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***The Imposter* by Jurgis Karnavicius: A Ballet-Fantasy on a Historical Plot**



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Abstract. One of the first Lithuanian composers to work in the genre of ballet was Jurgis Karnavičius (1884–1941). In 1928 he introduced a choreographic scene based on his tone poem *The Lithuanian Rhapsody*, that engaged interest in the genre of ballet among Lithuanian composers. Afterwards Karnavičius composed four full-length ballets that were offered to a variety of European theatres. Unfortunately, due to the events of World War II, there had not been any production of the ballet organized. Fortunately, the musical material of the ballet was preserved, including *The Imposter* (1940). The libretto written by Elena Pavlovna France is based on historical events in Russian history of the first decade of the 17th century — the beginning of the Time of Troubles. The main characters of the ballet are

Translated by Anton Vagero

the future tsar-imposter False Dmitry I and Marina Mnischech, whose fates are tied to both Russian, Polish and Lithuanian history. The ballet was influenced by the works of great Russian composers, such as *Boris Godunov* by Modest Mussorgsky and *A Life for the Tsar* by Mikhail Glinka, most specifically, their “Polish acts.” At the same time, *The Imposter* added new plot motives that allow us to see the uprising of False Dmitry from a different perspective. Karnavičius’ ballet continues to be preserved in the Lithuanian Archive of Literature and Music up to the present day. The hope remains that these materials shall not only be published, but also performed.

Keywords: Jurgis Karnavičius, *The Imposter*, Lithuanian ballet, False Dmitry I, Marina Mnischech, the Time of Troubles

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Музыкальный театр

Научная статья

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**«Самозванец» Юргиса Карнавичюса:
балет-фантазия на исторический сюжет**

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Аннотация. Юргис Карнавичюс (1884–1941) — один из первых литовских композиторов, обратившихся к жанру балета. Его первый опыт — хореографическая картина «Литовская рапсодия» (на музыку одноименной симфонической поэмы) — был представлен на сцене Каунасского государственного театра в 1928 году. Впоследствии Карнавичюс сочинил четыре полноценных балета, однако из-за событий Второй мировой войны они так и не были поставлены. К счастью, материалы, связанные с этими балетами, сохранились в архивах, в том числе клавиш и партитура одноактного «Самозванца» (1940). Либретто, написанное Еленой Павловной Франс, основано на исторических событиях первой декады XVII века — начала Смутного времени. Его герои — будущий Лжедмитрий I и Марина Мнишек, чьи судьбы тесно переплетаются и с польско-литовской, и с русской культурой. В балете ощущается влияние таких сочинений, как «Борис Годунов» М. П. Мусоргского и «Жизнь за царя» М. И. Глинки — не только в сюжете, но и в музыке. В частности, есть много пересечений с так называемыми «польскими актами» этих опер. Вместе с тем в либретто «Самозванца» внесены новые сюжетные мотивы, которые позволяют по-новому взглянуть на начальный этап истории Лжедмитрия. Балет Карнавичюса до сих пор хранится на полках Литовского архива литературы и театра (LLMR). Хотелось бы надеяться, что его материалы когда-нибудь будут не только опубликованы, но и исполнены на сцене.

Ключевые слова: Юргис Карнавичюс, «Самозванец», литовский балет, Лжедмитрий, Марина Мнишек, Смутное время

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Благодарности: Хотелось бы выразить глубокую признательность семье Карнавичюса, в частности пианисту, профессору Литовской академии музыки и театра Юргису Карнавичюсу, предоставившему доступ к архивным материалам, а также Литовскому архиву литературы и искусства и его работникам. Отдельная благодарность бывшему директору архива, художественному критику и профессору (PhD) Юозапасу Блажюнасу за профессиональную помощь и поддержку нашего исследования.

Introduction

The Lithuanian ballet was formed relatively late, in the 1920s. *The Lithuanian Rhapsody* by Jurgis Karnavičius is considered to be the first Lithuanian national ballet which was staged in The Kaunas Musical Theatre in 1928 by Russian choreographer Pavel Petrov¹ to commemorate the 10th anniversary of Lithuania's independence. The ballet was a great success and remained in the theater's repertoire for a long time [1, p. 14]. However, it was originally a symphonic poem (*The Lithuanian Fantasy*, 1925).

Besides the Rhapsody, Karnavičius wrote four full-fledged ballets² which however were not staged [2, p. 231]. Only the music for the ballet *La Bellote* (1926) had sounded in the Great Hall of the Leningrad Philharmonia on March 30, 1927, as a four-part suite³. Vocal and orchestral scores of the other three are still in the archives, but we think they haven't lost their relevance in modern times.

The third ballet – *The Imposter* (1940) – is initially interesting for having not only common aspects of Polish-Lithuanian but also Russian history. The libretto is based on a prequel to a historic event, known as the Times of Troubles, which led to the rise of tsar False Dmitry I on the Moscow throne and the Russian-Polish War in 1609–1618 [3, p. 333–334; 4, pp. 215–219; 5, pp. 423–430]. The ballets common bond with the musical history of Russia is undeniable – primarily in regards to the operas *Boris Godunov* by Modest Mussorgsky and *A Life for the Tsar* by Mikhail Glinka, the stories of which are related to the same historic period.

