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LITHUANIAN BALLET. THE BEGINNING OF THE FORMATION OF THE NATIONAL REPERTOIRE.

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Abstract

The restoration of the ballet and the classical repertoire in the post-war period was one of the most difficult in the history of Lithuanian ballet. However, with the appearance of ballet master in chief V. Grivickas, his quests and development of a heroic theme in Lithuanian ballet, bringing ballets “Ant marių kranto” (*On the Seashore*, 1953) and “Audronė” (*Audrone*, 1957) to the national repertoire laid the foundation for the formation of national art.

The purpose of this research was to identify, analyze and bring into the art science the stages of the formation of the national repertoire of the Lithuanian ballet that were not previously actualized.

Research methodology. The phenomenon of Lithuanian ballet is considered as a multidimensional subject, which includes the actual stage form, musical and choreographical lexicon, the problems of the formation of the performing school, as well as the historical and cultural context of the creation of stage choreography works in Lithuania 1928–1987. The research uses the principles developed by Russian art criticism to describe and analyze artistic processes and works of choreographic art.

This article is a part of the first scientific work of such scale, dedicated to the performances of the national repertoire of the Lithuanian ballet and the problems of its national identity.

Keywords: Lithuanian ballet, choreographer, ballet, Vytautas Grivickas, “On the Seashore”, “Audrone”, national repertoire, Lithuania.

Introduction

In 1944, the State Opera and Ballet Theater of the Lithuanian SSR was forced to revive and recover from the serious losses caused by the war. Many people emigrated, not only the absolute majority of the ballet troupe, but also some of the orchestra musicians. For more than one year the theater shared the hardships experienced by the entire war-ravaged country: there were serious problems with heating, lighting, there were not enough costumes, high-quality ballet shoes, etc.

Relations of the theater's leadership, its masters, with the administrative bodies that supervised the culture on behalf of the authorities (including the repertoire policy) were also difficult. Being essentially similar in their ideological content to the controversial battles of the 1930s (see chap. 1), the clashes of the creative staff and management bodies of the post-war period from the position of today are often perceived as "repertoire terror" [1, p. 48]. The theater, which was reasonably focused on restoring primarily the classical repertoire, was tasked with unreasonable tasks of urgently filling the poster with new productions on topical issues – clearly without understanding the specifics of musical theater, without taking into account the lack of a full-fledged performing school in the republic and other problems of the era. However, in the period 1944-1948. The performances of the pre-war repertoire in 1948–1955 were actively returning to the stage. "One or two ballets

were staged or renewed annually" [1, p. 48].

Relocation to Vilnius in 1947 (which, in principle, was logical for the theater, which had a republican status, and in this regard, played a serious educational role for the national Lithuanian culture, which in the capital, which had belonged to Poland for many years, was not predominant) was also associated with a number of problems. Not all theater employees were ready to take such a trip, especially considering the small salaries. And although the move still brought some improvements to the theater's everyday life, creative problems continued to accompany it. Including the aggravated disagreements between the main choreographer Kebauskas and one of the young promising dancers Vytautas Grivickas, who also dreamed of a choreographer's career and aspired to an appropriate education, which was impossible to obtain in Lithuania.

Research methods

Phenomenon of Lithuanian Ballet is regarded in the study as a *multidimensional phenomenon*, including its own theatrical form, musical and choreographic vocabulary, problems of formation of performing schools, as well as historical and cultural context of the creation of works of stage choreography in Lithuania of 1928 – 1987 years. This work uses the *principles developed by Russian art criticism* to describe and analyze artistic processes and works of choreographic art.

¹ For problems of the period, see in more detail: [2, b. 10–18].

Results

Joined the ballet troupe after three years of training in the ballet studio (1944), V. Grivickas in 1947 was sent to Moscow by the decision of the artistic council of the theater and successfully entered the choreography department of GITIS, where R. V. Zakharov was the master, who claimed that dance in the art of ballet “is not an end in itself, but a unique means” [3, p. 41] to show life and human characters. It is logical that the creative search for the young choreographer was aimed at “means of creating a picture of the life of his contemporaries and ways to connect classical dance with Lithuanian folklore” [3, p. 42].

After graduating from GITIS in 1952, Grivickas returned to the theater (since 1953 he was awarded the title of Academic)² where in 1954 he took the post of chief choreographer. An important and predominant part of his work was the renewal of the classical repertoire, and at the same time he was of the opinion that “ballet cannot be a museum with a permanent exhibition,” and the modern choreographer has the right to create a new version of the classical ballet that can cause more interest of the viewer [3, p. 42].

