

nians. The more intensive performing life of Lithuanians (symphonic orchestra, opera, conservatory) between 1925 and 1933 were of great importance. The revival of choruses and three song festivals in the region of Klaipėda (1927, 1933, 1938), proved the vitality of Lithuanian choral art.

The musical life of Little Lithuania and the region of Klaipėda which occurred in close interaction between Lithuanians and Germans up until 1940, is complex and multiple. Its research not only helps to reveal the important processes of Lithuanian national musical culture, but it also raises new questions. The answer to these questions will be found by investigating and studying further the archival sources.

**by the author**

**Danutė Petrauskaitė, Jeronimas Kačinskas, Vilnius (Baltos Lankos) 1997, Abb., Notenbsp., 535 S.**

Jeronimas Kačinskas is considered to be a classic of Lithuanian modernism for the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. He lived and worked in Lithuania until 1944 but after his motherland had been occupied by the Soviet Union, he moved to the West. There he continued his musical activities and is continuing his work in Boston to this day. In Lithuania Kačinskas was known as one of the most original artists for whom a composition was first of all the expression of an individual rather than a collective consciousness. He attempted to decentralize musical life in Lithuania and to integrate it into the context of Western European art development. He supported creative and flexible relations between individual and folk traditions. While in exile, he wanted music to help his compatriots to survive the loss of the motherland and to represent Lithuania in a foreign land on the highest cultural level.

The publication is dedicated to the 90<sup>th</sup> birthday of Kačinskas and it is an attempt to disclose a wider panorama of musical activities of the composer and conductor as well as his personality. The book consists of two parts: 1) a review, which reveals the most significant features of Kačinskas' creative activities, 2) articles and letters by Kačinskas as well as his memoirs presented exclusively for this book. Appendices contain a bibliography and discography, the most important dates of life and work of the composer, and the list of his compositions (published also in English). In the process of compiling this book the author has used materials from archives and libraries in Lithuania and abroad.

Kačinskas was born in Viduklė in 1907. He started learning music at the age of 6 with his father, a church organist. With the beginning of World War

In his studies were interrupted as Kačinskas together with his family was evacuated to Russia. He resumed his studies in 1918 after coming back to a restored independent Lithuania. Kačinskas would play all the compositions he could find in his father's library. At that time he also started composing. In 1923 he finished the Viekišniai secondary school and upon the advice of his father entered the Klaipėda Music School (Conservatoire).

In Klaipėda Kačinskas studied the piano, and from 1925 the viola. He also attended additional classes of composition under S. Šimkus, and after Šimkus left under J. Žilevičius. At that time he composed his first works under the influence of impressionism and expressionism. In 1929 Kačinskas decided to continue his studies in the Prague Conservatoire due to the unstable situation at the Klaipėda Music School. Encouraged by the Czech teachers, who worked in that school and who won authority with the students. In the spring of 1930 he graduated from J. Křička's composition class with his First String Quartet, a year later he finished his conducting class.

During Kačinskas' studies in Prague the greatest influence on his world outlook and the formation of his musical language was made by his professor Alois Hába. The young composer was fascinated by the possibility given by athematism: to express oneself freely and not to be bound by traditional canons. Kačinskas became one of Hába's most favorite students. It did not take him long to grasp the laws of quarter-tone music, he mastered the athematic style, and in 1931, when graduating from the studio, he composed the Second String Quartet in quarter-tone system. Hába tried to persuade Kačinskas into staying in Prague, but he wanted to go to Lithuania as soon as possible.

In the fall of 1931 Kačinskas settled down in Kaunas, the provisional capital of Lithuania (Vilnius was at that time occupied by Poland). He had to work as an accompanist, yet he did not lose hope to rise to the conductor's platform and to open a class of quarter-tone music. Only a few times did he get a chance to conduct the Symphony Orchestra of the State Opera House. During this time the course on quarter-tone music, which he had started to teach at the Kaunas Music School, was stopped by the principal's order. The conservative musical society in Kaunas was quite suspicious of the radical moods of the composer, yet he managed to form the Association of Progressive Musicians of Lithuania. At the end of 1931, together with some like-minded people, he started publishing the journal "Muzikos barai" ["Fields of Music"], with which he hoped to propagate modern music. Kačinskas was supported by his friends in Prague; Alois Hába, Karel Ančerl, M. Očadlík, K. Reiner would send articles for his journal. Kačinskas worried a lot about the one-sided estimation of professional music on the criteria of nationalism, about neglected lessons of music at comprehensive secondary schools and outdated methods of teaching. He worried about the repertoire of the State Opera House and the principles of

selecting staff members, the decline of choral culture and shortage of choral literature. Kačinskas tried to compensate for the shortage by publishing songs of his own and those of other young composers in the supplement of the journal "Muzikos barai".