The ballet is highly seldom in art history literature and the studies of the past decade are completely ignoring it. Even one of the most important sources on Lithuanian ballet music in Russian literature, the PhD thesis of Alexandras

1 Pavel Nikolaevich Petrov (1881–1938), Russian dancer, choreographer, and teacher. He is considered as the founder of Lithuanian professional ballet.

2 *La Bellote* (1926), *The Imposter* (1940), *Baroque* (1938), and *Jeunesse s'amuse* (1941).

3 Lietuvos literatūros ir meno archyvas. F. 646, ap. 1, b. 165. L. 5.

Jankauskas, has no mentioning of *The Imposter* [1]. The most detailed sources of information about the ballet are by musicologists Juratė Burokaitė [6, p. 56] and Audronė Žiuraitytė [2, pp. 237–238], but they are limited by just general aspects of it.

Origins

One of the sources, regarding the origin of the ballet were in fact the letters of Karnavičius: not only do they give us a glimpse of the plot about False Dmitry, but they also tell us about the plan to stage *The Imposter* in Covent-Garden. In general, these letters are addressed to his son,⁴ the librettist Elena Pavlovna France and the artist Mstislav Valerianovich Dobuzhinsky.⁵

Karnavičius had a correspondence with Elena France and her husband, Vladimir Ivanovich France,⁶ which were in very close contact with the ballet inner circles of London. It was they who proposed to write a ballet about False Dmitry. The idea was also supported by choreographers Léonide Massine⁷ and Yuri Szabalewski,⁸ who worked for Wassily Voskresensky, also known as Colonel Wassily de Basil. Shortly after, Karnavičius wrote the first pieces of the ballet, a Krakowiak, a Mazurka and a Polonaise and after that the draft materials for them were sent to Szabalewski.⁹

The hype around the ballet was impressive and the France family put a lot of effort in making the staging happen. In a letter to the Frances Karnavičius, with a touch of irony, writes that now their lives are spinning around *The Imposter*:

After your letter on the July 26 I began to suspect that because of my music your lives were turned upside down. The Doctor seized his medical practice and his wife has let the household and garden go. Day and night both of them go to directors and choreographers, showing the music of unknown Karnavičius. Now I want my music to have any success, if not for me, then for the effort, time and good will that you and Vladimir Ivanovich have put into it.¹⁰

4 Jurgis Karnavičius (1912–2001) was a Lithuanian pianist and teacher. From 1949 to 1983 he was the rector of the Lithuanian Academy of Music and Theater.

5 Mstislav Valerianovich Dobuzhinsky (1875–1957) was a Russian-Lithuanian artist, art critic, and memoirist. Together with Karnavičius he worked on many of his oeuvre.

6 Vladimir Ivanovich France (1895–?), doctor, critic, and ballet historian, husband of Elena France.

7 Léonide Massine (Leonid Fedorovich Myasin, 1896–1979), Russian dancer and choreographer.

8 In Polish sources he appears as Jerzy Szabalewski (see Program Balety Polskie Gdansk 1974. Sylfidy, balet w 1 akcie do muzyki Fryderyka Chopina. Opera baletycka. Gdansk, 1974). However, in a letter to Karnavičius he signed himself as Szabalevski (Lietuvos literatūros ir meno archyvas. F. 646, ap. 1, b. 142. L. 2).

9 Lietuvos literatūros ir meno archyvas. F. 646, ap. 1, b. 142. L. 2.

10 Cit. ex: Burokaitė J. (2004). Laiškai. Jelenai France. 1938-VII-5. In *Jurgis Karnavičiaus* [par. Jūratė Burokaitė]. Petro Ofsetas, p. 154.

The creators of the ballet faced various artistic problems. They discussed, for example, the extent to which historical accuracy should be maintained in the plot. This is indicated by lines from Dobuzhinsky's letter to Karnavičius:

...The entire historical truth should not be reproduced here, but some historical truth must still be adhered to <...> Of course, you cannot follow history and turn Poland into a fantastic Poland, and Russia into a fantastic Russia, then everything is "ceremonial" in dances (Russian and Polish) should be fantastic and unlike folk dances. Is this really necessary?¹¹

None the less the final version of the libretto was more of a romantic fantasy, than a historic plot: the ballet includes pieces with picturesque Arabic, Russian, and Polish dances, a scene of fortune-telling and vision of a gypsy woman who predicted False Dmitry's accession to the Moscow throne. Karnavičius often showed the draft materials of the dances to his colleagues. There were high hopes regarding the ballet and the composer rushed as quickly as possible to stage it. The plot was sincerely interesting to Szablewski who had Polish roots, which lead to negotiations between him and the administration of Covent-Garden regarding the staging of the ballet.

But alas everything changed with the beginning of World War II. On November 28, 1940, Karnavičius wrote to the composer Reinhold Glière mentioning the loss of hope on staging *The Imposter*:

...In recent years I visited both Paris and London, saw many interesting works by Fokin, Massine, Lishin etc. London has big enthusiasm when it comes to ballet! I met a lot of interesting people and there was even a chance of engaging my works. But the war ended any perspective of that.¹²

In September 1939 Massine went to America where he staged ballets in New-York, Chicago and Mexico,¹³ De Basils company went on tour to Australia.¹⁴ Dobuzhinsky left Kaunas for good, never to return and see Karnavičius ever again. [6, p. 56]. It is unknown if there is a further correspondence between Karnavičius and Dobuzhinsky. The work on *The Imposter* had stopped.