As a thesis, the young choreographer staged D. L. Klebanov’s ballet “Svetlana” (1939), the plot of which was dedicated to the Komsomol heroine, who repels foreign saboteurs at a certain socialist

construction site. Having the premiere in Moscow (Bolshoi Theater, with Olga Lepeshinskaya in the title part), performances in Gorky, Kharkov and Lviv, the ballet did not become either Gryvitskas’s favorite brainchild or the “hit” of the Vilnius scene – but, of course, enriched the choreographer’s work experience over modern material. More importantly, the artistic search for Grivickas, who continued and developed the development of the heroic theme begun by Kelbauskas in the Lithuanian ballet, is due to the appearance of the national repertoire of the ballets “On the Seashore” and “Audrone”.

Examining the ballet of Julius Juzeliūnas³ from the perspective of today (graduate of the Kaunas Conservatory, who completed postgraduate studies in Leningrad and defended his thesis on the topic “Lithuanian folk song in the symphonic works of some Lithuanian composers”) [5, p. 49] choreography composed by V. Grivickas and A. M. Messerer in co-authorship, one cannot but admit how difficult the problem was solved by the authors. Young chronologically, not yet fully regained his strength after the war years, the Lithuanian ballet embodied the story of the life of contemporaries in the play “On the Sea”⁴ . According to contemporaries, controversial in some dramatic aspects, ballet, however, not only entered the classics of national art, but also became widely popular

² At the same time, Lithuanian ballet figures received awards and titles: J. Uželiūnas, V. Grivickas, B. Kelbauskas, H. Banis, G. Sabaliauskaitė, T. Sventickaitė, P. Baravikas, R. Janavičiūtė, M. Jozapaitė.

³ Julius Juzeliūnas (1916–2001) — Lithuanian composer (one of the representatives of “Baltic minimalism”), teacher. People’s Artist of the Lithuanian SSR (1966). Pupil J. Gruodis. For more details see: [4, p. 134–138]

⁴ It should be noted that the work of Juzeliūnas – Grivickas was not only not a Lithuanian innovation, but even ahead of the appearance on the stage of the ballet about the workdays of Soviet fishermen “Coast of Hope” (comp. A. Petrov, ballet. I. Belsky). The dramatic concept appeared in the author of the libretto by Y. Slonimsky as early as 1950, but the first production took place in the Leningrad State Academic Theater named after S. M. Kirov only in 1959

outside the republic [4, p. 134].

Creating the libretto of the future performance, Grivickas undertook a complete immersion in the material: he went to the Baltic coast, where he not only watched from the side the life of the E. Telman fishing artel, noting the typical character traits and local customs, but also went out with the fishermen to the night sea. Several versions of the text were written before the original dramatic plot appeared, which could be embodied by means of dance [3, p. 34].

It was Grivickas who, for the first time in the drama of Lithuanian ballet, was considering the theme of labor heroism. Essentially new, which has become relevant for national art only within the framework of the socialist paradigm (a worldview that perceived labor not as a biblical punishment, a means of exploitation or a painful necessity, but as an honorary duty of a citizen, a conscious, respectable activity aimed at realizing professional abilities and for the benefit of the native countries), the theme certainly required for its embodiment a special choreographic language and such dramatically expressive content that allows about to escape and pathetic-naive (in this situation) the language of traditional ballet pantomime, and inappropriate to a naturalistic reproduction of the labor process. “Lyrical and dramatic scenes of the life of ordinary Soviet people” [6, p. 3], the line of the love triangle and the line of courageous labor of fishermen, the opposition of diametrically opposed value systems and moral choice – the plot elements resulted in the effectively “difficult way of forming a person of a new ethics and morality” [7, p. 111]. Obviously, the actual problem for the Lithuanian of a certain historical moment sounded convincingly and on a universal scale, as

evidenced by the active interest in the Lithuanian ballet art, caused everywhere in the USSR by touring performances [8, p. 169–184] of the first Soviet Lithuanian ballet.

“Against the background of the mean, but attractive landscapes of the Baltic states (painters J. Jankus and I. Surkevicius), seemingly ordinary, ordinary paintings arise” [6, p. 3]. In the fishing village, where a new marina is being built and the dramatic upheavals of the love of brigadier Jonas for Caste, who is faithfully waiting for his front-line fiancé Marius, labor days do not pass peacefully. Rich peasant Krezas and former Gestapo resident Gustas hiding at his place invent more and more wrecking plans. Playing on the feelings of Jonas, who was jealous of Caste for finally returning Marius, the enemies of the Soviet system provoke a quarrel – and the fishermen leave for the night sea without a foreman. A storm is approaching, and Gustas extinguishes the lights on the lighthouse. But Jonas, who was near, enters into battle with the enemy, and, despite a severe wound, manages to light the lighthouse. At the cost of his life, he prevents the death of fishermen (including his rival). The ballet ends with the opening of a new marina and the wedding of Marius and Caste.

