Dvořák’s Formal Education Outside Music

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The Dvořák literature has little to say on the subject of his education outside the realm of music. Close study of the topic, moreover, reveals that what has been written is often mistaken or at best seriously misleading. This is in part because direct documentation is scarce. My own researches draw on a variety of materials including especially the applicable law regarding elementary education in the Austrian Empire, various studies of the history of education in the Czech lands, the records of the school of St. Mary of the Snows in Prague (some of them previously examined but only cursorily), biographical sketches of Dvořák published during his own lifetime but ignored in most Dvořák literature, and an article published in 1905 on the history of education in Zlonice. My conclusions are many and varied, but the main results may be summarized as follows: 1) A significant strengthening of our conviction that Dvořák was an exceptionally bright and industrious student; 2) On the other hand, a reevaluation of the nature of his non-musical educational curriculum, as having never gone beyond the level offered by an elementary school – a level attained by many of his fellow students before reaching the age of twelve. In particular, the frequent use of the Czech term pokračovací (continuing) to describe Dvořák’s education after leaving Nelahozeves, implying advancement beyond the curriculum of an elementary school, is unfounded and misleading.

Among the many mysteries surrounding the childhood and adolescence of Antonín Dvořák, one of the most bewildering has been his education outside the realm of music. Apart from the lack of any letters or diaries pertaining to Dvořák or his family during his youth, we suffer also from the misfortune that all records in the school at Nelahozeves were destroyed in a fire in 1885. All records from the school at Zlonice from the period when Dvořák lived in that town have also been lost, and the same applies for school records from Böhmisch Kamnitz (Česká Kamenice) with the exception of Dvořák’s own grade report. In efforts to reexamine the popular but misleading image of the adult Dvořák as a naïve rustic with a supreme musical talent but an otherwise limited mental scope, it would be useful to know more about his non-musical education during early life. But the Dvořák literature has very little to say on this subject. The number of years he attended school is left unclear, and there is essentially no discussion of the nature of the curriculum other than to say that the study of the German language was a crucial issue. The surviving grade reports from the last two non-musical schools Dvořák attended – in Böhmisch Kamnitz and Prague – have

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been published, but with little attempt at interpretation. Closer study of the topic, moreover, reveals that what has been written is often mistaken or at best seriously misleading.

Practically all of what has been published about Dvořák’s formal non-musical education is contained in the writings of Jan Miroslav Květ – in his book Mládí Antonína Dvořáka (1943) and in various shorter studies. Květ in turn depends in part on Bohuslav Kalenský, author of the first substantial biographical essay on the composer (1912). Otakar Šourek, in his four-volume study of Dvořák’s life and works, relies in this matter (as on the subject of Dvořák’s childhood in general) almost entirely on Květ and Kalenský. In the 1980s and 1990s the subject of Dvořák’s non-musical education was explored anew by Jarmil Burghauser, primarily as a side issue in his studies devoted to the composer’s early musical training and to refuting the idea that Dvořák completed an apprenticeship in the butcher’s trade. (For complete citations of the above-mentioned literature and all sources to which this article refers, see the ‘List of Sources’ below.)

My own researches draw on a variety of materials in addition to the secondary sources just cited, including especially the law regarding elementary education in the Austrian Empire applicable during Dvořák’s childhood, various old and new studies of the history of education in the Czech lands, the preserved records of the school of St. Mary of the Snows in Prague (some of them already examined by Květ but only cursorily), biographical sketches of Dvořák published during his own lifetime but not used by Kalenský, Květ, or Šourek, and an extensive article published in 1905 by Jan Lipovský, school director at Zlonice, on the history of education in that town. My conclusions are many and varied, but the main results may be summarized as follows:

1) A significant strengthening of our conviction that Dvořák was an exceptionally bright and industrious student.

2) On the other hand, a reevaluation of the nature of his non-musical educational curriculum, as having never gone beyond the level offered by an elementary school – a level attained by many of his fellow students before reaching the age of twelve. In particular, the frequent use of the Czech term pokračovací (continuing) to describe Dvořák’s education after leaving Nelahozeves, implying advancement beyond the curriculum of an elementary school, is unfounded and misleading.

**Nelahozeves: Determining the Years of Dvořák’s School Attendance**

One issue on which there is relatively little doubt, and concerning which the information given by Šourek is in all probability correct, is the time period during which Dvořák attended school in his native village of Nelahozeves. However, neither Šourek nor his predecessors provide much documentation for their conclusions, and, as we shall see, the documentation that can be mustered is by no means unequivocal. Indeed, conflicting interpretations have appeared in print.

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2 Many of Květ’s findings are incorporated in the third edition (1954) of Šourek’s first volume, which has expanded coverage of Dvořák’s youth in comparison with the earlier editions.
as recently as 1994–1995. In cases like these it is possible that some day evidence will emerge that occasions a serious reevaluation of our conclusions, and it will be important to know what the basis was for having reached those conclusions. Therefore the matter deserves a closer look.

Concerning the date when Dvořák started school attendance, Kalenský (p. 9) gives the year incorrectly as 1849 (on what basis we don’t know), while all other sources before Šourek, including Květ, pass over the matter without comment. This is the one instance where Šourek (Vol. 1, p. 16) added to our knowledge about Dvořák’s non-musical education, by deducing the year in which he must have begun school attendance based on common practice:

‘[… ] Dvořák začal jako školák s vlastní povinnou návštěvou školní, což podle zvyklostí bylo nepochybně v jeho šestém roce, tedy na podzim roku 1847.’

The most authoritative basis for Šourek’s deduction is a comprehensive law concerning elementary education in the public schools in the Austrian Empire, proclaimed by Emperor Franz I in 1805. All provisions pertinent to the period of Dvořák’s childhood may be found in a book whose title is the title of the law, *Politische Verfassung der deutschen Volkschulen für die k.k. österreichischen Provinzen mit Ausnahme von Ungarn, Lombardie, Venedig und Dalmatien* (Political System of the German [= Elementary] Schools for the Imperial-Royal Austrian Provinces with the Exception of Hungary, Lombardy, Venice, and Dalmatia). This book presents the full original text of the law along with many subsequent revisions, each revision provided with a date; presumably these are all the revisions that were in effect at the time of the book’s publication. We shall use the edition of 1859. *Politische Verfassung* will be the basis for many conclusions in the ensuing discussion, including conclusions regarding issues where there has been much greater confusion than with the years of Dvořák’s school attendance in Nelahozeves, which is our present question.

Unfortunately much of the terminology of *Politische Verfassung* is difficult for us to interpret. No doubt this is partly because many key issues were regarded as so obvious that they required no explanation; alas this is no longer true for us today, looking back after 150 years of educational reform. A further difficulty in unraveling some of the terminological confusion is that of correlating the German law with interpretations of it expressed in Czech. In these matters we shall be helped by Czech studies of educational history in the Czech lands, especially those by Jan Šafránek and Václav Müller, published around the end of the nineteenth century and thus serving as a chronological intermediary to our own modern point of view. These studies consist to a large extent of Czech paraphrases of the law. Since, however, these paraphrases are

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3 In one of Jarmil Burghauser’s studies, but probably through no fault of his own. In *The Beginnings of Dvořák’s Musical Education*, p. 38, note 22, we find: ‘The obligatory attendance was from a child’s seventh to thirteenth birthdays inclusive.’ It should be from the sixth to the twelfth. This error resulted no doubt during the translation into English of Burghauser’s Czech wording, derived from Šafránek’s *Vývoj*, p. 49–50, which is ambiguous as is also the original German of the school law. The same footnote has in its next sentence what I assume to be a typographical error, referring to ‘five years of basic school’; the number should be six.

4 ‘Dvořák undoubtedly began his obligatory school attendance at the age of six as was customary, thus in the autumn of 1847.’
not always correct, we shall need to make constant reference to the original German.

The confusion begins with the title of the law, in the phrase _deutsche Volksschulen_. This must be understood as meaning ‘elementary schools’, i.e., basic, low-level schools, whatever the language of instruction. Müller (page 12n) explains in connection with the earlier Austrian school law of 1774, also referring to German schools, that the law presumed the language of instruction in all schools to be German, even though this was not the case. In other passages of the law we find that the meaning of the term _deutsch_ in and of itself has more to do with the level of the school than the nationality or language. For instance, the title of the law’s sixth _Abschnitt_ (section – p. 46, Article 63) is: _Verbindung der deutschen Schulen unter sich, und mit den höhern Lehranstalten_ (relations of the German schools among themselves and with the higher educational institutions). These higher institutions were primarily the gymnasiums. On p. 49, Article 73, the higher schools are called _lateinische Schulen_ , reflecting the fact that Latin was among the main subjects taught there. (Michail Kuzmin, pp. 56–57, tells us that in the gymnasium Latin had even been the language of instruction until 1781.)

As we shall see, comparison of the known facts about Dvořák’s education with the provisions of this law shows remarkable conformity – a testimony to the strong centralized administration of the Habsburg Monarchy. That indeed this law regulated elementary education in the Czech lands to an amazing level of detail is confirmed by the constant reference to _Politische Verfassung_ in the older Czech studies of educational history.

Regarding the date when Dvořák should have started school attendance, the relevant passage of the law is found in its Article 301 on p. 164:

‘Es sollen alle Kinder, Mädchen und Knaben, bemittelte und arme, vom Antritte des 6ten bis zur Vollendung des 12ten Jahres, in die Schule gehen.’

5 Literally: ‘All children, girls and boys, of means and poor, are to attend school from the beginning of the sixth year until the completion of the twelfth year.’

The expression _vom Antritte des 6ten [...] Jahres_ is unfortunately quite ambiguous in meaning. Taken literally, it would mean from the beginning of the sixth year of life, which means starting with the fifth birthday. We shall see later, in connection with age definitions for _Wiederholungs-Unterricht_ (review instruction) to be attended following completion of regular school attendance, that such an interpretation cannot be easily ruled out. But here, evidently, that is not the intended meaning. In the table following p. 164, _Beschreibungsbuch der Schulfähigen Kinder_ (Description of Children Eligible for School), the youngest children shown are _sechsjährige Kinder_ (six-year-old children). Also, the provisions regarding _Wiederholungs-Unterricht_ (p. 172, amendment to Article 311) use the following wording in reference to exceptional cases where children started school late: _die Kinder, welche älter als sechs Jahre in der Schule ein- [...] treten_ (the children who entered school when more than six years old). A further clue lies in the discussion of _Kinderbewahr-Anstalten_ for pre-schoolers (p. 12, amendment to Article 16), which are not allowed to enroll students _über fünf Jahre alt_ (more than five years old) – presumably because they should be attending regular school.

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5 Literally: ‘All children, girls and boys, of means and poor, are to attend school from the beginning of the sixth year until the completion of the twelfth year.’
As a specific example showing the normal starting age for school attendance, we may cite the records of the first class of the school of St. Mary of the Snows in Prague for the Fall 1857 semester (when Dvořák enrolled there in the fourth class). The first class shows an age range of several years, up to 9, evidently because students normally remained in this class for more than one year, and doubtless conditioned also by the fact that some took longer to graduate from it than others. Of interest to us here is the bottom of the range: of 114 students in all, only three are younger than 6 years old: two 5 1/2 and one 5. On the other hand 50 (approximately half of the class) are listed as 6 or 6 1/2 years old. Clearly, at this school 6 was the normal starting age.

From all these facts it is evident that *vom Antritt des 6ten Jahres* in the passage of the law quoted above means ‘from reaching the age of six’. This agrees also with the various studies of the history of education in the Czech lands.

An amendment to the law (to Article 306 on page 166) addresses the question of a child who reached the age of six during a school year (*welches das 6te Jahr unter dem Schul-Kurse antritt*), saying the child could wait to enroll until the beginning of the next school year. In all probability, however, this was not Dvořák’s case. The definition of the school year is addressed in Articles 77–79 and pertinent amendments (p. 52). At *Trivialschulen auf dem Lande* (Trivium schools in rural areas – see below), which would include the school in Nelahozeves, the beginning of the school year could vary from place to place, but the range of possibilities based on specifications for other types of schools would place it almost surely after Dvořák’s birthday on 8 September; for the *Hauptschulen* (main schools – the other most common type of elementary school), it was fixed at 1 October. Thus we can conclude with some measure of confidence that Dvořák should have begun school within a few weeks after his birthday on 8 September 1847, when he reached the age of six.

That the little Antonín would not have complied with this provision of the law is highly unlikely. On pages 164 through 170 we find strict measures for enforcing the rule on school attendance. It is true that an amendment of 1838 (page 172) to the regulations for the *Wiederholungs-Unterricht* provides for students who (for unspecified reasons) began school later than the age of six and therefore finished their required attendance later than normal. But such cases appear to have been rare. By way of example we have statistics for school attendance in Zlonice provided by Lipovský (p. 78). For 1846, Lipovský’s chart shows 232 children as legally obligated to attend school, and the same number actually attending. The next year given is 1856, in which we find 213 obligated to attend and 210 actually attending.

According to Müller (p. 17), children were excused from the requirement to attend school if they obtained private instruction instead. But we may safely assume that Dvořák’s family could not have afforded this.

Our next task is to interpret the date when required school attendance was supposed to be completed. In the words of the law already quoted above, students were to attend *bis zur Vollendung des 12ten Jahres* (until completion of the age of twelve). Here, if the meaning of *des 12ten Jahres* is analogous to that of *des 6ten [...] Jahres* in the specification of the starting age (*vom Antritt des 6ten – from entry into the sixth year or, as we have seen, attaining the age of six*), we shall
have to reach the surprising conclusion that Vollendung has the same meaning in this context as Antritt: namely ‘attaining’. Thus students were required to attend from the time they attained the age of six until the time they attained the age of twelve. Amazingly, at no point in the law is there an explicit statement of how many years a student was supposed to attend, which would of course help us in this matter. However, from various studies of education in the Czech lands, and specifically from the tables given by Lipovský (p. 78) where he provides the attendance figures just mentioned, we can see that the requirement must have been six years. The table of Schulfähigen Kinder (children eligible for school) following p. 164 in Politische Verfassung may in this case be misleading, listing seven age categories from Sechsjährige to Zwölfjährige. The Zwölfjährige, however, are evidently included only because of the fact, mentioned above, that a student whose birthday fell during the school year would wait to enroll until the beginning of the next school year, thus turning twelve during the last year of attendance. The provisions for Wiederholungs-Unterricht (p. 172) are again of help here, implying that students who älter als zwölf Jahre aus die Schule treten (leave school after reaching the age of twelve) are a special case.