11 Lietuvos nacionalinė Martyno Mažvydo biblioteka, retų knygų ir rankraščių skaitykla (Department of Rare Books and Manuscripts). F. 30, ap. 1, b. 2737. 1–4.

12 Cit. ex: Burokaitė J. (2000). Iz pisem Yu. Karnovicha [From Letters of Yu. Karnovich]. *Music Academy*, 672(3), 217–225, p. 224.

13 Myasin, L. (1997). *Moya zhizn' v balete*. Artist. Rezhisser. Teatr, pp. 352–353; Massine, L. (1968). *My life in Ballet*. Macmillan; St. Martin's P, p. 213; Straus, R. (2016). Massine, Léonide (1896–1979). *The Routledge Encyclopedia of Modernism*. Taylor and Francis. 2016. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781135000356-REM1002-1>

14 Surits, E. Ya. (2011). About the entrepreneur de Basil, Colonel V. G. Voskressensky. *Vestnik Akademii russkogo baleta imeni A. Â. Vaganovoj / Bulletin of Vaganova Ballet Academy*, 25(1). 81–99. C. 92.

The Plot and the Libretto

The plot consists of an episode where False Dmitry who is supported by Poland and is considered the candidate to take the Moscow throne somewhere between late 1603 and early 1604 [7, p. 29; 5, p. 410]. The libretto by France can be interpreted not only as an original view on the infamous historic episode, but also a specific paraphrase of *Boris Godunov* by Mussorgsky.

The action takes place in the Palace of Mniszech in the early 17th century. The hall slowly fills up with guests. Princess Wiśniowiecka and officer Osmolski enter, greeted by the voivode of Sandomierz Voivodship Jerzy Mniszech. The guests are waiting for his daughter Marina. Before her entrance there is an Arabic dance, and the guests receive East sweets. Marina enters with her sister Euphrosyne greeting the crowd. Osmolski expresses his feelings to Marina and the Polonaise begins. After that scene Marina asks Princess Wiśniowiecka to dance the Krakowiak, and later it all continues with the Mazurka. Now enters the Gypsy fortuneteller who amuses the noble guests. The Gypsy predicts Marina's rise but the later doesn't let her finish. In the fate of Osmolski the Fortuneteller sees nothing of interest.

All of a sudden enters Dmitry with his men and a jester. The guests, as specially Osmolski, feel hostile towards them. Marina is very discreet and doesn't show any emotion. Mniszech orders his servants to bring the guests some wine. Meanwhile Euphrosyne dances a minuet with her teacher Tranchée, after which Marina asks Dmitry to show them Russian dances. Therefore, begins a rapidly quick dance. The attention for Dmitry makes Osmolski jealous. Marina with a chalice of wine commences a Kujawiak: this way she is trying to make both of her admirers fight over her. When the dance ends Osmolski snatches the chalice from her hands and drinks up the leftover wine. When he turns around, he sees Marina in the arms of Dmitry. There begins a fight between the rivals, but it is stopped by the Gypsy. She fortune-tells the Imposter and falls to his feet: she has a vision that Dmitry and Marina are destined to take the throne. Marina takes an ancient sword from the wall and kneels before Dmitry. The offended Osmolski leaves the hall.

Marina and Dmitry dance an extended adagio after which Mniszech orders the servants to replenish the goblets with wine. The ballet ends with a solemn Mazurka¹⁵.

Though the plots to *The Imposter* and *Boris Godunov* have differences, they still have similarities: the ballet is somewhat of new version of the "Polish Act." However its content is not identical to what we see in Mussorgsky's opera. First of all, *The Imposter* has some mystical elements to it: the vision of Dmitry on the Moscow throne. Apart from that, the opera adds new characters such as the voivode Yuri Mniszech¹⁶ (Polish: Jerzy Mniszech, c. 1548–1613), officer Osmolski, the Princess Wiśniowiecka and Euphrosyne (Euphrosine¹⁷), Marina's sister. Almost all of them have historical prototypes.

15 Lietuvos literatūros ir meno archyvas. F. 646, ap. 1, b. 37. L. 48–51.

16 Though present in the tragedy by Aleksandr Pushkin, he is absent in the libretto of Mussorgsky's opera.

17 This is the spelling of her name that is accepted in Russian historical literature.

Jerzy Mniszech played an important role in Polish history and the twists and turns of the Time of Troubles in Russia. Having a great number of progenies, he sought to conclude profitable marriage alliances for all his children. In historical literature, he is described as a proud and powerful man, ready to sacrifice a lot for his goals [7, p. 11–13].

Jan Osmolsky, according to historical data, was Marina's valet [ibid., p. 108].¹⁸ In some sources he is called her page, and his name is rendered as Mateusz Osmalski [ibid., p. 328]. From the *Diary of Marina Mnishek* it is known that on May 17, 1606, during the storming of the royal chambers, Osmolsky stood up to defend the queen and her retinue but died at the hands of the conspirators [ibid., p. 108]. In early drafts of the libretto, he was called the Polish officer.

