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**REPERTOIRE IN TERMS OF POLICY: CHANGES IN THE MUSICAL LIFE
OF LVIV SINCE SEPTEMBER 1939.**

*The totalitarian state tries, at any rate,
to control the thoughts and emotions of its subjects
at least as completely as it controls their actions.
(George Orwell)¹*

The focus of this article is consideration of music-critical activities of Lviv artists in totalitarian regime conditions. Among them – composers V. Barvinsky, V. Vytvytsky and musicologists Z. Lissa and S. Lobachevska. Are analyzed selected music-critical publications in Lviv Soviet press, 1939–1941 years – ukrainian newspapers «Free Ukraine», «Leninist youth» and polish «Red flag».

Keywords: musical critics, musical publicism, ideology, V. Barvinsky.

Numerous cultural traditions were established in Lviv and other cities of Western Ukraine long time ago, separate cultural centres were of a great importance in the development of spiritual life in society. After the Soviet authority came into power in Lviv in 1939 creative and artistic institutions and laboratories from all cultural spheres of action were factually organized anew and some of them just underwent reorganization (like, for example, State Conservatory, which was founded in 1939 on the bases of three institutions of higher musical education in Lviv) for the sake of the rise of their operation effectiveness. Therefore, numerous regulations about organization of new artistic and educational musical institutions are being declared so confidently. At the beginning of 1940 the following establishments started working in Lviv: Lviv Radio Station (with music department), Lviv Philharmonic Symphony Orchestra, State Academic Capella of Ukraine “Trembita”, Lviv Academic Opera and Ballet Theatre, Lviv Conservatory and some other. In fact, all of those institutions and establishments had already existed before, yet the new government meant to create a “semblance” of the very fact of cultural life organization in Lviv and its positive influence on the development of art.

Taking into consideration the subject of the current research, a thorough insight is provided into the artistic life of Lviv in the period of Soviet accession to power (1939-1941), in particular we consider the repertoire of Lviv Philharmonic and Opera Theatre, that was founded on the basis of previously liquidated theatrical institution – Big City Theatre – and renamed the Lviv Opera and Ballet.

Since 1934 it has been closed due to financial hardship. Vasyl Barvinsky writes about the resumption of the theatre's work in Lviv's press: "The transmission of Big City Theatre house to the Opera and Ballet Theatre exploitation by Soviet government bears in itself a huge importance for Lviv in terms of art. The fact that Ukrainian language will be spoken on Lviv operatic stage for the first time in history. And all that became a reality just now, under the Soviet rule, in the year when Lviv was liberated by the heroic Red Army" [6].

In 1939 this establishment's working group consisted of 215 individuals, and after the intense extension of Lviv theatrical life in August the next year it numbered already 500 individuals. Polish artists prevailed among the soloists – Frantsishka Slonievska (Franciszka Słonievska), Valeria Yenjeyevska (Waleria Jędrzejewska), Romuald Tsyganick (Romuald Cyganik), Frantsisheck Bedlevich (Franciszek Bedlewicz), Yezhy Fitio (Jerzy Fitio), Lesheck Reikhan (Leszek Rejchan), Sofia Chepeliuvna (Zofia Czepielówna). The principal stage designer and art director was a famous Lviv's artist Felix Vyhzhivalskyi (Feliks Wygrzywalski) [5, p. 111].

There also worked the following stage-directors: Oleksandr Ulukhanov, A.Lein and V.Mandziy, and also such artists as O.Khvostov (from Kharkiv), M.Ushyn (from Leninhrad). Mainly local performers remained the soloists. As to the stage-directors and art directors, those were invited from the other cities of the Soviet Union. In particular, Oleksandr Ulukhanov – a stage-director and a singer and a representative of Moscow school. Before he started working in Lviv he had been working with theatrical enterprises in Kazan, Saratov, Kyiv, Tbilisi, Baku, Odesa, Saint Petersburg; he used to be a stage-director in Kyiv, Petersburg, Swerdlow; in thirties he was a stage-director of 'Russian Opera' in Paris. "Lviv Opera Theatre becomes a significant cultural centre and its fame is spreading over the whole Europe" – emphasizes A.K.Tereshchenko [4, p.7].