In the case of Dvořák, our conviction that he attended school in Nelahozeves continually through the school year ending in 1853 (after which, in September, he turned twelve), and that he thereby completed the required six years of attendance, gains support, albeit rather shaky in itself, from our knowledge that upon moving to Zlonice that year\(^6\) he entered the ‘third class’. Politische Verfassung (p. 46) has a specific provision that a student could proceed from a Trivialschule into the Dritte Classe of a Hauptschule, and evidently (though not explicitly) this means after completing the full course of instruction at a Trivialschule. (This passage of the law is quoted below under the discussion of Zlonice.) One problem here is that we are not entirely sure that the school in Zlonice qualified as a Hauptschule (see below), but it seems fairly clear in any case that its third class was in the nature of the third class at a Hauptschule.

Turning our attention now to the Dvořák literature, we find in the biographical sketches published during his lifetime practically nothing concerning his school attendance in Nelahozeves other than that he studied music with the schoolteacher Josef Spitz. But the biographical sketch by Eduard Moučka from 1885 does confirm (on p. 507) that Dvořák attended school there until reaching the age of twelve (if we interpret his German similarly to the way we interpreted the law): ‘Bis zu seinem 12. Jahre besuchte er die dortige Schule [in Nelahozeves].’ (‘Until reaching the age of twelve he attended the school there.’)

In Kalenský’s essay we have a valuable statement (unfortunately surviving only through its quotation in the essay) by a school director as of about 1900, confirming our interpretation of the legal age for completion of required school attendance and also the fact that the law should have applied to Dvořák. The statement is by František Heveroch, director of the school at Zlonice from 1879 to 1904 – a crucial character in our investigation to whom we shall refer again later at greater length. Heveroch wrote a letter to Kalenský which is quoted in the biographical essay on p. 14, in part as follows:

\(^{6}\) Not in 1854 as is commonly stated; see Note 20.
‘[…] roku 1853 dosáhl Dvořák již dvanácti let a dle tehdejších zákonů školních nebyl povinen navštěovovat školu všední, Wochentagsschule, ale toliko školu nedělní, “opakovací hodiny”.’7

From this period of Dvořák’s life there is just one document surviving that actually bears his name. It strongly suggests that Dvořák attended the school in Nelahozeves into the year 1853 and also (less strongly) that he thereby finished his required school attendance. This document is a handsomely-bound little book, Nábožný křesťan (The Pious Christian) by Prince Alexander von Hohenlohe, translated from the original German into Czech. Embossed on the leather cover is ‘Odměna pilnosti [= reward for diligence] 1852 F. K. z Lobkowitz’ and the title page bears the hand-written annotation ‘Dvořák Antonín 1853’. This book is first mentioned in the literature in Květ’s article Výuční list Antonína Dvořáka of 1937 (p. 138), as being already deposited with the Dvořák Museum in Prague (in whose possession it remains today, currently on display at the museum’s branch in Nelahozeves). Květ does not indicate how or by whom it was preserved. He interprets the book plausibly as a gift that Dvořák received from Prince Lobkowicz (lord of Nelahozeves).8 He further states that it was received ‘při odchodu ze školy’ (upon leaving school), observing that ‘docházka tehdy končila v 12 letech’ (attendance ended at the age of twelve at that time). In Mládí (2nd ed., p. 40) he embellishes this interpretation by adding that Dvořák received the book ‘na obvyklé školní slavnosti […]’ (at the customary school ceremony).

The bestowal of a gift of this type – of a religious character and evidently on a very dignified level – fits very well with provisions of Politische Verfassung on pages 56 and 58–59:

§ 89

Damit sowohl die Obrigkeiten […], als auch die Einwohner jedes Ortes, vorzüglich die Ältern der Schulkinder, von der Nützlichkeit der Lehrgegenstände, von der Zweckmäßigkeit der Lehrart, von dem Fortgange der Schüler, von der Geschicklichkeit und Arbeitsamkeit des Lehrers immer mehr überzeugt, Lehrer und Schüler zum Fleiße angespornt, […] sind in allen deutschen Schulen halbjährig öffentliche Prüfungen anzustellen. […]

§ 94

[…] Der Beschluß der Prüfung ist mit dem Ablesen der Namen solcher Schüler zu machen, welche sich durch Fleiß, Fortgang und Sittsamkeit vor Andern ausgezeichnet haben.

7 ‘[…] by 1853 Dvořák had reached the age of twelve and, according to the school laws of the time, was not required to attend school on weekdays, Wochentagsschule, but only the “review lessons” on Sundays.’ Kalenský does not date this letter, but apparently it was a response to an inquiry he made while working on his biographical essay, ca. 1900. The question arises as to why Kalenský did not go directly to Dvořák for his information. See Kalenský in the List of Sources below.

8 Prince (Kniže) Ferdinand Josef Lobkowicz (1797–1868), whose domain included Nelahozeves according to Karel Jeřábek (Lobkowicz family archivist) in his ‘Nelahozeves’, p. 71. The initial ‘K’ in the name ‘F. K. z Lobkowitz’ embossed on the book does not correspond to any name for this person that I could find in published sources, but Květ on MS p. 59 of Mládí, 3rd ed. does call him ‘Ferdinand Josef Jan Karel’, based apparently on information in the Lobkowicz archives. Květ supposes that the name ‘Antonín Dvořák’ was written on the book by the eleven-year old future composer himself, but Jarmil Burghauser has suggested it was more likely a school official or possibly the composer’s mother (Chlapecká léta, pp. 44–45).
We must note that such gifts were bestowed not only when a student finished school, but in every semester. If for some reason Dvořák started school later than the fall of 1847 (if, say, we are wrong about when the school year began at Nelahozeves, or if for some reason he did not conform to the legal norm) then he may have received this reward in 1853 without yet having finished his required school attendance. This would agree with the statement by Friedrich Hlaváč on pp. 31–32 of his biographical sketch of the composer from 1890, that Dvořák went to Zlonice ‘damit er dort seine Schulbildung vollende’ (in order to complete his school education there), and by Karel Stecker on p. 267 of his entry for the composer in Otto’s encyclopedia of 1894, that he was sent to Zlonice ‘k další povinné návštěvě školy’ (for continued obligatory school attendance). My guess, however, is that Stecker, whose essay is mostly or entirely derived from previous published sources, based his statement on a faulty assumption about Hlaváč’s meaning. Vollendung of school education might seem to suggest reaching some sort of prescribed endpoint, but on the other hand it may only mean that Dvořák and/or his family felt his education up to that point to be insufficient.

In balance, it seems likely that Květ’s statement is correct, and that Dvořák’s receipt of the book signified completion of his required six years of school attendance. If not, one might expect some other, perhaps even more substantial, reward to have survived from the time that Dvořák did indeed finish his requirements. But nothing of this kind has surfaced.

To summarize the above deliberations, it is reasonably certain that Dvořák attended school in Nelahozeves for six years, from the fall of 1847 to the summer of 1853, thereby completing his required six years of school attendance. We can now proceed to a consideration of the nature of the schooling he received there and how well he succeeded – topics that have received no serious discussion in published literature.

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9 Article 89: In order for the authorities as well as the residents of each community and especially the parents of the schoolchildren to be convinced more and more of the usefulness of the subjects of instruction, the expedience of the manner of instruction, the progress of the pupils, the skill and diligence of the teacher, [and] to spur the teachers and pupils to diligence […], in all the German [= elementary] schools half-year public examinations are to be held. […] 

Article 94: The examination is to end with a reading of the names of those pupils who have distinguished themselves above the others through diligence, progress, and good conduct.

Article 95: Premiums will be distributed as an encouragement to the youth; therefore it must be kept in mind above all that this should not be some inappropriate little book or pictures, and that they should be distributed to the most worthy pupils, because otherwise the purpose of this would be thwarted in one way or another. [Amendment of 1822 and 1833]: The consistories of the bishoprics are to watch over the purposefulness and admissibility of the premiums to be distributed to the elementary schools.
Dvořák’s Achievements as a Student in Nelahozeves and the Nature of the Curriculum There

The value to us of the book Dvořák received in 1853 actually pertains less to the question of when he finished required attendance than it does to the issue of how well he did in school: in the absence of any grade reports, it provides testimony that is quite important. As stated on its cover, it was a ‘reward for diligence’ – but based on this information alone we might suppose every student who completed the required years of attendance might have received such a book. It was Jarmil Burghauser who first suggested (Chlapecká léta, p. 89) that only the best students received such a reward, and my own researches have confirmed that he was right. Dr. Anna Holendová of the Komenský Pedagogical Museum in Prague, whom I heartily thank for spending several hours with me on matters concerning Dvořák’s school education, agreed with this notion. And the law in this regard, already quoted above, is quite clear. Such gifts ‘den würdigsten Schülern zu Theil werden, weil sonst […] der Zweck derselben vereitelt würde’. The implication is that these were the students who according to Article 94 had their names read aloud, because they ‘sich durch Fleiß, Fortgang und Sittsamkeit vor Andern ausgezeichnet haben.’

Dvořák, then, within the pool of students in the village school at Nelahozeves, was evidently outstanding in his mastery of the subject matter. But what was this subject matter? Here the school law and general histories of education in the Czech lands can tell us a lot.

As mentioned above, the school in Nelahozeves would have been considered a Trivialschule, which was one of several parallel types of public elementary schools in the Austrian Empire at the time. The other types, of which the most important was the Hauptschule, existed primarily in large towns or cities, not villages like Nelahozeves (Politische Verfassung pp. 12, 14, 16–17).

The name Trivialschule refers to the limitation of instruction essentially to the three subjects of the Trivium – reading, writing, and arithmetic. (In the present study the word Trivium will always be written in italics with a capital ‘T’ to avoid confusion with the word ‘trivium’ as normally used in English, meaning grammar, rhetoric, and logic.) We shall see, however, that the Hauptschulen too remained quite close to the basic subjects of the Trivium. Religious instruction was also given as a matter of course in all types of elementary schools, and in most cases the local priest was responsible for overall supervision of the schools; students were required to attend church services every day (Politische Verfassung p. 5, Article 1, and p. 54, amendment to Article 82).

The basic description of the Trivialschulen in the law (pp. 18–19) is one that contributes to our understanding not only of Dvořák’s education, but of the society in which he grew up:

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10 p. 59, Article 95. See previous note.
11 See note 9.
§ 27
Kinder der Trivialschulen gehören zu derjenigen nützlichen Classe der Menschen in Städten und auf dem Lande, welche ihren Unterhalt beynahe bloß durch Anstrengung ihrer physischen Kräfte erwerben, entweder durch Hervorbringung oder Bearbeitung oder den ersten Umfaß der Natur-Produkte.

§ 28
Da es nun alle Mahl ein Hauptfehler der Volksbildung ist, wenn sie einseitig auf die Bildung einer einzigen Seelenkraft hinausgehet, oder wenn sie bey der übereinstimmenden Ausbildung aller Seelenkräfte nicht auf das Bedürfnis der Classe, die sie bearbeitet und unterrichtet, Rücksicht nimmt, sondern jeder Classe alles Wissenswürdige angemessen glaubt, jeder Classe die nähmlichen Empfindungen beybringen, und jede Classe durch die nähmlichen Vorstellungen determiniren will; so ist in Trivialschulen dahin zu arbeiten, daß darin den Kindern die geoffenebarte Religion Jesu Christi gut und herzeindringlich gelehrte werde, und daß sie über die Dinge, mit welchen sie umgeben, und über die Verhältnisse, in denen sie sich befinden, und während ihres Lebens befinden werden, die richtigen Anweisungen bekommen, um die Dinge und Verhältnisse so zu benützen, wie es die christliche Sittenlehre vorschreibt. Lesen, Schreiben und Rechnen sind außer der Religionslehre die einzigen eigentlichen Schul-Lehrgegenstände, deren sie als Mittel zu ihren Zwecken bedürfen, zu denen nur noch eine practische Anweisung, einige Aufsätze zu machen, hinzukommen darf.12

Worthy of note is that this definition of the Trivialschulen, based on inherited status according to social class, was still in effect after the Revolution of 1848.

The language of instruction in the Trivialschulen was the native language of the students attending (Šafránek, Vývoj, p. 9), which in Nelahozeves was Czech.13 Whether the students may have been given any kind of introduction to German grammar we don’t know. Šafránek tells us (Vývoj, pp. 72–73) that a commonly-used textbook for reading, intended for village schools in the Czech lands and published in 1837, had two parts: the first, which was the same as for schools in the towns and cities, had German on the left pages and Czech on the right, and was devoted to religious instruction. The second, in Czech only, had various readings
in which religious matters again played a role, along with matters pertaining to rural life (especially farming) as well as explanations of the responsibilities of a poddaný (subject) to his or her lord.

According to various studies of Czech schools of the times, and also in accord with what the law implies, Trivialschulen had either one or two classes, meaning groups of students that met together or physical classroom spaces (Kuzmin, p. 55; Müller, p. 16.) In Nelahozeves during Dvořák’s childhood, according to Kalenský (p. 9) and also according to Josef Molík (former school director in Nelahozeves) in his Škola v Nelahozevsi (p. 47), there was only one classroom. For Trivialschulen in general it was specified that instruction be given every morning and afternoon except for Sunday and except for Wednesday and Saturday aftersoons (Politische Verfassung pp. 54–55, Article 83). However, the law provided that students should be divided into two groups, one for beginners and one for more advanced students, and that, where it was not possible for them both to meet through the whole day, one group should meet only in the mornings and the other only in the afternoons (pp. 177–78, Article 313–317). Most likely this was the case in Nelahozeves, since there was only one classroom. Which group met in the mornings and which in the afternoons varied according to local needs; we have no information as to the disposition in Nelahozeves.

From pp. 1–2 of the Stundenabtheilung (distribution of hours) at the rear of Politische Verfassung, we learn that ‘In Landschulen, wo halbtägiges Schulgehen ist, lernt die Classe der größeren Schüler täglich [Monday through Saturday] 3 Stunden, die Classe der kleineren täglich [Monday through Friday] 2 Stunden’. This means that Dvořák’s schooling in Nelahozeves fell far short of what we would consider full-time, and the extent of his learning had to be much more restricted than it would have been in a Hauptschule. For example the table for Stundenvertheilung for students in the Erste Classe at a Hauptschule (p. 5 at the rear of the book) shows 22 hours of instruction per week – more than double what their counterparts beginning school at Nelahozeves received according to the chart. This was one of the disadvantages of growing up in a village having only a one-room Trivialschule, and of not being able to afford private instruction.

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14 Molík states that the school had only one classroom until 1880. The school was located in the building now occupied by the Nelahozeves municipal offices, rebuilt after the fire in 1885. Kalenský says it originally had only one level. The photograph reproduced in Květ’s Mládí, 2nd ed. opposite p. 36 is, according to its copy currently found in the village chronicle, from 1894; since that time the building at the right has been torn down, whereas the one at the left, a distillery during Dvořák’s childhood, still stands.

