in Asia for (.). () >if we can compare< .hh
550 IE: = .hh are more conservative (.). [so ( ) you know, ] =
551 IR: = [and what about in Australia.]
552 IE: =↑ah ↑Australia I think >( )< er is like in- in Europe or or
553 IE: = .hh in- in North America (before) are friendly and errr
554 IE: >the reactions d- of the audience are< (.). are so (.). so
IE: [(0.3) ] =
IR: [spontaneous,?] =
IE: = spontaneous yes,? so= so .hh >we haven’t problem<
IE: I think (.>) >we can play< (.>) our (.>) three four five
IE: programmes here and. (0.1) =
IR: = uh huh,? =
IE: = >the- the audience will be happy.<
IR: ⇒f(h)ine." ⇒yeah. that- that (.>) was (.>) wa= one question
IR: I r(h)eally wanted to ask you.⇒
IE: = yeah. =
IR: = yeah. =
IE: = O[K. ] =
IR: [alright,?] >well let me let me see keep talking
IR: while I just check through and see< [what we’ve covered.]=
IE: [ >a= about what.< ]
IR: = .hh because I think we’re nearly there .hh ahhm (.>) OK,?
IR: (0.1) yeah. now this question. (.>) this’s a ⇒really interesting
IR: one for me =
IE: = uh huh,?
IR: (.>) a l::ot of the reports (.>) >about Professor NosáI<
IR: (.>) celebrate (0.1) his (0.1) genius,? for balancing (.>)
IR: artistry,? (.>) >with the traditional form.< (.>) >a lot of
IR: rep= the reports say this< (.>) you remember,? =
IE: = yah =
IR: = how does he decide =
IE: = u(h) huh,?=  
IR: = what is (.>) the authentic,? traditional form.=
IE: = ahh ⇒yeah=
IR: = or the word in the ⇒{(   ,?) =
IE:                       ⇒{(   ,?)] =
IR: = was o:riginal. .hh how does he know.
IE: = hhh ⇒you know that that er< I think that that’s er the the
IE: secret as - as maybe (.>) >maybe people ask er most times< er
IE: >how is< (.>) >how is it possible to create so fantastic music
IE: [in< (.>) er]
IR: [no. ] ⇒my question is<
IR: (.>) how does he know [(.>)] >what is original.< =
IE: [he-]
IE: = ⇒what is original.< yah. (.>) so.> =
IR: = mmm. =
IE: = mm yes,? that’s er (.>) good question. .hh >Professor NosáI
IE: comes from< (.>) >yeah really poor village middle Slovakia.<
IE: a:nd his childness was .hh er really poor but er full of
IE: tradition, full of .hh songs, and er maybe .hh from wi:ld er (.>)
IE: life in the villages and mountains and .hh where the people lived
IE: er hard hard life,? .hh but (.>) >in this hard poor life they
IE: didn’t forget< (.>)to (.>) >sing and dancing and< (.>
IE: >celebrate everything what< =
IR: = yup,? =
IE: = what er life bring er (.) to them,.hh and from this er (.)
IE: from >to this part of Slovakia he came< (.to .hh >bigger city,
IE: >and >that’s Bratislava the ↵capital,< .hh and er visited er
IE: >special performances new created< this time Slovak National
IE: (. <>Theatre, .hh >and it was really unique per
IE: celebrating< therrrr traditions >in Slovak National Theatre,?
IE: really unique,<C. hh and it just errrr (sittings) in theatre
IE: and (. ) came to the (. ) sure,? ↵that’s what I want to do. (.)
IE: and I try to do it the best as (. ) I (. ) can. .hh and so it’s try
IE: (. ) so he try to do it professional, .hh >(< er >nobod nobody
IE: knew (. ) that time that ( ) so- so successful he ↵just try to .hh
IE: to bring his er (.) feeling and his experiences on stage, .hh
IE: and do it as =
IR: = so are you [saying] that he was drawing on his own (.)
IR: childhood experience[es. ] =
IE: [uh huh? ]
IR: = authentic (. ) traditions (. ) =
IE: = yes,? =
IR: = .hh and the- he [knows,? ] =
IE: >but but<]
IR: = >and because of that he knows< (. ) what (. ) original is,? =
IE: = yes. =
IR: = what authentic is,? ]
IE: >but but ] that’s only the roots.< (. ) >because
IE: he’s he’s just< (. ) coming from (. ) one of (. ) regions =
IR: = of course. =
IE: = but then. after after he started to .hh >interested about<
IE: (. ) >choreography and everything,< .hh he ↵travelled a lot
IE: of all parts of Slovakia. .hh visited people [who was ] =
IR: [uh huh,?] 400 IE: = .hh living in these villages. who was created these fantastic
IE: costumes. .hh who who singing these songs er like
IE: spontan’ous. (. ) by the party or by by the (. ) normal li::fe
IE: after the wor::k or or before the work or after the er
IE: .hh spring and (. ) er he just (. ) try to- try to- >to put
IE: everything into his soul.< and (0.5) put it (. ) [through] =
IR: [{( } ]
IE: = his genius on the [stage. ]
IR: [“that’s beautiful.”] =
IE: = yeah. =
IR: = y(h)eah. .hh I didn’t know this.
