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# Festivals and Marketing Soviet Lithuanian Music after 1970

*The turning point in the international dissemination and reception of Soviet Lithuanian music came with contesting initiatives in the late 1970s and early 1980s. The 'official' channel for marketing modern music was creating in the shape of the Soviet Lithuanian Music Festivals (1977, 1982, 1987). These festivals consolidated the breakthrough of Lithuanian music that was associated with prominent works by the middle generation of Lithuanian composers and encouraged a shift in the international reception of Lithuanian music. This enabled the Lithuanian music scene to dissociate itself from the ideological and stylistic confrontations of the Cold War. Another factor that determined the international spread of Soviet Lithuanian music was the informal relationships with the international world of contemporary music across the Soviet Bloc. The role of an 'unofficial' axiological centre was mostly upheld by musicians and structures both official and informal in Poland and, in part, in the GDR. By analysing the interplay and feedback of (inter)national music performance and reception, we demonstrate how the Soviet Lithuanian music discourse was affected by sociopolitical and cultural circumstances.*

## Soviet music exports: between ideology and commerce

"Art is a commodity" – although this sounds like a cliché, let us think for a moment about the early 1960s and imagine these words being pronounced by Balys Dvarionas (1904–1972), the bearer of two Stalin prizes and the most influential and controversial composer of post-war Soviet Lithuania.[1] Contemporaries recall that he used to repeat the phrase, believing that the commercial side of music aids it in adapting to ideological requirements for culture. Thus in 1964, when Dvarionas went to Armenia to conduct *Three Symphonic Dances* (1963) by the Lithuanian composer Justinas Bašinskas (1923–2003), he said the following about the piece to his friend, the emigré composer Vladas Jakubėnas (1904–1976): "Those dances are not devised to kill, but rather are *exportreif* [suitable for export]. And by the way, they contain no trace of Lithuanian quotations. I'd say this is a fairly agreeable ending to the programme."[2]

In this article, I shall investigate the commercialisation of Soviet-era art music exports, further expanding on the contradictory relationship between the political and commercial dimensions in the international dissemination and reception of Lithuanian music of that time. In Lithuania, the topic of the international circulation and dissemination of national music in the USSR has hitherto been addressed only in the form of a fragmented, overly one-sided investi-

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1 Gedgaudas 2020.

2 "Tie šokiai nie ubivajut, bet exportreif [tinka eksportui]. Pričom be kokių nors lietuviškų citatų. Sakyčiau, prijatnoje okončanije programy." (Dvarionas 1982, p. 178). All translations by Rūta Stanevičiūtė unless otherwise stated.

gation. Such studies have mostly addressed the events and phenomena that furthered opposition to official cultural policies.[3] When writing of Soviet Lithuanian music exports, the musicological literature and the memoirs of contemporaries often exhibit radically contrasting opinions. Scholarly studies tend to support the view that music exports were under the strict supervision of the authorities and that it was impossible to avoid the influence of the State Concert Association of the USSR, *Goskoncert,* which significantly limited the activities of Lithuanian musicians and affected the dissemination of their music. However, the Soviet press, the increasing number of studies that have emerged about performers in recent decades, and the publication of artists' memoirs and letters, seem to promote an entirely different image of the expansion of Lithuanian performers outside the USSR from the 1960s onwards.[4] A cursory comparison of trends prevalent in the 1950s and '60s and a consideration of the changes that occurred later reveals that, starting from the period of the Khrushchev Thaw (1953–1964), the numbers of music performances outside the Iron Curtain gradually increased. Even in the immediate post-war years, when the Soviet authorities organised ten-day events of Lithuanian culture and arts in Moscow, similar export and exchange initiatives were also being augmented in other directions. Surprisingly, we can observe increased activity in this field, even into the late 1950s. It was only in 1957 that these ten-day cultural events between two countries were held in Lithuania and Poland.[5] It was also at this time that the Baltic States Music Festival was held in Riga.[6] Such events were not unidirectional. If we take the ten-day cultural event of the Baltic republics in Romania in 1958 as an example, we will note that in the early 1960s, musicians from Romania visited Vilnius nearly every year.[7] In the early 1970s, the younger generation of performers in Soviet Lithuania was able to go on foreign tours across all the continents, even reaching Africa.[8]