Another historic prototype is Euphrozyne, Mniszech's youngest daughter. According to some sources, in 1604 she was only 9 or 10 years old.¹⁹ Initially, Marina's sister did not appear in the draft libretto.

Another new character is the old Princess Wiśniowiecka. To determine who was the historic prototype for the heroine related to the Wiśniowiecki House is almost impossible due to the inconsistency of certain dates. However, this House played a major role in the rising of the Imposter on the throne: the key role in promoting him belongs to Adam Vishnevetski (1566–1622).²⁰ His support led “the risen prince” to the upper circles of the Polish Noblemen where Dmitry met Marina. Aside all of that, Wiśniowiecki and Mniszech Houses were related (Konstantin, Adam's brother, was married to Ursula, Marina's sister). Kazimir Waliszewski points out that it was “at Konstantin Wiśniowiecki that he [Dmitry] found Marina.”²¹

The main characters, the Imposter and Marina,²² are also not identical to the characters of Pushkin and Mussorgsky. Unlike the complex character of Grishka Otrepiev in *Boris Godunov*, Karnavichus presents Dmitry as a rather one-dimensional: an arrogant and power-hungry young man. Marina is intoxicated by his audacity and ambition. Dimitri is doing everything to win the favor of the Polish aristocrat. It is said in a letter from Karnavičius to Dobuzhinsky dated from July 22, 1938:

18 See also Kozlyakov, V. N. (Ed.). (1995). *Dnevnik Mariny' Mnishek* [*Diary of Marina Mnishek*], trans. [and intro., pp. 5–21] by V. N. Kozlyakov; [comments by V. N. Kozlyakov, A. A. Sevastyanov]. Dmitry Bulanin, p. 56.

19 Nataliya V. Eylbart points out that in 1609, when her father was going to marry Euphrosina to Valentin Druget, she was “no more than fourteen or fifteen years old.” [8, pp. 163–164] The wedding did not take place due to the death of the groom [ibid., p. 164]. Later, in 1629, Euphrosina ran away from home with a simple nobleman and married him [ibid., p. 188].

20 Waliszewski, K. F. (1989) *Smutnoe vremya* [Time of Troubles] [trans. from French]. Sovmest. sov.-fin. predpriyatie “IKPA.” (Original work published 1911), pp. 94–97.

21 Ibid., p. 97.

22 For the personalities of False Dmitry and Marina Mnishek, see [3; 7; 9; 10; 11; 12; 13].

...Dmitry wants to entertain Marina with a dance. He prepares his young men. They begin to dance — first slowly and then faster. The jester gets confused and Dmitry banishes him, mocks him, drinks a horn of wine and starts dancing. 10 pages of music came out. (4½ minutes).²³

It's possible that the sources of the libretto were not only the works of historians, but also some fictional Russian and foreign literature [13]²⁴ that was written in the early 20th century. By the time the ballet was created, the story of Marina and the Imposter baffled minds for more than three centuries, thus inspiring more and more historical stories, novels, and dramas.²⁵ It is very likely that the authors used this kind of source to avoid any repeats of the “Polish Act” in *Boris Godunov*. For example, the first part of the In Service to the Tsarevich trilogy — *The Three Crowns (Tri ventsa)* by Vasily Petrovich Avenarius — is suitable for this role.²⁶ It has an episode the Marina and Dimitry acquaintance which has a lot of analogies with the plot of the ballet²⁷: the ball scene with a similar set of Polish dances and even a Minuet. Moreover, the young Polish Prince Osmolski, in love with Marina, takes part in this episode. [13, p. 116].

In any case, whatever the basis of the libretto, Karnavicius's main goal was to focus more on the colorfulness of Polish folk dances than to show historical aspects in *The Imposter*.

Autograph of the Ballet

The piano score of *The Imposter* in manuscript are held in the Lithuanian Archives of Literature and Art.²⁸ Either the orchestra score wasn't preserved, or it didn't exist in the first place. In any way, there are no traces leading to it. Maybe it is related to the obstacles mentioned above: the war that shattered Karnavičius' hopes on staging the ballet.

The Imposter consists of only one act, in which, according to various parameters, one can distinguish from 10 to 16 sections. Besides that, there are two

23 Cit. ex: Burokaitė, J. (2004). Laiškai. Mstislavui Dobužinskiui. 22-VII-1938. In *Jurgis Karnavičiaus* [par. Jūratė Burokaitė]. Petro Ofsetas, p. 149. According to historical data, already at a very early stage, supporters from Russian lands joined False Dmitry (cf. “Prince Adam Wiśniowiecki informed the king back in November 1603 that twenty “Moskals” had come running to the “prince” and greeted him as a legitimate sovereign” [3, p. 69]).

24 Polish researchers point out that there are literary works about Marina Mniszek “not only in Polish or Russian, but also in German, French and Spanish.” [14, p. 186] In recent years, a number of studies have appeared devoted to the Time of Troubles and the image of the Imposter in Russian [13; 15; 16] and foreign [15; 17; 18] literature.

25 Up to the play *The Czar of Muscovy*, created in England in the early 18th century and having a political background [18].

26 Avenarius, V. P. (1901). *Tri ventsa. Istoricheskaya povest' iz vremen pervogo samozvantsa* [*The Three Crowns. Historical Story from the Time of the First Impostor*]. Izdanie knizhnogo magazina P. V. Lukovnikova.