In 1932 the composer produced one of the most significant of his early works, the *Nonet for string and wind instruments*, which in the same year was presented in Lithuania by the Czech Nonet. At that time Kačinskas had already moved to Klaipėda, where he also tried to propagate quarter-tone music but failed. In Klaipėda Kačinskas led the obligatory piano classes and a chamber ensemble class as well as different choirs in the town. But his greatest efforts were directed to the restoration of a symphony orchestra and establishment of an Opera House. In 1933 he started organizing concerts of symphonic music. In December 1934 the premiere of *La Traviata* took place. Yet it was difficult to hold concerts as the performers were not receiving any material support. In 1935 Fjodor Chaliapin visited Klaipėda and was impressed by their enthusiasm. In the spring of 1935 *Faustus* by Charles Gounod, conducted by Kačinskas, was performed, but that was the last premiere. Soon the Opera House was liquidated, and in 1936 the Symphony Orchestra also finished its activities.

In 1936 Kačinskas applied to the International Society for Contemporary Music, asking to accept Lithuania as its member. The applying country had to distinguish itself in the field of modern music and to get a recommendation from a member country. Kačinskas got the recommendation from Czechoslovakia, and his request was complied with. In 1937 a festival of the International Society for Contemporary Music took place in Paris, and Lithuania was the first Baltic republic to participate as a member with equal rights. It was represented by the composers Kačinskas and V. Bacevičius and later they were joined by V. Jakubėnas. Programmes for the concerts consisted of compositions selected by a jury. In 1938 the jury chose the *Nonet* by Kačinskas and it became one of the most interesting items at the London festival. The author was congratulated by composers of different countries, among them Béla Bartók. In 1939 the Warsaw Festival was the last for Kačinskas as Lithuania, occupied in 1940, lost its membership and renewed it only 1991, when it became an independent state once again.

The Lithuanian government did not support musical institutions and the cultural life in Klaipėda was inactive. At the same time the local German nationalists were becoming more and more active. That's why in the fall of 1938 Kačinskas accepted the job of a conductor of the Symphony Orchestra for the State Radio and left for Kaunas. At that time concerts were not recorded, and the music went directly on the air. Kačinskas would include works by composers of different countries and epochs in the repertoire of his orchestra. He performed almost all of the symphony works by Lithuanian composers.

From England he received an official message of thanks for popularizing English music in Lithuania.

In the beginning of 1940, when Vilnius was returned to Lithuania, the Radio orchestra moved to the old capital. The work rhythm remained the same: two concerts a week directly on the air and a public performance about once a month. With the Soviet occupation the orchestra received a hard blow. The communist authorities introduced censorship on the programmes, forced compositions of Soviet authors on the orchestra. On the other hand, the hitlerites were also pointing out which compositions were to be performed and which not, they dismissed the performers of the Jewish nationality from the orchestra and in 1941 transferred the orchestra to the disposal of the Vilnius Philharmonic Society. Kačinskas was happy to have escaped from immediate supervision of the Nazi. In 1942, when an Opera House opened in Vilnius, he became a conductor in it. In the opinion of some musical critics, Kačinskas was one of the most productive and best conductors in Lithuania. As the leader of the Radio and Philharmonic orchestras he arranged about 450 public, closed and radio concerts and conducted in about 250 performances in the Vilnius Opera House.

With the front approaching Vilnius, Kačinskas found out that communists had included his name in the list of people condemned for either death or exile and therefore decided to leave Lithuania. His journey to the West started in the fall of 1944. Kačinskas stopped for a time in the Czech town Lednica (Eisgrub) occupied by the German Nazi. He made his living by doing hard manual work. The composer had hoped to find a job in Prague with Hába's help, but he found out that the Soviets were already there. It was due to a happy coincidence that Kačinskas managed to escape and in the fall of 1945 together with his wife he settled down in Hochfeld, a suburb of Augsburg, in the zone controlled by the Americans.

In Augsburg a few thousands of Lithuanian refugees found shelter. To preserve their traditions and culture they sought to lead an active cultural life. Kačinskas got involved in it immediately. He was the leader of a mixed choir, acted as accompanist for singers, arranged concerts and composed music. He managed to get in touch with the Augsburg Symphony Orchestra and together with the Latvian and Estonian musicians they gave a few concerts of symphony music.

In 1947 Kačinskas, like most of the other refugees, started worrying about a safe shelter. In the spring of 1949 Kačinskas accepted the invitation of the priest of St. Peter's Lithuanian parish in Boston and started work as an organist there.