These events in the music life of Soviet Lithuania were not isolated phenomena, but a reflection of more general processes in Soviet cultural life. In the second half of the 1950s, shifts in the official cultural policy of the USSR in the sphere of music exports and imports can be observed through the founding of *Goskoncert* (*Государственное концертное объединение СССР* / State Concert Association of the USSR). This institution was established in 1956 through the Soviet tour bureau *Gastrolbiuro.* Its principal objective was to organise foreign tours of Soviet artists and visits of foreign musicians to the USSR, as well as arranging music exchanges within the USSR itself. *Goskoncert* was primarily concerned with ideological propaganda and political control, yet it also represented a tendency to monopolise cultural exports and imports. In the 1970s, the monopolistic force of the central cultural authorities was enforced by the All-Union Agency on Copyrights (*Всесоюзное агентство по авторским правам* / VAAP), founded in 1973. Until 1990, VAAP held a monopoly of copyright in the USSR, since private persons were not allowed to possess such rights. The decree adopted by the Council of Ministers of the USSR in 1973 regarding the payout of royalties set extortionate regulations in favour of the state and detrimental to the authors: the document specifies that for the first performances and publication of works, the authors received 30–40 per cent of royalties, while the pay-

3 Such views are challenged in Stanevičiūtė et al. 2018.

4 The conductor Saulius Sondeckis and the State Philharmonic Chamber Orchestra that he founded were particularly successful in this respect, even though in the post-Soviet years he complained of being constrained by Soviet institutions. For more information, see Melnikas 2020.

5 Cf. Dvarionas 1957.

6 Cf. Karosas 1957; Baumilas 1957.

7 The Decade of the Culture of the Soviet Baltic Republics was held in Romania from 1 to 10 June 1958.

8 Cf. Katkus 1977.

outs for repeated performances and publications were limited to 10 per cent only; however, there was a lack of transparency in the activities of VAAP.[9]

This intensified centralisation and monopolisation in the Soviet cultural economy in the 1970s was related to a general trend toward the commercialisation of culture during the period in question. Such a trend, for example, is reflected in the correspondence of 1977 between *Goskoncert,* the Ministry of Culture of the USSR, and Soviet music institutions, concerning greater cost-effectiveness when cooperating with foreign countries.[10] Efforts to optimise export efficiency after the 1970s might also be linked to broader phenomena in the arts and to the commercialisation and increase in consumption of mass culture that were especially pronounced in the fields of Soviet film, music and literature. As Eglė Rindzevičiūtė has observed, Soviet arts and culture were an extremely large sector: "In 1981, the 'art' sphere alone […] consisted of about 275,000 enterprises in the Soviet Union. This implied that, in terms of the number of organisations, only trade was ahead of culture in the Soviet national economy."[11]

However, it would be an over-simplification of the reality of Soviet culture to assume that the abovementioned centralised institutions were the sole channel of cultural exchange and the international dissemination of music. When considering opportunities for exporting music and the spread of ideas and practices, we can apply the classification developed by the Lithuanian historian Aurimas Švedas in his investigation of Soviet historiography.[12] According to him, we can distinguish the following forms of international music exports during the Soviet period: hierarchical exchange conducted through centralised institutions; vertical exchange conducted through local official institutions; and horizontal exchange, including informal contacts and cooperation between individuals and institutions. Such a model seems apt for discussing the music culture of the late Soviet period when ideological control had weakened, and the gap between the official cultural discourse and cultural reality was widening. This model can also help us to avoid a one-sided interpretation of the Soviet cultural system and allow us to investigate it by taking into account all three prevalent non-Marxist, ethical concepts of communism, namely communism as totalitarianism, communism as a path towards modernity (or an unfinished modernisation project) and communism as neo-traditionalism.[13]

## How to sell music? Music festivals in Soviet Lithuania

The diversity and interaction of these three channels for music exports and cultural exchange influenced the increasing pace of Soviet Lithuanian music exports and their significant qualitative change in the 1970s and '80s. It can be instructive to consider these issues in the context of events that had a special significance for the processes in question, namely the three Soviet Lithuanian music festivals held in Vilnius in 1977, 1982 and 1987 respectively. Discussions regarding the need for such events began in the Composers' Union of Soviet Lithuania in the 1960s, reflecting a more general concern about the propaganda of Soviet culture. For example, in 1964, the Soviet press published the opinion of Yekaterina Furtseva (the Minister of Culture of the USSR), who spoke about the need for large-scale festivals featuring guests from abroad while

9 CM-USSR 1973.

10 Supagin 1976.

11 Rindzevičiūtė adds that: "[o]f course, in 'real terms' of profitability, the cultural sector was far less important than trade. Yet 'culture' featured cash flows, staffs, various materials, accounting forms, principles of management, and more, most of which were the concern of planners." (Rindzevičiūtė 2008, p. 93).

12 Švedas 2009, p. 31.