Indeed, since its foundation (1900) renowned opera singers including Olexander Mishuha, Modest Menzinsky, Solomia Krushelnytska and others performed here.

Thus, the theatre possessed a great work and artistic outline, there was a 'star' constellation of various national schools (Polish, Jewish, Ukrainian, etc.) working here.

The opening took place in September with Ivan Dzerzhinsky's opera Quiet Flows The Don. Obviously, no coincidence that it was a Soviet socialist-realist opera composer who is

considered to be very marginal to date. The team was headed by chief conductor of the opera M. Pokrovsky. Besides, conductors Józef Lehrer and Jakub Mund also worked here. The latter (of a Jewish origin) was later shot by the Germans in 1943 in Yanivsky concentration camp near Lviv, where before that he led a camp orchestra.

As noted by Grzegorz Hrytsiuk in his work 'Polacy we Lwowie 1939-1944. Życie codzienne', "cultural life – theatrical and musical – in Lviv during the Soviet occupation in 1939-1941 was intense. The Soviet power tried to bring a certain feeling of positive and even flourishing into this area" [5, 112]. A significant role in this was played by the press which with the advent of the Soviet regime became the main instrument to influence the consciousness of society. Since the system of political censorship started to be pervasive, issue of books, magazines and newspapers without prior censorship and detailed inspection was prohibited. Support of the government was received only by a limited number of authors who, trying to work in line with the canons of 'socialist realism', adopted the 'Soviet platform'. Taking this into consideration, Lviv media massively highlighted the cultural life of the city. Philharmonic concerts, tours of famous singers, opera premieres – announcements of these events were rapidly printed on the pages of periodicals. Musical and critical publications were often found in three Lviv newspapers that existed at that time: Ukrainian-language 'Leninska Molod' ('Lenin Youth') and 'Vilna Ukraina' ('Free Ukraine') and the Polish-language 'Czerwony sztandar'. Based on the comparative analysis of these newspapers we can deduce an active artistic life of the city. Far-famed Soviet artists performed on the scenes of concert halls in Lviv (1939-1941) such as pianists – professor Abram Lufer, Jakov Flier and Isaac Mikhnovsky, winner of the All-Union and International Piano Competition Yakov Zak, violinists – David Oistrakh and Michael Fichtenholz. Composers Reinhold Gliere, singers – David Badridze, Maria Lytvinenko-Volgemut, Ivan Patorzhynsky, Mikhailo Donets, Oksana Petrusenko; People's Artist of Uzbek SSR Tamara Khanum, famous Polish singer Ewa Bandrowska-Turska also made guest appearances here.

Usually such arrangements and art events found their verbal display in Lviv press. For example, before the arrival of the famous Soviet violinist David Oistrakh (in April 1941) pre-announcements were published in three daily newspapers of Lviv. We know that the musician gave two concerts in Lviv. During the first, as reported in a review, the violinist

performed *'a series of successful adaptations'* [11]. During the other concert D.Oistrakh presented an interpretation of Tchaikovsky's Violin Concerto D-dur to Lviv audience. And as noted by the reviewer, *'the impression of the performance of this concert was memorable for all'* [11].

Mandatory attribute of a concert life at that time were artistic events with political implication. One of these is a series of philharmonic concerts called 'ten-day festival of the Soviet music', concerts or other events dedicated to the 'important' (Soviet) anniversaries, May Day celebrations and so on – with the typical ideological approach. At one of these concerts performed the director of the Kyiv Conservatory, professor and pianist Abram Lufer, where he performed a number of piano works by L.Revutsky, including his Concerto for Piano and Orchestra; and got acquainted with the activities of music institutions of the city.