15 The law specifies that students belong to the first of the two Abtheilungen (divisions) for two years. In describing the second division it refers to a first year and then in den folgenden Jahren (‘in the succeeding years’). Šafránek (Vývoj, p. 50) specifies the total number of years in the second division as four, perhaps simply by subtraction from the six years of required attendance.

16 ‘In schools in rural areas where school attendance is for half a day, the older students’ class meets three hours a day [Monday through Saturday] and the younger students’ class two hours [Monday through Friday].’
Helping the Father in the Butcher's Business in Nelahozeves

We cannot pass on from Dvořák’s non-musical education in Nelahozeves without referring to what has sometimes been considered an important aspect of that education, albeit non-academic. Various early sources refer to the tradition that a son would follow in his father’s profession (though this tradition could not have been iron-clad: the composer’s grandfather did not follow after his own father when, per Květ’s *Mládí*, 2nd ed., p. 15, he became a butcher and tavern-keeper around 1790). These sources tell how the young Antonín had to help his father in the butcher’s business already as a young boy. As we can see from our discussion of hours of school instruction, he would have had considerable time to do this.

The composer himself reportedly told of this type of work during a train ride through his native region in 1884 with his musician-journalist friend Václav Juda Novotný, who published a well-known record of Dvořák’s observations in 1911:

‘Tam pohleďte! Chvatěruby, Lobeč, Lobeček, Hleďseby, Všestudy a Mlčechvosty, v tato místa jsem chodil s otcem kupovat všelijaký ten boží dobyteček a když mi otec svěřil některý kus, jenž mi ve své bujnosti buď utekl nebo mne bez dlouhých okolků vtáhl do rybníka, nebyla to situace právě závidění hodná.’

In 1934–1935 Jaroslav Lambl, former director of the domain of Nelahozeves, published a story pertaining to Nelahozeves (*Ze vzpomínek*, p. 63) that may be the particular incident Dvořák had in mind when speaking to Novotný. Lambl’s account is based on the composer’s own narration during a visit to Vysoká by Lambl and others in 1901. However Květ in *Mládí*, 2nd ed., p. 42, notes that Lambl gives the undoubtedly erroneous figure of 16 for Dvořák’s age at the time of the event, and points out that ‘v šestnácti letech už byl Dvořák v Zlonicích’ (by the time Dvořák was sixteen he was in Zlonice). Actually, he was already in Prague! Květ supposes that Lambl’s story is just a different version of one told by Josef Kratina (*Proč*, pp. 25–26) which took place near Zlonice.

I should like to present here three bits of evidence that will incline us to think the story told by Lambl indeed took place during the boy’s Nelahozeves years. First, there is a source unknown to Květ that confirms the boy gave his father significant help in the butcher’s business already at that early age. This source is the composer’s interview with *The Sunday Times* of London from 1885, which says:

‘[…] I learned as a boy to buy, kill, and cut up the sheep and oxen. At the same time I attended the village school […]’

The context here leaves no doubt that the village school is the one in Nelahozeves.

The second point is that Květ fails to mention another version of the story Dvořák allegedly told at Vysoká, published by Lambl in 1941 in his *Jak nesla* (pp. 16–17). Here Lambl changed Dvořák’s age from 16 to 14. This still does not

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17 *S Dvořákem v Anglii*, p. 445. ‘Look there! Chvatěruby, Lobeč, Lobeček, Hleďseby, Všestudy, a Mlčechvosty [villages along the train route, all within 6 km. in a straight line from Nelahozeves]. To those places I used to go with father to buy all manner of God’s beasts, and when father entrusted me with some rambunctious animal that either ran away or dragged me unceremoniously into a pond, that wasn’t exactly an enviable situation.’
place it within the Nelahozeves period, but the change suggests that Lambl’s information regarding the age is not to be taken too seriously. This second version differs in a number of other details from the first, but is obviously the same story and clearly pertains to the Nelahozeves area. Both versions, it should be noted, present the narration, including the figure for Dvořák’s age, as a quotation of the composer’s own words, which in view of the discrepancies between the two indicates that Lambl is taking considerable license. (Novotný’s report is also suspect in this regard, but he at least was a journalist and probably took notes during the train ride with Dvořák.)

The third and most important piece of evidence is the existence of yet another version of Lambl’s story, unpublished until now, in a typescript deposited in the holdings of the former Dvořák museum of Kralupy (now in Mělník), titled Vzpomínka na zájezd [...], dated 1930 and signed by Lambl. Here the story is less embellished, and not presented as a quotation of Dvořák’s words. There is no contradiction between the location and the age given, because the age is omitted. All these factors, together with the chronological priority in relation to the two published versions, incline one to think this typescript version is the most authentic of the three. It reads as follows:

'Leč jaké bylo mé překvapení, když jsme ani o hudbu nezavadili, nýbrž se bavili posloucháním vypravování Mistra o dobách jeho mládí, kdy ještě jako učedník řeznický vodil s otcem telátka a jalovičky z trhu i na trh a kdy přihodilo se mu právě u nelahozevského ovčína, že se mu jalovice, jejíž provaz měl ovinutý kol ruky, — splašila a hezkých pár sáhů po zemi vlekla. Na štěstí — až na několik odřenin — vše dobře dopadlo.'

The term *učedník* (which disappears in the published versions), meaning something like ‘apprentice’, must be understood here only in the sense that the father was showing the boy how to do some things, not that the boy was engaged in some kind of formal training. Jarmil Burghauser in *K jedné* has argued convincingly that Dvořák never underwent any systematic training in the butcher’s trade, and in particular proved that the certificate he supposedly received upon completion of an apprenticeship in this trade at Zlonice is a forgery. (In *Chlapecká léta*, p. 55n, Burghauser reveals his later discovery that the forgery was perpetrated as a student prank, after Dvořák’s death.)

But let us return to our account of Dvořák’s academic education. From the above deliberations we can see that the quantity and probably the quality of training he received at the village school was pitiful, but that within the limited circumstances he did very well. And he evidently completed there his six years of required regular school attendance. We now can proceed to the next stage.

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18. ‘But how surprised I was when we didn’t even touch upon the subject of music, but rather were entertained by listening to the master’s stories about the times of his youth, when while still learning the butcher’s trade he and his father used to lead calves and heifers from the market and to the market, and when once by the sheep pen in Nelahozeves it happened that a heifer whose leash he had wrapped around his hand took fright and dragged him a good several yards along the ground. Fortunately everything turned out well apart from a few scrapes.’
Following the completion of his obligatory six years in school, Dvořák would no longer have been required to attend school on the week days; he could have elected to attend only the *Wiederholungs-Unterricht* (review instruction) on afternoons of Sundays and holidays, until reaching the age of fifteen. This is the requirement for *opakováčí hodiny* to which František Heveroch referred in the letter cited above. In this case the law is clear about the length of time students had to attend, namely three years (p. 172, amendment to Article 311). The specification of the ages of children attending, however, is again confusing: required to attend are those ‘welche der Elementar-Schule entwachsen sind, nähmlich von dem Anfange des 13. bis zur Vollendung des 15ten Jahres’ (who have matured beyond the age of attendance at elementary school, i.e. from the beginning of the thirteenth year [?] until completing [reaching?] the fifteenth year’) – p. 171, amendment to Article 311. Because this sentence, as well as other passages in the law, strongly implies that attendance at *Wiederholungs-Unterricht* follows directly upon completion of regular school attendance (without a break of a year), and since the requirement of three years’ attendance is explicit, we must interpret the age range as meaning from attaining the age of twelve until attaining the age of fifteen. (The meaning of ‘von dem Anfange des 13. […] Jahres’, then, is not analogous to that of ‘vom Antritte des 6.ten […] Jahres’ in the passage specifying the beginning of regular school attendance discussed above: it means not from attaining the age of thirteen, but rather from the beginning of the thirteenth year of life, i.e. from the twelfth birthday.)

It would have been very natural for the young Dvořák to attend these review lessons, which he probably could have done at the school in Nelahozeves, continuing instruction with his teacher Josef Spitz: the law provided that the review lessons should be given wherever there existed regular school instruction (p. 171, amendment to Article 311). To continue in daily school attendance, on the other hand, meant leaving Nelahozeves for a school with more sophisticated offerings. Another factor to be considered was that the *Wiederholungs-Unterricht* was *unendgeldlich zu geben* (‘given free of charge’ – p. 170, Article 311), whereas for regular school attendance parents had to pay *Schulgeld* (tuition). Exceptions to payment of tuition were made for the poor (p. 177, Article 312): Květ, for example, speaks in his unpublished 3rd edition of *Mládí* of parents in Nelahozeves being unable to pay tuition because of poverty. But such exceptions may not have applied to a student who had already completed the required attendance.

It is a fact of some significance, then, that the future composer (and/or his parents) opted against the *Wiederholungs-Unterricht*. Rather, in 1853 the boy left...
his native village for Zlonice, where he stayed with his uncle Antonín Zdeněk, and there he continued school attendance on an every-day basis. The reasons for his going to Zlonice are given variously by the early sources; there were in fact probably several factors. Most importantly, it seems, Zlonice had a strong reputation in music and offered the boy the possibility to advance his studies in that field. (We do not know whether he and/or his parents were considering the possibility of a career in music already at this time, but clearly his talents were recognized and there was a desire to foster those talents.) Uncle Antonín Zdeněk offered to take the boy in and thus give his parents some financial relief what with their growing family and faltering businesses. Another factor often mentioned in the sources is the possibility of gaining (or improving?) skills in the German language, for at this time in Bohemia anyone who wished to really succeed in life needed a thorough knowledge of that language. Zlonice, unlike Nelahozeves, offered a class taught in German, and it was this class, the ‘third class’, that Dvořák entered.

Another possible reason for the move to Zlonice, not mentioned by any of the sources but quite plausible in light of what we have found out, may have been simply the desire to further the boy’s education in general. His schooling in the one-room Trivialschule at Nelahozeves must have been pitiful indeed; Zlonice, by contrast, offered the possibility to study in what seems to have been a Hauptschule – to escape the confines of a Trivialschule with its low expectations specified for ‘diejenige nützliche Classe der Menschen […] welche ihren Unterhalt beynahe bloß durch Anstrengung ihrer physischen Kräfte erwerben’.

That Dvořák attended the třetí třída (dritter Klasse) in Zlonice we know explicitly from three of the biographical sketches published during his lifetime, by Novotný (Dvořákovo Stabat Mater, p. 7), Zubatý (p. 1–2), and Moučka (p. 507). Kalenský, seemingly unaware of these sources, relies on the above-cited letter from František Heveroch which reaches the same conclusion by deduction. A. K. Lomoz (p. 194) identifies the class Dvořák attended as a německá třída (German class), which must mean the third class because, per Lipovský (p. 70), the third class was the only one taught in German in Zlonice at that time. From Lipovský (p. 71) we know also that during that period the third class was the highest offered at the school in Zlonice, and we can safely conclude that there was only one school there because in his eighteen-page essay on Školství (Schools) in the town he never mentions the possibility of two or more schools operating concurrently. We know furthermore, from Heveroch’s letter cited by Kalenský as well as from Lomoz (referring to the německá třída) and from information given by Květ in his article Školy (p. 10), apparently on the basis of independent sources, that the teacher of the third class was Antonín Liehmann.

20 The information given by Květ and Šourek that Dvořák stayed in Nelahozeves until 1854 has been thoroughly refuted by Jarmil Burghauser, and I have found additional evidence myself to support his arguments. See BEVERIDGE, pp. 399–400.

21 Reasons why the boy moved to Zlonice, or information from which we may deduce such reasons, are given for example in the studies by KALENSKÝ (p. 13), KRIGAR (p. 15), KVĚT in Mládí (2nd ed., p. 42), LOMOZ (p. 194), MUSIL (p. 234), and NOVOTNÝ (Dvořákovo Stabat Mater, p. 7), as well as in Dvořák’s interview for the Pall Mall Gazette (p. 415). Květ alone, influenced by the forged apprenticeship certificate, includes study of the butcher’s trade as one of the reasons for the move.

22 See note 12, Article 27.
But what was the nature of this ‘third class’? Unfortunately all records pertaining to the third class in Zlonice from the time of Dvořák’s attendance have been lost. František Heveroch wrote already around 1900 in his letter quoted by Kalenský that ‘Z ní [from Liehmann’s third class] není tu však žádných katalogů aniž záznamů vůbec [...]’.23 And Květ then reports in Mládí (2nd ed., p. 59) that ‘Dnes už není možno nalézt ani výkaz z nedělní opakovací školy, který měl ještě v ruce Heveroch, ani katalogy z německé pobočky [meaning the third class].’24 In his article Výuční list (p. 138n), Květ had stated more broadly: ‘Dnes už jsou zápisy [školního archivu v Zlonicích] z těchto let nezvěstné – aspoň jsem jich nenašel, když jsem před několika léty v Zlonicích po nich pátral.’25

Lomoz referred to ‘zápisníky’ (notes or records) of Liehmann regarding Dvořák’s achievements in school, implying that he had seen these records, though perhaps he had only been told about them. But Květ in Mládí (2nd ed., p. 59) informs us that the records of Liehmann to which Lomoz referred ‘jsou dnes také nezvěstné’ (are now also missing).

Essentially everything that the Dvořák literature has to say about the class Dvořák attended in Zlonice goes back to Kalenský, who in turn quite possibly based all his information on the letter from Heveroch, as we shall see. Kalenský tells us (p. 10) that the third class was a pokračovací třída (‘continuing’ [?] class’). His meaning is unclear. Nowhere in the 1859 edition of Politische Verfassung is there a description of any class of instruction or any school using any word that could be translated as pokračovat.26 The only references to regular school attendance beyond the elementary level are in connection with the Realschulen (lying somewhere between elementary schools and secondary schools) and the gymnasia; neither of these existed in Zlonice.

In Jan Šafránek’s detailed chronological survey of the history of Czech schools at all levels, Školy české (Vol. 2, p. 281), there is a reference to a pokračovací kurs (continuation course or curriculum) attached to the měšťanské školy (townspeople’s schools) and intended for youths who like Dvořák had already completed their years of required school attendance. Perhaps this is what Kalenský had in mind. But Šafránek describes this course as having been first established in the 1880s; I found no instance of the word pokračovat at any point earlier in his chronological survey.

It may be that pokračovat is Kalenský’s interpretation of the word soukromý (private?) – the term used to describe the third class at Zlonice during Dvořák’s childhood in the letter Kalenský cites (p. 14) from Heveroch. This term has also enjoyed a long life in the Dvořák literature – unfortunately so, because it too is deceptive. Evidently it does not have its ordinary meaning of privátní: Lipovský 70–71 clearly describes the third class as a component of the only school in Zlonice, which was definitely public. Perhaps Heveroch was using the word

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23 But [from Liehmann’s third class] there are no records here at all.
24 ‘Today even the report from the Sunday review school that Heveroch had cannot be found, nor the records of the German branch [i.e. the third class].’ Květ’s reference to this class as a ‘pobočka’ (branch) is misleading – see below.
25 ‘Today the records [of the school archive in Zlonice] from those years are missing – at least I couldn’t find them when I searched for them in Zlonice several years ago.’
26 On p. 172 there is reference to a Fortsetzungs-Classe, but ‘Classe’ here means a ranking according to a student’s merit, not a course of instruction.
soukromý in contradistinction to obecný, which means public but which in the
nineteenth century, in connection with schools, also meant elementary or basic. In
this case it might indeed mean pokračovací in the sense of progressing beyond
elementary school.