13 Cf. Norkus 2007, p. 8.

incorporating typical Soviet rhetoric along the lines of "let the 'Moscow stars' shine for all".[14] However, no specialist contemporary music festival or international forum of this type was held in Soviet Lithuania until 1977, neither official nor unofficial. The concert programmes of official meetings and plenums of the Composers' Union were fairly closed events. To be sure, new Lithuanian music was present in regular concert life, but there was felt to be a need for specialised festivals, both from the perspective of music dissemination in the national cultural space and for international propaganda. In this regard, the lack of any international contemporary music festival in Soviet Lithuania and the weak institutionalisation of new music meant that the situation in Soviet Lithuania differed both from the environment for disseminating modern Russian music and from the situation in Poland and other countries of the socialist bloc.[15]

The principal organiser of these new Soviet Lithuanian music festivals, the Composers' Union of Soviet Lithuania, followed the successful models for music dissemination used at Soviet music festivals in Leningrad and Tbilisi.[16] Along with the Ministry of Culture of Soviet Lithuania, the key partner of these events was the Lithuanian Branch of VAAP (the All-Union Agency on Copyrights) located in Vilnius. The surviving documents do not explicitly identify whether the Composers' Union or the Copyright Agency was the principal initiator.[17] In Lithuania, the festivals were held in years of special political anniversaries, either of the October Revolution of 1917 or of the founding of the USSR in 1922. However, in their format, objectives and target audiences, these festivals differed significantly from ideological events of the early Soviet period. In the 1970s, the propaganda aspect was paired with commercial interests that were represented by the co-promoter, namely the Lithuanian branch of the USSR copyright agency. This entwining of propaganda and commercial interests was reflected in the festival programmes, which, along with pieces dedicated to the October Revolution, the Communist party and suchlike, also featured compositions by composers associated with 'unofficial' culture.[18]

Despite its propaganda nature, the festival's programmes were shaped by the Composers' Union, which for the first time was given the task of preparing a wide-ranging, representative music programme that might interest international experts. The first festival presented compositions written in the previous decade, while the later festivals showcased music composed more recently. Despite works included for ideological reasons (which were especially evident in the first festival), it was the commercial aspect of these events that meant their programmes featured many works that were representative of the modernisation processes of Lithuanian music from the mid-1970s onwards. This was a new wave of Lithuanian music that was significantly different from that of the 1960s that had tried to imitate or assume the techniques of the post-war Western avant-garde and of Soviet modernism. In the mid-1970s, another trend became apparent, similar to parallel processes that had started several years earlier in Russia and other neighbouring countries. It was a quest for modernist and post-modernist idioms and is in retrospect regarded as the most significant period in the revival of Lithuanian music in the second half of the twentieth century. According to the musicologist Vita Gruodytė:

14 Anonymous 1964, p. [3].

15 In this respect, as is well known, the role of the Warsaw Autumn International Festival of Contemporary Music was particularly important. For more, see *MT* 2017, a special issue dedicated to the international impact of the Warsaw Autumn Festival.

16 Juodelienė 1988, p. 127.

17 VAAP 1977.

18 See Landsbergis 1982.

> Strange as it may seem, the major breakthrough in Lithuanian music life took place around 1970, rather than after the restoration of independence in 1990 as one might expect. Several composers who had previously dissociated themselves from the mainstream (Bronius Kutavičius, Feliksas Bajoras, Osvaldas Balakauskas) began to form an alternative trend in Lithuanian music, which soon came to be realized as a new (or true, versus conditioned by the regime) identity of Lithuanian music.[19]

A similar trend was also noticeable in the other Soviet republics and some neighbouring socialist countries. For example, the Russian musicologist Tatyana Cherednichenko wrote about the period of 1974 through 1978 as the "real beginning" of the 1970s,[20] and Kinga Kiwała described the 1970s as a time of significant change in Polish culture, literature and music.[21] This widely established opinion about a tectonic shift in the mid-1970s is supported by the fact that the Lithuanian festivals under discussion here featured performances of many pieces that were still regarded as key works of Lithuanian music from the second half of the twentieth century, even several years after the end of the Soviet Union. To illustrate this, I refer here to a representative survey of Lithuanian musicologists conducted by the cultural monthly *Kultūros barai* (Culture domains) in 1997 that was concerned with identifying the best Lithuanian music pieces from the period 1946–1996.[22] I have here highlighted the compositions performed at the three Lithuanian music festivals of 1977, 1982 and 1987 (Figure 1).

| Composer | Work | Year | Number of votes | Number of points |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **1. Bronius Kutavičius** | ***Last Pagan Rites*** | **1978** | **9** | **72** |
| **2. Algirdas Martinaitis** | ***Cantus ad futurum*** | **1982** | **7** | **44** |
| **3. Bronius Kutavičius** | ***On the Shore*** | **1972** | **4** | **33** |
| **4. Osvaldas Balakauskas** | **Symphony No. 2** | **1979** | **4** | **31** |
| 5. Konstancija Brundzaitė | *Two Mourning Songs* | 1968 | 4 | 25 |
| 6. Feliksas Bajoras | Opera *Lamb of God* | 1982 | 4 | 25 |
| 7. Eduardas Balsys | Concert for violin and orchestra No. 2 | 1957 | 4 | 18 |
| 8. Vidamantas Bartulis | Opera *Lesson* | 1993 | 4 | 18 |
| 9. Rytis Mažulis | *Twittering Machine* | 1986 | 5 | 17 |
| 10. Feliksas Bajoras | *Missa in musica* | 1991 | 3 | 17 |
| **11. Feliksas Bajoras** | **Sonata for violin and piano *Years Gone By*** | **1979** | **3** | **17** |
| 12. Eduardas Balsys | Oratorio *Don't Touch the Blue Globe* | 1969 | 2 | 16 |
| 13. Osvaldas Balakauskas | Requiem | 1995 | 2 | 14 |
| **14. Bronius Kutavičius** | ***From Yotvingian Stone*** | **1983** | **2** | **13** |
| 15. Feliksas Bajoras | *Suite of Stories* | 1968 | 2 | 12 |