“Dramatically clear, written in captivating national color music gives broad opportunities for actors to reveal the whole ideological and artistic depth of the ballet” [7, p. 111]. Using not only Lithuanian melodies, but also material from Russian, Latvian, Estonian folklore, “Juzeliūnas proved himself in ballet as a wonderful lyricist. The most vivid lyrical paintings include adagio and girl dance from the third act. The adagio of the first act, and especially the picture “The Tempest” in the second act, are

characterized by strong drama” [4, p. 50], the theme of creative work is clearly reflected in the orchestral introduction to the second act [9, p. 23]. The musical characteristics of positive heroes are based on folk melodies, negative characters are “outlined with ominous, condensed psychological tones”, and the composer was able to “avoid deliberately disharmonious, anti-musical sound combinations” that could make the images of enemies clichéd. The musical score is distinguished by harmonious, effectively organized integrity: “Juzeliūnas does not tear off the attributes of the characters from the general color of the wonderful seaside nature, the joy of the attitude of the builders of new life; all this is perfectly expressed in music” [9, p. 24].

Despite the presence in the plot emphasized Soviet realities (for example, new longboats sent by the artel as a gift from the fraternal republics) and a completely clear division of the characters into enemies and heroes, the plot does not sin by unnecessarily serious, one-sided “posterity”. “The dramatic outline of the ballet “On the Seashore” is effective and danceable” [6, p. 3], it serves as a fruitful basis for creating stage images that are emotionally filled and diverse in their character. In the genre scenes imbued with good irony, “the incredulous Pliaugene, (J. Jovišaitė), the “don Juan” accountant Pliaugė (P. Baravikas), and a trio of characters who give the whole performance dynamism and liveliness: One (R. Janavičiūtė), Vitas (S. Bradilis) and Mikas (S. Bilida)” [3, p. 37]. The most dramatic and controversial of the heroes, as noted by A. Ruzgaite, was the foreman of the fishermen Jonas. Energetic and courageous, loving his friends, he is no stranger to selfish manifestations (which his enemies skillfully manipulate). But

betrayal is certainly alien to him, and he redeems his guilt at the cost of his life. In the ballet, Jonas is endowed with a vivid choreographic characteristic, and in the performance of Henrikas Kunavicius, dance and acting are organically linked [3, p. 34–35], in its variation “the power of a fisherman beating over the edge, the joy of courageous labor, forcing a person to face the insidious sea element every day” [6, p. 3].

Both dances and pantomime scenes are effectively saturated, “because Kaste’s dance is performed by G. Sabalyauskaite, who has the high gift of a ballet dancer – the ability to convey the rich and complex life of the human soul in intonations of movements. That is why plastic movements and the wide jumps of Marius – G. Banis, who opens the arms to his beloved girl at the hour of returning to his homeland, are excited. That is why the catchy and expressive gestures of Gustas – S. Goncharov give rise to concern; they immediately guess the predation of a person hostile to the friendly family of sailors” [6, p. 3].

The realities of fishing weekdays and holidays appear in ballet and are recognizably reliable, and stage rethought, fully “theatricalized”. So, in accordance with the proposed circumstances of the plot, “the director throughout the performance tries to show that the action takes place on the seashore. The whole team gives a small boat for Caste’s wedding, the young men raise the oars decorated with flowers, the sea god Bangputis participates in the ceremony” [3, p. 37].

Reviewers note the expressiveness of mass scenes, the charm of the national color of music and choreography, as well as the fundamentally important advantage of the performance: “The directors are

not afraid of the specifics of ballet – the inevitable conventionality of expression that is inherent in dance art. They firmly know that choreography does not tolerate direct imitation, naturalism, not only in fantastic ballets, but also in the reflection of “ordinary” life. In this sense, one of the best scenes in music depicting the alarm before the storm is indicative. It seems that screams of frightened birds are heard in the orchestra, the noise of a stormy sea is growing, and on the stage the dancing girls are closing in strict lines, and the flapping of their hands, brush movements, repeating again and again, resemble the alarming flapping of wings” [6, p. 3].