Without actually stating that he is doing so, Kalenský does seem to equate
soukromý with pokračovací. At one point in his narrative (p. 14) he uses, like
Heveroch, the term soukromý: 'Liehmann byl [...] správcem třetí, soukromé třídy.'
('Liehmann was the head of the third, private (?) class.') Elsewhere (p. 10) he
substitutes the word pokračovací: '[Dvořák's father told him that] bude navštěvovat
pokračovací, německou třetí třídu' (he would attend the continuing, German third
class). But then again (p. 14), Kalenský leaves us thoroughly confused by describing
the German class in which Liehmann taught (i.e. the third class) as a part of the
obecná škola: '[Liehmann] jmenován byl učitelem v německé třídě obecné školy
zlonické.' (Liehmann was named teacher of the German class of the Zlonice
elementary (?) school.) It is not clear whether obecný here means elementary, or
public, or both.

Dr. Anna Holendová of the Komenský Pedagogical Museum in Prague
confirmed to me that the meaning of soukromý in Heveroch’s letter is unclear, but
suggested that he may indeed have meant pokračovací. (At this point she did not
know that Kalenský had apparently interpreted it that way.) However she also
indicated that, if this was Heveroch’s meaning, he was probably mistaken.
Pokračovací education, she said, would not have been limited to religion and the
Trivium, but rather would have included more specialized subjects like history
and natural science. We have no records of the curriculum in Zlonice, but
Dvořák’s grade reports from the public schools he attended later in Böhmisch
Kamnitz and Prague show that his instruction there was still limited to the
Trivium and religion, and Dr. Holendová thought it unlikely that Dvořák, having
already attended a pokračovací class in Zlonice, would in effect have regressed to
one where only the elementary subjects were taught. (He would have been not
merely repeating subject material but actually moving backwards.)

Alas, besides questioning Heveroch’s meaning, we must also question whether
his testimony is really authoritative. František Heveroch (1843–1923) came to
Zlonice as school director in 1879, twenty-five years after the time of Dvořák’s
stay there. During this quarter-century the school in Zlonice, and the whole system
of education in the Austrian Empire, went through a series of drastic changes.
The use of German as the language of instruction in the third class at Zlonice was
phased out in two stages, in 1863 and 1874. Meanwhile, in the late 1860s, the
requirements of school attendance in the Empire were increased from six to eight
years, and the structure and nomenclature of schools offering the most advanced
education within the basic requirements and beyond was modified. In 1876,
expansion of the student population in Zlonice and environs led to the addition
of a fourth class, initially in space rented within a private home. Starting in 1879,

See MÜLLER, p. 7, and also p. 16 where in the title of the 1805 school law he translates the German
‘Volksschulen’, meaning elementary schools, as ‘obecné školy’. That ‘obecný’ could mean elementary is
also evident from the title of ŠAFRÁNEK’S Vývoj soustavy obecného školství of 1897, which is almost entirely
concerned with elementary education, meaning for our time period education within the six-year minimum
requirement.
just before Heveroch’s arrival, this class was moved to what had been the school
director’s residence. In 1880, after Heveroch’s first year, the school building was
expanded to include a new residence for him and additional class space, whereupon
the school comprised a total of five classes. Then in 1893 a totally new school
building was opened, housing five classes and two pobočky (branches) and in
1894 the old school building was sold into private hands. (All this according to
Lipovský, pp. 70–74, 78.) With these bewildering changes, it is no wonder that the
records of Liehmann’s third class were lost. And it would not be surprising if
Heveroch were unclear in his mind as to the nature of that class.

It is true that Heveroch had some contact directly with Dvořák. A musician
himself, like most Czech school teachers at the time, Heveroch played piano in
1880 in the concert in Zlonice that Dvořák helped organize to raise funds for
a memorial to Liehmann. (Lipovský, p. 80 and Květ, Josef Sedláček, p. 76.) We
may assume that he met Dvořák personally on this occasion, and possibly on
further occasions as well when Dvořák visited Zlonice, but there is no concrete
evidence of this. He evidently did not discuss Dvořák’s school attendance in Zlonice
at any length with the composer, or did not remember the discussion, because in
his letter quoted by Kalenský he had to deduce by a rather convoluted process of
thought even the fact that Dvořák had attended the third class. In summary, since
Heveroch’s characterization of the class is not clear, and since his knowledge of
that class was very indirect at best, we are probably well-advised to dismiss his
account altogether.

Lipovský’s report on the history of education in Zlonice is of little direct help
in this matter, though we may note that his description of the establishment of
the third class (on p. 70) omits any mention of an extension beyond the previous
course of study: ‘r. 1808 rozšířena byla škola zdejší o 3. třídu [...].’ (In 1808 the
school here was expanded to include a third class.)

As though the issue were not already confused enough, Květ in Mládí
(2nd ed., p. 51) introduced yet another term of dubious and misleading meaning
to characterize the third class at Zlonice:

‘Když se začalo roku 1833 učit v nové škole zlonické a byla tam zřízena německá
pobočka [emphasis added] při dvou třídách českých, stal se Liehmann učitelem na
těto pobočce.’

Květ may have gotten the notion that the third class was somehow auxiliary,
as the word pobočka implies, from another misleading statement in the letter from
Heveroch quoted by Kalenský, describing the Zlonice school during Dvořák’s
attendance there as ‘tehdáž dvoutřídní se soukromou třetí třídou německou’ (at
that time a two-class school with a private third class in German). In reality the
third class, as we can see from Lipovský’s general coverage, was an integral part
of the school, and there is no reason to speak of a ‘dvoutřídní škola’ during
Dvořák’s time there.29 Incidentally, the third class was established not in 1833 as

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28 When instruction was begun in the new school in Zlonice in 1833 and a German pobočka (branch)
[emphasis added] was established there in addition to the two Czech classes, Liehmann became teacher
in that branch.

29 Jarmil Burgauser’s The Beginnings unfortunately transmits Heveroch’s statement to the English-
speaking audience with the confusion worsened by the translation, characterizing the third class at
Květ has it here, but in 1808, as seen in the passage just cited from Lipovský, and as Květ himself states correctly in his earlier article Školy (p. 10).

Having now discredited what Heveroch, Kalenský, and Květ said about the nature of the third class, can we say something about it ourselves? We shall start by considering the nature of the school as a whole. Unfortunately none of the Dvořák sources, nor Lipovský’s study, characterizes the school with any term that enables us to correlate it directly with the types of schools described in Politische Verfassung. However it must have been some type of elementary school, if only because it is the only school mentioned in Lipovský’s essay as serving the Zlonice area. And so it should be covered by the provisions of Politische Verfassung.

The only schools described in the law as having as many as three classes are the Hauptschulen and the Realschulen. We can rule out the Realschulen, which definitely existed only in a few towns much larger than Zlonice. The sites of Realschulen in Bohemia are actually listed in Politische Verfassung (p. 17), in amendments to the law. Hauptschulen, too, were normally found in larger towns. Kuzmin, however, states on p. 55 that they could exist ‘ve větších městech a administrativním centrech’ (in larger towns and administrative centers). He is speaking here of circumstances in the late eighteenth century, but this is still relevant because the law of 1805 (p. 16, Article 23) specifies that ‘Hauptschulen haben fortan dort zu bleiben, wo sie bisher eingeführt sind.’ (‘Main schools are to remain in places where they have been established.’) Zlonice certainly qualified as an administrative center, being the seat from which the Kinský family governed several domains. That Hauptschulen could in some cases exist in relatively rural areas is implied in the very first paragraph of the law, stating that the local priest would have direct supervision over all Trivialschulen and ‘auf dem Lande auch über jede Hauptschule [...]’ (‘in rural areas also over every main school’). (The phrase ‘auf dem Lande’ is used elsewhere in the law to mean rural as opposed to urban). Our conclusion must be that the school in Zlonice was indeed a Hauptschule, or at the very least that its third class was the equivalent of that in a Hauptschule.

For Dvořák to transfer from the Trivialschule in Nelahozeves into a Hauptschule was a significant step indeed. The school in Zlonice surely offered a better quality of education, if only in that it had three classes, as compared with the two Abtheilungen (divisions) sharing one classroom in Nelahozeves; correspondingly, Zlonice had three teachers – Josef Toman, Antonín Liehmann, and Peter Jan Janda – where Nelahozeves had only one.

It is important, however, to realize that a Hauptschule was in essence not a school at a higher level than a Trivialschule, in the sense of a school meant for older children or children starting at a more advanced level. Such a higher-level school would in most instances have been called a gymnasium. Rather, the Hauptschule was a different, and better, type of elementary school. Kuzmin (p. 55) uses the word paralelní (parallel):

‘Zákon [1774] stanovil tři paralelní typy národní [= elementary] školy: na vesničích a malých městech školy trivální jedno- a dvou-třídní, zřizované při farách
a jejich filiálkách; ve větších městech a administrativních centrech troj-čtyřtřídní školy hlavní a v zemských centrech čtyřtřídní školy normální.\textsuperscript{30}

Růžena Váňová puts it this way (p. 33):

‘Je třeba připomenout, že všechny zákonem zřízené školy byly školami elementárními, které měly poskytnout dětem základy vzdělání, a netvořily systém na sebe navazujících škol (i když úroveň poskytovaného vzdělání ani perspektivy absolventů nebyly stejně).’\textsuperscript{31}

Váňová is again referring to schools as established by the earlier educational law of 1774. However this is still applicable to the time of Dvořák’s childhood, because the law of 1805 in force at that time, in describing the basic types of schools (primarily \textit{Trivialschulen} and \textit{Hauptschulen}), leans heavily on the nature of these school types as they already existed.

As observed above, by enrolling in the third class Dvořák was following a path prescribed as a possibility by the school law, namely that a student might proceed from a \textit{Trivialschule}, meaning presumably having completed at that school all six years of required regular school attendance, into the third class of a \textit{Hauptschule}. We know, moreover, that Dvořák was not the only student to enter the third class at Zlonice with this kind of background: the assistant teacher in Zlonice during Dvořák’s residence there, Peter Jan Janda, had attended that class as a sixteen-year old in 1836, having evidently completed his required school attendance previously in Vepřek (Květ, \textit{Školy}, p. 35).

However, the pattern of Dvořák and Janda was evidently not typical: rather, most students at the school in Zlonice had probably been there since the age of six, and may well have completed the third class before the age of twelve. The passage in the law specifying the progression from a \textit{Trivialschule} into the third class of a \textit{Hauptschule} (p. 46) also implies that these two types of schools are both elementary, in contradistinction to the more advanced schools:

\textit{§ 64}

Um den Zweck der deutschen Lehranstalten ganz zu erreichen, müssen dieselben sowohl unter sich als auch mit den höhern Lehranstalten in Verbindung gebracht werden.

\textit{§ 65}

Es ist daher von der Trivialschule der Übertritt in die dritte Classe der Hauptschule. Aus dieser kann der Schüler, welcher sich dem Gymnasial-Studium widmen will, in das Gymnasium, oder falls er noch zu jung dazu wäre, noch in die vierte Classe treten; der nicht Studierende hat den Zutritt zur vierten Classe. Nach

\textsuperscript{30} ‘The law [1774] specified three parallel types of national [= elementary] schools: in the villages and small towns \textit{Trivium} schools with one or two classes established in association with parishes and their affiliates; in larger towns and administrative centers three- and four-class main schools, and in principal cities of provinces normal schools with four classes.’

\textsuperscript{31} ‘One must keep in mind that all the schools established by the law were elementary schools, which were to provide children with the basics of education, and did not form a system of schools following one another (even though the quality of education provided and the prospects of graduates were not the same).’
vollendeter viert der Classe kann der Schüler entweder in das Gymnasium, oder in das geschäftige Leben niederer Gewerbe, oder in die Realschule übergeben.\textsuperscript{32}

Note that the gymnasium – a \textit{höher Lehranstalt} (higher educational institution) – is higher than the third class, and higher even than the fourth (for schools where a fourth class exists). The third and fourth classes, clearly, are still part of the \textit{deutschen Lehranstalten} which, as we noted above, means elementary schools.

Elsewhere, the law clearly implies that it was possible – indeed that it was normal – for a student to complete not only three but all four classes of a \textit{Hauptschule}, if it had that many, before reaching the age of twelve. This may be seen in the provisions requiring attendance at \textit{Wiederholungs-Unterricht} from the ages of twelve through fourteen: an exception to the requirement is made for students having already completed the fourth class with distinction; no mention is made that students at that age would be still attending such a class, nor a third class, nor any regular class in an elementary school (\textit{Politische Verfassung}, p. 172 – amendment of 1834 to Article 311). The following are all the exceptions listed:

\begin{itemize}
  \item a) Knaben, welche an einem Gymnasium studieren;
  \item b) Knaben, welche an einer Hauptschule alle vier Classen vollendet, und in der 4. Classe ein Zeugniß der 1. Fortgangs-Classe erhalten haben;
  \item c) Knaben und Mädchen aus den höheren Ständen, welche fortlaufenden häuslichen Unterricht erhalten.\textsuperscript{33}
\end{itemize}

A source of confusion regarding the meaning of the third and fourth classes is the section of the law mentioned above in connection with Nelahozeves (p. 177–78, Articles 313–315), calling for the division into two \textit{Hälften} (halves) or \textit{Classen} or \textit{Abtheilungen} (divisions). This section follows directly after the description of the six-year attendance requirement, and since the third and fourth classes are not mentioned here, one might get the impression that the six years are to be divided among two classes with the third and fourth classes to be attended later. However, the word \textit{Classe} here as a synonym for \textit{Abtheilung} is not to be equated with the word \textit{Classe} as used elsewhere in the law. We know from various studies of education in the Czech lands that \textit{Trivialschulen} often – in fact, according to Müller (p. 16), usually – had only one \textit{třída} (class). Yet, per this passage of the law, they necessarily had two \textit{Abtheilungen oder Classen}. Furthermore, it is fairly clear that this passage is meant to apply not only to \textit{Trivialschulen} but to

\textsuperscript{32} ‘Article 64: In order for the purpose of the German [= elementary] educational institutions to be fully achieved they must be brought into combination with each other as well as with the higher educational institutions. Article 65: Therefore one can pass from a \textit{Trivium} school into the third class of a main school, from which a student who wants to devote himself to gymnasium studies can pass to the gymnasium or if still too young, can continue into the fourth class; one who does not study [in gymnasium] can enter the fourth class. After completing the fourth class a student can either enroll in a gymnasium or enter the business life of a lower profession, or pass into a \textit{Realschule}.’