Fig. 1 The fifteen 'best' compositions by Lithuanian composers between 1946 and 1996 (according to a survey of Lithuanian musicologists conducted by the cultural monthly *Kultūros barai,* 1997). The compositions performed at the Soviet Lithuanian music festivals are here given in bold type.

19 Gruodytė 2009, p. 48.
20 Cherednichenko 2002, pp. 9, 17f.
21 Kiwała 2022, p. 87.
22 The material and summaries of the surveys are presented in Budraitytė 1997.

## Propaganda and the international reception of Lithuanian music

The Lithuanian Copyright Agency, in its reports to central management, emphasised the propaganda and promotional nature of the festival. The focus was thus on foreign visitors, they being the key audience that this propaganda campaign hoped to attract. Although local institutions – the Copyright Agency, the Composers' Union and the LSSR Philharmonic – cooperated closely in the organisation of the festival and provided significant financial and human resources, selecting the guests was under the strict control of the central Soviet institutions in Moscow. The Copyright Agency in Lithuania was instructed to invite representatives of those publishing houses or other musical institutions with which agreements had been signed for cross-border cooperation. All nominations for guests were approved in Moscow, and the costs of their visits were scrupulously regulated.[23]

The media reviews and observations from the organisers following all three festivals presented the opinion of the guests first of all, also emphasising the quantitative figures. Thirteen guests were invited to participate in the first festival, with only two of them representing Western countries (these being the representatives of the publishers Hans Sikorski and Ricordi). Other guests at the festival represented music institutions from other socialist states and Soviet republics, including representatives from the publishers Edition Peters (GDR), Editio Musica (Hungary), Supraphon, Panton and Opus (Czechoslovakia) and music experts from Poland, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, the GDR and the USSR. The festival programme featured 36 composers with 70 compositions. The results as reported by the Copyright Agency were as follows: the music of 25 composers gained the most interest, while 150 scores were sent out to various institutions after the festival, with an additional 554 pieces sent out later. The intention was to attract the attention of international music publishers and performers in hopes that they would include these pieces in their repertoire. Taking into account the fact that interest from foreign performers in compositions by Lithuanian composers was a fairly rare phenomenon before the festival, these figures contained in the reports of the Lithuanian Branch of VAAP look truly impressive.[24]

The documentation of the Lithuanian Copyright Agency allows us to trace a much more modest list of specific works by Lithuanian composers that were of interest to foreign visitors. Given that the Agency, like all other Soviet cultural institutions, existed in a planned economy and had to improve its performance on a continuous basis, the figures for these achievements could have been increased to confirm to the authorities that the event, which had required considerable investment, had been highly effective and successful. On the other hand, specific lists of sheet music or recordings of the works sent out can help us to clarify the reasons behind the interest demonstrated by foreign institutions and individual musicians. The high number of representatives of publishing houses at the festivals offers proof that the commercial interests of the Copyright Agency were of particular importance. The Agency sent out promotional brochures on composers, sheet music and recordings to foreign publishers on a regular basis, as did other USSR institutions (such as the Foreign Commission of the USSR Composers' Union in Moscow), but the music of the Soviet republics was mostly selected as propaganda samples

23 Cf. Troshin/Orlov 1977.

24 I was unable to trace any reliable sources that would allow me to state the exact percentage of scores sent out that were actually performed or published abroad. However, based on the information from the Lithuanian Agency on Copyrights VAAP and the press publications of the time, this figure will have been between 10 and 20 per cent.

for socialist countries.[25] Meanwhile, requests from the publishing houses participating in the festival changed the choice of authors and compositions, since even after the first festival, the compositions sent to the publishers did not include propaganda compositions. As can be seen from the works sent to the Edition Peters, Editio Musica, Supraphon, Panton and Opus, their representatives were primarily interested in possible repertoire works, mostly for traditional chamber music ensembles.[26] The representatives of performing institutions also had similar motives for their interest in Lithuanian music. Ivan Vulpe of the Bulgarian State Conservatory was interested in works of a much more traditional style, while Ricordi's consultant Francesco Degrada was also attracted by works full of the pathos of Soviet modernism and by plans to actively develop the forums of Italian and Soviet composers.[27]