Grivickas, who continued the search begun by his predecessors (including Kelbauskas) for enriching the classical basis of ballet with movements of Lithuanian folk dance, certainly managed to give his work (the first Soviet Lithuanian ballet) a recognizable and organic national flavor. “The waltzes of the first and second actions are very peculiar, in which the movements and steps are intertwined with the rotation characteristic of the Lithuanian dance paired with arms crossed. The stylized traditional youth polka is also expressive, in which all the friends and girlfriends of Kaste participate” [3, p. 36]. A. Ruzgaitė emphasizes that classical and folklore choreography in the Grivickas ballet not only coexist, but make up a well-organized, effectively justified synthesis: “The most ballet are the dances of a bachelorette party. The traditional movements of the Lithuanian dance “Sadute” expressed not a sad mood, as in the original, but a cheerful and bright mood. And this is understandable, since in Lithuanian folklore, the “Sadute” dance expressed severe changes in the girl’s life, and the fate of Kaste is different – joyful.

Girls like swans floating around the stage at high half-fingers, holding in their hand a large ring. And with Kaste rejoice in her happiness. The dance suddenly ends... clinging to each other, the girls stop. Feeling the approaching storm, the girls line up in a triangle, as if birds were ready to fly away. The inner anxiety of the girls is expressed in the movements of the hands, reminiscent of the Lithuanian dance “Blizdingele” [3, p. 36–37].

Shown at the Moscow Decade of Lithuanian Art (1954), “On the Seashore” was recognized as one of the most significant achievements in the history of Lithuanian ballet. According to the reviews of Soviet criticism⁵ (which noted the virtues of the libretto, music, artists and orchestra conducted by R. Geniušas) – even one of the best ballets of our time and an example of a play on a relevant realistic theme [13, p. 3]. In the years following the premiere, ballet performances were performed in Riga (1954), Lviv (1956), and Tallinn (1958).

In 1975, an updated ballet appeared on the stage of a building specially built for the State Academic Opera and Ballet Theater of the Lithuanian SSR. In the new version, the directors almost did not depart from the old one, “they simply abandoned excessive everydayism and ethnography” [8, p. 173], Grivickas “only reduced some pantomime scenes, partially expanded the dance sphere, which made the performance more compact, dynamic. A certain reduction in the number of characters made it possible to focus the attention of the audience on the main characters” [14, p. 2]. The stage designer J. Jankus, designing the 1975 edition, relied on the elements and findings of the Estonian ballet production [14, p. 2], already recognized as a classic work of national Lithuanian art.

⁵ See also: [10, 11, 12].

Discussion.

The year of the premiere of the *first Lithuanian Soviet ballet* “On the Seashore” was marked by two more important events for the history of national stage choreography. A choreographic department opens on the basis of the Vilnius School of Music (the future National School of Arts named after M. K. Čiurlionis). No less serious should be considered the release of the first edition of the book “Lithuanian Folk Dances”, which contained (in addition to a description of ten dances, including recommendations for the director) a historical essay, detailed chapters devoted to the characteristic features of Lithuanian folk dances and costumes. The same author in the introduction of the book “Lithuanian Folk Games”, published in 1955, for the first time “classifies by function and means of choreographic expression” [15, p. 5] dance folklore of Lithuania.

By 1955, there were already 15 music schools operating in the republic; the State Conservatory of the Lithuanian SSR (founded in 1949 after the unification of the Vilnius and Kaunas Conservatories) played the role of the largest center for music education, where the departments of the history and theory of music, folk instruments, and choral conducting were opened for the first time, and the theater department as well. Outstanding masters of art teach here: T. Petrauskas, A. Stašavičiute, B. Dvarionas, I. Švyadas, J. Siparis, St. Vainunas, J. Čiurlionite and others [5, p. 63–64].

It should also be noted that by the mid-1950s, the State Folk Song and Dance Ensemble of the Lithuanian SSR was already very popular and successful not only in Lithuania but also abroad: Letuva toured in Moscow and Leningrad, in Latvia, Estonia, and Belarus, Ukraine, Moldova, Armenia, Georgia; the merits of the ensemble leaders⁶ are awarded with prizes. “The basis of the ensemble’s repertoire is Lithuanian folk songs, dances, games, instrumental plays, montages, as well as original songs and dances of the fraternal Soviet peoples. songs and instrumental plays of Soviet composers and classical works” [5, p. 47–48]. The work of the Folk Art Houses actively contributes to the preservation and development of the richness of folk culture (for them, repertoire collections, methodical literature, seminars and consultations are held), the Republican Lithuanian Song and Dance Holidays are resumed (J. Lingis becomes their artistic director and chief choreographer in 1950). This is the cultural context for the development of Lithuanian ballet during the creation of the “heroic” performances of V. Grivickas.