\textsuperscript{33} ‘a) boys studying at a gymnasium; b) boys who have completed all four classes in a main school and achieved the 1st Rank of Progress in the fourth class; c) boys and girls from the higher social classes who receive ongoing private tutoring.’ In \textsc{Burghauser’s The Beginnings}, p. 38n, we find entry into the third class listed as one of the standard options to review lessons ‘according to the court decree of 2nd. August 1823’. However, in \textit{Politische Verfassung}, p. 171, we find that this particular decree mentions no options at all, and at no point in the law do we find attendance in the third class listed as an option to review lessons (even if it appears that this was Dvořák’s case!). \textsc{Burghauser’s} original Czech text (\textit{Počátky}) correctly mentions only two basic options: review lessons or entry into a form of higher study.
Hauptschulen, which thus must also be divided into two Abtheilungen oder Classen – despite the fact that they are characterized elsewhere in the same law as having three or four Classen (p. 19, Article 31, and p. 16, Article 23 respectively). Moreover, comparison of the subjects to be taught in the two Abtheilungen oder Classen with sample grade report forms for the Erste Classe through the Vierte Classe in the appendices to Politische Verfassung confirms that the word Classe is being used in a different way: some subjects described as appropriate to the first Abtheilung oder Classe do not appear on the grade reports until the second Classe, and for the second Abtheilung oder Classe not until the third Classe.

All of these deliberations lead us to the conclusion that the third class at Zlonice was almost surely part of an elementary school whose curriculum could be completed within the six years of required school attendance. In all likelihood many or most of its students were younger than Dvořák at the time he enrolled. From the standpoint of a Hauptschule, his attendance there was in a sense remedial, in that it remedied the deficiencies of the primary schooling he had received in Nelahozeves. Though he was evidently one of the best students in Nelahozeves, he surely had not achieved the same level of knowledge and skill as students his age who grew up in Zlonice, who had the benefit of attending a Hauptschule from the start.

Indeed, the entire course of Dvořák’s general education (as opposed to musical education) from this point on would be in a sense remedial. He advanced not to higher levels of schools, but to more and more sophisticated elementary schools. Fortunately, from the schools he attended in Böhmisch Kamnitz and Prague we have far more information than from Zlonice and, as we shall see later, this information when viewed in the context of Dvořák’s overall educational progress abundantly confirms what we have already concluded: that the third class in Zlonice was pokračovací (continuing) only in the sense that it (obviously) followed after the second class of the same school, and that for Dvořák it represented a form of continuation in his education.34

There was one important respect, however, in which for Dvořák the third class at Zlonice represented more than a review of the subjects he had already studied in Nelahozeves, now with greater thoroughness. It also meant coverage of those subjects in the German language. And here it is necessary to stress that German was indeed the language of instruction in the third class at Zlonice. From the Dvořák literature one could get the impression that the third class was a ‘German class’ only in the sense that it taught students how to speak, read and write in German. Thus from Lomoz we have it that:

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34 What is ambiguous and misleading in the original sources often becomes downright wrong in derivative literature, especially if translation to a foreign language is involved, and this unfortunately has been the case in accounts of Dvořák’s childhood, particularly regarding this issue. Thus Klaus Döge, in his Dvořák: Leben, Werke, Dokumente of 1991 – the best German biography of the composer – speaks of the Fortbildungschule in Zlonice, extending Kalenský’s misconception of the third class to a misconception of the whole school. And John Clapham’s Dvořák of 1979, the most authoritative biography of the composer in English to date, labels the school in Zlonice a ‘secondary school’ (p. 12), meaning in English a school intermediary between an elementary school and a college and not at all overlapping in function with the school in Zlonice. Actually Clapham does not specifically say that Dvořák attended school in Zlonice at all, only that he studied German with Liehmann. He does say that he attended school in Česká Kamenice, however, and once more applies the term ‘secondary school’, again incorrectly (p. 14). To describe the school of St. Mary of the Snows in Prague Clapham uses a direct translation of pokračovací škola, equally vague and misleading: ‘continuation school’ (p. 16).

The fact that Lomoz identifies German, apparently as one of a number of subjects, as being especially difficult for Dvořák, perhaps betrays a misunderstanding of the situation: in reality all the subjects were difficult for Dvořák, because they were all taught in German.

The use of German as a language of instruction, even in schools like the one at Zlonice where most or all of the students were Czech, was by no means exceptional in Bohemia at the time. The common practice was to use Czech only in the Trivialschulen and perhaps in the lower levels of Hauptschulen (Šafránek, Vývoj, p. vii and Školy české, Vol. 1, p. 267.)

Confirmation that German was the language of instruction in the third class at Zlonice during the time of Dvořák’s attendance comes from Lipovský, p. 70: ‘R. 1808 rozšířena byla škola zdejší o 3. třídou; od té doby pouze v nejvyšší (III.) třídě bylo vyučováno jazykem německým.’ It seems, however, that the use of German as the language of instruction was eventually viewed as impractical. Lipovský, after implying that during the reign of Emperor Joseph II in the 1780s all classes at Zlonice were taught in German, continues as follows:


As we have seen, already in 1808 the language of instruction in the first two classes at Zlonice was switched to Czech. And starting in 1863, just a decade after Dvořák’s stay in Zlonice, instruction in German would be phased out in the third class as well (Lipovský, p. 70).

If the majority of students in Zlonice had difficulty with German in the third class, we can imagine that Dvořák had even greater difficulty, for, coming from a village Trivialschule, he was less likely to have been taught German as a subject of instruction. Outside of school, it is possible he had learned a little from his father. (We may assume that his father spoke some German, since he had spent as many as eight years wandering in the southeastern parts of the Empire, where he could hardly have gotten by speaking Czech; in later years, Dvořák’s letter to his

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35 ‘Dvořák also attended his [Liehmann’s] “German class”; Liehmann’s records, however, show that he was no outstanding student. German, especially, was a tough not to crack for him.’

36 CLAPHAM is another who apparently misunderstood the situation, stating in Dvořák (p. 12) that Liehmann was ‘the school’s German master’, who, besides training him in music, ‘also taught him German, a subject that did not interest Toník greatly.’ (Incidentally, the notion that German did not interest Dvořák is only a guess – we only know that, at first, he had trouble with it.)

37 ‘In 1808 the school here was expanded to include a third class; from that time on German was the language of instruction only in the highest (third) class.’

38 ‘Fortunately this instruction did not persist for long. The teachers themselves, mostly aware that the children did not understand them and were not doing well in their studies – and that their efforts were thus futile – gradually began to neglect this order, so that in the early nineteenth century […] German was disappearing from the national [=elementary] schools; finally, to the benefit of our nation, it disappeared completely.’
father of 21 March 1884 expresses the expectation that his father has been reading the German-language newspaper *Politik* – see *Antonín Dvořák. Korespondence*, Vol. 1, p. 405.) But in any case, we can well imagine that the twelve-year-old Dvořák was scarcely prepared to sit through whole days of instruction spoken in nothing but German, whereby the basic knowledge of the language was assumed to already exist. Indeed it would not be surprising if he gave up in despair – and this may be what actually happened.

We have evidence enough that the young Dvořák had substantial difficulties at school in Zlonice precisely because of the language barrier. Apart from the comments of Lomoz already cited, Kalenský tells us the following, in connection with František Dvořák’s deliberations over whether to send his son to higher study in music, and his decision to send him in the interim to Böhmisch Kamnitz to learn German (p. 19):

‘Otci nebylo také nijak už tajno, že jeho Toník pro samou muziku nepřivedl to v německé třídě národní školy zlonické u Liehmanna, Čecha jako hora, v němčině valně daleko.’

How Long Did Dvořák Attend School in Zlonice?

This brings us to the topic of how long Dvořák remained in the third class in Zlonice, which is entirely a matter of speculation. From *Politische Verfassung* and the various studies I examined of the history of education in the Czech lands, it is impossible to determine how long a student would normally attend the third class. This is probably because no such norm existed, but even if it did we need not think that Dvořák conformed to it – he was a special case in that he transferred from a *Trivialschule*, and also in that, following a gap of at least a year (probably more), he entered a different third class, in Böhmisch Kamnitz.

Turning to the Dvořák literature, we find that the sources published during his lifetime tell us essentially nothing about this matter. Krigar comes closest, saying (p. 16) that Dvořák ‘verharrte bis 1856 behufs seiner Studien in Zlonitz’.

But Krigar is evidently referring only to his musical studies; his essay makes no reference at any point to the school in Zlonice. Květ in *Mládí* (including the unpublished 3rd ed.) does not even hint at the length of attendance, but in his earlier article *Cesta* he tells us that Dvořák attended the school in Zlonice for ‘aspoň rok’ (at least a year) without giving documentation. This is probably his guess based on what Kalenský says, but Kalenský’s information is again both ambiguous and of doubtful reliability. He gives us only the quotation of the letter from Heveroch, with no attempt to interpret the length of time Dvořák attended:

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39 ‘And the father was by no means unaware that music itself had prevented his Tony from making much progress in German with Liehmann, a steadfast Czech, in the German class at the Zlonice elementary school.’

40 ‘continued his studies in Zlonice until 1856’.
According to Dr. Holendová of the Comenius Pedagogical Museum in Prague, this passage is quite ambiguous as to the period of time to which it refers – one school year, two school years, or two calendar years. If Heveroch did mean two school years, and if we had no knowledge of the context, then we would expect based on common practice in the nineteenth century that he meant the school years 1852–1853 and 1853–1854. (It was normal to refer to a school year only by the year in which it ended.) But he could not have meant to include the school year 1852–1853, because later in the quoted passage he implies he was aware that Dvořák came to Zlonice in 1853. If he meant only the single school year 1853–1854, this would coincide with the information given by Kalenský in his essay as to the period of Dvořák’s stay in Zlonice – from the autumn of 1853 until sometime (evidently the summer) in 1854. Perhaps, then, Heveroch is only feeding back what Kalenský had told him about the duration of Dvořák’s stay in the town. That Dvořák left Zlonice in 1854, however, is definitely not true – he did not leave until 1856.

However we interpret Heveroch’s meaning, he is again probably not a reliable source, since he states that he was unable to find Dvořák’s name in any school records at Zlonice, and he does not give any other possible source of information as to when Dvořák attended school there. It is unlikely he had it from the composer himself, since as noted above he did not even know that Dvořák had attended the third class, but rather had to deduce that fact.

It is also unknown whether Dvořák may have attended Wiederholungs-Unterricht in Zlonice after the period when he attended the third class. As mentioned above, students having completed their required six years of regular school attendance were normally required to attend Sunday review lessons from the age of twelve until reaching the age of fifteen, with exceptions listed that, alas, do not include enrollment in the third class. Presumably Dvořák would not have attended the review lessons simultaneously with the third class; whether he could have satisfied the requirements for three years of review lessons by attending the third class for, say, a year, is impossible to determine. Heveroch later in his letter (as quoted by Kalenský, p. 14) says:

‘Však ve výkazech nedělní školní mládeže [opakovací hodiny] z dotyčné doby, roku 1853 a 1854, nenachází se také jméno Dvořákovo.’

But, again, the time period to which Heveroch refers here is unclear, and we do not know whether he searched through records of review lessons for any later years.

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41 ‘Having searched thoroughly in the local school archive, especially in records from [the school years ending in?] 1853 and 1854 [or the calendar years 1853 and 1854, or the 1853–1854 school year?] when Dvořák attended our school, [...] I did not find the name Dvořák in any record of the school here.’

42 My examination of school records from Prague from the 1850s reveals that full school years were routinely designated by only the calendar year in which they ended.

43 ‘However, in the records of youths attending the Sunday school [review lessons] during the time in question, 1853 and 1854 [or school year 1853–1854] the name Dvořák is also not found.’
What we do know is that after spending three years in Zlonice, in or out of the third class, in or out of review lessons, Dvořák went to Böhmisch Kamnitz and enrolled there once more in a class designated as dritte (third) and that his study there was still limited to the basic subjects of the Trivium together with religion. From this one is inclined to think that he spent less rather than more time in the third class at Zlonice. A likely hypothesis would be that Dvořák, frustrated with lectures in German, gave up on the third class in Zlonice at an early stage. V. J. Novotný’s notation on a manuscript copy of the Polka, B. 1, by Dvořák and Liehmann (see Burghauser’s thematic catalog, p. 49), may serve as a hint:

‘Dle vlastního výroku Dvořákovu 53 přišel do Zlonic a [tato polka] dělána je 54, když chodil s muzikama.’

Perhaps after a year (or even less?) in the third class, Dvořák dropped out and utilized the time thus made available to tour with the bands. In any case, his musical activities in Zlonice as described by all the sources (especially Kalenský and Květ) are of an astonishing scope which could hardly have been accomplished while attending school full time. Also, after his parents moved to Zlonice in 1855 there is much talk of his helping them in their businesses.

As long as Dvořák was enrolled in the third class, he would have attended twenty-two hours a week, with instruction Monday through Saturday mornings and afternoons, excepting Thursday afternoons which were free, according to prescriptions for the third class of a Hauptschule (Politische Verfassung, p. 7 in the appendices.) The school year officially ran from 1 October to 15 August (p. 55, Article 86 with amendment). For comparison, this starting date agrees with that at the Hauptschule of St. Mary of the Snows in Prague, where Dvořák was enrolled on 1 October 1857; the prescribed ending date of 15 August, however, was apparently not followed either in Prague or in Böhmisch Kamnitz, since his grade reports from both places are dated the end of July. In Zlonice, the end of the school year may be irrelevant anyway, since we don’t even know that Dvořák finished a whole year. Subjects of instruction specified for the third class are, as in a Trivialschule, essentially limited to religion and the Trivium, but with finer differentiation and evidently a higher degree of achievement expected. We shall have a closer look at this prescribed curriculum in connection with the school at Böhmisch Kamnitz.

It seems likely that, after leaving the third class in Zlonice, Dvořák spent some time studying German on his own, with his father, and/or privately with Liehmann, for when he again enrolled in a class with German lectures, at Böhmisch Kamnitz, his results were excellent.

Böhmisch Kamnitz

By the fall of 1856 when he moved to Böhmisch Kamnitz (Česká Kamenice), a town in northern Bohemia, Dvořák was fifteen years old and would not have

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44 ‘According to Dvořák’s own statement he came to Zlonice in 53 and [this polka] was written in 54 when he went around playing in bands.’
been bound by any legal requirements for school attendance, not even review lessons. Nevertheless, he attended school there full-time for an academic year. All sources agree that his purpose in going to Böhmisch Kamnitz, at that time a purely German town, was to improve his skills in the German language; both Kalenský (p. 19) and Květ (Mládí, 2nd ed., p. 65) suppose that the intent may have been at least in part to prepare him for his attendance at the Prague Organ School the following year, where lectures were primarily in German.\(^{45}\) We may safely assume that German was also the language of instruction at the school he attended in Böhmisch Kamnitz.