Meanwhile, the range of interests among musicologists was much wider. Here we should mention the activities of the (East) German musicologist Hannelore Gerlach, who began promoting the music of the USSR republics in the GDR even before the first Lithuanian Music Festival. She later did the same for Lithuanian music in the GDR, initiating several commissions and contributing to publications that promoted the work of Lithuanian composers.[28] Gerlach's requests for works differed significantly from the interests of the publishers, as she was interested most of all in those composers active in the radical renewal of Lithuanian music, such as Bronius Kutavičius, Osvaldas Balakauskas, Feliksas Bajoras and others. After the first Soviet Lithuanian Music Festival, she recommended Bronius Kutavičius's post-avant-garde work *The Small Spectacle* (1975) to the German State Opera in Berlin. However, it was scrutinised by the censorship authorities to determine whether it was suitable for distribution abroad, and they refused to allow its performance.[29] It is worth noting that in the following years, Soviet music festivals were also attended mainly by musicologists whose research was related to Russian and Soviet music or who had a major interest in discovering authors and works that did not conform to the official canon.

After the first Soviet Music Festival, the VAAP agency in Lithuania started to become more courageous by sending works to Western labels that were not present at the event, including Universal Edition, Boosey & Hawkes, Schirmer and others. The model of the first festival was reapplied in 1982 and 1987 – each of these years bringing significant shifts in the political and cultural life of the USSR.[30] Despite differences between the political and cultural contexts, the cultural significance of all three festivals can be summarised by means of certain key impact areas: the depoliticisation of Lithuanian music exports and the commercialisation of its international dissemination; a qualitative change in the international reception of Lithuanian music;

25 Thus in Moscow in 1965, the Foreign Commission (section) of the Union of Composers of the USSR decided to represent Lithuania with the following compositions: the score of Julius Juzeliūnas's symphonic poem *Ash Lullaby* (1963) was sent to Poland, Vytautas Laurušas's *Poem* for violin and piano (1962) to North Korea, and the sheet music for Abelis Klenickis's suite *Summer Day* for children's choir and orchestra (1956) to Czechoslovakia (see FCUoC 1965). The last of these represented the style of Socialist Realism, while the first two were already moving away from Socialist Realism towards official Soviet Modernism.

26 Some of these works were sent directly to the representatives of the publishing houses participating in the festival, and some were sent through VAAP representatives abroad. For example, Julius Juzeliūnas's String Quartet No. 2 (1966), Osvaldas Balakauskas's Sonatina No. 2 for violin and piano (1973), Jurgis Juozapaitis's Sonata for solo violin (1972) and *Music* for ensemble (1970), Vytautas Jurgutis's *Piece* for cello (1970) and Jurgis Gaižauskas's Sonata for oboe and piano (1972) were sent to the editor-in-chief of Opus, Marián Jurik.

27 Degrada 1977.

28 See Gerlach 1984; Danuser et al. 1990. The contribution of German musicologists to the popularisation of new Lithuanian music was also highlighted in Balakauskas 1985.

29 Cf. Neef 1977.

30 On the late Soviet era see, e.g., Kotkin 2008 and Yurchak 2006.

and the self-perception of Lithuanian music within the national cultural environment and a change in the discourse of modernisation. All these areas reflect a paradigm shift that was taking place. Let us briefly discuss them, starting with the shift in international reception.

The policies of these festivals reflected changes in the international reception of Lithuanian music. During the first festival, most guests admitted that they knew little or nothing about contemporary Lithuanian music. According to the representative of Sikorski, they saw it as "fireworks of interesting music that was totally unfamiliar to us".[31] While the response of Western European publishers might be explained by the official control that was exerted over music exports, the opinions of those from neighbouring republics (and especially from musicians of fellow socialist countries) require additional comment. Let us take Poland as an example. Even though contemporary Lithuanian music had been performed at specialist Polish contemporary music festivals such as the Warsaw Autumn, as well as in regular concert life until 1977, in most cases the pieces to be presented were selected by the central culture authorities of the USSR. For instance, the first prominent appearances of Lithuanian performers in the said festival include tours of the Lithuanian Chamber Quartet in 1965 and of the Lithuanian Chamber Orchestra in 1971, both organised by the *Goskoncert* agency. Along with arguably drab pieces by Lithuanian composers representing Soviet modernism, the programmes of both ensembles also featured works by Dmitri Shostakovich. In 1977, during the USSR Cultural Days in Poland, the Lithuanian State Symphony Orchestra also performed Justinas Bašinskas's Symphony No. 4 (1977) – yet another of many colourless examples of the genre that did not stay in the repertoire for long. However, in all these cases, the Polish music critics reviewed Lithuanian music as part of the official Soviet music scene and lacking in any individual character. Cultural exchange with the Polish Composers' Union was carried out at an institutional level, but these events did not leave any significant trace in the reception of the music.