Authoritative theater experts such as J. A. Golovashenko, N. I. Elyash, prominent musicologist I. L. Gusin, etc., write about the tour performances of the Opera and Ballet Theater of the Lithuanian SSR of the 1950s. Graduates from the best schools of Soviet ballet (G. Sabaliauskaitė, H. Kunavičius and others) already dance in the ballet troupe of these years [16, p. 4]. Recognizing the achievements of the Lithuanian ballet in mastering the classical

⁶ In particular, Juozas Lingis (1919–1984), dancer and teacher, collector of Lithuanian national folklore, founder of modern Lithuanian choreography, future People’s Artist of the USSR (1970), author of books on Lithuanian folk dances.

⁷ Audrone — «storm»; Ugnius — «fire».

repertoire, the critic also admits: “the theater has its own traditions that have developed with the older generation of the troupe, there are also capable youth. But it should be noted that the Lithuanian ballet should expand its collective, persistently improve the dancing skills of the artists, and replenish the troupe with educated people. No matter how difficult it is, it is necessary for the theater, especially since it is called academic” [17. p. 3]. Obviously, the main choreographer no less deeply understands the problems and tasks of creative growth facing the troupe. Therefore, in 1955, on his initiative, a group of young Lithuanian dancers went to study at the Leningrad State Art University (the release of the Lithuanian course took place in 1959).

Meanwhile, Grivickas poses increasingly large-scale tasks to himself. The successful experience of creating the ballet “On the Seaside”, in which the images of Soviet Lithuania were embodied, makes the choreographer think that the national ballet “has no historical folk work of its own”, which could tell “about the unity of the Lithuanian people in the face of the enemy, purity of love and sacrifice”, about how “personal happiness becomes secondary in the face of danger threatening the homeland” [8, p. 169–184]. The dramaturgy of the new ballet (again Grivickas becomes the author of the libretto) this time relies on the legendary fate of the era of King Mindaugas (13th century), touches on the problem of maintaining national Lithuanian identity in the fight against the Crusader conquerors. The history of the unification of Lithuania becomes the background for the tragic love of Audrona and Ugnius .

The plot of the couple in love – “the theme is primordial in literature and in art. A lot of wonderful works that have survived centuries have been created on this subject”⁸ . Whatever era, no matter how fantastic the landscape may be surrounded by lovers, their very presence presupposes a lyrical line of action that allows the choreographer to realize images on the stage that require the maximum application of artistic skill and talent. Not without reason in the dramaturgy of the “heroic” ballets of Grivickas a number of similar elements “rhyme”: lovers who find themselves in a network of enemy intrigues; involuntary betrayal of the hero; signal light, which is ignited at the cost of life, etc. At the same time, the images and characters of his heroes can be very different: if for the production of “On the Seashore” the librettist looked for typical, recognizable features for the characters, then for the heroes “Audrona” needed almost archetypal: human, but enlarged, “heroically” raised” [18, p. 3]. It is no accident, deeply thought out in this light, that the composition of the orchestra is complemented by a piano and organ, an introduction to the musical score of the prologue and finale of the choir, as well as the director’s decision to create a compositional “frame” for his work: it is opened and completed by mass scenes arranged like monumental murals – like messages to contemporaries from their heroic ancestors [19, p. 2].

Weaving in the plot the historical events of the 13th century, the author of the libretto gives “the whole story a halo of legend” [18, p. 3], reaching “almost the Shakespearean scope. The personal fates of the heroes here are inseparable from

⁸ See.: “Vain Precaution”: a collection of articles for staging ballet at the State Academic Maly Opera House. – Leningrad:

MALEGOT, 1937. P. 7. 51 беттің астында тұрады

historical events of truly epoch-making significance” [6, p. 3]. Having led her lover into battle, the boyar daughter Audrone is forced to confront her father’s intentions to marry Prince Kunotas. The girl rejects the claims of the prince, but the power is on his side – and Audron, who is also assured of the death of Ugnius, turns out to be a wife and a captive in the prince’s tower. Ugnius also becomes a victim of deception: having learned about the alleged betrayal of his beloved, he despairingly conspires with the crusaders to avenge Kunotas. Bursting into the castle, he kills the prince and rushes to Audrona, but she horrifiedly repels her lover, who led the enemies of his homeland. On a high tower, a girl lights a signal fire – and dies, having managed to warn the Lithuanians about the attack... Ugnius, who realizes his guilt, dies, trying to save Audrone. The Lithuanian army liberates the castle, the people mourn the Audrone and vow to take revenge on the crusaders.