Confirmation of Dvořák’s success in the endeavor comes from his school grade report – by far the most important surviving document concerning his education up to this point in his life. The following transcription is according to Květ in Mládí (2nd ed., p. 66), but with italics added to distinguish the handwritten parts of the document from the pre-printed text, as seen in the facsimile Květ also provides (opposite p. 53).\(^{46}\)

\begin{quote}
**ZEUGNIS**

Anton Dvořák [sic]

hat dem Schulunterrichte an der 3. Klasse der StadtSchule in Böhm.-Kamnitz im Schuljahre 1857 [meaning 1856–1857]\(^{47}\) beigewohnt, und nachstehende Lehrgegen-
ständen folgender Maßen erlernt:

Die Religionslehre $\textit{sehr gut}$

Das Lesen

" Schönschreiben $\textit{sehr gut}$ [bracketed for all subjects]

" Rechtschreiben

" Kopfrechnen

Die Tafelrechnung

Schriftliche Aufsätze

Auch hat sich derselbe in seinen Sitten $\textit{sehr gut}$ verhalten. Er verdient daher in die VorzugsKlasse gesetzt zu werden.


Florian Kinder P. Johann Faust Josef Rehnelt

\end{quote}

\(^{45}\) He also studied music in Böhmisch Kamnitz, with the organist and choir director Franz Hanke, but this seems not to have been the main reason for his sojourn there. Hanke was evidently not, as Květ states in Mládí, 2nd ed. and Šourek repeats after him, a graduate of the Prague Organ School; Květ refuted this notion himself in his 1958 article Antonín Dvořák v České Kamenici, which unfortunately has gone unnoticed by most subsequent writers. On the other hand we do have new evidence that Hanke may have been one reason for the choice of Böhmisch Kamnitz as the site to learn German: he had taught in Schönlinde (now Krásná Lípa, north-east of Česká Kamenice near Rumburk) in 1829–1832, precisely the same time period when Liehmann was teaching in the adjoining village of Schönbüchl (now Krásný Buk). See KURKA, p. 346. Květ in Antonín Dvořák v České Kamenici corrected Kalenský’s assertion that Hanke was director of the Stadtschule which Dvořák attended in Böhmisch Kamnitz; he was actually a teacher at the girls’ school.

\(^{46}\) The report is now deposited with the Mělník District Archive. It was first published in 1910 (Zdeněk, pp. 243–244). English translation: Certification. Anton Dvořák [sic] has attended school instruction in
This document has been cited often in the Dvořák literature, but nobody has yet attempted to interpret its contents, including the question of just how gut is sehr gut. According to Politische Verfassung, pp. 62–63, Article 106, sehr gut was the best of four possible grades a student could receive in the subjects of instruction, and the best of five for the assessment of Sitten (conduct). The reference on Dvořák’s report to VorzugsKlasse evidently corresponds to the class erste mit Vorzug (first with excellence) specified by the law (again, not a class of instruction but a ranking according to overall merit.) It is, once more, the best of four possibilities. Placement in this top category was awarded by law to students having earned mehr sehr gut als gut (more very good than good) with no marks of mittelmäßig (average). Since Dvořák earned sehr gut exclusively, he presumably was in the top portion of this top category.

What was meant by a Stadtschule in Böhmisch Kamnitz at the time is open to some question. The term Stadtschule (town school, in Czech městská škola) was just coming into use at this time. In the Austrian Empire the Stadtschule normally comprised what would otherwise, or formerly, have been the upper classes of a Hauptschule. However Jan Šafránek points out in Školy české, Vol. 2, p. 28n, that this usage of the term was not adopted in the Czech lands. Jiří Kurka (p. 346), having researched Dvořák’s stay in Böhmisch Kamnitz utilizing local archives, had to guess on this point: ‘[Dvořák navštěvoval] třetí třídu městské školy (Stadtschule), která odpovídala asi pozdější škole měšťanské.’

Important for us is that the subjects of instruction shown on Dvořák’s report agree with those prescribed by law for the third class of a Hauptschule, with only a few differences in degree of differentiation. In the appendices at the end of Politische Verfassung, under Stundenvertheilung für Muster- oder Normal- und andere Hauptschulen - Dritte Classe (Distribution of Hours for Model- or Normal- and other Main Schools) the items shown as Die Kopfrechen (mental calculation) and Die Tafelrechnung (calculation at the board) on Dvořák’s report are given simply as Das Rechnen, while Schönschreiben (calligraphy) and Rechtschreiben (spelling) are simply Schreiben, though we find here a separate listing for Dictando Schreiben (writing from dictation). There is also a separate listing for Die Sprachlehre (grammar), which on p. 19 of the main text of Politische Verfassung is identified as die deutsche Sprachlehre. On page 7 of the appendices we find Das Lesen und Dictando-Schreiben der lateinischen Schrift (reading and writing from dictation in Latin – not appearing on Dvořák’s report) as occupying one hour per week, but in the main text, pp. 20–21, this is explained as being only for students intending to continue into a gymnasium.

As already noted above, the subjects on Dvořák’s report are not substantially different from those specified for Trivialschulen, covering religious instruction plus reading, writing and arithmetic, but with the various aspects of these
subjects more finely specified and evidently a higher degree of mastery expected. For example, in the *Hauptschulen* instruction in how to write essays is integral, not optional as in the *Trivialschulen* (*Politische Verfassung* pp. 19–20, Article 31).

Kalenský (p. 20) introduces here once more the term *pokračovací*, referring not just to the class Dvořák attended but to the whole school: ‘Nyní zavedl [Dvořáka] pan Ohme ještě do českokamenické pokračovací školy německé.’ But the elementary nature of the curriculum suggests that his term is once more misleading at best; Kurka (p. 346) specifically refuted Šourek’s characterization (taken from Kalenský, no doubt) of the school there as *pokračovací*, asserting that such a school did not exist in Böhmisch Kamnitz until 1873.

If, as seems clear enough, the *Dritte Klasse* at this school in Böhmisch Kamnitz was analogous to that of a *Hauptschule*, it would follow that, as in Zlonice, Dvořák attended school here with students younger than himself – by now perhaps several years younger. This would apply to Dvořák’s fellow student Franz Böhm as well as, presumably, many of his other playmates, and might explain why the games described by Kalenský seem more appropriate for, say, a twelve-year old than for a fifteen-year old like Dvořák. (See Burghauser, *Chlapecká léta*, p. 95).

A true assessment of Dvořák’s academic achievements at Böhmisch Kamnitz in relation to those of the other students, and deeper insight into the nature of the class, would require examination of the school records giving data not only for Dvořák but for other students. Such records, unfortunately, seem again to have been lost for the entire period surrounding Dvořák’s attendance there. All archives from Böhmisch Kamnitz from that period were evidently transferred elsewhere at some point in time. Mr. František Cvrk of the State District Archive in Děčín assured me in 1994 that, if the school records existed, they would be deposited there. But they are not. Also in 1994, the mayor of Česká Kamenice Hana Lukáčová suggested to me that the records may have been destroyed following World War II by Czechs who wished to erase from memory the Germanic past of towns in the former Sudetenland.

Whatever the answers might be to these questions, it is reasonably clear that Dvořák did very well in school at Böhmisch Kamnitz in a variety of subjects taught in the German language. He redeemed what apparently had been his failure in Zlonice, in German and consequently in academic instruction generally.

**Prague**

The last phase of Dvořák’s formal non-musical education comes in the following school year, 1857–1858, when while studying at the Organ School in Prague he simultaneously attended the *vierte Klasse* (the fourth class, which was the highest) at that city’s *Pfarrhauptschule zu St. Maria Schnee* (Parish Main School of the Church of St. Mary of the Snows), run by the Franciscan Order. Here, at last, we have relatively copious information enabling us to evaluate with confidence his attendance and results at the school: not only his grade report (*Schulzeugnis*) for the full academic year, but also and more importantly materials held by the

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49 ‘Now Mr. Ohme also enrolled Dvořák in the German continuing [?] school in Böhmisch Kamnitz.’
Prague City Archive including various letters and miscellaneous reports as well as
the school’s systematic statement of examination results (Prüfungs Extract) for
both semesters of Dvořák’s enrollment, providing data on all the students and
their performance in the various subjects and thus allowing us to make
comparisons. In addition we have substantial information about the school from
outside sources.

One of the sources of information held by the Prague City Archive is
a collection of materials from the parish office of St. Mary of the Snows including
a folder of miscellaneous manuscripts and typescripts pertaining to its school.
Zlata Brátková’s guide to the collection tells us that the school was on the ground
floor of the parish office building, which stood in front of the western facade of
the church of the same name. This church, one of the largest Gothic structures
in Prague, is located between Wenceslas Square and Jungmann Square about
400 meters from the Organ School and from Dvořák’s place of residence in the
Old Town at the time, which was at Dominikanergasse (now Husova ulice) No. 238.

As regards the nature of the school, Kalenský (p. 30) again applies the
mysterious term pokračovací which he evidently derived from Heveroch’s unclear
terminology in relation to Zlonice as we have seen, and calls the Prague school
a pokračovací německá škola (’continuing (?) German school’). Květ follows suit
(Mládí, 2nd ed., p. 78), referring to it simply as a pokračovací škola, then Šourek
(Vol. 1, p. 30 – again pokračovací německá škola) and after Šourek all subsequent
biographers of Dvořák. But here, much more so even than in the case of the schools
in Zlonice and Böhmisch Kamnitz, we have abundant evidence from other sources
that shows this designation to be meaningless at best and very misleading at worst.
I have been unable to find the term pokračovací or any Czech or German equivalent
thereof as a description either of the school of St. Mary of the Snows or of the class
Dvořák attended there anywhere outside the Dvořák literature. And if this term
implies a school above the elementary level then it is definitely erroneous.

The school’s own records refer to the institution as a Pfarrhauptschule
(parish main school). Šafránek’s Školy české (Vol. 2, p. 114) includes it in a chart
of twenty-seven such schools (in Czech farní hlavní školy) in Prague as of 1855
(two years before Dvořák’s attendance), listing it as having 421 students which
was about the average. Of these, we know from the school’s own Prüfungs Extract
for the fall semester of 1857 that there were 87 in the fourth class, which Dvořák
attended.

From 1867 – ten years after Dvořák’s attendance – we have an extensive
article on Prague in the large Czech encyclopedia edited by František Ladislav
Rieger which clarifies the school’s position in relation to other educational
institutions in the city. We find it there under literární (literary) schools as
opposed to umělecké (artistic). Within the literární schools it comes under veřejné
(public) as opposed to soukromé (private), and within the veřejné schools it is
listed under the lowest of three categories: i.e. among the nížší školy (lower
schools), as opposed to střední školy (secondary schools, consisting of the gymnasia
and reální školy) and vyšší školy (college-level schools). The nížší školy include

50 Brátková, p. V.
51 See ‘Praha’ in the List of Sources.
triviální (Trivium) schools, also known as národní (national) schools, as well as ten hlavní školy (main schools) which were run by the stát (the state), the obec (the city, evidently), or korporace (corporations), and six farní hlavní školy (parish main schools) maintained by the obec Pražská (the Prague parish). (Evidently by 1867 many of the schools shown in Šafránek’s table from 1855 as farní hlavní školy were no longer considered to be farní (parish) but simply hlavní školy, and others had been closed or are for some reason not accounted for in the encyclopedia article.) It is in the category of parish main schools that we find the school u Panny Marie Sněžné (of St. Mary of the Snows).

The section of Politische Verfassung devoted to Arten der Schulen (Levels of Schools, pp. 12–17) makes no mention of Pfarrhauptschulen (parish main schools). Evidently these were simply a type of Hauptschule, distinguished as implied in the article in Rieger’s encyclopedia not by their nature but only or primarily by which institutions administered them.

From the discussion above concerning Zlonice we already know that a main school was a type of elementary school, and the hierarchy in the encyclopedia article on Prague confirms this. Any remaining doubt that the school of St. Mary of the Snows was indeed elementary is dispelled by data given in its own Prüfungs Extract, namely the ages of all the students in all the classes. For the Fall 1857 semester, ages in the first class ranged from 5 1/2 to 9, in the second class from 7 to 12, and in the third class from 8 to 13 1/2. In the fourth class, which Dvořák attended, the ages ranged from 9 to 14 with the average being 12. These ages were evidently as of the beginning of the school year, because they are copied from the first to the second semester for all students without change. Curiously, Dvořák is shown both in the Prüfungs Extract and on his Schulzeugnis as being 13 years old whereas in fact he was 16. Květ noted this in Cesta, p. 20, and also the fact that no student is shown as being over 14 – speculating that 14 may have been the maximum age allowed and offering this as a possible explanation for Dvořák’s true age not being given. (But wouldn’t one expect in this case that he would have been listed as being 14?) What Květ seems not to have observed is that the age range of the students clearly shows this to have been an elementary school, not pokračovací (continuing) beyond the level of some school to be attended earlier.

The subjects of instruction taught in the fourth class at St. Mary of the Snows, as reported in the Prüfungs Extract, are actually somewhat more restricted than those listed for the fourth class of a Hauptschule (main school) in Politische Verfassung. Article 32 of that law (p. 20) specifies that the fourth class at Hauptschulen was to be divided into two Jahrgänge (years) having somewhat different curricula of instruction. The Prüfungs Extract for St. Mary of the Snows indeed shows that many of Dvořák’s fellow students in the fourth class were in their second year there: while the majority are listed like Dvořák with 1. Okt. 1857 as the date of their Aufnahme in diese Klasse (acceptance into the class), twenty of them (about 25%) had enrolled in the class a year earlier: on 4. Okt. 1856. However, the subjects of instruction are the same for all the students. As in the third class at the school in Böhmisch Kamnitz, they consist essentially of religion and the Trivium, though with still finer differentiation than we saw there and with the addition of das Zeichnen (drafting).
The subjects taught in the fourth class at St. Mary of the Snows actually lack some items listed in the *Politische Verfassung* for the first Jahrgang of the fourth class (p. 20, agreeing with p. 8 of the appendices), namely *Geographie der österreichischen Monarchie* and *Baukunst*, as well as *Dictando-Schreiben* and *Geometrie* — although these last two subjects may have been included in *Die deutsche Sprache, Die böhmische Sprache, Das Rechnen, and/or Das Zeichnen*, all of which we do find at St. Mary of the Snows. An annotation to p. 8 of the appendices in *Politische Verfassung* regarding the first Jahrgang suggests that certain specialized subjects had to be offered because *Real-Schulen* (schools on a somewhat higher level) were found in so few places; since Prague did have *Real-Schulen*, perhaps it was thought unnecessary to offer these subjects at a main school there. Otherwise the subjects listed in the law for the first Jahrgang of the fourth class agree with those shown in the *Prüfungs Extract* from St. Mary of the Snows. For the second Jahrgang of the fourth class, however, the *Politische Verfassung* (pp. 20–21) specifies in addition *die Stereometrie und Mechanik, die Naturgeschichte […], Naturlehre und die Geographie fremder Staaten und Welttheile nach dem Bedürfnisse des Künstlers und des Gewerbsmannes.* None of these subjects is found at St. Mary of the Snows.