In 1977, the first Soviet Lithuanian Music Festival was attended by the Polish musicologist Tadeusz Kaczyński, a member of the Warsaw Autumn programme committee. Soon he began to suggest including some of the works that had impressed him (e.g. Kutavičius's *The Small Spectacle* or his First String Quartet) in the Polish programmes of the festival, and he published a positive review of the new Lithuanian music in the journal *Ruch muzyczny*.[32] However, the works proposed by Kaczyński were not included in the festival programmes. The path of Lithuanian music to the official stages, and the turning point of its reception in Poland, were determined by the informal relations between Lithuanian and Polish musicians. Krzysztof Droba, a Polish musicologist and concert organiser who attended the second Soviet Lithuanian Music Festival, encouraged the dissemination and reception of Lithuanian music in Poland based on a different set of values. On his initiative, starting in 1977, Lithuanian music was performed at independent festivals in Stalowa Wola, Baranów and Sandomierz, a private festival of Krzysztof Penderecki in Lusławice and the official Warsaw Autumn. As a result, the reviews of the Lithuanian Chamber Orchestra's concert at the Warsaw Autumn Festival of 1978 were focused on the *Dzukian Variations* (1974) by Kutavičius; similarly, the significant stages on the path to the international reception of this music were marked by that composer's portrait concerts at Poland's independent festivals (from 1979 onwards) and a performance of his oratorio *Last Pagan Rites* (1978) by Polish musicians at the Warsaw Autumn in 1983. Polish institutions commissioned works from Kutavičius, Balakauskas and Bajoras; the neo-Romantic generation of

31 "Įdomios, bet mums visai nepažįstamos muzikos fejerverkas" (Juodelienė 1988, p. 127).
32 Kaczyński 1977.

young composers also began to get increasing attention at this time.[33] These developments were a result of horizontal exchange, of informal cooperation between individuals and institutions – a cooperative trend that progressed swiftly and resulted in the Polish contemporary music scene becoming an unofficial axiological centre for the dissemination of modern Lithuanian music in the late Soviet period. Poland's contemporary music scene was the most important such platform in Eastern Europe, providing a modern identity for the musical traditions of a geographical region (including Lithuania) that was challenging Soviet ideology. Polish music criticism was responsible for consistently advocating the image of 'exotic' Lithuanian music. Feedback mechanisms were also in place, and these processes influenced developments in the local canon of composers and their works. Shifts in artistic, moral and social attitudes in the 1970s, as well as shifts in the self-image of musicians, facilitated interrelationships between Lithuanian and foreign musicians. At the same time, the Soviet music festivals were official events that were being transformed into centres of informal networking.

The events targeted at international audiences had a positive impact on Lithuanian national self-perception. They consolidated the establishment of a burgeoning Lithuanian music through prominent works by the middle and older generations of composers. International reviews helped to cement musical, national identities that were in turn heavily influenced by postmodern definitions of cultural diversity and individual creativity that placed an emphasis on cultural nativism. There was a positive shift in the international reception of Lithuanian music, allowing it to dissociate itself from representations of musical worlds that relied on ideological, Cold War confrontation, and to recognise idiomatic configurations of a national modernism. Axiological centres for the spread of Lithuanian music emerged in the extranational cultural environment, such as in Warsaw and Moscow, in which there was a clear distinction between the vertical, official relationships and the horizontal, informal relationships that helped to disseminate Lithuanian music. The latter were reliant primarily on Polish and, in part, on (East) German personalities on the music scene. The national and international reception of Lithuanian music also led to tensions and ideological sanctions in the Soviet Bloc.[34]

## Conclusion: The impact of the Soviet Lithuanian music festivals

Let us now come back to the commercial aspects of Lithuanian music exports. Even in Soviet times, there was no unanimity about the significance of festivals regarding increased international exposure and commercial efficiency. For example, when asked in 1987 about contacts established during such festivals and his response to the dissemination of music, the composer Osvaldas Balakauskas expressed a fairly reserved attitude, stressing that merely sending scores to publishers did not constitute a serious presence in foreign media or on the concert scene abroad: "Our works abroad automatically enter the competitive environment first as a commodity and not as art that is better or worse".[35] In spite of muffled praise from the Lithuanian Branch of VAAP about the results of festivals, the commercial impact of these events was

33 Krzysztof Droba also wrote extensively about Lithuanian music in cultural periodicals and academic publications in various countries. Some of these publications have been reprinted in a collection of his writings in Lithuanian (Droba 2018).

34 In the 1980s, political reasons meant that the cultural periodicals of the USSR were restricted in the information that they could provide on cultural events in Poland. This is why many texts by Vytautas Landsbergis and other musicologists were censored or not published. For example, Landsbergis's article on the Baranów festivals, prepared for publication in 1984, was not published until 1989 (Landsbergis 1989).

