

The Czech opera production of the so called “Pre-Smetanian” era represents a topic quite neglected by music historians. It is therefore the goal of this master’s thesis to repay this debt by showing Kittl’s opera, *Bianca und Giuseppe oder Die Franzosen vor Nizza*, (the libretto, written by Richard Wagner, based on the novel, *Die hohe Braut*, by Heinrich König) as a work of art which illustrates the high quality of the Prague opera scene in the mid-1800s. The core of this thesis consists of a dramaturgical analysis of the final form of the mentioned opera. This analysis advances in three steps. 1. The main idea of König’s novel and its aesthetic are presented in the light of his life. 2. The following chapter concerns Wagner’s libretto. Apart from showing the differences between the novel- and opera aesthetics, the emphasis is on the dramaturgical means which Wagner employs: various usage of the *couleur locale*, ensemble of the *pezzo concertato* type, working with specific time structures in the opera or allegorical usage of the so called – as Frenchmen say – *spectacle d’optique*. 3. The next chapter strives to assess the extent to which Kittl succeeded in expressing Wagner’s intentions or, in another words, the extent to which Wagners’s “poetic intention” (*dichterische Absicht*) came true in Kittls’s music. Kittls’s change of the end of the opera is interpreted here as a solution which to a great extent, shifts Wagner’s original idea of depicting the history as a great force in which the decisive moment ruins the individual fates of opera heroes. This concept is typical for the so called *grand opera*. Wagner knew the aesthetic of this French genre very well and was influenced by it, as is shown in his article, *Über Meyerbeers Hugenotten*, and is not reflected enough in Czech musicology. This article is the subject of a separate chapter. The last chapter of this thesis is focused on the critiques in the press which shed light on a couple of phenomena typical for the 19th century: national striving and the so called *Reminiszenzenjägerei* (reminiscence hunt) among other things.