27 Chapter 31. *Panna Marina Dances a Menuetto*. Ibid., pp. 241–249.

28 Lietuvos literatūros ir meno archyvas. F. 646, ap. 1, b. 33.

additional pieces in the piano score: the *Mazurka No. 2*, which wasn't included in the ballet and an arrangement of the *Kujawiak* for violin and piano with the title in German "Solo from the ballet *The False Dmitry*" (*Solo aus dem Ballet „Der falsche Demetrius“*). Inside the manuscript there is no numbering, and we can judge about amount of musical pieces and their significance only by specific features.

First of all, almost every main section is dated (with the exception of the arrangement and the Fortune-telling scene). They are also prefaced with titles in English and Russian languages and are underlined with a single or double line.²⁹ The dates are always put down on the first page of the section (in the left upper corner) and are always supported with the text "Author's property. All rights reserved" with the signature of Karnavičius (see *Figure 1*). The same signatures and date (sometimes the place of origin) can be placed in the end. Comparing this information allows us to recreate relatively accurate order of when the pieces were created: the most early ones were written in 1938 (*Polonaise, Krakowiak*, the first³⁰ and partially the final *Mazurkas, The scene and the Russian Dance*), another part in 1939 (*The Arabian Dance, Marinas Entrance*), and the Introduction, *Kujawiak* and the ending to the Finale in 1940 (see *Table 1*).

The ballet is titled only in the English: *The Impostor. Ballet in 1 act*, which precedes each of every main piece in the ballet (with the exception of the Fortune-telling scene). The only designation in German is in *Kujawiak's* transcription, and the work is called *False Dmitry* in it (*Der falsche Demetrius*). The reasons why the main piano score has mostly English titles are clear: a reminder that the ballet was planned for the staging in Covent-Garden. However, why he used German in this transcription is not quite clear. Maybe it was written after the nazi occupation of Lithuania in 1941 (the *Kujawiak* was written in 1940).

A number of pieces have several sections with tempo and time signature changes, often with a general pause between them. Sometimes they are marked with a specific title like *Minuet* in the end of the large section *The Fortune-telling and the Gypsy dance* (see *Table 1*).

The piano score also has notes in Russian that are related to the course of the plot and are relatively detailed. Sometimes, in addition, they mark the borders of the inner sections which can be considered singly (for example, the entrance of Dmitry with his men and the entrance of Euphrosyne in the Fortune-telling scene, the dance of Dmitry in the next scene). However, there are no text marks after *The Kujawiak* dance near the end.

²⁹ In some cases they are only in Russian or only in English.

³⁰ It is interesting that this *Mazurka* and *Mazurka No. 2*, not included in the clavier, are dated on the same date: February 2, 1938.



Figure 1. J. Karnavičius. *The Impostor*. Introduction³¹

Below is a table with the names of the sections presented in the piano score, their tempos, text marks with the plotline and dates when these sections were written. The numbering is given in square brackets. Those sections that can be highlighted within the main ones are marked with the number of the previous section with the addition of a letter of the Latin alphabet. This segregation is,

³¹ Lietuvos literatūros ir meno archyvas. F. 646, ap. 1, b. 33. L. 8.

to some degree, very relative. So, the section 4a isn't related to the *Polonaise*, but to the following *Krakowiak*: by the plot (when the Princess Wiśniowiecka is asked to dance) and by the musical material that is followed after the dance by framing it (5a: the guests thank the Princess). Between the *Kujawiak* and the *Finale* more highlights can be added based on the tempo changes of the sections.

Table 1. Composition of the ballet *The Imposter*

№	Title of the section ³²	Tempo	Notes related to the plot	Dates
[1]	<i>Introduction / Vstuplenie</i>	<i>Moderato, energico, festivamente</i>	The curtain opens. The hall in the house of Mniszech. Guests start gathering, they are greeted by Mniszech. Enters Osmolski. Enters countess Wiśniowiecka	1940
[2]	<i>Arabian dance / Arabskii tanets</i>	<i>Allegro</i>	The little Arabian servants give the guests sweets.	1939
[3]	<i>Marina's Entry / Vyhod Mariny</i>	<i>Allegretto grazioso</i>	Marina enters with her ladies. Osmolski approaches Marina and expresses his feelings to her. <i>Preparation for the Polonaise</i> ³³	1939
[4]	<i>Polonaise / Polonez</i>	<i>Allegro brillante (alla Polacca)</i>	Mniszech and Princess Wiśniowiecka initiate the Polonaise, they are followed by Marina and Osmolski with other guests. One by one the dancers leave the Hall. Marina and Osmolski return and dance alone. The others return to the Hall. A common dance.	1938
[4a]	—	<i>Allegretto</i>	Marina, Mniszech and others invite Princess Wiśniowiecka to start the dance. At first she refuses languidly, and then agrees.	
[5]	<i>Cracow Dance</i> ³⁴ (<i>Krakowiak</i>) / <i>Krakovyak</i>	<i>Andantino grazioso</i>	Princess Wiśniowiecka and Mniszech. (The Princess dances languidly, dreamily as if she is recalling her youth.)	6-III-1938
[5a]	—	<i>Allegretto</i>	Mniszech, Marina and others thank the Princess for the dance. She suggests Marina to dance next.	
[6]	<i>Mazurka / Mazurka</i>	<i>Allegretto capriccioso alla mazurka</i>	Marina, Osmolski and Marina's ladies.	28-II-1938