35 Based on interviews with the composer in 1986/87, in which he admitted that it was after 1977 that his music began to be heard abroad. Quoted after Balakauskas 2000, pp. 263, 275.

negligible – in terms of actual contracts with publishers, or scores and music recordings issued. From the standpoint of the music economy, the music exports encouraged by festivals ought rather to be discussed in the context of shifts in cultural policy.

Any attempt to define the results of those festivals ought to focus on their quality of impact, not the quantity, as the former is more important for the international dissemination of Lithuanian music. When we compare performances of Soviet Lithuanian music before the mid-1970s to those that were given after the festivals, we can identify several compositions that fairly accurately define the then international image of Lithuanian music. Before the 1970s, the best-known Lithuanian work abroad was the Concerto for Violin and Orchestra (1948) by Balys Dvarionas, a work that was awarded the Stalin Prize. It became famous not because of the Prize, but because its musical characteristics made it a convenient, suitable choice for many performers to take into their repertoire. Other popular works during the period in question also supported the Soviet image of Lithuanian music. In the 1970s, the most popular piece of Lithuanian music was Vytautas Barkauskas's Partita for Solo Violin op. 12 (1967) – a mixture of dodecaphony, neo-folklorism, blues and rumba that symbolised an escape from the traditions of socialist realism and Soviet modernism. Once again, its popularity was determined by its genre and style, and by the fact that it was promoted by Gidon Kremer from 1970 onwards. In the early 1980s, the image of Lithuanian music was dominated by the works of Bronius Kutavičius and especially by his cycle of so-called pagan oratorios (1970–1986), which were described by local and international critics as an example of the Lithuanian exotic avant-garde – being an intuitive exploration of Lithuania's primeval nature and the epiphanic image of a lost paradise.[36]

The international dissemination of Lithuanian music was strongly influenced by fluctuations in the foreign policy of the USSR and by inconsistent changes in its variously isolationist cultural policies. However, during the late Soviet period in particular, when the official discourse was largely ignored, local initiatives and informal ties became more important than exchanges and collaboration through the central authorities or national organisations. Even the scope of foreign concert tours and music exchanges arranged through official channels revealed the rather exclusive status of art music in the USSR: political and economic leverage became strongly intertwined, and in the late Soviet period, economic factors began to predominate, especially in the field of music. We do not possess accurate data about the international dissemination of the art of the Lithuanian Soviet Socialist Republic during the Soviet era, but the documentation of central Soviet institutions that implemented foreign cultural policy lets us assume that Lithuanian music enjoyed a rather exclusive position when compared with the other arts and was able to incorporate within it both local experiences and international artistic ideas, controversies and tensions.

The discussions about selecting works for export reveal a trend towards decentralisation, as evidenced by the intensified dissemination of music through all three channels discussed earlier, that is through hierarchical, vertical and horizontal exchange. The available documentation reveals that decisions concerning music exports were made at a local level, i.e. by the institutions of Soviet Lithuania, while central Soviet institutions were primarily responsible for providing the necessary channels for those exports. This fact allows us to consider music exports within broader considerations about the USSR and the peculiarities of its culture system. Perhaps the myth about the supposedly omnipotent central authorities is closely related to concepts of communism as totalitarianism and might be seen as analogous to the notion of the Communist Party's omniscience and omnipotence. However, this approach loses its validity,

36 Cf. Chłopecki 2007, p. 235.

especially when we consider the late Soviet period.[37] Those researchers supporting an alternative concept of the USSR as a failed modernisation project regard the increased decentralisation and differentiation of social and cultural life as significant arguments to support their views. Meanwhile, the representatives of macro-sociology, who adhere to the concept of communism as neo-traditionalism, suggest that the social and cultural structure of each Soviet republic or socialist country ought to be defined through comparative analysis. Following this approach, for example, the American sociologist Herbert Kitschelt has derived a unique typology: bureaucratic-authoritarian communism; national-accommodative communism and patrimonial communism. Based on this, he assigned the Soviet Baltic republics, Serbia and Slovakia to the same group of mixed national-patrimonial communism. According to Kitschelt, in states of this type, the authorities combined strategies of patronage with the policy of compromise.[38] To my understanding, in order to perform a deeper investigation of aspects of USSR music history such as the music economy and music exports, which have hitherto barely been studied, it is important to take into account a broader, more diverse spectrum of approaches that view the USSR as a historical phenomenon.

Fig. 1 Lithuanian performers preparing for a concert at the World Exposition in Montreal (from left to right): Virgilijus Noreika, Regina Kučaitė, Pranciškus Budrius and Danutė Juodvalkytė, Vilnius, 1967 (Photo by Marius Baranauskas, Lithuanian State Central Archive/LCVA).