IE: = and its alot alot hundreds of days weeks and maybe years
IE: .hh what he just travelled a- a- across [Slovakia.] =
IR: [ uh huh,?] =
IE: = doing his own =
IR: = yep primary research. =
IE: = >yep because [he− he have to understand ] =
IR:  
[how much does he go to archives.]
IE: = so< (. ) so (. ) < because he ca− can’t just for (. ) er >one of
IR: part of Slovakia,? he just says< .hh if you want to created
IE: it =>per<fect on the stage. > (. ) you >have <to >know <it (. ) and
IE: (. ) >love ( .) it, (. ) the same like (. ) your (. ) home village.
IE: (. ) < and the first > =
IR: = "y(h)eah" =
IE: = part ¡you ¡must ¡do, =
IR: = o "y(h)eah" =
IE: = do .hh and the:rn you
IE: can (0.5) >do it on the stage.<
IE: = yeah =
IR: = I didn’t know this about him. .hh
IE: = OK. (. ) >¡does he ever< (. ) use the archives? (. )
IR: you know (. ) >some people go to ah< matica, =
IE: = (. ) >uh huh,? =
IR: = < or− or > (. ) or in Bratislava to er ( ,?) or whatever, (. )
IE: archiv[es,?] =
IE: [( )]
IR: = yeahp. (. ) er (. ) "(h)archiv" (. ) >I dunno how to say it in
IE: Slovak.< of the early re[cordings.] =
IR: Slovak.< o [uh huh,? ] =
IE: >uh huh,? uh huh,? uh huh,?<
IR: = does he need to do that,? (. ) or (. ) not. =
IE: = ¡a:ih ¡I’m sure he has,? [( .)] =
IR: = ( .) mm hmm,?
IE: = [{ ]}==
IR: = [I know ]some of them do =
IE: = yup,? =
IE: = I read in the history where [( .) ] =
IE: = [uh huh,?]
IR: = there was a movement at one point where >¡everyone went to the
IE: archives. ¡said< this. this is traditional. this is traditional.
IR: ¡should sound like this. (. ) like the recordings.
IE: (0.1) .hhh ¡a:ih (0.1) yes,? of course it’s important but (. )
IE: this is the genius of Professor Nosál that (. ) he (. ) is
IE: (0.4) >moving or creating it< through hhh his self =
IR: = "his [own his"]
IE: = [a:nd er ] do it different,? ¡but
IE: >¡you ¡know .hh the<− the maybe the best one er sentence what
IE: is explain it is er as we as we play in err in on Broadway in New
IE: York,? .hh a:nd in >New York Times< it was er (0.2) article,?
IE: >about our performances with< er really huge photos,? .hh a:nd
IE: >( )< journalist there,? .hh and she say,? (. ) sh− she wrote er
IE: (...) the best one of this is,? that (...) it's fully
IE: modern show (...) for everyone but (...) er it (...) didn't er (...)  
IE: lose,? the roots,? of traditions and traditional .hh (.). er
IE: >feelings ;or something you know?< ;so .hh mostly; that’s
IE: the (hear:)t of [it really modern,? ]
IR: [I think I remember that review.]
IE: = and tradition =
IR: = yep, .hh >and that was my question< how he knows
IR: = (oh) =
IR: = you have answered it (.). that I what I wanted
IR: to know was how does he know what is tradition and (.)
IR: now you’ve answered [that. ] =
IR: = that’s (.). er wonderful.=
IR: = ( ) =
IR: = let me quickly see (.). where else I wanted to go. (.). that
IR: one,? (.). yep,? (.). yes. (.). uh huh,? (0.4) "yes. (.). there’s
IR: this one,? but I’ll just see. (.). I might leave that one out."