If indeed the students in the fourth class at St. Mary of the Snows were separated into two Jahrgänge for purposes of instruction (though with the same subjects), then it is conceivable that Dvořák may have been placed in the more advanced group immediately upon his enrollment in the class, because of his previous education and his advanced age. This is impossible to determine. What we do know is that he remained at the school only one year. This was evidently nothing unusual: the listed dates of entry into the fourth class for the Fall 1857 semester indicate that, if this was a typical semester, then normally only one third of the students remained in the class for a second year. In any case Dvořák’s studies at the Organ School would have prevented him from continuing at St. Mary of the Snows during his second year of Prague. This we can deduce from the recollections of his fellow pupil at the Organ School, Václav Urban, as communicated to and quoted by Kalenský (p. 34):


The hours of instruction for the fourth class of a main school specified on pp. 8–9 of the *Stundenabtheilung* at the rear of *Politische Verfassung* would not have conflicted with the evening lectures in the first year of studies at the Organ School, but would have conflicted with the morning lectures in the second year.

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52 Geography of the Austrian monarchy, the art of construction, writing from dictation, and geometry.
53 The German language, the Czech language, arithmetic, and/or drawing/drafting.
54 Solid geometry and mechanics, natural history […], natural science, and geography of foreign countries and continents according to the needs of artists and tradesmen.
55 ‘I attended the organ school with Dvořák only one year. As a student at the reální school I could not attend instruction in the second year, which was in the mornings. Dvořák – I think – attended the main school of the Franciscans at that time and I attended in Budeč. […] Lectures in the first year [at the organ school] where given in the evening, I think starting at six or seven o’clock.’
So if Dvořák considered continuing at the school at St. Mary of the Snows for a second year at all, then he may simply have decided (unlike Urban) to give preference to his musical over his general education. But there may have been another factor as well: money. Tuition had to be paid for children in elementary school, as we have seen above, but attendance at the Organ School was free of charge (Meliš, p. 1001). And we know that the economic fortunes of the composer’s parents had sunk to a new low just at the time the second year of his studies in Prague began (Kalenský, p. 40; Květ Osudy, pp. 100–101; Květ Mládí, 2nd ed., p. 112–114.) Continuation at St. Mary of the Snows at a later date, after graduation from the Organ School, was probably also ruled out by economic considerations, combined with Dvořák’s advancing age (which as we have seen was already several years beyond that of most of his fellow students in 1857).

What is remarkable, given everything we know, is not that Dvořák failed to remain at St. Mary of the Snows for a second year, but that he ever enrolled there at all. He had long since satisfied the minimum requirements for regular school attendance, and for him to attend the school of St. Mary of the Snows simultaneously with the Organ School represented a major strain on his own time as well as a strain on someone’s finances (primarily those of his parents, we may assume).56

Unfortunately we have little to go on in assessing Dvořák’s purposes in attending St. Mary of the Snows. No source before Kalenský even mentions that he attended school in Prague apart from the Organ School. Kalenský (p. 30) explains it entirely as a way of further improving his German, needed for attending German lectures at the Organ School:

‘První starostí otcovou o syna v Praze byl zápis do škol. Dobře poznal, že rok po-
bytu v Čes. Kamenici Antonínovi velmi prospěl v obeznámení s německým jazy-
kem. Přes to však věděl, že ho neovládá ještě vícestranně a hravě a obávaje se, by
syn nenarazil ve varhanické škole za úplně německé správy ředitele K.
Pitsche, českého jazyka neznalého, na mnohé svízele, zavedl svého Antonína
dříve k Františkánům do pokračovací německé školy, by zdokonalil se ještě více
v jazyku německém.’57

Indeed, Dvořák’s attendance at this school must have further improved his knowledge of German substantially if only because instruction was evidently in German. Kalenský and Šourek, as we have seen, call St. Mary of the Snows a German school. Actually the 1867 article on Prague in Rieger’s encyclopedia

56 Kalenský (p. 24) reports that the boy’s uncle Antonín Zdeněk, with whom he had lived in Zlonice, offered support for his studies in Prague at the time the decision was made to send him there. Květ (Mládí, 2nd ed., 69) repeats this, and also mentions in the same context (without giving a source) ‘slib podpory panů ze zámku [in Zlonice, evidently] – podle jedné zprávy dal pří zprávy a kníže Kinský’ (a promise of support from the lords at the stately home – according to one report even Prince Kinský provided support). We have no confirmation of either source of support from biographical sketches published during Dvořák’s lifetime, several of which refer to the financial burdens of his studies in Prague as having been born by his father (Zubatý, Moučka, Hlaváč) or his parents (Kričar p. 39, 40). In Osudy, p. 100 Květ does give specific information about Antonín Zdeněk having helped František Dvořák out of a financial crisis in October 1859 – after the boy had graduated from the Organ School.

57 ‘The father’s first concern for his son in Prague was enrollment in schools. He knew well that the year of residence in Böhmischem Kamnitz had been very beneficial to Antonín in familiarizing him with the German language. However, he also knew that his mastery of the language was not yet well-rounded and fluent, and fearing lest his son come up against many problems in the organ school under the
cited above lists it as one of four české (Czech) parish main schools in the city, along with two that were německé (German). The real situation was evidently that shown in Šafránek's chart of Prague's parish main schools as of 1855 in České školy (Vol. 2, p. 114), indicating that instruction at St. Mary of the Snows was given in both languages; based on information Šafránek provides elsewhere in the same study (Vol. 1, p. 267) it appears that Czech was probably used in the lower classes and German in the upper. A manuscript chart from 1861 in the school's own records held by the Prague City Archive provides some confirmation that this was the case that year: next to classes one through three we find the sentence ‘Vyučovací řeč je česká’ (The language of instruction is Czech), but by the fourth class is written ‘Vyučovací řeč německá’ (Language of instruction German). This same table has somewhat unclear markings under the individual subjects of instruction that seem to indicate some of them were taught in Czech, but this could represent a change during the four years that had passed since Dvořák's attendance – a change in the direction of instruction in Czech in accord with the trend of the time. All things considered, it seems fairly clear that the language of instruction in the fourth class when Dvořák attended it in 1857–1858 was primarily or entirely German. This despite the fact that, according to the same manuscript chart from 1861, the large majority of students had Czech as their native language: 90, versus 4 with German and 11 who were bilingual. The subjects of instruction, however, included both German and Czech, as we see in this chart and also in the Prüfungs Extract for the semesters of Dvořák's attendance.

Kalenský’s implication that improvement in German was the primary purpose of Dvořák’s attendance is perhaps corroborated by the fact that Dvořák or his parents chose a school where German would be the language of instruction. (Šafránek’s chart shows that there were also main schools in Prague where the only language of instruction was Czech.) But we need not feel compelled to accept Kalenský’s interpretation as being authoritative, given his general unreliability. Květ in Mládí (2nd ed., p. 78) allows at least the possibility of a broader purpose behind Dvořák’s attendance at St. Mary of the Snows: ‘aby se zdokonalil v literárním vzdělání a asi hlavně v němčině [...].’ In any case we should keep in mind that, while the main language of instruction was evidently German, the subjects taught also included religion, arithmetic, drafting, and the Czech language. We cannot discount the possibility that Dvořák and/or his parents were guided not only by immediate practical necessity, but by the general desire for cultural betterment.

Having now recognized that the endpoint of Dvořák's formal education outside music was still at an elementary level, we must understand all his previous

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58 This is in the section of Šafránek's study devoted to main schools in the period from 1791 to 1848: ‘V první třídě vyučovalo se po česku, v druhé převládal utrakvismus, ve třetí, po případě také ve čtvrté třídě slýchati bylo výhradně jazyk německy.’ (‘In the first class the language of instruction was Czech, in the second both Czech and German, and in the third as well as in the fourth class if there was one only German was heard.’)

59 See Fara: P. Marie Sněžná in the List of Sources.

60 ‘to improve his literary education, and probably mainly his knowledge of German.’
schooling, which has been the subject of so much speculation, as steps toward this modest goal. And the fact that we find the term *pokračovací* used by Kalenský and Květ yet again as a characterization of the school at St. Mary of the Snows, where we have abundant information from other sources that does not support this, confirms that the term is not to be trusted – neither here nor in the cases of their descriptions of the schools in Zlonice and Böhmisch Kamnitz. All the schools Dvořák attended, other than the Organ School, were at an elementary level.

Nevertheless, Dvořák’s academic results in his elementary subjects of instruction at St. Mary of the Snows are again impressive enough to be worthy of note. The following were his marks for the first semester, given in the *Prüfungs Extract* in an entry dated 15 March 1858 (reported by Květ in Czech translation in *Mládí*, 2nd ed., pp. 78–79 with a few errors as indicated here by footnotes):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>Sitten</em> [conduct]</td>
<td><em>sg</em>  [= sehr gut]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Fähigkeiten</em> [abilities]</td>
<td><em>sg</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Anwendung dersel.</em> [application thereof]</td>
<td><em>g</em>   [= gut]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>die Religionslehre</em> [religion]</td>
<td><em>g</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>bibl. Geschichte</em> [biblical history]</td>
<td><em>g</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Evangelium</em> [the gospel]</td>
<td><em>g</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>die deutsche Sprache:</em> [the German language]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>das Lesen</em> [reading]</td>
<td><em>sg</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>die Sprachlehre</em> [grammar]</td>
<td><em>g</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>das Rechtschreiben</em> [spelling]</td>
<td><em>g</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>der mündl. und schrift. Gedankenausdruch</em></td>
<td><em>g</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[expression of thoughts orally and in writing]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>die böhm. Sprache</em> [the Czech language]</td>
<td><em>g</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>das Rechnen</em> [arithmetic]</td>
<td><em>sg</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>das Schönschreiben</em> [calligraphy]</td>
<td><em>sg</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>das Zeichnen</em> [drafting]</td>
<td><em>g</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>the Fortgangsklasse</em> [category of progress]</td>
<td><em>l</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In addition to the data reported by Květ, this *Prüfungs Extract* for Dvořák’s first semester provides, first of all, some important contextual information. For instance we see that the *Fortgangsklasse* is a categorization of students according to achievement and that Dvořák’s ‘1’ represents ironically not the highest category but rather the second highest, after the *Vorzugsklasse* (the category of excellence). However, according to a summarizing table in the *Prüfungs Extract* only 6 students out of 85 achieved the *Vorzugsklasse*. In Dvořák’s *Erste Klasse* of achievement (not to be confused with the chronologically ‘first class’ for the youngest students

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61 KVĚT mistakenly lists both ‘schopnosti’ (abilities) and ‘užití jich’ (application thereof) as ‘velmi dobře’ (very good). See *Cesta...*, p. 21 and *Mládí*, 2nd ed., p. 78.

62 In KVĚT’s account of the first semester in *Mládí*, 2nd ed., pp. 78–79 this subject is omitted.

63 In both *Cesta...* and *Mládí*, 2nd ed. KVĚT mistakenly interprets *das Zeichnen* as ‘psaní (t.j. pravopis)’ – writing (i.e. spelling). It is actually drawing, evidently mainly in the sense of drafting. In describing the curriculum for the fourth class at a *Hauptschule*, the *Politische Verfassung* (p. 20) mentions *das Zeichnen* in association with the construction trade: *die Baukunst und das für die meisten Künstler und Professionisten so nöthige Zeichnen, vorzüglich mit dem Zirkel und Lineale* (construction skills and drafting, which is so necessary for most artists and professional tradesmen, especially with a compass and ruler).
in the school) there were 54 students, but his marks place him near the top of that group: whereas he has all sg (sehr gut) or g (gut), most students in the Erste Klasse show at least one m (mittelmäßig = average), and it is not uncommon for them to have lower grades than this in some subjects. The next lower category, the Zweite Klasse, has 22 students, while 3 are in the Dritte. By comparing Dvořák’s grades with those of all his fellow students we can see that overall he was approximately in the 88th percentile.

Also of interest is information that provides a profile of Dvořák’s fellow students. Though the table just cited accounts for a total of 85 students in the fourth class, there are actually 87 of them listed individually. The large majority have Czech surnames, but their first names are all given in German forms (in our case Anton instead of Antonín) in keeping with the consistent German language of the Prüfungs Extract. Judging by their names, all the students appear to be male. I was unable to find here any of the names Květ lists (in Mládí, 2nd ed., p. 77) as Dvořák’s fellow pupils at the Organ School, doubtless because they had finished their elementary education at an earlier age.

Of special significance is the number given by Dvořák’s name in his first semester for Ausbleiben (absences): 30, which is the highest of any student in the class! This undoubtedly reflects the extreme pressures on his time: he was enrolled concurrently in evening lectures at the Organ School, and also participated in orchestral rehearsals and performances as a string player. According to Politische Verfassung (p. 8 of the appendices), instruction for the fourth class was given every morning and afternoon on Monday through Saturday, excepting Thursday afternoon. This is the same basic pattern as observed above for the third class, but the total number hours of weekly instruction is considerably larger: 33. It is hardly surprising that Dvořák was frequently unable – or too exhausted – to attend. His high number of absences, by the way, may explain why his mark in Fähigkeiten was sehr gut but in Anwendung ders. only gut. Given these constraints, Dvořák’s academic performance seems very impressive.

In the second semester Dvořák’s number of absences came down to 1164 – not the highest in the class, though still well above average. This time his academic performance was even better. As Květ tells us in Mládí (2nd ed., p. 80), he was one of only 8 students out of a total of 83 to achieve the rating of ‘E’. Květ does not give his source for this information, but it is evidently the Prüfungs Extract, from which we can also determine that ‘E’ is the equivalent of the Vorzugsklasse – a distinction that Dvořák did thus finally achieve. (Based on analogies with records of the Organ School as reported by Květ and Šourek, ‘E’ evidently stands for Eminenz or Eminenter.) Essentially in agreement with the Prüfungs Extract for the second semester is Dvořák’s Schulzeugnis (grade report) for the whole academic year, transcribed by Květ in Mládí (2nd ed., p. 79) without substantial errors as confirmed by comparison with the facsimile he provides opposite p. 68.