32 In English / in Russian in transliteration.

33 Note in Russian and English.

34 There is a slip of the pen in the autograph: Danse.

[7]	Gadan'e i tsyganskii tanets [Fortune-telling scene and Gypsy dance]	<i>Allegro non troppo</i> <i>Allegretto tranquillo</i> <i>Allegro non troppo</i> <i>Allegro vivo</i> <i>Allegretto tranquillo</i> <i>Allegro vivo</i>	The Gypsy Fortune-teller, drumming her tambourine, enters the Hall. Passing between the guests, the Gypsy takes the hand of first one, then the other and peers inquisitively. As if not finding anything worthy of attention, the Gypsy dances. Enters a male Gypsy. Duet: The Fortune-teller and the male Gypsy. The Gypsy [Fortune-teller] reads Marina's hand and finds something extraordinary in her fate. Marina withdraws her hand, the Gypsy dances. The Gypsy tells fortunes to Osmolski. Disdainfully throwing away Osmolski's hand, the Gypsy dances with the male Gypsy.	—
[7a]		<i>Moderato risoluto e con moto</i> <i>Meno mosso</i> <i>Tempo I</i> <i>Moderato</i>	Dmitry enters with his retinue and a jester. Mnizsech and the elder guests greet him. Osmolski and some of the young men are hostile to Dmitry. Marina warmly greets Dmitry but hides her feelings. Mniszech orders to bring Dmitry and his men some wine. Enters very naïve and blushed Euphrozyne. With her enters Tranchée, an old dance teacher.	
[7b]	<i>Menuetto</i>	<i>Andantino grazioso</i>	Euphrozyne, Tranchée, and other ladies and gentlemen.	
[8]	<i>Scene and Russian Dance</i> [Stsena i russkii tanets]	<i>Moderato</i> <i>Allegretto a tempo (Allegretto)</i> <i>Moderato</i> <i>Allegro non troppo, ma animato a tempo animando</i>	Mniszech asks Dmitry to show off some Russian dances. Dmitry gives a sign to his people; they, as if reluctantly, are getting ready, warming up. Begins a smooth dance. The Jester copies their movements. Dmitry banishes the Jester. Dmitry prepares to dance. Dmitry's dance. A group of men from Dmitry's retinue are dancing, others are playing folk instruments. Dmitry [dances]. Dmitry and the ensemble.	1938
[9]	<i>Kujawiak / Kuyavyak</i>	<i>Andantino cantabile</i>	—	1940

[9a]		<i>Allegro non troppo, ma animato</i>		
[10]	<i>Mazurka (Finale)</i> [Mazurka]	<i>Allegro non troppo, brillante, alla mazurka</i>	—	1938 1940

Therefore, as we see from Table 1, different national dances occupy a central place in ballet. Not surprisingly, the most varied of them are Polish dances, corresponding to the place in which the plot unfolds.

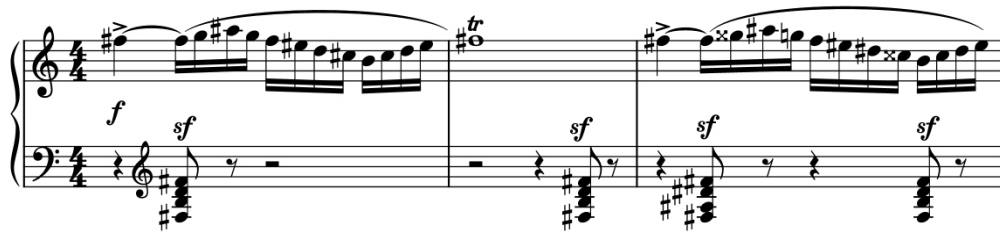
National Dances in the Karnavičius' Ballet

The dramatic structure of the ballet, regarding the national dances, can be separated into three lines: the Polish, the Russian and the “exotic” one. The last of the three is the *Arabic dance* and the *Fortune-telling scene*. These pieces play a different role in the dramaturgy of *The Imposter*: the first one is an element of *couleur locale* and the second one is important for the development of the plot. Their order is apparently not random. The *Arabian dance* (No. 2, see *Example 1*) is very colorful, compact and is located between the *Introduction* and *Marina's Entrance*. It brings up a contrast that is necessary for the more highlighted Polish plot line. With its energy and temperament in a hasty tempo it reminds of Eastern motives in Rimsky-Korsakov's works (for example, the theme of Scheherazade from the suite with the same title, the Tsarina of Shamakha theme and the little black boys dance from *The Golden Cockerel*, see *Examples 2* and *3*), which is not surprising, since this Russian composer was one of Karnavičius' teachers.

Слуги-арапчата подают гостям сласти

Example 1. J. Karnavičius. The Imposter, No. [2] Arabian Dance, mm. 1–12³⁵

35 Lietuvos literatūros ir meno archyvas. F. 646, ap. 1, b. 33. L. 12.



Example 2. Rimsky-Korsakov *The Golden Cockerel*, Act 2, fig. 192, mm. 3–5



Example 3. Rimsky-Korsakov *The Golden Cockerel*, Act 2, fig. 201

The Fortune-telling scene is much more expanded and is located in the middle of the composition. Various episodes alternates here: fortune-telling and a gypsy dance, built in the form of free variations (see *Table 2*).