IR: (.). this one. .hh you know how a lot of the reviews also (0.1)
IR: describe (.). Lúčnica’s performances as lighthearted (0.5) they
IR: say this all (.). i(h)s lighthearted (0.1) and one programme
IR: is called ahh ahh (.). >Forever Young.< (.). another one is
IR: called er ;Youth and Beauty. =
IR: = yeah, =
IR: = .hh does he ever,? (.). in the >in the village< he must have
IR: known. the hard life, (.). the tragedies, the murder the rape,
IR: the (.). love triangles, illegitimate, er >the problems that
IR: every society has.< (.). ;any of these songs (.). ever (.)
IR: part of (.). >Lúčnica’s performance? or is it always just
IR: (.). the lighthearted.
IE: .hhh ;a:hh. >I don’t think so it’s [this< er hehehe]=
IR: [hehehe ]
IR: (( Andrej gesticulating at the window and pointing inside))
IE: er >songs and music and dances,? .hh a:::hh I also this= this
IE: dance (.). er but er, =
IR: [hehe !{  }]
IE: [hehe Andrej ]
(( Andrej gesticulating with more energy))
IE: .hh yeah ahh you know (.). I just try to also explain by words of
IE: Professor NosáI.=
IR: = mmmhmm,? =
IE: = the ;just (.). is telling that ah the art (.). generally and (.)
IE: especially his art on the stage,.hh he try just to bring
IE: to the >audience and the people< (.). beauty, (.). a::nd er (0.2)
IE: and to be happy and (oh) (.). >if I was a dancer< he= he
IE: alwa- always say to us (.). yes. (.). ;it’s ;really hard. .hh you
IE: have to practice a lot, do hard work and er (0.5) err
510 IE: [( ] =
511 IR: [( ) the bar, ( )]
512 IE: = prepare these hundreds many hundreds errr hours and .hh no
513 IE: free time just >work ‘n work< but (.) the audience ca:in’t
514 IE: see that just ↑they ↓just have see the ↑beauty ↓and er =
515 IR: = "uh huh,?" =
516 IE: = an and (. ) ;laughing ↓and =
517 IR: = "uh huh,?" =
518 IE: = everything what is (.) nice.
519 IE: not what is hard. if they say it. if they say "yes it was ha:rd
520 IE: job it was bad." =
521 IR: = "yeah" =
522 IE: = >he have to say< =
523 IR: = "yeah" =
524 IE: = ↑it was so [ ( ]
525 IR: = ↑but what] about the tragedy of life. (0.3)
526 IR: >in the village.< (. ) =
527 IE: = ↑a:hh. =
528 IR: = ↑n all the songs that come from that. (. ) [cause I know they] =
529 IE: [ma- < ↑ maybe ] =
530 IE: = maybe, maybe this is the point. (. ) so (. ) the- the- the life
531 IE: was so ↑ha:rd and full of tragedy and full of work .hh so the
532 IE: people .hh like just celebrate in the free time. [it was] =
533 IR: = [mmhm, ]
534 IE: = not so many times in the year .hh and they (. ) they was so (.)
535 IE: hard work and they just try to (. ) celebrate and [be ] =
536 IR: = [yah. ]
537 IE: = happ[y and] .hhh forget everything and just [er put their] =
538 IR: = [yep ] [understand, ]
539 IE: = feelings out of them. =
540 IR: = >uh hmm,? uh hmm,?< =
541 IE: = and maybe that’s [the]
542 IR: = [OK ] yep maybe it is,? .hh and the only one
543 IR: I think I have left .hh ahm are- are those political questions.
544 IR: (. ) because (. ) I wondered (. ) .hh because there is a lo:it of
545 IR: documentation. .hh about how .hh er Slovkoncert and the
546 IR: >Ministry of Culture< used to (. ) >keep a very close ↑eye. on
547 IR: different programmes< (. ) and censor,? "I have five minutes
548 IR: heheº =
549 (( Andrej gesticulates at the window))