This time the co-author of Grivickas was the young composer Juozas Indra⁹ (1918–1968), composer, singer, conductor. A graduate of the Kaunas Conservatory (1941), where he studied singing and composition, an artist of the Kaunas opera, a future honored art worker of the Lithuanian SSR, Indra did not escape the tragic post-war upheavals. In 1945, he was arrested and exiled, in 1945–48. sang in the music and drama theater and philharmonic society of the polar city of Vorkuta. However, already in 1948 he continued his career as a soloist of the opera company and conductor in Vilnius, and then in Kaunas (since 1954 he was the main conductor of the Kaunas Music and Drama Theater). The ballet “Audrone” was the first major work of the

composer, who wrote three versions of the score, trying, according to Indra, “to convey to the viewer the harsh historical truth and to use the stage images to show the feelings and aspirations of the characters” [4, p. 98]. Solving such serious creative tasks, Indra “deeply studied national folklore, ancient folk melodies. As a result, an interesting work was created, deep in both content and form.

The music of the new Lithuanian ballet is expressive and full of gentle romance. The musical characteristic of the main characters – Audrone and Ugnius, representatives of the people who are the main character of the work is accurate” [20, p. 3]. The Lithuanian musical folklore ballet score “often quoted authentically, but to an even greater extent used to create original musical images and intonations that are close to folk. The high professional mastery of J. Indra manifested itself in peculiar, fresh harmonies, rhythm, in an interesting orchestration” [13, p. 3].

Criticism emphasizes that the director managed to avoid the characteristic romantic cliches in the image of the Lithuanian Middle Ages. There are no pagan altars on the stage, archaic priests do not appear, etc. “Throughout the directorial system of the play, in its choreography, in the design of the artist J. Jankus, one can feel rigor, even severity, which seems very organic, for this heroic on topic and the spirit of the performance” [21, p. 3]. The color of the era is shown mainly by laconic and expressive stylized details: in one of the episodes, a tour killed in a hunt is carried out onto the stage, the horns of which are hung on a powerful trunk of a fake oak [3, p. 49]; the dark atmosphere of the crusader castle is created by high Gothic stained glass

⁹ Real name is Juozas Padleckis.

windows and black and white cloaks with crosses [22, p. 4], etc. Costumes, also stylized, are developed on the basis of rich historical and ethnographic material, mastered and rethought by the artist.

Against this thoughtfully-rigorous background, the choreographer “proved to be an inventive and thoughtful artist” [20, p. 3]. Modern criticism especially emphasizes the scale of the production, in which both large pantomime scenes and mass folk dances (which the show is replete with) “serve not only as a bright, colorful background of the performance, they are necessary for the development of the action, plot, no less important and interesting than the scenes, duets and adagios telling about the fate of the main characters of the work” [21, p. 3].

The full-fledged drama of the choreographic action was to a great extent predetermined by the work of the composer, who “first of all acts as a playwright, considering every step of his work, finding interesting means for expressing the content” [4, p. 99].

At the same time, Grivickas managed, both dramatically and choreographically, not only the images of the main characters, but also the dance characteristics of numerous supporting characters, even episodic ones. “That is why the comedic, provocative image of the young Skyrmute in the temperamental performance of the brilliantly dancing R. Janaviciute, the funny joker Dundis (V. Bradilis, S. Bilida), Giedre (A. Tamuleviciute), the girls from the castle (A. Ruzgaite) are remembered” [21, with. 3].

Musical and choreographic material allowed the performers of the main parts to create integral, original characters of the characters, to show skill and acting personality in the interpretation. Audrone performed by G. Sabaliauskaite and T.

Sventickaite are emotionally different, as criticism noted. So, the heroine of Sabaliauskaite is “a heroic soul in the guise of a modest, shy girl the softness and plasticity of her movements correspond to a heroic and at the same time deeply human image; great sincerity and immediacy of performance give the ballet heroine warmth and sincerity” [18, p. 3]. Sventickaite “from the very beginning sets off in her heroine the traits of will and determination. Her Audrone is a proud, whole nature, in her the whole time burns a flame of anger, protest against rapist-crusaders, against the prince, who forced her to become his wife by force; in dance she conveys the determination of a pure and incorruptible soul” [21, p. 3].

The interpretations of the controversial image of Ugnius performed by G. Banis and G. Kunavicius are also unlike. Both dancers “do not forget that Ugnius is not only a lover, but also a brave warrior, a hero. Ugnius by G. Banis is valiant and courageous. Most of all he succeeds in scenes of courageous impulse or violent despair. G. Kunavicius at the beginning of the play is more lyrical, simple-minded, even naive. The heroic theme of the role does not arise immediately, but develops gradually. Kunavicius’ dance creates the lyrical charm of the image – easy. Romantically aspiring, plastically pure and accurate” [21, p. 3].