Table 2. Fortune telling scene structure

1.	The entrance of the Gypsy and the beginning of the dance	<i>Allegro non troppo</i>
2.	Fortune-telling to random guests	<i>Allegretto tranquillo</i>
3.	Continuation of the dance	<i>Allegretto tranquillo – a tempo</i>
4.	The male Gypsy’s entrance. Duet	<i>Allegro non troppo – Allegro vivo</i>
5.	Fortune-telling to Marina	<i>Allegro non troppo</i>
6.	Continuation of the dance	<i>Allegretto tranquillo</i>
7.	Fortune-telling to Osmolski	<i>Allegro non troppo</i>
8.	Continuation and Finale of the dance	<i>Allegro vivo</i>

After the scene of the Fortune-telling comes a section that isn’t marked in the piano score: the entrance of Dmitry and his men. There initiates the „Russian“ line of the ballet. On the other hand there is a piece that stands independent of any of these lines and is putted between the Russian dance and Dmitry’s dance: the entrance of Euphorsyne that dances the *Menuetto* with her old teacher Tranchée. This little scene that has no impact on the plot has a little of a similarity to the Couplettes of Tricke from *Eugene Onegin* and could be a scene inspired by an episode from *The Three Crowns* and the chapter *Panna Marina dances a Menuetto* where the following is written:

The gracefully sedate national French dance, the minuet, the complete opposite of the daring folk dance of the Poles, the mazurka, was brought to Poland from Versailles³⁶ a quarter of a century earlier by the courtiers of the cheerful Polish king Henry of Valois<...>. Like a hasty meteorite, the French prince has shined on the horizon of The Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth and has flared up and faded away, yet the Menuetto was still reigning over the ballrooms of big and small Polish magnates.³⁷

The *Scene and Russian Dance* is one of the most dramatic and well structured sections of the ballet: Mniszech asks Dmitry to show off a Russian dance and the later gives a sign to his men. The dance contains several interconnected episodes (see *Table 3*).

Table 3. Structure of *Scene and Russian Dance*

Эпизоды	Темп
Scene with Marina Mniszech	<i>Moderato</i>
Ensemble dance (<i>Example 6</i>)	<i>Allegretto</i>
Solo of the Jester (<i>Example 7</i>)	<i>A tempo (Allegretto)</i>
Dmitry's dance (<i>Example 8</i>)	<i>Moderato – Allegro non troppo, ma animato</i>
Ensemble dance	<i>Allegro non troppo</i>
Solo of Dmitry	<i>A tempo (Allegretto)</i>
Dmitry and the ensemble	<i>Animando – Animato</i>

Of all the pieces, Russian dances are closest to the original source, which are the Eastern Slavic dance songs and tunes: rhythm, accents, pairs of periodicities in the structure, tonic-dominant changes in the bass serve as confirmation of this. Many of these features appear the moment Dmitry enters the scene in the previous section (*Example 4*), and later on dominates practically in every episode of *Scene and Russian Dance* (*Examples 5–8*).



Example 4. J. Karnavičius. *The Imposter*, No. [7a], Dmitry's Entrance, mm. 9–13³⁸

36 In this case the mentioning of Versailles is an anachronism: this place became the residence of French kings only in the late 17th century. Anyway, it is also very unlikely that the Menuetto was brought to Poland by the courtiers of Heinrich of Valois due to it being also known only from the 17th century [19, p. 202].

37 Avenarius, V. P. (1901) *The Three Crowns*, p. 247.

38 Lietuvos literatūros ir meno archyvas. F. 646, ap. 1, b. 33. L. 33 back side.



Example 5. J. Karnavičius. *The Imposter*, No. [8] Scene and Russian Dance, mm. 1–11³⁹



Example 6. J. Karnavičius. *The Imposter*, No. [8] Scene and Russian Dance, mm. 19–26⁴⁰



Example 7. J. Karnavičius. *The Imposter*, No. [8] Scene and Russian Dance.
The Jesters Dance, mm. 60–65⁴¹

In the theme of Dmitry there can be seen a seeming resemblance with the *Gopak* and *Trepak* by Mussorgsky: the melody begins with the V degree, plating out the auxiliary second, the descending movement towards the tonic (Examples 8–10).

Allegro non troppo, ma animato



Example 8. J. Karnavičius. *The Imposter*, No. [8] Scene and Russian Dance.
Dmitry's Dance, mm. 114–119⁴²

39 Ibid., L. 38.

40 Ibid., L. 38 back side

41 Ibid. L. 39.

42 Ibid. L. 40.



Example 9. M. Mussorgsky. *Gopak*⁴³ (1st Edition), mm. 11–14



Example 10. M. Mussorgsky. *Mussorgsky Songs and Dances of Death: Trepak*, mm. 21–24

The Polish dances have the dominating role in the ballet: they hold the composition together. We presume that such an important role is conditioned not only by peculiarities of the plot, but also by the orientation towards Russian musical culture. In all fairness, the Polish dances are considered an essential part of it. Glinka, Mussorgsky, Tchaikovsky, Rimsky-Korsakov, Lyadov and other composers contributed to the genre with their work. [20, pp. 113–114] Karnavičius, a pupil of the Saint Petersburg Conservatory, couldn't ignore the traditions of his predecessors and teachers.