37 For critique of this approach see Norkus 2007.
38 Kitschelt et al. 1999, pp. 19–42.


Fig. 2 Jonas Švedas on a tour of Soviet Lithuanian musicians in France, 1956 (Lithuanian Literature and Art Archive/LLMA).


Fig. 3 Musicologists Algirdas Ambrazas (Lithuania) and Dorothée Eberlein (West Germany) filming a TV programme, Vilnius, 1982 (Lithuanian Literature and Art Archive/LLMA).

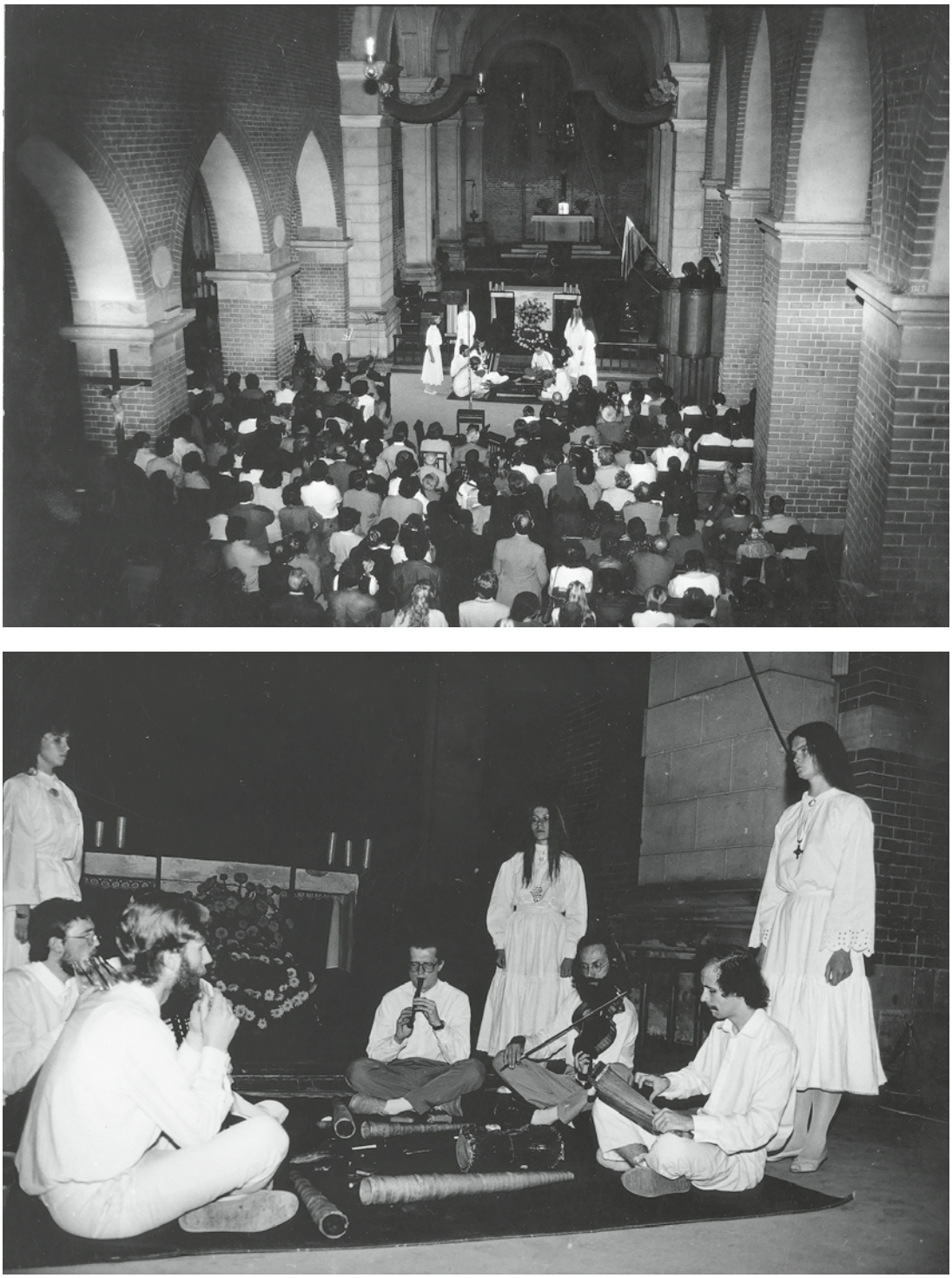

Fig. 4 Bronius Kutavičius's oratorio *From the Yotvingian Stone* (1983) performed by the New Music Ensemble (director Šarūnas Nakas). St. James's Church, Collectanea' 88 Festival, Sandomierz (Poland), 1988 (Photos by Sylwester Kryczko, Krzysztof Droba Collection).

Fig. 5 Performance of Bronius Kutavičius's oratorio *The Tree of the World* (1986) at the Warsaw Autumn Festival, 1990 (Photo by Włodzimierz Echeński, Krzysztof Droba Collection).

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