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64 This figure is mentioned by KVĚT in Mládí, 2nd ed., p. 79, though he (intentionally?) does not report the much higher figure for the first semester and offers no comparison with numbers of absences listed for other students.

65 This document may also be found transcribed in Antonín Dvořák. Korespondence a dokumenty. Kritické vydání, Vol. 9, pp. 118-119, where the editors’ heading unfortunately designates the school again as ‘pokračovací’.
This document reads as follows, with pre-printed text shown in normal type and hand-written insertions shown in italics.  

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**SCHULZEUGNIS**

_Dvořák Anton_ von Mühlhausen gebürtig, 13 Jahre alt, katholischer Religion, Schüler der vierten Klasse, hat im zweiten Semester des Schuljahres 1858 [=1857–1858] dem öffentlichen Schulunterricht sehr fleissig beigewohnt, sich in den Sitten sehr gut verhalten, und bei sehr guten Fähigkeiten und sehr guter Verwendung die vorgeschriebenen Gegenstände folgendermassen erlernt:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Die Religionslehre samt biblischer Geschichte</td>
<td>sehr gut</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>die deutsche Sprache, und zwar:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>das Lesen</td>
<td>sehr gut</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>die Sprachlehre</td>
<td>sehr gut [bracketed for all four subentries under ‘Die deutsche Sprache’]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>das Rechtschreiben</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>den mündlichen und schriftlichen Gedankenausdruck</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Die böhmische Sprache</td>
<td>gut</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>das Rechnen</td>
<td>sehr gut</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>das Schönenschreiben</td>
<td>sehr gut</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>das Zeichnen</td>
<td>gut</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Dieser Schüler verdient daher in die Vorzugs Klasse gesetzt zu werden.


_Dr. Duchek_  
Direktor

_P. Michael Reichmann_  
Katechet

_Jan Procházka_  
Hauptschullehrer

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N.B.: The indentation of the subjects following after ‘Die böhmische Sprache’ and absence of capital letters at their beginnings is misleading: unlike the subjects indented after ‘Die deutsche Sprache’, they are not subcategories but independent items. This is clearer in the _Prüfungs Extract._

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66 English translation: School Certification. Dvořák Anton, born in Mühlhausen [= Nelahozeves], 13 years old, of the catholic religion, pupil in the fourth class, has attended public school instruction in the second semester of the 1858 [=1857–1858] school year very diligently, shown very good conduct, and with very good abilities and very good application thereof has learned the prescribed subjects to the following extents: [individual grades] This pupil thus deserves to be placed in the Excellent category. Prague, Main School of St. Mary of the Snows, 28 July 1858. Dr. Duchek, Director. P. Michael Reichmann, Catechist. Jan Prochážka, Main School Teacher. [Circular stamp:] Parish Main School of St. Mary of the Snows in Prague.

67 Here the _Prüfungs Extract_ for the second semester has _gut_ rather than _sehr gut_.

68 Here the _Prüfungs Extract_ for the second semester has simply _E_.

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The record of Dvořák’s performance at St. Mary of the Snows where the language of instruction was evidently primarily German, following upon his excellent results in Böhmisch Kamnitz where German was certainly the only language used, clearly suggests that by this time his command of German must have been fairly secure. This is confirmed by his graduation a year later (at the age of not quite 18) from the Organ School, where instruction was also primarily in German, as the second-best pupil in his class. Indeed his knowledge of German may have been better than his knowledge of Czech with regard to grammar and spelling: as Květ observed, his marks at St. Mary of the Snows were better in German than in his native language!

Curiously, as an adult Dvořák complained bitterly about the use of German as the language of instruction at the Organ School and described it as a serious obstacle for him. His composition pupil Josef Michl at the conservatory in Prague recalled him saying, in the context of a general complaint about the Organ School and his experiences there:

‘Kdo se chtěl něčemu naučit, musil umět německy! Kdo znal dobře německy, mohl být primus a kdo neznal, nemohl být primus! Já jsem znal německy špatně a i když jsem něco věděl, nedovedl jsem to dobře říč!’69

And in an interview for the *Sunday Times* of London in 1885 (Paul Pry, ‘Enthusiasts Interviewed’) Dvořák said, again in reference to the Organ School:

‘Here my great difficulty at first was that I could scarcely speak a word of German, for, although a Bohemian institution, the professors were then compelled to speak German – a rule which was simply scandalous.’

As has often been observed, however, Dvořák himself was not always the best source of information about his own life, especially when recalling events in the distant past. And in this case his sensitivities as a Czech patriot – in a period when governmental suppression of the Czech language in Bohemia and Moravia in favor of German was a burning issue – explain a lot. While his patriotism was fundamentally sincere, he even felt the need at times to ‘posture’ himself as a Czech patriot, as revealed in a letter he wrote on 21 August 1885 to his friend Josef Zubatý during another visit to England:

‘Nezmiňujte se ale o tom [in the Czech press], že jsem *musel* promluvit pár slov německy, poněvadž anglicky ještě neumím, p. Littleton to sboru a orchestru přeložil. Napište třebas, že jsem mluvil turecky! Víte, jak to u nás chodí.’70

At the time of his enrollment in the Organ School, Dvořák may indeed have resented having to attend lectures in his own country in a language that was not his native tongue, but his later judgment of his weakness in German must have been a gross exaggeration.

69 ‘Anybody who wanted to learn something had to know German! Whoever knew German well could be first in the class, and whoever didn’t, couldn’t! My knowledge of German was poor, and even when I knew something I couldn’t express it well!’ Michl, ‘Z Dvořákova vyprávění’, p. 401.

70 ‘But don’t mention [in the Czech press] that I had to speak a few words in German, because I still don’t know English; Mr. Littleton translated for the chorus and orchestra. Maybe say that I spoke Turkish! You know what it’s like in our country.’ *Antonín Dvořák: Korespondence*, Vol. 2, p. 86.
Conclusion

With regard to our image of Dvořák as an adult, the findings of the present study should increase, not decrease, our respect for his scope of knowledge and his intellect. We have new reasons to think that his basic desire and ability to learn were far above average. And the recognition that his formal education outside music never exceeded that offered by an elementary school shows that whatever broader cultural knowledge he possessed was acquired almost entirely on his own, demonstrating a quest for knowledge that sprang from true inner curiosity on the part of a man whose erudition was won in an ‘uphill battle’, outside the framework of educational institutions that members of more privileged classes attended as a matter of course.

List of Sources


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Fará: P. Marie Sněžná. I.C.: 28, Kart. č. 4. Farní škola 1798–1912. Various unbound manuscript letters and reports pertaining to the Parish Main School of St. Mary of the Snows, held in one folder at the Archive of the City of Prague.
HLAVÁČ, Friedrich: Anton Dvořák. Eine biographische Skizze, in: Nord und Süd 52 (January–March 1890), pp. 29–39. Hlaváč’s sketch gains a little in authority through a letter surviving from him to Dvořák dated 6 June 1889, telling the composer he was working on the article and asking him if he wished to add any information to previously-published articles. Dvořák’s reply, if there was one, is not known.
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KURKA, Jiří: Pobyt Antonína Dvořáka v České Kamenici (Antonín Dvořák’s Stay in Česká Kamenice), in: Z minulosti Děčínska II, ed. Helena Smíšková, Okresní národní výbor, Děčín 1974, p. 346. I thank Mrs. Věra Chlebníčková for bringing this article to my attention.
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- Vzpomínka na zájezd k Antonínu Dvořákově do Vysoké u Příbramu v roce 1901 (Recollection of a Trip to Visit Antonín Dvořák in Vysoká near Příbram in 1901), typescript, Nelahozeves 26 August 1930, District Archive in Mělník, collection of the former Dvořák Museum in Kralupy.

Lipovský, Jan: Školství (Schools), in: Zlonice 1705–1905. Památník na oslavu dvoustého výročí povýšení Zlonic na městečko (Memorial Book to Celebrate the 200th Anniversary of the Elevation of Zlonice to the Status of a Town), Zlonice, Městské zastupitelstvo (Town Council), no date [1905?].

Lomoz, A. K.: Upomínky na pobyt A. Dvořáka ve Zlonicích (Memories of A. Dvořák’s Stay in Zlonice), in: Dalibor 27 (1904–1905), pp. 193–194. Published not long after the composer’s death. Undocumented except by reference to the ‘paměť lidu’ (the people’s memory), and containing some definite mistakes, the article nevertheless seems authoritative for the most part and contains some key information not found anywhere else. ‘A. K. Lomoz’ is given as the name of the author, but I was unable to find reference to this name anywhere else. Jitka Ludvová suggested to me it might be a pseudonym. Jarmil Burghauser then suggested it might be some sort of palindrome, or modified palindrome, of the real name. The book Zlonice 1705–1905 (see under ‘Lipovský’) contains an appendix listing owners of homes in the town as of 1905 (p. 155); the owner of ‘the present čp. 42’ is a certain ‘Rudolf Homolka, soukromník’ (private entrepreneur).

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Dvořákovo mimohudební školní vzdělání

David R. Beveridge

Jedním z nejvíce matoucích tajemství dětství a dospívání Antonína Dvořáka je jeho mimohudební vzdělání. Kromě toho, že se nedochovaly žádné dopisy či deníky týkající se Dvořáka nebo jeho rodiny v době jeho mládí, padly veškeré záznamy školy v Nelahozevsi za oběť požáru z roku 1885 a ztratily se i všechny záznamy školy ve Zlonicích z doby, kdy Dvořák v tomto městě žil. Totéž platí i pro jeho školní záznamy v České Kamenici, s výjimkou Dvořákových vlastních vysvědčení. Pro toho, kdo by se chtěl pokusit o nový pohled na jeho rané mimohudební vzdělání, byly užitečné Dvořákovská literatura však k tomu má relativně málo co říci; bližší pohled na toto téma ukazuje, že to, co k němu napsáno bylo, je mnohdy chybné, nebo v nejlepším případě silně zavádějící.

Prakticky vše, co bylo řečeno o Dvořákovi mimohudebním školním vzdělání, je obsaženo ve spisech Jana Miroslava Květa. Květ sám se zčásti opíral o Bohuslava Kalenského, autora první českého dvořákovské práce (1912). Otakar Šourek se ve své čtyřsvazkové monografii o Dvořákově životě a díle díle v této věci téměř výlučně opírá o Květa a Kalenského. V80. a 90. letech 20. století se tématu Dvořákova mimohudebního vzdělání znova věnoval Jarmil Burghauser v souvislosti se svým výzkumem skladatelova raného hudebního vzdělání a vyvrácení názoru, že se Dvořák vyučil řezníkem.

Můj vlastní výzkum je založen na různorodého materiálu, doplňujícím výše citované sekundární prameny, se zvláštním zřetelem ke školským zákonům, vztahujícím se k základnímu vzdělání v rakouském mocnářství v době Dvořákova dětství. Jde o rozmanité starší, někdy dokonce i noveděně studie o historii vzdělávání v českých zemích, dochované záznamy ze škol působících při chrámu Panny Marie Sněžné v Praze (některé z nich už dříve zpracoval a publikoval Květ), životopisné články o Dvořákově působení publikované za jeho života, ale nevyužité Kalenským, Květem nebo Šourekom, a velkou studii o historii zlonického školství, publikovanou roku 1905 ředitelem zdejší školy Janem Lipovským.

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Nejdůležitější výsledky svého výzkumu shromáždím v následujících bodcích: 1) mé přesvědčení, že Dvořák byl výjimečně bystrý a pilný student výrazně zesílilo; 2) je nezbytné nově zhodnotit úroveň jeho mimohudebního vzdělání – zdánlivě nebylo na vyšším stupni než to, které mohl získat na základní škole a jež mnoho z jeho spolužáků získalo před dosažením dvanáctého roku.

Dvořák navštěvoval celkem čtyři školy, které poskytovaly mimohudební vzdělání: vesnickou školu v Nelahozevsi (1847–1853), třetí třídu školy ve Zlonicích, která byla pravděpodobně „hlavní školou“ (1853–?), dále třetí třídu městské školy (Stadtschule) v České Kamenici, která byla zřejmě opět dřem „hlavní školou“ (školní rok 1856–1857), a čtvrtou třídu hlavní školy u Panny Marie Sněžné v Praze (školní rok 1857–1858). Všechny tyto školy poskytovaly
základní vzdělání. Věk většiny žáků se pohyboval mezi šesti a jedenácti lety nebo, v případě školy u Panny Marie Sněžné, mezi šesti a dvanácti lety. Oficiálními vyučovacími předměty byly výlučně (nebo téměř výlučně) čtení, psaní, aritmetika a náboženství.

Škola v Nelahozevsi byla co do typu takzvaná Trivialschule; tyto školy byly zřizovány ve vesnicích, se zaměřením na děti z nižších vrstev, u kterých se v průběhu života nepředpokládal společenský vzestup. Vyučovacím jazykem byla čeština. Vzhledem k tomu, že tato škola byla pouze jednotřídní, byli žáci rozděleni do dvou skupin. Někteří došli do školy ráno, jiní odpoledne. Dvořák zřejmě věnoval podstatnou část svého času pomoci otci v řeznictví, i když nikdy nebyl v tomto povolání řádně vyučen.

Pro školy, které Dvořák navštěvoval ve Zlonicích, České Kamenici a Praze, užívá Kalenský z nejasných příčin termín „pokračovací“. Všichni další Dvořákoví životopisci naneštěstí toto tvrzení nepřijali; zejména v případech německých a anglických překladů to často vedlo k velmi zavádějícím závěrům. Pro Dvořáka samotného bylo studium na těchto školách „pokračovacím“ – i nadále však šlo pouze o základní školy. Dvořák na těchto školách studoval v zásadě stejné předměty jako v Nelahozevsi, ale důkladněji a – což je významné – ve všech třech případech byla vyučovacím jazykem němčina.

Školský zákon předepisoval povinnou školní docházku po dobu pouhých šesti let; Dvořák ji ukončil v Nelahozevsi. Znamená to, že jeho rozhodnutí pokračovat ve vzdělání ve Zlonicích, České Kamenici a Praze bylo dobrovolné. Zmíněné školy vyžadovaly placení školního; skutečnost, že jeho rodina, která nepatřila k ekonomicky prosperujícím, byla ochotná podstoupit tuto finanční oběť, naznačuje vážný zájem o prohloubení chlapcova všeobecného vzdělání.


V případě všech form studia němčiny jako vyučovacího předmětu ve škole při chrámu Panny Marie Sněžné byl Dvořák na závěrečném vysvědčení (Schulzeugnis), klasifikován vždy „sehr gut“, zatímco v češtině pouze „gut!“ Ve světle výše uvedených zjišťení je jeho pozdější stěhování si na potíže, které měl s němčinou v prvních letech pobytu v Praze, třeba brát s rezervou – jako svého druhu národní pózu.

(překlad Michaela Freemanová)