The Imposter has many parallels with these traditions, however, as we said before, the main points of contact appear with *Boris Godunov* and *A Life for the Tsar*, particularly with the Polish acts in these operas. The link with Glinka's work is obvious: the subsequence of the dances by Karnavičius follow the same logic as of a typical ball in Russia in the 1820s and 1830s which influenced the structure of *A Life for the Tsar*. This subsequence is more complex but recognizable in *The Imposter*: the *Polonaise* plays the role of the solemn dance, opening the Ball, followed by *Krakowiak*, *Mazurka*, *Kujawiak*, and one more, the final *Mazurka*.

⁴³ Lyrics of Taras Shevchenko, translated by Lev Mey.

The Polish line in *The Imposter* starts with the Introduction in which, despite the dominance of the even meter, one can find features of several national dances of different genres: mazurka, polonaise and krakowiak. *Marina's Entrance* (№ [3]) precedes the first Polish dance: the *Polonaise* (No. [4]; these sections are connected attacca). The last one has common features with polonaises in operas by Russian composers: the designation *Tempo di Polacca (alla Polacca)*, dotted rhythm, chord texture, etc. (For example, *The Polish Dances* from the 2nd Acts of *Boris Godunov* and *A Life for the Tsar*, the 6th scene of *Eugene Onegin* etc. See *Examples 11–14*).



Example 11. J. Karnavičius. *The Imposter*, No. [4] *Polonaise*, mm. 1–8



Example 12. M. Mussorgsky. *Boris Godunov*, Act 2, *Polish Dance and Choir*, mm. 1–8



Example 13. J. Karnavičius. *The Imposter*, No. [4] *Polonaise*,
Marina's and Osmolski's Dance, mm. 49–52⁴⁴

44 Lietuvos literatūros ir meno archyvas. F. 646, ap. 1, b. 33. L. 19.



Example 14. M. Glinka *A Life for the Tsar*, Act 2, No. 5. *Polish Dance*, mm. 3–7

The dances also have original features. For example, it is known that the Krakowiak is traditionally performed very pompously, solemn, and hasty. A good example of that is the Krakowiak from «A Life for the Tsar», which is performed with *sforzando* and *staccato* articulation (Example 15). However, this dance is interpreted differently in *The Imposter*: it is slow, lyrical, and rarely becomes louder than *p* (No. [5], see Example 16). In the script of the ballet the Krakowiak is described like this: “Jerzy Mniszech, supported by the entire society, asks Princess Wisniewiecka to start dancing. They dance in lyrical slow motion Krakowiak»⁴⁵.



Example 15. M. Glinka *A Life for the Tsar*, Act 2, No. 6. *Krakowiak*, mm. 8–14



Example 16. J. Karnavičius. *The Imposter*, No. [5] *Krakowiak*, mm. 1–5⁴⁶

As for the *Mazurka*, it was said earlier that the ballet has two of them: one in the middle (No [6], see Example 17) and in the finale (No [10], see Example 18). (A reminder, that this dance also finishes the “Polish act” in *A life for the Tsar*.) Apparently, the role of these *Mazurkas* in the composition determined their musical

45 Lietuvos literatūros ir meno archyvas. F. 646, ap. 1, b. 37.

46 Lietuvos literatūros ir meno archyvas. F. 646, ap. 1, b. 33. L. 22.

content. The first one is sensitive and melancholic, while the final one is solemn. There is also a contrast between the tonalities of the *Mazurkas*, the first one being in *d minor*, while the final one is in *D major*.



Example 17. J. Karnavičius. *The Imposter*, No. [6] Mazurka, mm. 1–5⁴⁷



Example 18. J. Karnavičius. *The Imposter*, No. [10] Mazurka and Finale, mm. 1–5⁴⁸

The ballet has a very rare dance for the theater: *Kujawiak* (No. [9], see Example 19), akin to the mazurka, gentle and romantic in nature [21, p. 251–257]. In *The Imposter* it is Marina's solo in which she alternates smooth and lyrical movements with fast and impetuous ones. Here in the plot, she turns Dmitry and Osmolski on each other.



Example 19. J. Karnavičius. *The Imposter*, No. [9] Kujawiak, mm. 1–6⁴⁹

Conclusion

The Imposter, unfortunately, suffered the same fate as other ballets by Karnavičius, as well as many of his later works, which were not performed and are now practically forgotten. However, time turned out to be favorable to the materials associated with this ballet: the piano score and libretto have been preserved, allowing one to judge the work as a whole. *The Imposter* is interesting primarily in the context of multifaceted historical and cultural connections and intersections.

47 Ibid. L. 25.

48 Ibid. L. 53.

49 Lietuvos literatūros ir meno archyvas... L. 43.

It was created as a common brainchild of representatives of different countries and different nationalities, which could not but affect the final result. Its plot and musical features have little to do with the tense pre-war atmosphere of the late 1930s: they became a kind of echo of the artistic ideals of the Silver Age with its craving for national character, decorativeness and exoticism. In the folk dances of *The Imposter*, allusions to the music of Russian composers of the 19th and early 20th centuries turn out to be more significant than the trends of modern times.

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