Lviv welcomed guests, performers on tour and glorified musicians, and always richly rewarded them with applause and support. Practically every performer who visited this place lovingly recalled the warm reception by Lviv audience almost always. These words were written by the famous Polish singer Ewa Bandrowska-Turska after her concert in Lviv, *"I have never in my life had such attentive and musical listeners as in the Soviet Union. It is really a country of joy, songs and music. Toilers of the Soviet cities are able to appreciate art"* [10]. It's worth of note that in the above quotation an evident ideological interpretation of journalistic genre is clearly seen.

However, due to musical and critical publications and reviews we can follow all the metamorphosis also in the opera repertoire in a given period. Drilling down publications in press we can represent a list of performances that emerged in Lviv theatre repertoire between September 1939 and June 1941 in chronological order:

1939 – 1. Queen of Spades by P.I. Tchaikovsky; 2. Cossack Beyond the Danube by S.S. Gulak-Artemovsky; 3. Laurencia ballet by O.A. Crain;

1940 – Quiet Flows the Don by I.Dzerzhynsky; La Traviata by G.Verdi; Eugene Onegin by P.I. Tchaikovsky; Don Quixote ballet by L.Minkus; Madame Butterfly and La Boheme by G.Puccini.

1941 - Natalka Poltavka by M.Lysenko in the original edition of V.H. Kostenko; The

Red Poppy ballet by R.Glier; Carmen by G.Bizet; The Gypsy Baron by J.Strauss. The latest work of the theatre which meant to have been staged was a Ukrainian ballet Lily by K. Dankevich, as reported by Lviv newspaper 'Vilna Ukraina' (on June 20, 1941). However its premiere (which was effectively and actively prepared) was interrupted by the war. In addition, one of the publications of the 'Vilna Ukraina' newspaper about an 'opening of the opera season in Lviv' contained an approved plan of repertoire for 1940-1941 biennium. Among undelivered yet scheduled before the war performances there were the opera Taras Bulba by M.Lysenko, Aida by G.Verdi, The Bells of Corneville by Robert Planquette, The Daughter of Madame Angot by Charles Lecocq, music to Ostrovsky's drama Snow Maiden by Tchaikovsky, stage play of drama Peer Gynt by E.Grieg.

The rich repertoire comprised, as we can see, the diversity of national schools and contrast of genres – from light operettas and ballet to lyrical and dramatic operas. However, the common thread in the repertoire are operas in the style of socialist realism (such as Quiet Flows the Don), Soviet ballet about class inequality, bourgeoisie, etc. Exactly this was by far the most important function of an ideological machine in the field of culture – involvement of society into a mass art of Soviet focus in the newly found territories to the public which needed new ideological beliefs.

As noted above, all Lviv opera stage plays were immediately recorded in the form of enhanced publications in the press: annotation messages about an upcoming premiere and a review on it. The greatest paradox is that it was 'Soviet' operas and ballets receiving highly appreciated evaluation in press, often with several articles written by professional critics. Most recently a composer, director of the Lviv Conservatory Barvinsky acted as a latter. For example, four big articles in the 'Vilna Ukraina' by various authors were devoted to the premiere of the opera Quiet Flows the Don by Ivan Dzerzhinsky (at two pages of the newspaper). Among them there was a large-scale professional article by Barvinsky. It is no accident that Lviv Theatre began its concert season with this opera as it was a work in which Soviet composer Ivan Dzerzhinsky¹ brightly embodied the basic tenets of the dominant style of the time – Socialist Realism.