Lithuanians had been living in Boston since the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. To preserve their national identity they had been establishing their organizations,

associations and schools, yet the traditions of their cultural life were very different from those in Lithuania. It was not so easy for Kačinskas to work with the church choir. Yet due to Kačinskas' persistence the choir of St. Peter's church became a cultural center for Lithuanians. He was regularly arranging concerts in Boston and its environs, participated in music festivals organized by other ethnic communities. Despite that the job of the organist restricted the composer. He lived in a very closed and - from the artistic point of view - limited community of his compatriots and therefore tried to integrate himself into American musical life.

In 1951 Kačinskas produced one of his most significant works, the Mass dedicated to the anniversary of the Christening of King Mindaugas. In it he masterfully combined the consonance of the Gregorian chant and of the Medieval organum with bifunctional complexes popular in the 20<sup>th</sup> century with the quartal chords, extended tonality and his favourite athematism. The Lithuanians found the Mass too innovative.

In 1952 the Lithuanians, Latvians and Estonians arranged a concert of symphony music at Carnegie Hall together with the NBC Radio and the New York Philharmonic Orchestra, and in 1953, during the celebration of the 700<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Christening of King Mindaugas, Kačinskas performed with the Washington National Symphony Orchestra. The Americans were impressed with the professional performance of Kačinskas, but after finding out he was just a church organist, they refrained from any serious offers.

Kačinskas was one of the enthusiasts who tried to show that the Lithuanians are capable not only of dancing folk dances and singing folk songs, but also of cherishing their elite culture. That's why he tried to persuade his compatriots in Boston into preparing a programme of Lithuanian symphony music. He finally managed to do it in 1958 with the Boston Symphony Orchestra. The concert was a success and in 1959 he was invited to conduct the Brockton Symphony Orchestra, in 1960 the Cambridge Civic Symphony Orchestra, and in the fall of 1960 he became a permanent conductor of the Melrose Symphony Orchestra, one of the oldest orchestras in the environs of Boston.

Americans liked the Lithuanian musician and started to invite him to many places. With Kačinskas conducting different orchestras in the USA, works by V. Bacevičius, K. V. Banaitis, M. K. Čiurlionis, J. Gaidelis, J. Gruodis, V. Jakubėnas, S. Šimkus and Kačinskas himself were performed on the initiative of the Americans. The Belmont Community Choir under the leadership of J. Bavicchi had been performing songs and the Mass by Kačinskas, while the instrumentalists on the occasion of the composer's 60<sup>th</sup> birthday arranged a concert of his works.

In 1967 Kačinskas started teaching conducting and composition at the Berklee College of Music where he spent nineteen years. The composer was

approached by performers commissioning compositions, which were immediately performed in the concerts by the College's faculty.

He never ignored requests from the Lithuanians: he would compose cantatas, motets, hymns for their religious and national festivals. One of his largest compositions in the 80s was an one-act opera *Black Ship*, staged by the Chicago Lithuanian Opera.

In the 90s new tendencies in Kačinskas' works were revealed, elements of Lithuanian intonations appeared; earlier the composer had consciously avoided them. But even in his atonal and athematic music one could feel the Lithuanian spirit - viscosity of pastel colours, the sense of transparent sadness, lyrical melancholy or restrained joy and the lyrical-mystical world outlook.

In Soviet Lithuania the name of Kačinskas has not been mentioned frequently. Kačinskas was considered a representative of the formalism of Western Europe which was contradictory to the realistic national school of composers. But the Lithuanian people had not forgotten his name and his deeds. At the end of the 90s, with the warming-up of the political climate in Lithuania, concerts of his compositions were held. The Lithuanian Composers' Union elected him Honorary Member and invited him to visit his Motherland, which Kačinskas did in 1991. In the major cities of the country his concerts took place and after them many people wanted to talk to the famous musician of the independent Lithuania who had been out of reach for a long time. The people of Klaipėda elected him Honorary Citizen of their city, and the residents of Vilnius nominated him for the 1991 National Prize. He received the Prize in 1992 during his second visit to Lithuania.

Kačinskas thinks the first period of his creative activities, with radical expressionism and maximalist standpoints, lasted from 1929 until 1952. The period of modern moderate style with almost imperceptible features of romanticism followed. The period of 1970-1980 was for Kačinskas the time of search after which he started using intonations of Lithuanian folk songs without giving up either athematism or atonality. Today the composer's attitude towards athematism has changed. He no longer thinks that only athematic music can express the artistic potential of an individual in the best possible way. Kačinskas considers his youthful admiration for quarter-tones to be a natural need to participate in the process of the renovation of music language. The strict dodecaphonic method seems too rational, and therefore unacceptable for Kačinskas. For him art is a fusion of emotions and intellect.

**by the author (abridged)**