550 IR: = .hh and censor things,? make sure there was not anything
551 IR: that they didn’t li:ke,? (.) ahmm (.) and so on .hh
552 IR: =d(h)id he have to d(h)eal with th(h)at?º (0.1) did they
553 IR: ever, (.) what was it like for Lúčnica and Professor NosÁI.
554 IR: (0.2) >with this pressure from (. ) Slovkoncert.<
555 IE: err, Slovkoncert doesn’t exist more,? =
IR: = I know, >but I’m talking about during the
557 IR: = communist years.< =
558 IE: = uh huh.=
559 IR: = was it [a pressure]=
560 IE: [ahh, ]
561 IR: = for him? or how did he deal with it.
562 IE: (. ) so ;you ; know generally (. ) that times (. ) was (. )
563 IE: = Further hard< and .hh ahh art was really under pressure.
564 IE: = but (. ) >maybe this was the luck< (. ) for traditional music
565 IE: = that it wasn’t political. .hh and maybe also the government
566 IE: = that time like it because (whole) ideology and nothing,? .hh
567 IE: = but er (. ) >the right way of Professor Nosál was< .hh he never.
568 IE: (. ) never, .hh er (. ) co-operated with political. (. )
569 IE: >till [now. (. ) ] =
570 IR: ["mmmhmm,?" ]
571 IE: = >not just [only in this time,?< ]
572 IR: = >so he stuck to his own artistic vision.<]
573 IE: = yeah. the i just (. ); did ; his ; work (. ) >as good as he
574 IE: = [can,?< ] =
575 IE: = [and they let him. ] =
576 IE: = yes, >and they they< let him,? (. ) >sometimes yes it was
577 IE: = hard time,?< .hh they try to (. ) make push on some things,?
578 IE: = .hh >but he say< (. ) >we just doing our work,? and< er
579 IE: = (. ) you let us do it,? ; or (. ) I (. ) get (. ) out. =
580 IE: = uh huh .hh >s[o you’re] =
581 IE: [( ]
582 IR: = saying that he he< usually he would win.
583 IE: = yah. .hh >but he was also er err anytime principal,? till
584 IE: = [this,? time because< .hh >in last sixteen years was also
585 IE: = er difficult the [Slovak political life,<
586 IR: = ["uh hmm,?" ] =
587 IE: = yes. that’s what I wanted to ask
588 IR: = [you. what happened after that. ]
589 IE: [I w(h)ill without c(h)omplain,? hehe]
590 IE: [hehehe] =
591 IE: [hehehe]
592 IE: = .hh but (. ) he always have the the same er the same er
593 IE: >look on this,?< .hh we are not political,?
594 IE: = [we are ] =
595 IR: ["uh hmm,?"
596 IE: = artist,? and we are doing (. ) our j[ob.:] perfect,] =
597 IR: = [ >so it didn’t]
598 IR: = make any difference.<
599 IE: = and many many years ago (. ) everybody can see
600 IE: = that that it’s good >and it’s good for Slovakia,<
601 IE: = presented as- as er ambassadors of our culture and country,
602 IE: = and it’s right.< .hh and everyone (. ) ministers. prime
IE: minister. and everybody can like it, and say that
604 IE: yes it’s the
605 IR: [uh huh, ? ]
606 IE: = right way, ?< .hh and >;now the< .hh >;now the
607 IE: position of Professor Nosáľ is so so< (. ) so high
608 IE: >you know li< hh li- like (. ) many many years of .hh he
609 IE: is like national hero and =
610 IR: = yep =
611 IE: = you know (this is) er different ( ) because (. ) < these
612 IE: ministers prime minister president, > [.hh ] =
613 IR: [ yep]
614 IE: = like to [sea::t] nearby him >and [watch Lúčnica’s ] =
615 IR: [ yes. ] [of of cour:::se.]
616 IE: = performances, ?< .hh >because they are prou:::d. =
617 IR: = yup. =
618 IE: = ?I: think it’s good, ? [.hh ] because it doesn’t
619 IR: ["y(h)e::p"]
620 IE: matter if it’s left or right [of ] government,?
621 IR: ["uh hmm,?"]
622 IE: .hh but but the- the (. ) the question of culture, (. )
623 IE: should be in the [( ] =
624 IR: [absolutely (. )]
625 IE: = [{
626 IR: [absolutely] .hh and so:::,? (. ) since we joined the EU:::,?
627 IR: (. ) no difference (. ) at all,? does the EU have any (. ) do
628 IR: they attempt to have any say,? in >in cultural expressions
629 IR: of of any of the (. ) member countries,< (. ) the European Union.
630 IE: = yah,? .hh >if we [have< ] =
631 IR: [they have a policy].
632 IE: = uh huh,? =
633 IR: = do they try to (. ) tell you anything? or do they just leave
634 IR: you to do your thing. =
635 IE: = uh huh,? (. ) ;no [!pressure { }]
636 IR: [.hh >cause I ] know I know in some
637 IR: countries it was an issue.<
638 IE: (. ) uh huh,=
639 IR: = yep. .hh [OK.] =
640 IE: [( )]
641 IR: = well .hh you know what,? (. ) >I think we’re d(h)one.< =
642 IE: = [yeh, ? ] =
643 IR: [I really] do::: =
644 IE: = OK. =
645 IR: = ;yeah. (. ) uhhmm =
646 IE: ( ) have a drin::nk and =
647 IR: = all right. (. ) ;thank ;you ;so mu:::ch,?
648 IE: = you’re welcome.