³ Quiet Flows the Don is the first opera of the composer. It was included, according to D.Shostakovich's recommendation, into the plan [of the Leningrad Maly Opera Theatre](#), in October 1935 it was staged and soon became a part of the repertoire of many musical theatres in the country. The first edition of the vocal score was issued with a dedication of the opera to

As A.Tereshchenko marks, since its premiere at the Maly Theatre, "the opera Quiet Flows the Don is staged in many theatres of the country manifesting realistic aspects of modern opera, 'new tone' which can be heard in a live current folk-song language. The play produced by a young theatre troupe in Lviv was successful and had a great response" [4, p.10-11]. Creative composition of the opera mostly remains the same as in previous productions. In addition to the familiar names – M.Tregubov, A.Ulukhanov, M.Pokrovsky, F.Slonevska, F.Bedlevych, L.Landau, R.Tsyhanik – the author of the review A.Liev ('Czerwony sztandar') emphasizes the good work of the decorator Khvostov. Overall printed reviews were quite positive and rave indicating the great success of the opera. Only V.O. Barvinsky in his article called it quite clearly a 'full-scale performance' [9]. Obviously, to review the works on such topics most talented critics were needed who were artists in words and possessed an authoritative opinion, and occupied an important place in public life. Vasyl Barvinsky as a famous composer and musical figure, director of Lviv Conservatory (at the time), successfully executed a mission of music criticism showing all his verbal skills. *"Quiet flows the Don was one of the most successful attempts to give shape to a classic Soviet opera. Its libretto is based on the background of the novel of Sholokhov, under the same title in which personal tragedy of its heroes fits in closely with major historical events which shaked to foundation old world of oppression and exploitation"* [9]. Very aptly and correctly he criticizes the musical side of the opera giving sensible and reasonable comments, *"The music language itself does not yet possess any distinct individual features and is not meant to innovative trends. However, in this first attempt of the young composer we can sometimes feel a new flavour, so characteristic of the best Soviet mass songs"* [9].

The same task was probably assigned to Barvinsky when writing a review on Ludwig Minkus's ballet Don Quixote. The biggest difficulty of the presented articles lied especially in the art of giving not too critical, positive assessment of staging of the ballet. Barvinsky writes openly about questionable artistic merit of musical canvas but he is still regardful, *"One shouldn't mean any serious artistic value to Minkus's music written for the ballet Don Quixote, because neither form nor content of these solitary, barely coherent between one*

D.Shostakovich. In the second edition I.Dzerzhinsky withdrew the dedication under the influence of the editorial [Muddle Instead of Music](#) in the newspaper [Pravda](#).

another production numbers do not cause interest" [7]. However, in two other reviews on this staging in the newspapers 'Leninska Molod' and 'Czerwony sztandar' none of the authors did not dare to express such thoughts exactly. And vice versa – they have been too generous in their judgements, positively expressing musical and critical evaluation of the team work and the composer's music in general. Barvinsky also focuses on a great importance of another fact. The musical side of the work has become of much better quality as revised by composer J.Kofler, who "managed to link all individual production numbers into a more organic fusion, writing a prologue and epilogue and a few insertions to it" [7].

An important event for the city was the arrival of the composer Reinhold Gliere. This is stated in a review on staging of his ballet *The Red Poppy*. *"The name of the composer Gliere is widely known and popular throughout the Soviet Union. Our city have recently had the honor to host him here and to discover him as a conductor and composer of symphonic music. The Red Poppy (1926-27) is the first ballet based on Soviet motives, the first successful attempt to create a new form of Soviet ballet"* [12].

The fact of R.Gliere's arrival to the city is also mentioned by Barvinsky. In his review on staging of his ballet, the composer said, *"This is the first successful attempt to create a ballet on the Soviet theme"* [8]. And the best evidence is a saying that depicts the great influence of the Soviet ideology on the artist, *"With the new calibre and flourishing of musical culture of the city that began on the day when the Soviet regime was established in the lands of Western Ukraine, the ranks of prominent musical figures, composers and performers have grown"* [8].

Examining the cultural and art publications of Lviv daily newspapers (1939-41), we can make some conclusions about the musical and, in general, artistic life of the city. A sharp change in the political situation in Galicia impacted cultural life of the region and its interpretation in periodicals. These publications give reason to consider art an ideological weapon in the hands of those who rules it. Especially if it is a mass art, where the usual concert repertoire acts only as a means of progressive influence in order to bring up a 'new man' and build a 'new society'. Ukrainian independence made it possible to objectively evaluate the study period rejecting ideological dogma.

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