Reviewers unanimously note the expressive, graphically clear picture of the role of the ambitious, cruel Prince Kunotas, created by V. Grivickas exclusively by means of pantomime – the ballet master clearly deliberately, dramatically logically deprives his hero of the ability to dance, which only loving, capable of self-sacrifice and devotion to the soul express themselves [18, p. 3].

The unconditional value of ballet, the

1 and 2 acts of which are based mainly on the material of folk dances, which also occupy an important place in the 3 acts [3, p. 48-52], is a competent, organic fusion of national Lithuanian elements with the “language of classical choreography, with the motives of ancient, historical dances. The skillful use of the latter gives the performance a true historical flavor, conveys a sense of the era” [21, p. 3]. The soul of the Lithuanian people, the poetic originality of its culture, are reflected in the rhythmically diverse drawings and intonations of the lyrical girls’ round dance, cheerful village dances, ritual dances. One of the most expressive episodes is called the dance of Lithuanian warriors, “a rhythmically complicated gallop, behind whose external restraint one feels heroic impulsiveness and elation” [18, p. 3].

The new Lithuanian ballet, the “choreographic epic” about the heroes of antiquity, in addition to well-deserved praises, provoked well-reasoned criticisms: the dramatic art seemed too complicated in some episodes; “The composer does not always remain faithful to the melodic features of folk music. National color in solo performances is scarce” [20, p. 3]; “One cannot fail to notice the uniformity and poverty of solo male variations (a disadvantage, unfortunately characteristic of many of our ballets)” [21, p. 3]; verbose and static endings of acts; participation in the choir’s action was not always justified [3, p. 49–52].

Nevertheless, reviewers unanimously recognized that at the core of the performance is deeply integral, and all these controversial points do not detract from its obvious merits. Despite the fact that “an attempt to create such a work could not be difficult for the young Lithuanian ballet” [21, p. 3], the embodiment of the national theme by

means of stage choreography, using folklore material to enrich the language of ballet classics, was considered successful.

In 1969, the second edition of Audrone appeared – more intense and concise in drama, rid of several historical and everyday scenes, more conventional choreographic. “According to the idea of the scenographer Jankus, the whole action took place on a black background, for the historical time such stylized details as a window, a cross, a sword indicated, the costumes of dancers were lighter, not hindering movements” [8, p. 174]. The third edition, in which the number of actors was increased, was created by V. Grivickas in 1975 for the stage of the new theater building.

The period 1940-1957 for Lithuanian ballet can rightfully be considered “heroic”. In the conditions of a change in the socio-economic system, occupation and hardships of the post-war period, the national choreographic art managed not only to preserve its best achievements, but also to expand the experience of developing Lithuanian themes. The appeal of Lithuanian authors to the *themes of labor and civil feat, the preservation of national identity, the people’s struggle with oppressors and invaders*, of course, was a response to the challenge of the era. It is also important that the *heroic theme is the most organic soil for the development of the “big style” in stage art*, allowing you to introduce into the play really necessary mass scenes (requiring mature skill from both the choreographer and the artists).

Obviously, one of the central problems posed before the national ballet of 1940-1957 is the *problem of drama*, and its solution was found precisely in the heroic theme. Progress in this area moved from the “Bride” by B. Kelbauskas with

her pastoral charm and uncomplicated national romantic characters (heroics appear here only as an episodic motive and do not become really important, even in later editions, with unsuccessful attempts to “revolutionize”) – the already much more complex first Soviet libretto “On the Seashore” (containing a dramatic line of character development, posing the heroes with the problem of moral choice, and with the performers – the tasks of acting zhivaniya roles), and then – to the “choreographic epic”, the first Lithuanian historical ballet “Audronė” (very large scale in this period, the testimony of the maturity of the national choreographic art, mastered and a great form of performance and craftsmanship of the organic fusion of elements of classical and folklore).

The most significant thing in the period under review is the appearance in Lithuanian ballet of own choreographers who completed a performing school in Kaunas and enriched it with training from masters of the Russian school. And while choreographer Kelbauskas relied on the dancer’s experience, unconditional natural talent and sense of style, his follower and graduate GITIS Grivickas became the first holder of a diploma of a higher Soviet school in the history of Lithuanian ballet to inherit and develop the development of the oldest ballet schools in Russia. In the performances of V. Grivickas, the motives and innovations from the heritage of compatriots who were looking for ways of interaction between classical and folk choreography, received serious development, a solid professional basis for the implementation of which the choreographer received, learning from R.V. Zakharov.

It will be fair to admit that the Lithuanian ballet (and even more so the choreographer) school was in its infancy

during this period. It was only in 1953 that the choreographic department began working in the future Vilnius School of Arts. And, despite the fact that the national ballet already included a number of masters, whose experience should be passed on to youth, productive interaction with the oldest schools in Moscow and Leningrad continued to play a leading role in the training of young cadres [16, p. 4]. Moreover, the academic status of the theater, requiring a solid poster filled with classic names, also obliged the dancers to have adequate technical equipment. The ballet troupe of the State Opera and Ballet Theater of the Lithuanian SSR, taking into account all the problems of growth, turned out to be quite seriously prepared to carry out the most difficult tasks that the performances of the repertoire of the 1950s set before them [17, p. 3].

Towards the end of the period under review, the achievements of the Lithuanian ballet aroused well-deserved interest both among the audience and authoritative reviewers, who recognized the merits of the performances of the classical and national repertoire: “The searches of the theater deserve all support. It is indisputable that the performances of the Lithuanian ballet are original, deeply meaningful, permeated with the high ideas of our time” [6, p. 3]. It can be concluded that in the late 1950s, Lithuanian ballet approached the threshold of its maturity, since it was at that moment that it *acquired all the components necessary for full development*: stable state support as part of an academic theater institution; *extensive repertoire (including classics and works of national art)*; own (albeit extremely young) performing and composing school; constantly working choreographers who grew up in the national environment; a creative team of dancers, combining

representatives of the older generation, able to transfer their experience, and young, to whom this experience must be transferred. I want to emphasize the latter as a succession factor, extremely important for the formation of national art, which involves the transfer, preservation, study and development of traditions that determine the aesthetic style and direction of artistic search.

Conclusion

Concluding the conversation about the Lithuanian ballet of the 1940–1950s, one cannot but recall two brilliant duets of this period: Genovaitė Sabaliauskaitė

and Henrikas Banis, Tamara Sventickaitė and Henrikas Kunavicius. They danced the main parts in ballets recognized as national classics. Numerous reviews speak of their stage charm and performing skills [23, p. 44–47]. But for our study, it is equally important: it was in their performance that fragments of the performances “On the Seashore” and “Audrone” [24] remained on the film, thanks to which we can today experience the atmosphere of the era, see with our own eyes the birth of a national performing style.

For the Lithuanian ballet, a new period began, in which interaction with cinema

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ЛИТОВСКИЙ БАЛЕТ.

НАЧАЛО ФОРМИРОВАНИЯ НАЦИОНАЛЬНОГО РЕПЕРТУАРА

Аннотация

Послевоенный период восстановления балета и классического репертуара один из самых сложных в жизни литовского балета. Однако с появлением главного балетмейстера Витаутаса Гривицкаса поиски и развитие героической темы в литовском балете и появление в национальном репертуаре балетов «На берегу моря» (1953) и «Аудроне» (1957) заложили основу для формирования национального искусства.

Целью исследования было выявить, проанализировать и ввести в полноценный научный обиход ранее не актуализированные искусствоведением этапы формирования национального репертуара балета Литвы.

Данная статья является частью первой научной работы такого масштаба, посвященной спектаклям национального репертуара литовского балета и проблемам его национального своеобразия.

Ключевые слова: литовский балет, хореограф, балет, Витаутас Гривицкас, «На берегу моря», «Аудроне», национальный репертуар, Литва.

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ҰЛТТЫҚ РЕПЕРТУАРДЫ ҚАЛЫПТАСТЫРУДЫҢ БАСТАЛУЫ

Аңдатпа

Соғыстан кейінгі балет пен классикалық репертуарды қалпына келтіру литва балетінің ең күрделі кезеңдерінің. Алайда бас балетмейстер В. Гривицкастың пайда болуымен, оның Литва балетінде қаһармандық тақырыбын дамытуы мен ізденістері және «Теңіз жағасында» (1953) және «Аудронда» (1957) балеттерінің репертуарында пайда болуы ұлттық өнерді қалыптастыруға негіз болды.

Зерттеудің мақсаты бұрын соңғы өнертанушылық тұрғыда зерттелмеген Литва балетінің ұлттық репертуарын қалыптастыру кезеңдерін анықтау, талдау және толыққанды ғылыми айналымға енгізу болды.

Аталмыш мақала Литва балетінің ұлттық репертуарының спектакльдеріне және оның ұлттық ерекшелігі мәселелеріне арналған осындай ауқымдағы бірінші ғылыми жұмыстың бір бөлігі болып табылады.

Тірек сөздер: литва балеті, хореограф, балет, Витаутас Гривицкас. «Теңіз жағасында», «Аудронда», ұлттық репертуар, Литва.

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